

DEPARTMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE

Bus Vannin Accessibility Steering Group Meeting Thursday 10th October 2022 at 10 am The Boardroom, Sea Terminal Building

Present:

██████████ (KW)

██████████ (DC)

██████████ (SU)

In attendance:

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

██████████ Head of Operations, Bus Vannin

██████████ Design Engineer, Highways Division

██████████ Project Officer (SC) (Notetaker)

Mrs K Sharpe, MLC (KS)

Mrs D Kelsey, MLC (DK)

1.	Introductions, Welcome & Goodbye KS reported that she had resigned as a Member of the Department, and therefore as Chair of the Steering Group. She reported that this had been a reluctant decision, but essential to enable her to focus on her role as Children's Champion. She thanked Members of the Steering Group for their hard work, and advised that she would miss working with them. Mrs D Kelsey MLC (DK) was welcomed to the meeting as an interested observer. ██████████ Design Engineer, (BA) was also welcomed to the meeting.	
2.	Minutes of the Last Meeting Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 2 nd August were approved, subject to the following amendments: (i) <u>Section 4 - Scooter Approval Process – Gatekeeping Issue</u> It was noted that discussion had taken place regarding the scooter and rider approval and training process, together with the need to ensure approved scooter users only access buses on their approved scooters. (ii) Rediweld It was noted that this product could provide an off-the-shelf temporary solution for bus stops.	

	<p>(iii) <u>Lithium-ion batteries in mobility scooters</u></p> <p>It was noted that discussion had taken place regarding concern over the possible fire-risk of lithium-ion batteries in mobility scooters. These scooters have been banned by other bus companies due to the possibility of self-combustion and the subsequent difficulties in putting out a lithium battery fire.</p> <p>This issue would need to be considered further in relation to Bus Vannin services.</p>	IB
3.	<p>Actions arising from the last meeting</p> <p>(i) <u>Surface Coverings for Wet Weather</u></p> <p>SU suggested that the disabled surface used by London Transport has more grip.</p> <p>IB updated the Group that there were no set criteria for floor coverings, and advised that he was awaiting feedback from ALBUM, the Association of Local Bus Company Managers.</p> <p>He further reported that this was an issue that would be discussed at the forthcoming Bus and Coach Show, and would be a part of the vehicle specification.</p> <p>(ii) <u>Occupation of the wheelchair space by other disabled users</u></p> <p>IB reported that obtaining information reports from bus drivers of such occurrences had been raised with the Unions, but that there had been no reported incidents.</p> <p>It was noted that this was probably due to the time of year, and that it was more likely to occur in good weather.</p> <p>It was noted that the use of the Tetra system to report occurrences should be included in the specialist disability awareness training.</p> <p>(iii) <u>Disability Awareness Training</u></p> <p>It was noted the disability awareness training should include the need to deploy the ramp for passengers using wheeled walkers.</p> <p>It was agreed that IB would share the current training package with the members of the Group.</p>	IB IB IB
4.	<p>Update on Report & Recommendations to the Minister</p> <p>SC updated the Group on the recommendations to the Minister and the decisions made, as outlined in Appendix 1. She relayed the Minister's thanks to the Group for their excellent work and advised that the Minister had requested that the report be published.</p> <p>SC advised that she was seeking clarification from the Minister regarding a number of issues, including the trial on the No 21 route.</p>	SC

<p>5.</p>	<p>Town Centre First</p> <p>EC reported on a project being progressed by the Department for Enterprise, (DfE), Town Centre First: reviewing the Town Centre First model as a template for Regeneration in the Isle of Man is a key commitment within Our Island Plan 2021-2026.</p> <p>As the next step in this project, DfE is co-ordinating a data collection/collation project, to create a baseline understanding of the Island’s towns and villages.</p> <p>EC reported that this was a piece of work which the BVASG could become involved in, as accessibility could form a key theme as the project develops. It was also noted that Sight Matters would be an appropriate organisation to assist with this work.</p> <p>It was agreed that the DfE officers working on this project be advised of the existence of BVASG.</p>	<p>SC</p>
<p>6.</p> <p>(i)</p> <p>(ii)</p>	<p>Highway Issues</p> <p><u>Cat with No Tail</u></p> <p>Discussion took place regarding accessibility issues at the Cat with No Tail. BA advised that this was being addressed and was due to be upgraded as part of the initial Bus Stop Kerbs 2022 works package.</p> <p>Discussion took place regarding the customer feedback loop, and EC updated the Group on changes within the Highways Division to re-focus efforts on maintenance.</p> <p>In response to a query regarding re-distributing funds to address maintenance issues, discussion took place regarding the funding differences between the capital programme and maintenance.</p> <p><u>Cronk y Berry</u></p> <p>Discussion took place regarding work being undertaken by a contractor at Cronk y Berry, with raised ironworks on the walkway, where residents have fallen, and pedestrians have been required to walk into the road.</p> <p>BA advised that the Highways Division was aware of issues with the contractor on this scheme, and it was suggested that there could be a requirement for contractors’ accessibility measures to be tested at the procurement stage, and that once the work is in progress, that the measures are monitored by the Division. BA stated this would be monitored during the bus stop kerbs and accessibility improvements schemes. He indicated he would look into contractor’s requirements on all DOI schemes.</p> <p>EC advised that the Department would investigate why due process was not followed with regards to Cronk y Berry.</p>	<p>BA</p> <p>BA</p>

<p>(iii)</p> <p>(iv)</p>	<p><u>Victoria Street, Lloyds Bank</u></p> <p>SU reported on an issue around the roadworks at Lloyds Bank in Victoria Street, advising that the dropped kerbs are challenging, with a steep step at the bottom. BA agreed to look at this issue.</p> <p><u>Highways Network</u></p> <p>It was noted that there was a need for a piece of work to map the issues regarding permanent features on the highway network which create difficulties for people with a disability eg street furniture. (This would be added as an agenda item for a future meeting).</p>	<p>BA</p> <p>SC</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Remit of the Steering Group</p> <p>DC reported that she was delighted at the proposed extension of the remit of the Group.</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p>Rediweld Update</p> <p>BA reported that the Division had gone out to tender for 17 bus stops to be made accessible, and further reported that they would look to add more bus stop improvements and install Redi-Weld pads as a temporary measure at Lord Street provided the contract was on programme and within budget. SU noted that due to the incline at the Lord Street stop closest to the traffic lights, installation of the Redi-Weld pad could prove BA confirmed that the Redi-Weld pads are a recycled product, which could also be re-used.</p> <p>It was noted that due to the incline at the Lord Street stop closest to the traffic lights, installation of the Redi-Weld pad could prove difficult.</p> <p>It was agreed that BA would forward a list of the 17 stops to be made accessible to SC, for onward distribution to the Group.</p> <p>It was also noted that the proposals for the Lord Street construction had already received planning approval, so changes to the design would be unlikely.</p>	<p>BA/SC</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Free School Bus Passes</p> <p>Further discussion took place regarding the briefing paper on free school bus travel, updated by SC on 29.9.22.</p> <p>It was noted that free school bus travel was aligned to free school meals, and that free school travel was a cost met by the Department.</p> <p>It was also noted that there was currently no appeals process in place regarding applications for free school travel. It was also noted</p>	

	<p>that there is an appeals issue in place in the Housing Section of Public Estates and Housing, which could be helpful.</p> <p>Discussion took place regarding whether it was appropriate for the Group to be discussing and making recommendations to the Minister on policy issues. It was agreed that this would be raised and clarified with the Minister.</p> <p>It was further agreed that, if it was deemed appropriate for the Group to be considering policy issues, an appeals process was required. Subsequent to the meeting IB agreed to raise the issue of an appeals process at the Transport Services political meeting, and a process would be drafted if approved at that meeting.</p>	<p>EC/SC</p> <p>IB</p>
10.	<p>Concessionary Fares</p> <p>The Steering Group was updated about the ongoing work regarding concessionary fares, and the need, as a minimum, to update historic and inappropriate definitions of disability used to assess eligibility for a disability concession.</p> <p>EC advised that there was a need to define the purpose of a concessionary fare.</p> <p>It was noted that concessionary fares is another policy issue, and noted that again it may not be an appropriate issue for consideration by the Group.</p>	
11.	<p>Transport Strategy</p> <p>DC requested information regarding the Transport Strategy, and EC provided a brief outline of the project, reporting that the development of a Transport Strategy was a requirement of the Island Plan.</p> <p>It was noted that the Accessibility Chapter of the Strategy would need to be progressed at an early stage, as it would need to feed into other sections of the Plan.</p> <p>The BVASG would be consulted on its content.</p>	SC
12.	<p>Risk Register</p> <p>DC enquired whether there was a risk register regarding delivery of the work of the Committee.</p> <p>EC advised that the majority of the risks belonged to other Divisions.</p>	
13.	<p>Bus Fare Cap</p> <p>It was noted that the cost of the three month trial of the Bus Fare Cap was to be funded by Treasury.</p>	
14.	<p>The meeting closed at 11.50</p>	

APPENDIX 1

BUS VANNIN ACCESSIBILITY STEERING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS & MINISTER'S COMMENTS

No	RECOMMENDATION	MINISTER'S DECISION
1	The attached report be approved and adapted for submission to Council of Ministers and Tynwald;	Not approved, but publish Accessibility Steering Group Report online
2	Bus Vannin begin a 12 month trial carrying mobility scooters on its services;	Approved
3	an operational working group is established to identify the actions required to begin the trial;	Approved
4	the trial be monitored regularly, in order to address any issues identified;	Approved
5	the trial begin initially on the No 21 route, and extended to the Numbers 22 and 25 routes after 6 months should no significant issues be identified on the No 21 route;	clarification from the Minister required.
6	a full review of the trial to be undertaken after 12 months, with full consideration given to how the carriage of mobility scooters could be extended Island-wide;	Approved
7	a report to Tynwald, based on the contents of this Report, be prepared and submitted to Cabinet Office for consideration by Council of Ministers prior to onward submission to the Clerk of Tynwald's Office;	
8	the remit of the Steering Group be extended to other areas of the Department, and;	Approved
9	Accessibility form one of the themes of the forthcoming Transport Strategy.	Approved