

Date: 13th December 2012

1. Transport for Economic Growth Event

Tonight – from 17:45 to 20:00 TfSH is hosting an event titled "*Transport for Economic Growth*" at the Sea City Museum, here in Southampton, to promote the work of TfSH and our partners and the role that transport is playing in supporting economic growth.

The event will showcase recent and current projects, what these will deliver and how these link to economic growth. Stands include:

- Job Centre Plus
- Tipner and City Centre project
- The Billion Pound City
- Active Travel
- The Sub-Regional Transport Model
- Local Sustainable Transport Fund Project: A Better Connected South Hampshire
- Sustainable Transport Access to Tourism, Isle of Wight
- Southampton Sustainable Travel City
- Southampton City Streets
- Platform Road
- Bus Rapid Transit, and
- Better Bus Area Fund Projects

There will also be an interactive display of My Journey – our sustainable transport campaign.

The event has been organised in partnership with SHBOA.

Invites have been sent out and we have had a healthy response to what promises to be a good evening.

2. Rail Gauge Enhancement

I'm pleased to report that following the rail gauge enhancement project between Southampton and the Midlands, the proportion of port freight transported by rail has increased from 27% to 36%. This is relieving pressure on our highways and is imperative to ensure that the significant levels of growth in freight traffic through the port can be accommodated.

TfSH will be working with the freight industry to develop a revised freight strategy in the New Year. This will build on the Southampton Freight Consolidation Centre project being delivered through the TfSH Local Sustainable Transport Fund project and the aforementioned rail freight project.

3. Port of Southampton Dredging Licence

Staying with Port related activities, I am also pleased to report that Associated British Ports (ABP) has been granted approval to carry out a key component of its dredging programme at the Port of Southampton.

The removal of 450,000 cubic metres of material at the Marchwood Moorings will widen the navigation channel by 30 metres and improve marine access for large container vessels.

The dredging will complement the redevelopment of berths 201 and 202, which will allow the Port to handle the largest vessels.

This represents another step to ensure that marine access to all container berths meets the future needs and maintains the port's position at the forefront of global trade.

4. Pinch Point Success

In October I was delighted to hear that the Highways Agency confirmed funding for two projects at key motorway junctions in the TfSH area.

Scheme: M27 Junction 3

Summary: Widening the westbound exit slip road, providing four lanes on all four carriageway sections and installing traffic signals.

Cost: £2m

Start: 2014

End: 2015

Scheme: M27 Junction 5

Summary: Widening approach roads and slip roads and providing a segregated left turn lane on to the M27 eastbound

Cost: £4.9m

Start: 2014

End: 2015

Indeed, the TfSH area received 40% of the South East Pinch Point funding – more than any other area. In addition, a further Pinch Point scheme will tackle congestion on Easton Lane in Winchester, at its approach to the M3 Junction 9 – which is a key bottle-neck for South Hampshire and its economy. However, we would like to see a far more comprehensive scheme developed for this critical junction.

I'm pleased that officers were able to support the Highways Agency in pulling together the evidence to evidence the need for these two interventions.

5. Regional Growth Fund

Last week the government awarded Southampton City Council a further £5.3m from the Regional Growth Fund to fund further major improvements to a key part of the road network. This is in addition to the £5.6million that was awarded in October 2011 for the 'Platform for Prosperity' scheme which will now be extended, allowing comprehensive improvements along Town Quay between the High Street and the De Vere roundabout.

Once complete, the improved road layout will reduce traffic congestion on the western approach to the city centre and Eastern Docks, unlocking the development potential of this part of the city, whilst vastly improving accessibility.

6. Tipner Interchange and Park & Ride – Funding Confirmation

Yesterday the Department for Transport confirmed final full approval to the Tipner scheme in Portsmouth enabling work to begin. The department will provide a maximum of £19.5 million towards the full scheme cost of £28.19 million.

The scheme will deliver:

- a new motorway junction on the M275 at Tipner providing access to the development site
- a new additional bus priority lane on the M275 heading south from the new interchange - this is intended to improve public transport between Tipner and central Portsmouth and improve bus reliability, this will be an additional lane and would not remove any capacity for general traffic
- a park and ride site accessed via the new motorway junction, with bus every 10 minutes to the city centre/Gunwharf Quays.

Work can now start on the construction with the project scheduled to complete in April 2014.

7. City Deal

An Expression of Interest has been submitted by the two cities in the second wave of City Deals. The Expression of Interest identifies requests from government for freedoms and flexibilities to mitigate transport as a constraint on economic growth, through improved integration of the management of transport assets. A response from Government to the Expression of Interest is expected in mid January.

8. Local Transport Body

I was pleased to see that guidance on Assurance Frameworks for the establishment of Local Transport Bodies has now been published by DfT. We will now continue to work with partners to establish an LTB for this area in accordance with the guidance and we will set out our proposals in a report to the next meeting of this Joint Committee, in February.

9. Southampton Real Time Passenger Information

The new Southampton Real Time Information System has gone live this week and is currently subject to Site Acceptance Testing. This system is one of only a few in the UK to use innovative new technology that improves bus priority and the availability of real time bus information whilst at the same time reducing overall revenue cost to the City Council by over 70%. The system is live on Bluestar and Unilink services with First and smaller operator services going live on the system soon.

The system is a product of a partnership between the City Council and Bus Operators which uses smart ticketing machines to generate the data required to provide roadside predictions, but more importantly bus priority at junctions for late running buses. Bus Operators have shown commitment as part of the Bus Punctuality Task Force within the City by investing in their back office element of the scheme and Automatic Vehicle Location Systems and data sorting.

The system supplier is JMW systems and provides information at 230 roadside locations with open source data which allows easy development of smart apps or other technologies. The system will also include multi modal transport interchange broadcast displays showing real time public transport information for all modes that shall be installed in the Spring of 2013.

10. Norman Baker Visit

As I reported last time, the planned visit of the Under Secretary of State for Transport, Norman Baker, on the 18th of September was cancelled. However, Norman Baker will now be visiting the area twice – in January and March. The January visit will focus on projects in the eastern part of our area (such as BRT and Tipner), whilst the March visit will focus on transport projects in Southampton.

11. Bus Rapid Transit – Phase 1 Performance

Following the delivery of Bus Rapid Transit Phase 1 connecting Fareham and Gosport, the latest figures identify a 16% increase in bus patronage over the services replaced by the Eclipse with a 6% general increase in bus patronage in the Gosport peninsula.

Several hundred passenger interviews have been carried out on the Eclipse services and the early signs are very encouraging that people are switching from their cars onto Eclipse. There are also promising signs that passengers are using Eclipse services to get to Fareham rail station rather than using their cars.

12. Waterside Rail

The Waterside Rail study, being undertaken by Halcrow, began in the Summer and is due to be completed by the end of January 2013. Halcrow are looking at several aspects - engineering requirements to bring the line up to passenger operating standards, whether a new service can be accommodated in the operating area, where a new service could operate to (from Hythe), potential timetables, station locations, passenger demand forecasts and capital costs. The project Steering Group comprises Hampshire County Council, Halcrow, South West Trains and Network Rail.

Should the scheme produce a sufficiently strong business case we have commissioned a Funding and Delivery Strategy that would be carried out by Grant Thornton, which will be available by the end of March 2013 (should that piece of work be required). At that point we will be in a position to discuss whether we continue to the next stage of the Network Rail GRIP study process which would be GRIP 4 - Single Option Development.

13. LSTF & Better Bus Area Fund Projects

The TfSH Better Bus Area Fund project continues to deliver in accordance with the programme, and, working in partnership with bus operators we have delivered:

- free on board internet on over 400 buses to date, with over 560 to be fitted in total;
- five buses refurbished, with over 130 to be refurbished in total;
- next stop audio-visual equipment live on 18 buses, with a further 120 committed for delivery. This project is expected to deliver next stop audio-visual facilities on over 500 buses;
- 6 buses fitted with internal LED lighting, with a further 465 buses committed for delivery;
- a customer service charter has been drafted by First;

- the Brockhurst Roundabout project has been expanded to include Cross-Ways junction; and
- apprentices have been appointed.

Likewise, through the TfSH LSTF project we expect to deliver on our revised programme for year 1. Amongst other projects, to date we have delivered:

- personal Journey Planning to over 3,000 households in Gosport;
- public transport improvements at Fareham and Gosport stations including new bus stops, real time information and improved pedestrian way-finding.
- Detailed design for the north of Central Station urban realm enhancements are complete, and this is beginning to generate investment interest from the private sector.
- The Southampton City Council-promoted new Real Time Information system has been successfully tested and proved to work. This is a major step forward in the programme, and we can confidently progress to the delivery of an effective and lower cost Real Time solution.

14. Autumn Statement

TfSH is pleased to see the Government's commitment to investing in transport infrastructure to support growth as revealed in the Chancellor's autumn statement. We will continue to work with the LEP and make the case to Government for investing in this area.