

DECISION-MAKER:	SOLENT TRANSPORT JOINT COMMITTEE			
SUBJECT:	RESPONSES TO STRATEGIC ROAD AND RAIL CONSULTATIONS			
DATE:	12 JULY 2018			
REPORT OF:	RICHARD PEMBERTON, PRINCIPAL TRANSPORT PLANNER, SOLENT TRANSPORT			
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<b>STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY</b>		
<b>NOT APPLICABLE</b>		
<b>BRIEF SUMMARY</b>		
This report provides a brief summary of responses to consultations submitted by Solent Transport during the 2017/18 year on strategic road and rail issues.		
The report also makes recommendations for the content of proposed Solent Transport responses to two current rail consultations.		
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS:</b>		
	(i)	That the Joint Committee notes the previous consultation responses made during the 2017/18 year.
	(ii)	That the Joint Committee considers the suggested content in this report, for Solent Transport’s responses to the two current rail consultations.
<b>REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS</b>		
1.	Responding to these consultations will help support ongoing efforts to secure improvements to rail services in the Solent area through the DfT’s rail franchising process.	
<b>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED</b>		
2.	Not responding to the consultations. This option was rejected on the basis that it would reduce the level of local input and influence over the Cross Country rail franchise and potential major changes to rail fares.	
<b>DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)</b>		

3.	<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p>Solent Transport regularly submits responses to consultations on strategic transport issues, typically on rail franchising and rail investment proposals, and strategic road network investment plans. These responses tend to be of a strategic nature reflecting the high level, whole-Solent focus of the partnership.</p> <p>Responses to consultations seek to positively influence policy-setting and funding bodies, seeking to bring further investment to the Solent's transport networks, in turn supporting economic growth and housing delivery as well as improving air quality.</p> <p><b>Consultation responses in previous financial year</b></p>
4.	<p>During 2017/018, Solent Transport responded to the following public consultations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• South Western Railway - Future of Island Line Consultation</li> <li>• South Western Railway - December 2018 timetable proposals consultation</li> <li>• Department for Transport - Future of Great Western Rail Franchise consultation</li> <li>• Department for Transport - Shaping the future of England's strategic roads (RIS2) consultation</li> <li>• Department for Transport - Consultation on Proposals for the creation of a Major Road Network (MRN)</li> </ul>
5.	<p><b>Current open consultations and recommended key points to raise</b></p> <p>There are two rail-focused public consultations currently open. These concern the Cross Country rail franchise, and future changes to rail fares.</p>
6.	<p><u>Cross Country Rail Franchise</u></p> <p>The current Cross Country franchise is due to end in December 2019. The Department for Transport is running a competition to select the next operator of the franchise.</p> <p>This consultation seeks views on various aspects of the Cross Country passenger rail service to inform what the Department for Transport asks from potential operators when re-letting the franchise in 2019. The consultation closes on 30th August 2018. This meeting is the opportunity for Members to</p>

shape and agree the main points of the Solent Transport response.

The DfT have identified that the primary issue needing to be addressed in the franchise is the lack of capacity and overcrowding, particularly as trains get closer to Birmingham and pass through the Midlands at peak times. The services are heavily used by commuters.

It is suggested to Members that the key themes of a Solent Transport response should be as follows:

- Agreement with DfT position/ prioritisation of addressing crowding issues in the new franchise.
- Stating that an obvious solution to these issues is to provide significantly more carriages than the current 4 or 5 carriage train lengths on many, if not all Cross Country services, especially north of Reading but also between Reading and Bournemouth particularly in the peak hours.
- Rejecting suggestions in the document for addressing capacity issues which would negatively impact users in the Solent area. Specifically, the potential removal of some station stops or ceasing operation of all Cross Country services west of Southampton (to Brockenhurst & Bournemouth) in order to reallocate existing carriages to busier parts of the route. These actions would negatively affect the substantial role that Cross Country plays in providing local/ medium distance connectivity along the Winchester-Southampton-Bournemouth corridor.
- Encouraging the DfT to view current medium-distance commuting usage as a core part of the function of Cross Country, and instead of trying to deter usage from this market, suggesting that the future franchisee should be required to provide sufficient seating capacity and perhaps make changes to reservation policies, on-board layout of some carriages etc to cater for this role better than at present.
- Requesting DfT/ potential franchisees to investigate whether there could be any means of re-providing Cross Country rail services to Portsmouth, to help the poor direct rail connectivity between the Portsmouth area and key destinations in the Midlands and North of England.
- Requesting that DfT require the future franchisee to participate in and accept rail products on the Solent Go multi-modal smart card, to compliment South Western Railway's commitment to offer Solent Go products from Summer 2019.

The full consultation document can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/cross-country-rail-franchise>

Members are asked to endorse these general themes as the basis for a full response.

7.

#### Easier Fares consultation

This consultation is being run by the Rail Delivery Group, a rail industry association that brings together rail infrastructure owners, passenger train

8.	<p>operators and rail freight operators. It owns the ‘National Rail’ brand. The aim of the consultation is to inform potential future major changes to how rail fares are set, bringing rail fare policies (which were devised 25 years ago) up to date to reflect modern travel patterns, technological changes and user needs.</p> <p>It is recommended to Members that key content of a Solent Transport response should be as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for proposals to determine rail fares based on distance travelled - improving transparency and bringing rail into line with most other modes of travel where cost is primarily determined by the distance travelled (e.g. driving).</li> <li>• Support for proposals to redesign fares so that “split ticketing” becomes un-necessary in order to secure the best value fare for longer distance trips.</li> <li>• Support for proposals for regular users to receive discounts on future ticket purchases, and a suggestion that the rail industry should widen this proposed scheme to semi-regular rail users (for example part-time workers commuting by train several days per week) and also seek to widen the scheme to offer “friends and family” discounts or similar for regular rail users.</li> </ul> <p>There are several questions within the consultation where caution is recommended, most notably proposals for variations in fares based on the level of service received (e.g. lower fares for routes with a lower quality service) and alterations to peak time price differentials (potentially including removal of, or increase in the differential).</p> <p>Increased peak time fare differentials are a cause for concern in that despite advances in remote working, many who use rail for travel to work or education have little choice but to travel at peak times at least on some days. High peak time fares may result in rail being uneconomical for those journeys - resulting in potential rail users choosing to drive instead (adding to traffic congestion) or resulting in them choosing not to take up employment, education or training in some locations (potentially negatively affecting local economies). The full consultation document can be found here: <a href="https://www.britainrunsonrail.co.uk/fares">https://www.britainrunsonrail.co.uk/fares</a></p> <p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>This report provides a summary of Solent Transport’s role in responding to public consultations run by strategic transport infrastructure owners and service providers, primarily in relation to the rail and the strategic road networks.</p> <p>The report has also provided some recommended content to Members for responses from Solent Transport to two currently open consultations on rail fares and the future of the Cross Country Trains franchise.</p>
<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>	
<b><u>Capital/Revenue</u></b>	

9.	Nil- no capital or revenue costs associated with this decision
<b><u>Property/Other</u></b>	
10.	Nil- no property considerations associated with this decision
<b>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</b>	
<b><u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u></b>	
11.	N/A
<b><u>Other Legal Implications:</u></b>	
12.	N/A
<b>RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS</b>	
13.	No tangible risks attached to this decision.
<b>POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS</b>	
14.	Not directly applicable.

<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	N/A
<b>WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:</b>	Affects all parts of Solent area within catchment of rail stations, particularly those served by the Cross Country rail franchise.
<b><u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u></b>	
<b>Appendices</b>	
1.	None.

#### **Documents In Members' Rooms**

1.	
<b>Equality Impact Assessment</b>	
<b>Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out.</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Privacy Impact Assessment</b>	
<b>Do the implications/subject of the report require a Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) to be carried out.</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Other Background Documents</b>	
<b>Other Background documents available for inspection at:</b>	
<b>Title of Background Paper(s)</b>	<b>Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)</b>
1.	
2.	

