



PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

INDIVIDUAL DECISION BY THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ENVIRONMENT

TOPIC – SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY TIMETABLE 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 Legal Services Manager, the Chief Executive and the Strategic Director: Resources are consulted together with Chairman and Vice Chairman of The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and any other relevant overview and scrutiny committee. 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:

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Democratic Services Officer: Nancy Graham, Tel: 01962 848235, Email: ngraham@winchester.gov.uk

SUMMARY

The South Western Railway franchise is a vital part of the national rail network that serves a market extending from central and south west London to major towns and cities in Berkshire, Devon, Dorset, Hampshire, Surrey and Wiltshire; it also provides services on the Isle of Wight. The franchise area serves a diverse market providing connectivity that includes airports, ports, universities, sporting and cultural centres, theme parks and National Parks.

The South Western Railway franchise supports commuters, businesses, and local communities, as well as providing services for the tourist and leisure markets. The railway supports the wider economic prosperity of the region, whilst also providing vital access to London.

Increasing numbers of passengers are travelling on the South Western Railway network; approximately 14% of all passenger journeys on the GB rail network are made on services operated by the new franchisee, South Western Railway.

As part of SWR's winning franchise bid, they proposed a new timetable, combined with new and better trains, more seats, improved service frequencies and quicker journey times.

The consultation document is therefore seeking views on their proposed timetable in order that they implement a timetable that best serves existing customers, existing communities and potential customers to increase rail use for short journeys and cutting out the need to drive those short trips.

Full details of the timetable and consultation details are found at:
<https://www.southwesternrailway.com/contact-and-help/timetable-consultation>

DECISION

That the proposed response, as attached to this Notice, to the consultation be agreed for submission to South Western Railway.

REASON FOR THE DECISION AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

The provision, operation and maintenance of an effective rail timetable for Southern 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 a new timetable is being planned. No other options have been considered in this case.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

None.

CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN ON THE DECISION

None.

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

Following Councillor comments on the draft notice, the Council's response to the consultation has been revised to include reference to parking issues at Shawford and Micheldever Station, longer journeys at Micheldever and to remove reference to trains stopping at Woking.

The City Council remains concerned about commuter parking issues associated with the use of Shawford and Micheldever stations, requests that these matters are considered as part of the timetable review, and look forward to continuing dialogue with South Western Railway regarding these matters.

As Woking is a key interchange for services to Heathrow and other non-London destinations the reference to trains stopping at this station has been omitted.

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: 19.12.17

Councillor Jan Warwick: Portfolio Holder for Environment

South Western Railway: Timetable Consultation

Response by Winchester City Council

This is Winchester City Council's response to the South Western Railway timetable consultation. The first part of this response is general comment on the nature and needs of the local rail service and network and the second addresses the individual services to stations in the Winchester District.

General Comment

- Winchester District covers a large area of almost 250 square miles. Whilst it is centred on the City of Winchester (Hampshire's county town) the district borders Basingstoke and Deane in the north, Portsmouth, Fareham, Havant and Eastleigh in the south, and Test Valley to the west and East Hampshire to the east. 40% of the District falls within the South Downs National Park.
- The Council is committed to supporting the enhancement of rail capacity and reliability across the District. We are also fully supportive of the development of public transport from an environmental perspective. We are delighted to see the amount of freight using the rail network through our area, rather than the roads, and support this vital contribution to local economic growth whilst reducing motorway traffic and carbon emissions.
- Winchester was one of the first authorities to have a local plan judged as 'sound' following the introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework. Our Local Plan Part 1 (Joint Core Strategy 2013) recognises the importance of good transport links for the development of commerce, tourism, and employment. Winchester is a historic city, attracting millions of visitors every year, and is also a gateway for the South Downs National Park.
- Winchester Town itself is a major administrative/employment, educational, cultural, retail and leisure centre for both its residents and those in nearby settlements as well as the wider county area. There are significant patterns of in and out commuting for workers and residents. The mobile nature of the local population adds a further complexity as residents travel to alternative destinations, whether by necessity or desire. We have a broad demographic population mix, including a large element who commute to higher paid employment elsewhere; most notably London. Winchester has flourishing universities, and well respected colleges of further and higher education with a very large local catchment area that rely heavily on public transport. The County Council is also based in Winchester close to the railway station, and major re-development in the area around the station is planned and we hope to attract businesses to this location. The Council is also promoting the regeneration of part of the city centre as well as building a major new leisure facility on the edge of town at Bar End There are a number of housing and other development

projects about to come on stream such as Barton Farm (2000 homes). This, together with other developments planned for the town (4000 homes in total up to 2031), will only increase demand on the rail system.

- The nature of the District and the way it functions depends upon a variety of inter-relationships with its neighbours for employment, leisure, shopping and housing needs. As a result we work closely with the County Council as well as neighbouring district and unitary authorities , including through the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire, and the Solent and Enterprise M3 Local Economic Partnerships, on many areas of mutual interest including transport.
- A vibrant and successful rail network is a vital part of the attraction of Winchester for residents, employers, visitors and businesses. There has been significant increase in demand for rail which has produced a number of capacity challenges.
- There are four rail stations within the Winchester District; Winchester itself being the largest with over 5 million passenger movements in 2014/15 according to Office for Rail Regulation data. It is an important destination, departure and interchange station.
- The three other stations are smaller village stations at Micheldever Shawford and Botley. All show significant growth over the last few years as illustrated by the ORR data with passenger numbers likely to exceed 200,000 per station in the next year or two. The smaller stations of Shawford and Micheldever provide important feeders into longer distance services to London but also vital and valued local links, keeping traffic outside settlement centres. Botley Station offers more local services that are direct to Winchester and Eastleigh, where connections to Southampton can be made. We believe there is an opportunity for further modal shift if capacity, reliability and passenger comfort can be improved, providing it is competitively priced. Rail is a key contributor to other forms of sustainable transport, feeding in and out of bus services, walking and cycling.

Winchester Railway Station

- We welcome the increase of trains from Winchester arriving in to Waterloo before 8am, especially the two direct trains at 0624 and 0654. The twice hourly fast service to Waterloo during peak times and one hourly fast service during off peak will add value and hopefully encourage new railway users from Winchester. The reduced journey time to 58 and 56 minutes is also a welcomed improvement as long as enough time has been allocated and trains can keep to their timetable.
- The direct evening trains from Waterloo provide Winchester's commuters with a fast journey home every half hour. The xx14 and xx44 stopping services also provides a fast journey of around 1 hour and 6 minutes.

- The City Council supports increased numbers of coaches to provide more capacity on crowded routes.
- The City Council supports all moves that allow local commuters, students and visitors to access the city via public transport this includes the increased services from St Denys.

Shawford Railway Station

- The City Council would welcome any additional services to this station to encourage public transport use. Although it appears the number of trains in the peak time to London is similar to the existing timetable, it is disappointing to see that they are stopping at more stations, which although not significantly longer would still add an extra five minutes or so. The fastest peak time trains to London from Shawford would require a 5 minutes wait at Winchester.
- After 0848, there is not a train to Winchester from Shawford for another hour. Many local people and students catch the 0919 train from Shawford which has been removed from the new timetable. We would therefore request 09.12 from Eastleigh stops as Shawford to help meet the needs of the local community. We do not think this would significantly affect that train, seeing as it is a stopping service, and will call at Micheldever Station and Woking which the existing train does not. It would be most advantageous if the XX12 from Eastleigh did stop at Shawford throughout the off peak period.
- We would also like to see the hourly Waterloo to Portsmouth Harbour stopping service call at Shawford.
- South Western Railway must consider parking facilities at small village stations when implementing any new timetable. The operator should investigate ways to provide additional commuter parking at Shawford in order to remove commuter cars from the nearby village streets. These commuter vehicles have triggered multiple parking restrictions to be implemented causing, visitors and residents to be affected for a train station issue.

Botley Railway Station

- We would support the services from this station and its continued level of service appears to be similar to the current timetable for peak and off peak times. We are encouraged by the greater evening services to Botley. This station is likely to see considerable growth in passengers associated with nearby major housing development areas in both Eastleigh and Winchester Districts (North Whitley will be developed to provide 3500 new homes) and we look forward to this train service growing in the future.

Micheldever Railway Station

- The City Council would welcome any additional services to this station to encourage public transport use. It appears the number of trains in the peak time to London is similar to the existing timetable, although retimed and unfortunately slightly longer.
- The evening peak trains from London will become longer due to the service stopping at other stations. It would be preferably if the Micheldever service is not restricted in favour of other smaller stations. We would therefore request that a fast train to Winchester could stop at Micheldever.
- The off peak hourly Waterloo to Southampton Central service stops at many stations apart from Micheldever Station. It would be advantageous to the local residents if this stopping service could add one more stop to its timetable allowing Micheldever residents and students to access Winchester and beyond. This revision should therefore be included in the new timetable.
- Parking at Micheldever Station has been problematic for commuters and residents. Parking restrictions have been implemented on the nearby streets to curb all day parking, but South Western Railway should investigate more parking facilities for commuters at this station.

Portsmouth Direct Line

- Winchester District extends all the way to west of Waterlooville where 3000 new homes are being built. Their nearest train line is the Portsmouth mainline. The increased frequency of train services on this line are very welcome including the 10 car train class 442 trains, which commuters prefer. The increased late night service will allow residents to attend events in London knowing their trains are running later in the evenings.

Portsmouth to Fareham, Southampton and Weymouth

- The City Council supports the additional hourly service running between Portsmouth Harbour and Southampton. Although not directly in the Winchester District it allows more opportunities for connections into the area. The journey length for the 'faster' trains between these two cities has been cut to under an hour, which although is better than the current 1hr and 10 minute journey, still seems uncompetitive to a motor vehicle for a 25 mile journey and we would encourage South Western Railway to increase the attractiveness of this journey and make it more competitive when compared to the private car.

Summary

The City Council recognises the enormous task of rearranging timetables and the importance of this consultation to South Western Railway's new franchise. We would hope to work in partnership with South Western Railway in the future to enable the best level of service for the residents and visitors to the Winchester District.

The proposed timetable no.158 shows half hour fast trains and half hourly stopping trains servicing Winchester railway station. The extra early trains to Waterloo combined with the reduction in journey time are encouraging and hopefully will inspire more to use the railways for short and long journeys.

For the stations at Micheldever Station and Shawford, we would like to see the stopping services of the Portsmouth Harbour and Southampton Central trains to serve both stations to allow a half hourly service to these stations and increase the attractiveness of rail as an alternative to driving.

We ask for consideration be given to half hourly trains at Botley in the future to offer more frequent rail services to the increasing population of this area associated with the large amount of housing planned in Eastleigh Borough and at Whiteley.

The City Council look forward to continuing discussions in the future with South Western Railway regarding the parking issues around Shawford and Micheldever Stations.