

COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT

Update Report

5 March 2020

Please note that the following recommendation is subject to consideration and determination by the Committee before taking effect.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

- (a) The Communications and Engagement report is noted

1. Background

The Board at its meeting in March approved the Communications Strategy and the proposals for the Transport Forum. This report provides an activity update for the previous quarter and a look forward to upcoming activities.

2. Communications and Engagement Update

2.1 Website

The website www.peninsulatrtransport.org.uk has been live since May 2019. The website helps to explain the purpose and work of Peninsula Transport and provides links to schemes, minutes, governance arrangements and news. To counter a perception that Peninsula Transport is just focused on roads a new section has been added on rail linking through to the peninsula Rail Taskforce website. To help people gain a greater understanding of STBs generally links to the other STBs (such as Transport for the North and Midlands Connect) have been added.

Our ongoing engagement with stakeholders is documented on the website with information and photos from Transport Forum events.

News of events, announcements and reaction to ministerial announcements are also posted on the website and shared on social media.

2.2 Social Media

The Twitter account @PensTransport is used to help share news, build awareness with stakeholders and drive traffic to the website. In addition to news the social media account has been used to live tweet from events. The account is also used to share information from other stakeholders such as the Peninsula Rail Task Force, Great South West APPG, DfT and Network Rail Resilience Forum. This has started to build engagement with a range of audiences.

2.3 Media

Regular news items are posted on the website, sent to local media and comment given to reporters as and when appropriate such as welcoming announcements on additional transport funding.

2.4 Publications

Our leaflet on the work of Peninsula Transport is given out at Transport Forum events and is available on the website. The summary version of the Economic Connectivity Study is being finalised.

2.5 Transport Forum

The Transport Forum held on 21 November 2019 in Plymouth attracted over 20 representatives from the core stakeholder group. There were presentations from AECOM on the Economic Connectivity Study, from Heart of the South West LEP on the Local Industrial Strategy and then a series of round tables were held looking at key themes. A further Transport Forum with core stakeholders is planned for 19 March 2020 and a full stakeholder event looking at the wider set of stakeholders with a focus on the emerging Transport Strategy themes is being planned for May/June. These events are helping us build a database of stakeholders who are interested in the work of Peninsula Transport.

2.6 Stakeholder briefings

MPs are sent regular briefings on the work of Peninsula Transport. Letters have been sent from the Peninsula Transport Chair welcoming the new Ministers and Parliamentary Under Secretaries of State within the Department for Transport and providing information on the work of Peninsula Transport to date. A letter was also sent welcoming the new Chancellor for the Exchequer and pressing the case for funding on key Peninsula Transport issues.

2.7 Joint STB Communications and events

Regular teleconferences have been undertaken with the Communication leads for the other Sub-National Transport Bodies (Transport for the North, Midlands Connect, Transport for the South East, Transport East, Western Gateway, England's Economic Heartland) to discuss approaches to areas of shared interest. We joined the other STBs with a successful shared hub space at Highways UK in Birmingham on 6/7 November 2019 with senior officers delivering presentations and a shared exhibitions space. We contributed to a joint video with the other STBs which was played at the event and is on our website. We gave out leaflets about the work of Peninsula Transport and made a number of new contacts with key stakeholders such as rail freight. We have agreed to take a similar approach with other STBs to the Innovation & Technology in Transport conference at Farnborough on 13/14 May. We have also agreed joint messaging between STBs on the key role the organisations play.

3. Next Quarter

Looking forward the key activities for the next three months are to:

- Continue to develop the website adding more video and graphic content to illustrate the range of challenges faced and benefit to be delivered.
- Hold the core stakeholder Transport Forum on 19 March 2020 in Exeter and the wider stakeholder event in May/June
- Further build the stakeholder mailing list to keep people informed.
- Produce MP briefings in March following this meeting to provide an update
- Develop our public affairs agenda with clear asks and offers for 2020 as well as working closely with the newly formed Great South West APPG.

4. Financial Considerations

Costs are within financial envelope agreed.

5. Summary

The Communications and Engagement are being delivered in line with the agreed strategy.