

## DEPARTMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE

### Bus Vannin Accessibility Steering Group Meeting Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2022 at 2pm The Boardroom, Sea Terminal Building

#### Present:

Mrs K Sharpe, MLC (Chair), (KS)

██████████ (KW)

#### In attendance:

██████████ Director of Transport Services (IJL)

██████████ Deputy CEO, Department of Infrastructure (EC)

██████████ Project Officer (SC)

██████████ (Notetaker))

<b>1.</b>	<b>Minutes of the Last Meeting</b>  Minutes of the last meeting were agreed.	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Matters Arising</b>  (i) It was agreed that Mrs Poole Wilson be contacted regarding her intention to raise issues regarding a standardised language approach for protected characteristics.  (ii) KS enquired about the £8-10m estimated costs to amend the bus stops to make them accessible, and whether a bid had ever been made to Treasury for funding to undertake this work?  IJL confirmed that it had never been on the political agenda, and that politicians have historically rejected such requests.  It was agreed that the officers would locate an old, rejected, business case.  Discussion took place regarding accessibility. EC reported that the Department does not have the baseline data regarding the number of people who require an accessible service and their requirement needs, and advised that there were other solutions that could address issues of accessible public transport provision.  It was agreed that there was a need to email Cabinet Office, to establish the position regarding the future appointment of an Equality Advisor, and an Equality Champion.	<b>SC</b>         <b>SC/IJL</b>         <b>SC/EC</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Review of Applications for Appointment to the Steering Committee</b>  It was noted that the pool of applicants contained a good mix of disabilities, with the ability to have a wider view of the issues of other people – including mothers with prams.	

	<p>It was agreed that the applicants be assessed against the criteria for appointment, to identify a shortlist for interview.</p> <p>It was further agreed that SC would liaise with the Cabinet Office, to obtain standard questions regarding the Nolan Principles and conflicts of interest.</p> <p>It was agreed that the interviews would enable the interviewers to get a feeling for the character of the applicants.</p>	<p><b>SC/ALL</b></p> <p><b>SC</b></p>
<b>4.</b>	<p><b>Review of Bus Journey</b></p> <p>Discussion took place regarding how to develop a greater understanding in the road design/upgrade process, between the requirements of Bus Vannin, and the Highways Division.</p> <p>EC advised that the Manual for Manx Roads does provide guidance regarding bus stop design, but IJL reported that the Manual did not provide sufficient depth of information.</p> <p>SC reported that during discussion following the recently installed Kassel kerb at Kirk Michael, the Senior Asset Engineer had suggested a joint workshop between the Design team, the Engineers and Bus Vannin. This was generally considered to be a very good idea by both parties.</p> <p>EC reported that there was a need for a broader piece of work regarding equality within Government, but that this was out-with the remit of the Steering Group.</p>	
<b>5.</b>	<p><b>Bus Stop Review – No 21 Route</b></p> <p>IJL reported that the No 21 route had been identified for a potential mobility scooter trial as a consequence of the need for a reduced speed. He advised that Bus Vannin had received only one request for the carriage of a mobility scooter on the route, and that there was (currently) only 1 accessible bus stop in the centre of Douglas.</p> <p>Discussion took place regarding standards for mobility scooters, and IJL reported that he would be meeting the Managing Director of Envorso Limited the following day, an international group that advised Governments and the UN.</p> <p>He advised that he would update Mrs Sharpe following the meeting.</p>	<p><b>IJL</b></p>
<b>6.</b>	<p><b>Next Steps</b></p> <p>It was agreed that an options paper would be prepared for consideration by the Group when it next met on 19<sup>th</sup> April.</p> <p>KW advised that it would not be possible to adopt a blanket code across the network, as different routes had different requirements.</p> <p>EC advised that the report would contain a range of options, from full adoption of the code, to not adopting the code, with a number of varied options in the middle.</p>	<p><b>SC</b></p>

	<p>It was suggested that a one year trial could serve as a useful tool to review accessibility in a "microcosm", which could be used to prioritise the stops to be made accessible. It was however noted that a trial would not test high-speed, rural routes.</p> <p>KS enquired whether there was other information that should be gathered in future bus stop audits.</p> <p>It was suggested that once the Group has addressed the issue regarding mobility scooters, consideration be given to making Douglas Town Centre accessible.</p> <p>KS enquired whether it should be an aspiration to make every bus stop and foot path accessible. EC advised that recommendations from the Group would need to be made to the Minister, for consideration. Following which, should it be required, a policy would be developed, with an action plan which included classification and prioritisation.</p> <p>Discussion took place regarding whether the Equality Act requires Bus Vannin to obtain alternative transport, eg a taxi, in the event that a wheelchair user wishes to travel on the bus when the wheelchair space is already occupied. It was noted that there were a number of reasons why it was not possible to use taxis as a back-up service, including the limited availability of wheelchair accessible taxis, but that the Group may wish to make some recommendations to the RTLC.</p> <p>It was suggested that demand responsive transport for mobility issues could be explored as part of the remit of the Group.</p> <p>It was suggested that the No 21 route could be ranked, according to the level of accessibility, and where it was or was not, possible to put a ramp out. IJL reported that there is a need to provide a safe system to get on, and off, the bus.</p> <p>It was noted that any mobility scooter user who refused to comply with the rules of travel, would lose the right to travel. It was however noted that this could be difficult for the bus driver to manage.</p>	
<p><b>7.</b></p>	<p><b>Close</b></p> <p>The meeting closed at 3.35 pm</p>	