

Update report

21 June 2021

Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Board before taking effect.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

- (a) The Communications and Engagement report is noted

1. Background

This paper provides an outline of the communications activities which have taken place for the period March 2021 to June 2021, as well as setting out the up and coming programme.

2. Communication Strategy, Activity Plan and Protocol

At its meeting in March 2021, the Board agreed to review and approve the activity plan and communication protocol, via email. Post the Board meeting, feedback would be provided on the interim communication strategy, noting the intention of finalising the strategy post the consultation on the high level transport strategy.

This action was completed. The communications activity plan and protocol have been approved and are now live.

The communication activity plan is updated on a monthly basis to ensure activity is adjusted as the programme progresses. All initial feedback on the strategy has been reviewed and accounted for, and the strategy will evolve following the consultation.

3. Communications activities since March 2021

Communication activity since March 2021 has been limited due to the local elections. Communications and publicity activities were paused during the pre-election period and have remained low-key since the local elections ahead of the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair for Peninsula Transport due to the limitations on spokespeople.

The following summarises the main areas of work which has been undertaken, or are in progress, since March 2021.

3.1. Strategic communications and programme development

Strategic communications and programme development ensures ongoing development of the communications activity plan and strategy to ensure communications are effective. Campaign plans are also developed where more focused messaging is required. Recent activity includes:

- Development of the consultation campaign plan in order to promote the consultation on the vision and encourage response
- On-going development of the monthly communications activity plan

3.2. Stakeholder communications

Working with stakeholders is vital in shaping the work of Peninsula Transport. Recent stakeholder engagement activity includes:

- Peninsula Rail Task Force (PRTF) and Peninsula Transport briefing papers for Board Members
- Meeting with Highways England to understand stakeholder engagement opportunities
- Mailing list set up, opening up a new channel for engagement

3.3. Public affairs and parliamentary relations

Our MPs are sent regular briefings on the work of Peninsula Transport and PRTF. Recent activity includes:

- MP update issued to inform them on progress and the submission of the funding business case

3.4. Online communications

Website

The website (www.peninsulatrtransport.org.uk) helps to explain the purpose and work of Peninsula Transport and provides links to schemes, minutes, governance arrangements and news. PRTF has its own website currently (www.peninsularailtaskforce.co.uk) although this site will either be updated or migrated within the Peninsula Transport site in the near future.

A review of the Peninsula Transport website, as well as other Sub-national Transport Body (STB) websites, has been carried out and a paper produced to make recommendation on design, content and structural updates with a view to bringing the website in line with Peninsula Transport's vision.

Recent website updates include:

- Board meeting updates
- Posts to amplify A382 funding announcement

Social media

Both Peninsula Transport and PRTF Twitter accounts, @PensTransport and @SWRailTaskforce respectively, are used to help share news and build awareness with stakeholders.

Social media activity is on-going, originally focusing on re-tweeting and now moving into pro-active content particularly around the consultation and new announcements. Prior to the pre-election period we took baseline analytics from both the STB and PRTF social media accounts in order to evaluate engagement going forward.

3.5. Media management

Recent media activity includes:

- PRTF comments to support Network Rail and associated social media around rockfall shelter funding and planning as well as the Okehampton announcement

3.6 Joint STB Communications

A Communications Group comprising of the communications leads for STB's (Transport for the North, Midlands Connect, England's Economic Heartlands, Transport for the South East, Transport East, Western Gateway as well as Peninsula Transport) meet on a monthly basis to discuss approaches to areas of shared interest. Recent activity include:

- Coordination of the stand alongside other STBs at the *Innovation and Technology in Transport* (ITT) event due to take place at Farnborough 31 June – 01 July
- Initial feedback on proposed joint STB event for 2022

4. Future work activities

The following work will be undertaken in the coming months:

- Consultation promotion - this is an opportunity to highlight the STB and its work. Activity to include:
 - Briefing cascade and stakeholder engagement – launch and reminders
 - Media work – launch and reminders
 - Consultation webpage on www.peninsulatransport.org.uk
 - Proactive social media – launch, reminders, key elements
 - MP liaison – launch and briefing
 - Transport Forum and stakeholder group online events
- Promotional work for the 2021/22 funding business case as well as the new Board
- Website development – using the Vision to reshape Peninsula Transport's online voice as well as incorporating PRTF materials. Updates in line with the 2021/22 business case
- Updating PRTF campaign plan – ensuring the specific rail key messages are up-to-date
- Stakeholder audit, leading to the development of new channels
- Development of newsletter channel in order to begin building a regular base of stakeholders interested the work of Peninsula Transport
- Utilising other opportunities to promote Peninsula Transport's key messages through proactive news stories
- Public summary of communications objectives and high level activity following consultation
- Comprehensive Spending Review considerations

5. Financial Considerations

Costs are within the financial envelope agreed for communications activities.

6. Environmental Impact Considerations

There are no environmental impact considerations associated with this paper.

7. Equality Considerations

There are no specific equality considerations associated with this paper. The interim communications strategy has been developed mindful of the need for the work of the STB to be accessible to all.

8. Legal Considerations

There are no legal considerations associated with this paper.

9. Risk Management Considerations

There are no risk management considerations associated with this paper.

10. Public Health Impact

There are no public health impacts associated with this paper.

11. Summary

The communications activity is being delivered in line with the interim communications strategy and agreed monthly communications activity plan. Communications have been limited since the pre-election period but the up and coming consultation is an opportunity to generate momentum for Peninsula Transport, promoting its role, aims and current work with stakeholders across the Peninsula and further afield.