



PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

INDIVIDUAL DECISION BY THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR HIGH QUALITY ENVIRONMENT)

TOPIC – STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION SOUTH WESTERN RAIL FRANCHISE

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 Chief Operating Officer, the Chief Executive and the Chief Finance Officer 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.

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SUMMARY

The South Western rail 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 rail 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 rail network; approximately 14% of all passenger journeys on the GB rail network are made on services operated by the current South Western franchisee. Combined with the major investment in railway infrastructure being undertaken by Network Rail, and the delivery of new rolling stock, the re-letting of the South Western rail franchise

represents a significant opportunity to improve the capacity, connectivity, accessibility and quality of services offered to passengers.

The Department wants passengers to feel that they are getting value for money for the price of their ticket, and to be satisfied with the services that they receive. The challenge is to ensure efficient provision of sufficient train capacity to match future demand and to make services more attractive.

Innovation and partnership working are vital in making the improvements to services and facilities passengers want to see. The consultation document is therefore seeking views on how best to balance their aspiration for a railway that provides excellent services for passengers, and supports the economic growth of the region, whilst being an affordable proposition with focused and targeted use of resources.

Full details of the draft strategy and consultation details are found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/south-western-rail-franchise>

DECISION

That the proposed response, as attached to this Notice, to the consultation be agreed for submission to the Rail Executive of the Department for Transport .

REASON FOR THE DECISION AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

The provision, operation and maintenance of an effective rail network 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 this Strategy is adopted. The comments take into account current and potential future issues which have been identified. No other options have been considered in this case.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

None.

CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN ON THE DECISION

Portfolio Holder for Environment, Health and Wellbeing

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

N/A

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: 10.02.16

Councillor Frank Pearson: Portfolio Holder for Environment, Health and Wellbeing

South Western Rail Franchise: Stakeholder Consultation

Response by Winchester City Council

This is Winchester City Council's response to the South Western rail franchise stakeholder 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 questions raised in the consultation document.

General Comment

Winchester District covers a large area of 250 square miles. Whilst it is centered 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 rail 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, 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 a flourishing University, 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 based in Winchester close to the railway station, and development in the area around the station is planned and we hope to attract businesses to this location. There are a number of housing and other development projects about to come on stream including, Pitt Manor (200 homes), Barton Farm (2000 homes) and Silver Hill (a major mixed use regeneration project in the city centre). 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 councils and, also through the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire, the Solent and Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise 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. We have a strong working relationship with rail operators in this area particularly Stagecoach and South West Trains. Therefore, we welcome the Wessex Route Study consultation and broadly support its analysis and aspirations to tackle growth and rail capacity. We are working in partnership with Hampshire County Council who we understand will be responding in more detail to specific cross County issues.

There are four rail stations within the Winchester District; Winchester itself being the largest with 4.7 million passenger movements in 2013/14 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. These smaller stations provide feeders into longer distance services but also vital and valued local links, keeping traffic outside settlement centres. 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.

The recent announcement on the proposal to incorporate all London suburban rail routes into the control of Transport for London (TfL) will have a significant impact on the remainder of the SW rail franchise. This could reduce the emphasis on London based travel and as a result the SW franchise should look to further develop and enhance rail travel in the Hampshire area.

Questions raised in the consultation document

Passenger Satisfaction

- Do you support the key priorities that have been identified through the Transport Focus research?
- Are there other priorities you believe should be included to inform the new franchise specification?

The City Council supports the findings of the recent Transport Focus research. Passenger satisfaction must be improved and perception by the customer of value for money should be enhanced. The research highlighted a number of key issues which the City Council supports. Of particular note is the requirement for sufficient room to sit and/or stand; many services are

overcrowded both on the approach and departure from London Waterloo but also on more local journeys, e.g. Fareham- Winchester.

Wi-Fi at stations and on trains is of increasing importance to passengers (including those travelling for work purposes) and visitors and is already available on other modes of public transport such as buses. The new franchise holder should prioritise delivery of strong, secure Wi-Fi for all passengers who wish to use it without additional charge. Access should be quick and easy so that even passengers who make relatively short journeys are able to use it. Preferably this should be delivered on all services in advance of the 2018 deadline set by the Department for Transport.

Charging points for laptops/tablets should be provided for those wishing to work on the train as this would be consistent with the Government's aim of ensuring all businesses have access to appropriate broadband connections..

Safety is also of concern. Night opening of main entrances, toilets and waiting rooms should match scheduled services, and passenger perception of safety should be measured and improved where necessary.

Passenger interaction should be improved, particularly when there are delays, to empower customers to feel in control of their travel. A stronger focus on customer service should be included in the new specification. Customers should feel that their views are being listened to and taken on board through all media platforms. For more complex enquiries that cannot be handled on the spot, there should be a requirement to respond within a short set period e.g. 10 days and for the customer's experience of providing feedback and criticism to be well managed so they feel valued.

Franchise Objectives

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Do you feel that these are appropriate objectives for the South Western franchise?● Are there any further objectives you believe should be included? |
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The City Council is supportive of the objectives of the franchise and endorses the need to place customers at the centre of planning the operation of the rail network.

Capacity

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Considering the planned schemes to deliver additional capacity, what are your views on additional opportunities to deliver more capacity elsewhere within the franchise area?<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Are there particular services or routes where you believe there is a need to introduce additional capacity to address overcrowding?● It may be possible to increase overall passenger carrying capacity by introducing different rolling stock that has more standing space and/or modifying the internal configuration of trains, including rebalancing first and |
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standard class seating. Do you have views on these potential rolling stock changes?

1) London commuting

There are significant capacity problems which need addressing both short and long term. It is unacceptable that an increasing number of regular passengers have to stand to and from Winchester in peak hours, or choose alternative slower services which reduce capacity on these services. We would support the majority of the options that the Wessex Route Study puts forward to tackle this. The one suggestion we cannot support is the option to replace 2+2 seating with 2+3 seating for these lengths of journey. Regrettably, the UK population is getting larger but also many commuters use their train service productively to work or for leisure pursuits. These can not be undertaken easily in cramped 2+3 seating. In the short term we believe more seating capacity could be provided on the class 444s notably in the vestibules and the buffet/disabled/guards coach.

The main overcrowding issues are on services to / from London. Whilst this is an issue during traditional weekday peak periods, services can also be overcrowded during the off peak, particularly during times of higher travel demand (e.g. holiday periods). This can be exacerbated by the operation of shorter train formations, during the off peak. For example, most main line services only operate with five coaches in the off peak, compared to ten during the peaks. The provision of infrastructure to deliver additional peak period capacity in and out of London Waterloo can also be used to deliver additional off peak services. Service improvements on these routes are considered in the Train Service Specification section.

The City Council supports increased numbers of coaches to provide more capacity on crowded routes and welcomes the improvements made by the current operator.

2) Service pattern

a) **Winchester** - The current arrangement broadly works well although we would welcome at least one hourly fast Waterloo 'only' service as every fast Waterloo 'only' service would add value. We welcome the aspirations for additional cross boundary services, including direct services to Paddington, the new East/West link for connection into Crossrail and London Heathrow airport. We would also like to see improved services from Winchester to the eastern South Coast towards Brighton.

b) **Botley** - We would support the comments and aspirations made by Eastleigh Borough Council for this service and for the one train per hour to be increased to two. Botley station is likely to see considerable growth in passengers associated with nearby major housing development areas in both Eastleigh and Winchester District

c) **Micheldever and Shawford** - we are aware and supportive of the local rail support groups which exist at these two stations. The local groups have worked closely with the rail operator to provide enhancements to services at these stations which have been welcome and helped to grow passenger usage and awareness. We would welcome additional peak and non peak services to these stations as capacity, demand and services develop.

Future impacts on demand

- What factors may impact on demand for travel on the new South Western franchise, drawing on local impacts in particular? Please provide any evidence you may have.

The City Council believes that more focus needs to be given to local transport opportunities both peak and off peak. There are opportunities for a transport “metro” in the South Hampshire area but it’s not fully exploited. For example it is not possible outside peak to travel from local Southampton stations such as St Denys direct to the county town without a lengthy change at Eastleigh. We note that Winchester has a little used turn back facility at Baltic sidings which could be utilised for such 'Metro' services.

Redoubling of single track sections(particularly on the line between Eastleigh and Fareham), or the provision of passing places, needs to be planned to increase capacity for local services particularly in the South Hampshire area where further housing growth to 2036 and beyond is being planned. In particular major housing allocations in Winchester and South Hampshire will increasingly rely on rail services from Winchester (4000 houses planned to 2031) and Botley (3500 houses at North Whitely) along with new offices and other large scale businesses developments. Increasing congestion on the M27 and M3, which also serve short local journeys, will make local rail more attractive for commuting and other journeys if the services can be improved.

Train Service Specification

- Where, if anywhere, would you like to see any changes to first and last trains on the South Western network and why? Do you have any evidence to support this?
- Where, if anywhere, would you like to see any changes to weekend trains on the South Western network and why? Do you have any evidence to support this?
- Would you support a specification which is flexible enough to allow the operator to review how station calls are allocated to train paths in order to improve overall line capacity? What impact might this have on passengers?
- Respondents are invited to propose any changes to the current service pattern which they feel should be considered and to explain their rationale, for example by identifying specific local factors which might influence the future level of passenger demand which should be reflected in a revised specification.

- Respondents who wish to promote service changes should clearly identify these in their response to this consultation, as well as any supporting business case or value for money (VfM) analysis.

Connectivity to/from London is a key issue for the Winchester economy. Whilst services on the mainline routes serving key stations have benefitted from new rolling stock over the last 10-15 years, journey times and speeds are uncompetitive when compared to other city regions in the UK. Typical journey times are currently c 60 minutes to/from Winchester. This relative uncompetitive journey time will be further exacerbated once HS2 and the Great Western electrification schemes are completed. In order to maintain economic competitiveness of the Winchester economy, it is essential that in combination with infrastructure investment, the franchise seeks to deliver journey time improvements on this main line route.

It is felt that later services are needed out of London and from key areas of night time economy, including the cities, towards more residential areas. Current services fail to sufficiently meet the needs of the night time economy, for example, current services often force passengers to leave the scheduled events they are attending early in order to catch the last train.

The City Council would not support a service specification that allowed operators flexible train path allocation that could result in a reduction in services at stations such as Botley, Micheldever or Shawford. Excellent work has been carried out in recent years to deliver a better frequency of service at these stations, and any deterioration of service levels at these locations would be viewed as a retrograde step especially given the large scale of house building planned in the vicinity of the station at Botley.

The City Council would like to see the new franchise holder improve rail connectivity within the South Hampshire region, particularly for journeys between Portsmouth and Southampton where the journey time can be as long as 60 minutes for a 25 mile journey, which is uncompetitive when compared with other city pairs, and limits labour mobility. Significant growth in both housing and employment is planned for the areas surrounding the train stations in between. Improved rail connectivity would support a reduction in demand for travel on the M27 and increase travel choice for work and leisure. For example, there are effectively no direct services between the Botley Line and Southampton, and so passengers much make an inconvenient change at Eastleigh. Some of the necessary infrastructure enhancements have already been identified in the Wessex Route Study for potential delivery in CP6 or beyond. Bidders should work with Network Rail and relevant stakeholders to identify the necessary infrastructure to deliver these changes.

As a minimum we would expect service levels at the stations of Winchester, Micheldever, Shawford and Botley to remain as they are, yet if the franchise is to see passenger growth – linked with major housing developments in Winchester and South Hampshire, then service levels need to improve further.

Performance and reliability

- Are there any specific stations or services where you believe reliability or punctuality should be improved?
- Where possible, please explain your reasoning when responding to this question.

The City Council has no comments on this point other than there should be strong penalties for a franchise holder that fails to meet expected standards for performance or reliability.

Managing disruption

- Respondents are asked to suggest what mitigating actions and steps the South Western operator should be expected to take to meet the needs of its passengers both during the planned disruption to the franchise as a result of enhancement works and when 'force majeure' events, such as extreme weather or unplanned events that impact the smooth operation of the network.
- Respondents are asked to consider whether they would support replacing first/last train services with alternative transport where it can be demonstrated that a longer period of engineering access for Network Rail would improve the infrastructure reliability and reduce disruption overall.

The City Council believes that communication with customers is very important, particularly in times of delay or disruption. Passengers should feel in control of their travel and their options. During planned disruption more staff should be available at stations to help passengers. Communication across all media platforms should be utilised including Facebook, twitter, on-train and at-station announcements, posters and emails to season ticket holders. If replacement services are needed for first and last trains then a fully accessible alternative should be provided which can match journey times as far as possible and carry all passengers as usual e.g. passengers with disabilities, and those with luggage, buggies and bicycles

Partnership working and collaboration

- We are interested in your view on the best way to achieve efficient operation of this railway through partnership and collaboration. Please describe how such working arrangements might support this objective.

The City Council believes that the franchise holder should demonstrate flexibility to work constructively with Local Authorities particularly around delivery of areas of new housing, productivity and economic growth. The franchise holder should commit to working more collaboratively with passengers to seek their feedback and be influenced by their requirements and the new franchise could make this a requirement.

Partnership working with tourism agencies is especially important to encourage a modal shift from car-bourne to rail-bourne visitors, which is very possible in Winchester. A more consistent approach to joint marketing

campaigns is required, and it must be properly resourced by the franchisee throughout the life of the franchise: previous 'stop start' initiatives have failed to deliver the potential benefits.

Community rail and other local partnerships

● What opportunities are there for Community Rail Partnerships and other local partnerships to expand their role and range of activities to support local communities, businesses and other organisations?

There are several Community Rail Partnerships within Hampshire who work to promote train and local bus services and engage volunteers to improve stations and services. Increased funds should be made available by the franchise holder to maintain growth in this area, and increase it where possible particularly as there are currently no Community Rail Partnerships within the Winchester District. The franchise holder should support recruitment of volunteers and offer improved recognition and rewards e.g. free tickets and travel offers.

Island Line

● What factors do you consider should be taken into account in assessment of options for the Island Line?
● Do you have any innovative proposals for how the Island Line might operate on a more self-sustaining basis?

The City Council has no comments on this point

Third party funded changes

● Are you aware of any proposals for third party funded changes?
● Please provide details in line with the requirements set out above, or provide sufficient detail for further dialogue to take place to understand the proposals.

The City Council is not aware of any proposed changes.

Stations

● What improvements would you like to see at the station(s) you use to enhance your journey experience?
● Please indicate the name of the station(s) and the rationale for your specific comments.

Winchester City Council would support the findings of the Transport Focus research, and the County Council's knowledge and experience of recent

station audits. As a consequence the City Council would like to see the following station improvements:

- Increased car parking should be considered for stations demonstrating a demand across Hampshire. Micheldever and Shawford are good examples.
- Improved cycle access and parking should be provided at all stations that meets and exceeds demand to ensure that any potential modal shift is catered for.
- Improved sense of security for passengers, especially for early and late services,
- Consideration should be given to staffing stations in key areas until the last train of the day.
- Waiting rooms and toilets should be open before the first train of the day and until last train has departed.
- Toilets should be added where possible at stations with no current provision.
- Staffing hours should be well advertised online and at the train station.
- Where CCTV is available at stations it should be better advertised.
- The franchise holder should better explain the use of help points e.g. not just for emergencies so passengers are informed and can better manage their travel.
- More seating should be provided along with shelter from the rain and sun via longer canopies.
- Stations should be well kept and attractive – e.g. well painted and without boarded up windows. Repairs should be made quickly
- Ticket Vending Machines (TVMs) should be available at more stations and these should direct passengers to best value fares available.
- Station accessibility should be improved – all stations should be compliant with the Equality Act: Only 1 of 4 stations in the Winchester District is fully 'accessible' for a modern railway: this is unacceptable and needs to be addressed.
- Facilities should exist at all stations where passengers can wait for onward connections such as bus or a lift. e.g. a sheltered area at the front of the station.
- Free Wi Fi at all stations should be provided
- Improved onward travel information – as in London stations, directional maps matching local wayfinding should be placed in prominent positions and include road names and landmarks.
- Provision of local visitor information should be included as standard in ticket halls (eg static map produced in consultation with the local authority/tourist board and not a commercial publisher).

- Hot drink vending machines should be available, especially where there are no café facilities, to reflect the long hours and increasingly non-routine travel patterns of commuters and visitors.
- Real time information on platforms and in stations could include news and weather updates, particularly at stations with fewer services.
- Bus information (real time) should be provided at stations in relevant positions.
- Provision of cash points at all stations
- Encourage commercial opportunities at stations to improve community profile and increase footfall to provide a greater sense of security for passengers

Door-to-door journeys

- What are your proposals for providing passengers better and safer access to different modes of transport at stations (including bus, car, cycling and walking)?
- What opportunities exist for improved integration between modes, citing relevant examples to support your comments? The City Council believes a budget for improved pedestrian and cycle facilities should be considered within the specification and a commitment made to work with stakeholders to identify and deliver projects to improve routes and facilities.

Bus services should be clearly advertised at the stations in real time and where possible bus stops should be located in line of sight, within or very close to train stations. There should be better integration of bus-rail journeys, especially where new major housing developments in Winchester and Whiteley (Botley Station) will create additional demands.

Every station needs high quality cycle shelters and storage, not just to meet current demands – but to meet growing demands. All cycle shelters should be covered and in a non-secluded area, and improvements should be made for passengers travelling through stations with bicycles and luggage as these movements e.g. accessing ticket machines, toilets and cafes can be difficult in crowded stations.

Many improvements for better integration have been made over the current franchise but there is potential for more.

It should be a requirement of the new franchise holder to develop and implement station travel plans for all stations.

Fares and Ticketing

- What are your views on the availability of retail staff and the ability for passengers to have widespread access to ticket buying opportunities (e.g. through new and improved approaches such as smart ticketing, increased advance purchase ticketing or via mobile phones), adequate measures to

ensure vulnerable passengers are not disadvantaged, and more effective customer service by both station and on-train staff?

- Do you have any evidence to support your views?

The City Council believes bulk and flexible ticketing to support flexible and part time working should be introduced – equivalent discounts to an annual pass, monthly pass and weekly pass are expected. It is critical that the ticket prices offer better value for money.

Further developments in Smarter ticketing are expected e.g. paying online and by phone and tablet with 'show and go' ticketing. Paper ticketing and timetables should be retained for those who prefer it - and staff at stations should still be available to help with such purchases.

Integrated ticketing is also very important to support multi modal journeys. In the south of the County there is a Solent Go card which currently covers bus and ferries but should also cover train fares. Solutions that support end-to-end journeys should be provided and available for purchase through a variety of means including cash, card, online and contactless payment.

The franchise holder should continue to support discounted tickets for workplaces. The current arrangement for negotiating workplace discounts could be improved upon and innovative solutions which work better for the customer are encouraged.

The franchise holder should also be approachable by developers to negotiate discounts for new and expanding residential and business developments for a fixed period in order to introduce new people to the rail services and reduce their impact on the highway.

TVMs should direct passengers to the best value fare to and from any station (including but not limited to the station at which they are standing), this would provide equity for those without any internet access at home and could help to avoid unintended ticketless travel.

Local day-out reduced fare campaigns could be promoted e.g. promoting travel by train to specific events across Hampshire and the wider Southern region. The franchise holder should also commit to flexible, innovative ticketing solutions to meet all users' needs, such as mobile ticketing.

Smart ticketing

- What are your experiences of using smartcard technology within the franchise area to date?
- To what extent do you believe that smartcard technology could be used to manage passenger demand and to create an integrated journey experience for passengers?

WCC Comment: See Comments on Fares and Ticketing above

Passenger Information

- Are there areas of improvement in customer information and engagement you would like to see before, during and after your journey?

WCC Comment: See Comments on Fares and Ticketing above

Service quality

- What areas of customer service within your end-to-end journey would you expect to see monitored and reported on to improve the service quality for passengers?

The City Council believes that customer service should be excellent, including staff in stations, and processes for making comments and complaints. Staff at stations could provide an ambassador service helping to promote the area surrounding the station and making passengers feel welcomed and valued.

Passenger compensation

- Please provide details of your experience with the current delay repay passenger compensation arrangements, and suggestions for how this might be modified in the new franchise to make compensation more transparent and convenient for passengers.

The City Council has no comments on this point

Security and Safety

- Do you have any proposals to improve security and safety at stations and on trains that you would like us to consider?
- Please provide details of the stations(s) and/or train(s) where appropriate that have informed your comments, and provide supporting information where available.

As mentioned earlier in this response, the City Council would like to see later opening of main entrances, toilets and waiting rooms. Actual and perceived safety should be a priority.

Closing Comment

The City Council recognises the importance of this new franchise and expects a high quality service for its residents and will look to work in partnership with the franchise holder, other Authorities, the Local Enterprise Partnerships and Community Rail Partnerships to enable an excellent level of service for customers and support the economic prosperity of the areas served by the South Western Franchise.

A key aspiration for rail services in the District that all stations have a service frequency where, for many journeys, rail represents a viable alternative to

driving. It is our view that a minimum of a half hourly service frequency throughout the day in each direction is required to achieve this. An hourly service is unlikely to be an attractive service for most people who currently choose to drive.

Currently Winchester is the only station serving the District that achieves a minimum half-hourly service. The remaining stations (Micheldever, Botley & Shawford) do not have this level of service. We believe that provision of additional services to those stations not currently receiving a frequent train service will help significantly increase the attractiveness of rail as an alternative to driving for journeys where rail has potential to compete.