

Background to IBP/355 Bus Real Time Passenger Information screens

DPIP has asked Cabinet to consider whether phase 2 of this project is necessary and value for money

1. A package of mitigation measures set out in the Jacobs Study designed to deliver modal switch away from private cars towards sustainable transport modes was included as an input into the transport model that supported the Local Plan that was found sound and adopted in 2015.
2. The package of mitigation measures that included Smarter Choices and Demand Management Measures and the need for a balanced strategy including RTPI screens, bus priority measures, and parking management measures was thoroughly discussed and debated at the Local Plan Examination as it was deemed ambitious. However, the Local Plan Examiner accepted that it was possible to achieve a 7% reduction in car trips to and from Chichester city centre and a 5% reduction in trips to and from Strategic Development sites by 2031 as such levels of modal switch had been achieved in other parts of the country.
3. Without the mitigation measures included in the package to encourage modal switch mentioned above, the Local Plan would have needed to have included more road infrastructure. Hard engineering solutions would almost certainly be more expensive than the modal switch package that included measures such as RTPI screens and Smarter Choices and would only mitigate at point locations where suitable land was available, rather than the corridor based or network-wide effect of sustainable measures. In contrast to these, RTPI screens represent good value for money. The information provided on the screens conveys additional confidence to passengers, especially for new or infrequent users and visitors, which helps to encourage use of services.
4. DPIP has previously rejected the Smarter Choices projects and they have since been removed from the IBP.
5. IBP/355 is one project to deliver twelve RTPI screens. It had been selected for delivery in the CIL Spending Plan to be delivered over two years as it was not feasible to deliver all of it in one year. Phase 1 of the project has recently been completed, and work for Phase 2 is due to be delivered in 2021 and is being prepared. The project is been prioritised as 'policy high' as it formed part of the mitigation required to deliver the Local Plan
6. Our infrastructure partners use the CIL Spending Plan as reassurance that they can invest in working up their projects in full detail, and as a tool to lever in match funding. If projects are removed that have already selected and/or are part way through being delivered then the 5 year spending plan does not

offer the necessary reassurance to our infrastructure partners that their projects will be delivered in time to match the growth in the area.

7. Phase 1 of the project was approved by Cabinet, and subject to a joint legal agreement between Chichester District Council and WSCC. As part of the legal agreement WSCC provided evidence that their procurement process for delivery and installation of the boards has secured value for money. WSCC will have to enter into a new legal agreement and follow the same process to demonstrate that the Phase 2 represents value for money and can be delivered in time.
8. IBP/355 has been discussed in detail at past Growth Board meetings and before that the Joint Officers and Members Board, and it was concluded that the RTPI screens had more benefits to the users of the bus service than mobile phone apps as many people who use buses are the elderly and/or are at a financial disadvantage and may not be able to drive or own a private car. Bus users are the section of the population that are least likely to have modern mobile phones, and even if they do have them may not have the knowledge about what apps exist or even how to download an app. They may also feel vulnerable and prefer not to get their mobile phones out in a public space. Reliance on mobile phone apps are thus not a good substitute for RTPI screens. The availability of RTPI screens therefore helps to promote equalities in society.
9. Additional limitations of mobile apps are:
 - a. They can be difficult to use (departure data is rarely the main information displayed – often concentrate on journey planning)
 - b. They don't always work (for example the Traveline GB app was recently down)
 - c. They don't always provide real time data (often just timetabled data)
 - d. The data is generally not as accurate as the data supplied through on-street RTPI displays
 - e. Smart phone ownership is low within the demographics of bus users
 - f. Which app to use? There are so many apps to choose from – none doing everything well.
10. For the reasons given in paragraph 9, the provision of on-street RTPI displays are seen as the foundation of RTPI provision in West Sussex with mobile apps and online solutions providing a supporting role.
11. RTPI displays are easy to use, right in front of waiting bus passengers and provide concise, accurate information. The displays have a long term role in RTPI provision through the continued cost reductions of the provision (such as battery powered solutions rather than mains powered) and the advancements made in the displaying of information (i.e. summary displays by destination at key interchanges).

12. During Covid-19, the messaging facility on the RTPI displays has been vital in providing up-to-date information on the reduced bus services in operation and displaying key community messages and latest service updates. For example, the current message being shown on the displays is “In-line with Government guidance, you must wear face coverings when travelling on public transport”.
13. The RTPI displays also have an audio announcement facility to aid those with visual impairments.
14. A long term plan for the deployment of RTPI displays in Chichester has been developed. New strategic sites in and around Chichester mean that it is even more important to encourage modal shift and increased bus patronage. Installing RTPI displays at key locations and/or corridors supports this by helping people change their travel behaviour towards more sustainable transport modes. The plan will ensure that any s106 funds from the strategic sites in Chichester (S106 and CIL) are spent in a co-ordinated manner and ensure suitable coverage of RTPI displays across the Chichester City and surrounding area.
15. The aim is to provide RTPI displays at locations that enable people to complete two-way journeys, i.e. RTPI display at the bus stop nearest their home (at new developments) for journeys into the city centre and then access to RTPI displays in city centre to get back home or from key stops to local facilities, such as hospitals.

Key locations are:

- The City centre
- The City centre to north of the city
- East / west corridor
- City centre to south of the city
- Local services, such as Parklands

16. IBP/355 is one of the projects which helps to deliver Policy 8 of the Local Plan adopted in 2015. Through Policy 8, the Council made a commitment to work in partnership with WSCC, other transport and service providers to provide a better and improved integrated transport network, specifically targeting investment on delivering improved and better integrated bus and train services, and improved pedestrian and cycling networks. The sixth bullet point in this policy specifically supports this project as it sets out the requirement and commitment to promote behavioural change in travel choices, such as easy-to-use journey planning tools. The text at the end of the policy specifically refers to CIL being used to support sustainable transport measures.

17. Officers still consider that Real Time Passenger Information projects are a necessary part of the Local Plan transport package of measures to support modal switch and believe that they also represent good value for money.
18. The seven RTPI displays installed as Phase 1 of IBP/355 cost between £6,694 and £8,346 each depending on the cost of new power supplies. Unfortunately, there wasn't quite sufficient remaining funding to provide an 8th display.
19. As different types of displays become available, the supply, installation and maintenance costs are coming down. Battery powered LCD and e-ink RTPI displays are now available, therefore reducing supply and installation costs as no mains power is required.
20. It was previously stated that the "Maintenance costs vary depending on the type of display installed but on average it costs £250 per display per year. West Sussex County Council currently fund the maintenance of RTPI screens from the Revenues Works Budget'. Following recent contractual changes, the maintenance cost is now averaging at £200 per display per year.
21. The cost of running the central control system has also been reduced significantly due to sharing databases with Hampshire County Council.
22. Installing a combination of traditional and battery powered displays as part of Phase 2 would result in more displays being delivered for the agreed budget.