

## MINUTES OF QUALITY TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP MEETING

Held on Thursday 5th July 2007 at Quay Arts Centre, Newport

### PRESENT:

Hugh Walding – Isle of Wight Friends of the Earth (Vice Chairman)  
Adrian Ash – Isle of Wight Council  
Roger Barnard – Isle of Wight Older Voices  
David Blake – Federation of Small Business  
John Burrows - Wightlink  
Ashley Curzon – Isle of Wight Council  
Loretta Lale – Hovertravel Ltd  
Valerie Lawson – Cycle Wight  
Jon Matthews - Wightlink  
Rachel Mills - Isle of Wight Council

Dave Moore – Isle of Wight Council  
Martyn Mullins – Isle of Wight Council  
Melissa O'Dwyer – Red Funnel  
Steve Sansom – P.D. Port Services  
Ian Schaff – Isle of Wight Council  
Don Vincent – IW Bus Users Group  
Ron Wallis – IoW Motorcycle Club Training  
Charlotte Westwood – Isle of Wight Council  
Brenda Wilkins – IW Group of Advanced Motorists

### 1. APOLOGIES

Gillian Barnett – Isle of Wight Tourism  
Richard Box – Hovertravel  
Patricia Collins – British Horse Society  
Cllr Hunter-Henderson – Isle of Wight Council  
Sean Millward – Wightlink

Andy Mintram – Red Funnel  
Andy Morris – Isle of Wight Council  
Steve Porter – Steve Porter Transport  
Margaret Steggles – Cycle Wight  
John Steggles – Cycle Wight

### 2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes from the 8th March 2007 were agreed.

### 3. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

Steve Porter (SP) was unable to attend therefore Hugh Walding (HW) took the chair and read out the following notes from SP. *"Firstly, please accept my sincere apologies for not being here today, due to a bereavement in the family, can I also thank Hugh Walding for chairing the meeting in my absence."*

*One of the main items that I wanted to report on was the revived Freight Forum which was a pretty lively meeting at times, due mainly to a few of the invitees missing the point about being presented with the wider picture of the Local Transport Plan, Local Development Framework and the Ports Inquiry. However, there was agreement about the importance of having a freight strategy going forward and recognition that, as the Island develops, the impact of freight movements will increase substantially. I am pleased that Ian Boyd of Island 2000 accepted the Chairmanship of future meetings which, I hope, will allow me to attend and take part as an operator rather than a neutral.*

*Finally, I would like to congratulate Southern Vectis on the quality and quantity of the new buses serving the Ryde to Newport and Newport to Cowes corridors. If the rest of the Island gets served as well as those routes we have a very good chance of reducing some car use."*

### 4. FREIGHT FORUM UPDATE

Rachel Mills (RM) informed the group that the freight seminar was held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2007 and that 60 organisations were invited including members of the QTP. The meeting was well attended with presentations from Chris Wells, Bill Murphy, Dave Moore, and Peter Taylor which were very informative and prompted some lively debate.

It was felt that the next meeting should be convened following the outcome of the Ports Inquiry and the Government's decision on Private Finance Initiatives (PFI), which was due in June, however the Government has now stated that the announcement on PFI will not be made until the Autumn so as a result the next freight forum will be held as soon as possible and will be open to all QTP members and the minutes from the previous meeting will be distributed along with these minutes.

### 5. PORTS INQUIRY

Dave Moore (DM) outlined the reasons why the inquiry had been established, and what was to be included and excluded. DM explained that information and evidence was provided by ferry service operators, Isle of Wight Economic Partnership, Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses, Steve Porter Transport group, Quality Transport Partnership and 500 returns from the public. DM was disappointed that there was no response from any of the supermarket chains, major retailers or other haulage companies. He highlighted the main issues that had been identified and the risks that faced the Island as well as outlining the recommendations which had been put forward.

The group discussed the issue of integrated ticketing between the ferry operators and that this was not favoured, however in unforeseen circumstances tickets could be interchanged between operators with prior agreement. It was also felt that the signage for the Wightlink ferry terminal in Portsmouth was not clear. DM informed the group that the Highways Agency stated that it must be the closest point of interest should be signed and not the end destination.

#### 6. **NEW HOVERCRAFT**

Loretta Lale (LL) informed the group that the new hovercraft had been entirely designed and built by Hoverworks which are an Island company operating from St Helens. The new craft offered 130 seats with improved width and pitch. The interior of the craft was light, airy and comfortable with large luggage compartments and areas for bicycles. The craft also offers improved facilities for disabled travellers with a lift providing access and three spaces for wheelchairs. The craft underwent sea trials on the 6<sup>th</sup> June and went into full service on the 8<sup>th</sup> June which coincided with the Isle of Wight Festival.

LL explained that Hovertravel provides the cheapest travel option across the Solent and are now able to provide a more reliable service with no planned changes in the price of tickets. The Hovertravel bus was now routed via Gunwharf shopping centre and leisure complex to improve travel options. DM enquired as to whether Hovertravel planned further new crafts. LL stated that at present Hoverworks were building a craft for an American operator which was designed to transport both passengers and vehicles and that Hovertravel would investigate the need for further new crafts depending on demand.

#### 7. **NEW VESSELS ON LYMINGTON ROUTE**

John Burrows (JB) and Jon Matthews (JM) explained that Wightlink were responsible for transporting two thirds of all cross Solent traffic, which equated to five million passengers and over a million vehicles each year. The travel trends on the Yarmouth to Lymington route had changed over the past 30 years due to a decrease in foot passenger figures and increased car sizes. The new vessels had been designed to contend with today's market with space for 65 cars, 370 passengers and lashing points for motorcycles. However the length of the vessels had only increased by 4 metres while both the draught and beam remained virtually the same which ensured that the vessel would be able to pass through the Lymington channel easily. To increase stability and allow effective manoeuvrability the engines had been positioned along the centre line, with each vessel having four engines and a spare engine and gearbox to improve reliability. The design of the vessels would decrease loading and unloading times and provide easy access for passengers with disabilities.

JB and JM informed the group that Eagle Lyon Pope had been instructed to carry out an assessment of the suitability of the proposed vessels on the Yarmouth to Lymington route and that the terms of reference had been agreed by the Harbour Master. The group enquired as to whether the new vessels would have an environmental impact on the historical sites in Yarmouth and if the two new vessels would replace the existing three. JB assured the group that the vessels would continue to approach the quay at reduced speeds and that for the time being the schedule would be operated by the two new vessels and one old, however Wightlink had secured an option to purchase a third in the future.

#### 8. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Don Vincent (DV) informed the group that at the committee meeting of the IW Bus Users' Group in June concerns were raised relating to the ability to access St. Mary's Hospital via public transport. RM informed the group that at present the Council did not have a dedicated Workplace Travel Planner and that the only means of securing a compulsory Workplace Travel Plan would be through a section 106 planning agreement.

**ACTION:** Access to St. Mary's Hospital via public Transport to be an agenda item for the next meeting.

Roger Barnard (RB) expressed safety concerns over rumours that Southern Vectis were planning to route the Road Train along Shanklin to Sandown Revetment.

**ACTION:** Information to be provided directly to RB.

Ian Schaff (IS) explained that train passengers between Portsmouth and Fratton were still experiencing delays and that the signalling works had been extended for a further six months.

**ACTION:** A further letter to be sent to Network Rail and the issue to be an agenda item for the next meeting.

#### 9. **DATE & TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2007 at 2pm in the Seminar Room, Quay Arts Centre.