

COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT

Update report

05 October 2023

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/introduction

This paper provides an outline of the communications activities that have taken place for the period July – September 2023, as well as setting out the up-and-coming programme.

2. Communications activities since July 2023

Since July 2023 activity has focused on developing supporting communications for work packages as they are completed as well as planning works for consultation on the transport strategy.

2.1. Strategic communications and programme development

The communications strategy and communications activity plan are subject to ongoing development to ensure communications are effective.

Recent activity includes:

- Ongoing development of the monthly communications activity plan
- Ongoing review of the overarching 2023/2024 milestone plan to guide the monthly communications activity plans
- Provisional planning of the comms and engagement consultation plan for the transport strategy consultation.

2.2. Stakeholder communications

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

- One-to-one responses to inbox enquiries for Peninsula Transport and managing Peninsula Rail Task Force's (PRTF) mailbox.
- The Technology and Zero Emission Vehicle study briefing being issued to the stakeholder database to highlight publication.
- The International Gateway study briefing being issued to the stakeholder database to highlight publication.
- Working with GWR and Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership on a stakeholder pack to help promote the Devon and Cornwall Railcard.

2.3. 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. The Peninsula Transport website is updated in line with the work programme and any key news announcements.

Key updates:

- Devon and Cornwall Railcard goes digital: <https://www.peninsulatrtransport.org.uk/news-articles/1987/>
- International Gateways Study: <https://www.peninsulatrtransport.org.uk/international-gateways/>
- Technology and Zero Emission Vehicle study: <https://www.peninsulatrtransport.org.uk/technologyandzev/>

Social media

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

Peninsula Transport social media activity is ongoing, focusing on re-tweeting relevant news and proactive content focusing on programme milestones.

The twitter trends from the last six months are shown in Table one.

Table one: X (formerly Twitter) trends for Peninsula Transport over the last six months:

Insights	Mar 2023	Apr 2023	May 2023	Jun 2023	Jul 2023	Aug 2023
Profile visits	308	32	60	319	130	-
New followers	2	-2	0	4	2	0
Mentions	7	1	0	2	1	-
Impressions	338	22	795	3,469	374	349
Posts	4	0	1	1	2	0

A LinkedIn profile was launched in March and is regularly updated with a programme of content to help build a picture of Peninsula Transport's work to date as well as promoting new work as and when it comes online. The page currently has 77 followers.

Page link: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/peninsula-transport/>

2.4. Media management

- Press release: New study published to explore enhanced global connectivity in the South West (13 July) <https://www.peninsulatrtransport.org.uk/news-articles/new-study-published-to-explore-enhanced-global-connectivity-in-the-south-west/>
- Press statement: A303 Stonehenge scheme will play a key role in boosting the economic performance of the South West (14 July) <https://www.peninsulatrtransport.org.uk/news-articles/a303-stonehenge-scheme-will-play-a-key-role-in-boosting-the-economic-performance-of-the-south-west/>

- Press release: Study sets out opportunities to transform the South West's transport system with digital technology and zero emission vehicles (6 September)
<https://www.peninsulatransport.org.uk/news-articles/study-sets-out-opportunities-to-transform-the-south-wests-transport-system-with-digital-technology-and-zero-emission-vehicles/>
 - Coverage in Transport and Energy: <https://transportandenergy.com/2023/09/11/study-sets-out-zero-emission-vehicle-and-digital-tech-opportunity/>

2.5. Public affairs

Briefing emails were issued to all MPs across Devon and Cornwall to help promote the digitisation of the Devon and Cornwall Railcard. MPs were provided with a stakeholder pack which included content for websites, newsletters, social media and marketing assets.

In addition, all MPs within the Peninsula Transport area were issued a copy of the briefing on the both the International Gateways and Technology and Zero Emission Vehicle studies.

2.6. Joint STB Communications

A Communications Group comprising of the communications leads for STBs (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. There are no updates on this item.

3. Future work activities

The following work will be undertaken in the coming months:

- Development of preparatory communication materials for the following:
 - WP05 Economic Corridor Study – summary publication
 - WP08 Rail Strategy
 - WP25 Alternative Fuels for Freight
- MP engagement – forthcoming draft transport strategy
- Finalising the comms and engagement plan for transport strategy consultation
- First STB newsletter – to be issued to coincide with the launch of the draft strategy
- Stakeholder audit
- Transport Forum
- PRTF – ensuring the specific rail key messages are up-to-date, consolidating messages within WP08, Rail Strategy
- Utilise opportunities to promote Peninsula Transport's key messages through proactive news stories, events etc

4. Financial Considerations

Costs are within the financial envelope agreed for communications activities.

5. Environmental Impact Considerations

There are no environmental impact considerations associated with this paper.

6. 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.

7. Legal Considerations

There are no legal considerations associated with this paper.

8. Risk Management Considerations

There are no risk management considerations associated with this paper.

9. Public Health Impact

There are no public health impacts associated with this paper.

10. Summary

The communications activity is being delivered in line with the interim communications strategy and agreed monthly communications activity plan.