

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**Decision Report**

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment
Date:	15 September 2015
Title:	WiFi/Audio Visual on Buses and at Rail/Bus Stations
Reference:	6882
Report From:	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. This proposal relates to the issuing of Grants totalling £1.003M to be made to Stagecoach and South West Trains in relation to providing free Wi-Fi and audio-visual announcements on buses operating in Blackwater Valley, Andover, Basingstoke and Winchester, and free Wi-Fi at Andover Bus Station, and at Woking, Guildford, Basingstoke and Farnborough Main rail stations.
- 1.2. Funding has been secured following separate successful bidding opportunities with the DfT and EM3 LEP. This project is fully funded through these grants, at no cost to the Department.

2. Background

- 2.1. Following the success of an earlier project in South Hampshire, a series of bids were submitted in 2014 for the introduction of Wi-Fi services and 'next stop' announcements on local bus services, and further Wi-Fi services at key rail stations, in north and central Hampshire (and a minor part in towns in Surrey). Three bids in total, two to the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) and one for Local Growth Funding (LGF) from the Enterprise M3 LEP were successful and, in combination, secured just over £1m of funding for implementation.
- 2.2. The funding awarded includes both the capital and revenue funding required for implementation. This breaks down as £273,000 Capital and £730,000 revenue.
- 2.3. In addition, the proposal levered £510,000 of private sector match funding, offering investment of over £1.5million in local improvements. This covers the full cost of implementation.

3. Scheme Details

- 3.1. The scheme will introduce free Wi-Fi and 'next stop' announcements (audio and visual) for users of bus services operating in a number of towns and surrounding rural areas. As anticipated in the bid, procurement and installation will be undertaken by the bus and rail operators (Stagecoach and South West Trains). The County Council's role is essentially limited to claiming and passing on the funding while ensuring that grant conditions are met.
- 3.2. Stagecoach will procure and install free Wi-Fi at Andover Bus Station, and free on-board Wi-Fi and audio-visual 'next stop' announcement technology on bus routes in Andover, the Blackwater Valley, Basingstoke and Winchester, and the surrounding areas.
- 3.3. Wi-Fi at rail stations will be procured and installed by South West Trains at five of the most heavily used rail stations in the EM3 LEP area (Basingstoke, Farnborough Main, Aldershot, Woking and Guildford).
- 3.4. In addition, and as a result of funding this project, Stagecoach South have committed, at their own cost, to installing new ticket machines to their fleet equipped with automatic vehicle tracking and to purchase four new buses for use in Andover.
- 3.5. While a minor part of the project is in Surrey (and noting that some bids were made jointly with Surrey County Council) the large majority is in Hampshire and, furthermore, Hampshire County Council is leading on implementation on behalf of both authorities.

4. Finance

- 4.1. All funding for the project will be in the form of Grants to the Lead Authority. Payments are to be made following quarterly claims procedures to the funding body. For part of the LSTF funding, Surrey County Council are the 'Responsible Body' and so that element of funding will be received via them.
- 4.2. Grant Agreements between the County Council and both Stagecoach Ltd and South West Trains Ltd will be put in place in order to pass on any relevant financial or programme conditions including those set out in paragraphs 3.3 and 3.4 above.
- 4.3. As yet, the LGF Funding Agreement with the EM3 LEP is not finalised, although the principle is fully accepted and work is underway. The recommendation is therefore subject to this being completed.

4.4. The table below sets out the funding;

Grant Recipient	LGF (Capital)	LSTF (revenue)	TOTAL
	£000	£000	£000
Stagecoach	672	188	860
South West Trains	58	85	143
TOTAL	730.0	273.0	1,003.0

4.5. The recommendation seeks approval for the award of funding up to this level, to ensure that there is sufficient flexibility to allow for programme implementation. It is anticipated that the grant would be spent in full, although any underspend would be likely to remain unclaimed.

4.6. There are no long-term revenue implications for the Department with this project. The LSTF has been allocated specifically to fund the purchases of required licenses and the first 12 months maintenance, after which Stagecoach and South West Trains will meet all future maintenance costs.

5. Programme

5.1. Delivery and installation will begin following completion of the required Funding Agreements and payment of the Grants to both recipients.

5.2. It is expected that all requirements will be completed by September, which will enable installation to have commenced by November and be complete by March 2016.

6. Recommendation

6.1. That the Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment approves, subject to confirmation of funding from the EM3 LEP, entering into Grant Agreements with Stagecoach (up to £0.860M) and South West Trains (up to £0.143M) in order that they may deliver Wi-Fi and Audio Visual (AV) improvements set out in this paper, funded by EM3 Local Growth Fund (LGF) (Capital), and Department for Transport (DfT) Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) (revenue).

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Maximising well-being:	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Enhancing our quality of place:	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

DocumentLocation

None

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equality Duty

1.1. The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- a) The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- b) Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- c) Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

1.2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

The proposal aims to provide a positive impact on the prosperity of the county and its communities by improving the quality of the overall public transport offer, thereby making it easier for people to travel by more sustainable modes of transport. This can help remove barriers to public transport use and help to support economic growth and reduce carbon emissions. The improvements should be of benefit to all members of the community when using these public transport services and it is not anticipated that any adverse impact upon people with protected characteristics will result.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

2.1. The proposal to enhance public transport through the provision of free Wi-Fi and on-bus AV will contribute to a more attractive and safer environment for public transport users.

3. Climate Change:

3.1. How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

As part of the wider package of measures under the two LSTF bids, Connectivity in the Blackwater Valley and Sci-Tech Corridor and the Rural Connectivity bid, the modal shift to more sustainable travel modes will have a positive impact on the County Councils carbon footprint.

3.2. How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

As part of the wider package of measures under the two LSTF bids the need to adapt to climate change has been considered using the DfT carbon tool to assess the impact of the measures on CO₂ emissions. The proposal is resilient in its longer term impacts, by way of enhancing public transport and encouraging sustainable travel modes.