



PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

INDIVIDUAL DECISION BY THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR HIGH QUALITY ENVIRONMENT)

TOPIC – London and South East Route Utilisation Strategy Draft for Consultation.

PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

The Access to Information Procedure Rules – Part 4, Section 22 of the Council's Constitution provides for a decision to be made by an individual member of Cabinet.

In accordance with the Procedure Rules, the Corporate Director (Governance), the Chief Executive and the Head of Finance are consulted together with Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Principal Scrutiny Committee and all Members of the relevant Scrutiny Panel (individual Ward Members are consulted separately where appropriate). In addition, all Members are notified.

Five or more of these consulted Members can require that the matter be referred to Cabinet for determination.

Contact Officers:

Case Officer: Dan Massey, Tel: 01962 848 234, Email: dmassey@winchester.gov.uk

Committee Administrator: Nancy Graham, Tel: 01962 848 235, Email: ngraham@winchester.gov.uk

SUMMARY

A 12 week consultation period on the London and South East Route Utilisation Strategy (RUS) started when the document was published on 16 December 2010.

The RUS builds on the series of RUS's, published between 2005 and 2010, covering routes into and around the capital. The latest publication represents their latest analysis with respect to an appropriate strategy to 2031 for the South East England railway network as a whole.

The RUS forecasts an increase of over 30 per cent in the numbers of peak time commuters heading to London by 2013. The RUS therefore focuses on increasing rail capacity to meet that demand.

The strategy includes:

- An assessment of demand into each of London's capital stations and proposes interventions to meet this demand;
- Consideration of improved connectivity across the region;
- Consideration of requirements to cater for forecast growth in freight;
- Synergy with industry plans for High Speed 2 and other committed rail schemes such as Crossrail and Thameslink;
- A detailed study of the South Hampshire and Solent area.

The last item is of considerable interest to the Winchester District as it was only partially covered by the 2005 South West Main Line RUS and includes the following key recommendations:

- Brighton to Southampton Central service to run via Botley instead of via Netley, so as to serve Southampton Airport Parkway, requiring a timetable recast due to capacity on the single line on the Botley route;
- Provision of a new service between Portsmouth and Southampton Central to address the gap of infrequent fast trains between these cities;
- Netley line recommended to remain as heavy rail (consideration was given by the RUS as to whether a conversion to light rail might be appropriate);
- Further investigation into small-scale infrastructure enhancements, in particular redoubling of the Botley line and consideration of an additional Platform 4 at Eastleigh;
- Provision of four freight paths per hour between Basingstoke and Southampton Central;
- Extension of South West Trains 'Figure 6' Salisbury to Romsey service, via Southampton Central and Chandler's Ford, back to Salisbury.

Full details of the draft strategy and consultation details are found at www.networkrail.co.uk

DECISION

That the proposed response, as attached to this Notice, to the consultation be agreed for submission to Network Rail.

REASON FOR THE DECISION AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

The provision and maintenance of an effective rail network for South East England will have an impact on transport and other infrastructure in the Winchester District, and it is therefore important that the City Council's views are taken into account

when this Strategy is adopted. The comments take into account current and potential future issues which have been identified.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

None.

CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN ON THE DECISION

Portfolio Holder for High Quality Environment, Portfolio Holder for Rural Areas and Market Towns, and other Winchester City Councillors.

FURTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF THE DRAFT PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

Following representations from Cllr Robert Hutchison, and in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, the consultation response has been amended to incorporate a number of additional and clarified points. Primarily noting and supporting the representations being made by WinACC on the Route Utilisation Strategy.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY THE DECISION MAKER OR A MEMBER OR OFFICER CONSULTED

n/a

DISPENSATION GRANTED BY THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

n/a

Approved by: (signature)

Date of Decision: 14.03.11

Councillor Eleanor Bell – Portfolio Holder for High Quality Environment

London and South East Route Utilisation Strategy Draft for Consultation

Response by Winchester City Council

The City Council welcomes the opportunity to respond to the consultation. The following comments are made in the knowledge that further evaluation of the some of the options for Solent and South Hampshire remain under evaluation and development.

The city council is most interested in the key recommendations for South Hampshire and the Solent and in particularly welcomes and supports the:

- Provision of a new service between Portsmouth and Southampton Central to address the gap of infrequent fast trains between these cities;
- The opportunity to redoubling of the Botley line and consideration of an additional Platform 4 at Eastleigh;
- Provision of four freight paths per hour between Basingstoke and Southampton Central.

Such initiatives will assist in the delivery of sustainable transport opportunities in the South Hampshire area, which will inevitably face significant growth over the RUS timescale and also allow opportunities for increased rail freight traffic on the Southampton-Winchester-Basingstoke corridor which will ease the burden on the M3 motorway and A34 Primary Route Networks.

The delivery of 'Cross Country' services is also very important to Winchester and its surrounding district. The increased services on the Southampton route (to three trains every two hours) are welcomed, but there remains scope for further additional services or capacity to alleviate the overcrowding that can occur on certain routes or times. It is understood that currently only half of the six new services stop at Winchester on week-days. We would ask for all the services that currently terminate at or start at Reading to be extended to/from Southampton, and request that they all stop at Winchester. This would provide a half-hourly service throughout the day.

Whilst the RUS focus is on identified growth on London bound commuters, the City Council also believes that there is potential for considerable growth in rail travel between Winchester and the Solent area. However such growth opportunities may need to be met through additional train paths (and associated new services) or additional train capacity through longer trains (and associated increased platform lengths). To assist this we would support the proposals (Table 10.3, e, f, p157) to triple or quadruple the line between Eastleigh and Southampton Central. This would provide sufficient capacity for better services between Winchester and the Southampton Area, and further enable half-hourly Cross-Country services.

The City Council also supports the submission from WinACC (Winchester Action on Climate Change) on the Route Utilisation Strategy including the provision of a 'metro' type provision to serve the wider South Hampshire

urban area. We are aware that any new or improved service provision may of course need to be included in the appropriate future franchise consultation.