SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel

DATE: 8th September 2016

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WARD(S):   All

PART I
FOR COMMENT & CONSIDERATION

SLOUGH REAL TIME PASSENGER INFORMATION (RTPI)

1   **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to examine information on the effectiveness of the Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) system in Slough and to seek ways to improve it.

This report is designed to provide the Committee with information relating to following issues:

- To examine the low detection rate of local buses on the RTPI system, and what can be done to improve upon this current level;
- To enquire what improvements have been made to the RTPI detection rates since the start of the project;
- To explore whether London Buses and other bus companies can join the system, to provide full route coverage; and
- To examine Future Plans for RTPI in Slough; the routes not yet covered by bus stop displays, and which areas to be enabled next.

2   **Recommendation**

That the Committee note the progress made since RTPI was implemented.

3   **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

3a. **Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy (SJWS) Priorities**

Regeneration and Environment

The Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) roll-out across the borough is an integral element for improving the local economy and environment by making bus travel a more attractive mode of transport. By encouraging commuters in Slough to travel by bus instead of car, it will lead to a healthier and more accessible Slough through reduced congestion and carbon emissions.

4   Other Implications

(a) Financial

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

(b) Risk Management

Risk	Mitigating action	Opportunities
None	None	There are no risks, threats or opportunities arising from the report.

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no legal or Human Rights Act implications relating to the content of this report.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

There is no identified need for the completion of EIA relating to this report.

5   Supporting Information

Why is there a low detection level for buses using the system, and what steps can be taken to raise detection

5.1   Slough's bus fleet increased following the closure of the Bracknell Bus Depot. As a result this affected the percentage of local buses detected on Slough's RTPI software with new buses from Bracknell to be consolidated.

5.2   The Slough bus depot received new vehicles months prior to the Bracknell Depot closure. This process required the transfer of integral equipment to ensure local bus services would deliver real time information in Slough. First Bus made their fleet readily available for JMW engineers to ensure minimum disruption to RTPI in Slough.

5.3   In addition to regular spot checks via the InfoRoute system, site visits have been undertaken following the concerns raised by members. These checks have concluded that some of the services have low detection rates. These include the 60 and 61 services.

5.4   SBC have discovered the reason for the change in detection rates being due to a conflict between hardware used in an on-bus displays trial. The affected buses in Slough have since had the RTPI equipment and software reprogrammed by JMW to solve this issue.

What has been done since the start of the project?

5.5   Problems have been dealt with as they have arisen, through internal council management systems. In addition to this, a number of improvements to detection rates were made over the past year:

1) Bus Fleet Replacement: Since December 2015 First Buses in Berkshire have replaced a number of bus vehicles in their fleet which had affected the overall detection.

2) SBC, First Bus and JMW have monthly maintenance meetings in addition to the Quality Bus Partnership meetings held between First and SBC every quarter.

<u>Can London Buses, Arriva and other bus companies operating in Slough join the system, to provide wider RTPI coverage?</u>

5.6   Slough Borough Council's Transport Team completed the process of establishing a SIRI link feed with Bucks County Council enabling us to detect their services (Arriva) that operate through Slough. A SIRI feed is currently being established with Redline Buses. There are also plans to include the TfL 81 bus service into the complete coverage.

<u>Which Routes are not yet well covered by bus stop shelter and flag displays, and which routes can be enabled next?</u>

5.7   Slough Borough Council has a programme for the next phase of RTPI bus shelter and flag display installations in Slough. Expanding the RTPI display provisions across the borough is part of the plan but achieving a higher average detection rate is a higher priority in order to give confidence to the end user.

<u>What are the future plans for RTPI in Slough?</u>

5.8   Quick Response (QR) Codes are available at a number of bus stops in Slough. These are installed in the form of a square barcode on the inside of a bus stop shelter and are managed by ClearChannel.

5.9   SBC are in the process of trialling audio-visual equipment with JMW and First Bus on a small number of vehicles in the borough which is similar to in the equipment utilised in London, Nottingham, Reading and other parts of the country. This feature will enable bus vehicles to visually and audibly announce the oncoming stops of which will be great benefit to visitors to Slough and all those with sensory impairment disabilities.

5.10 The next step for Slough's RTPI will be to upgrade both hardware and software to accommodate the existing fleet, thus enabling SBC to future-proof the RTPI on buses and bus stops.

6   **Conclusion**

That the Committee note the report.

7   **Background Papers**

None.