

Policy Group – 22 November 2017

South Western Railway proposed train timetable consultation

1. Purpose of report

To consider proposed changes to the timetable for south-east Dorset to London Waterloo, via Southampton, and recommend a response to Council.

2. Key issues

- 2.1 South Western Railway won the franchise earlier this year to run a rail service between the south coast and London Waterloo, and are proposing a change to the timetable.
- 2.2 South Western Railway states: ‘South Dorset and Hampshire Local Services Stakeholders have asked for faster journeys and improved service intervals. We plan that journeys from Weymouth to London will be up to 12 minutes faster and for the two trains per hour between Weymouth and Bournemouth to be spaced much nearer to a half-hourly frequency, Wool will see both Weymouth trains calling there. This however requires the link from some less busy stations to London to be broken at off-peak times with the trains instead providing cross Southampton connectivity to Fareham and Portsmouth. Same platform connections will be provided at Brockenhurst for passengers using the local service to connect to/from London.’
- 2.3 As part of their consultation, South Western Railway poses the question: ‘Do you support the speeding up of services from Weymouth with improved service intervals between Weymouth and Bournemouth and the change in connectivity for smaller stations?’
- 2.4 The consultation document and proposed revised timetable can be found on-line at: <https://www.southwesternrailway.com/contact-and-help/timetable-consultation> . The Purbeck rail service is the South Western Main Line table 158.

3. Recommendation

A report be submitted to Council recommending that it responds to the South Western Railway consultation as follows:

The Council

- (i) accepts that changes in connectivity at smaller stations are required to provide reduced journey times of some Weymouth to London Waterloo direct services; and
- (ii) notes that local commuters will enjoy an overall improved service.

4. Policy issues

4.1 How will this affect the environment, social issues and the local economy?

The local commuter service is improved at Wool and will provide more opportunities for local residents to use the service for regular trips. Holton Heath loses a direct service from

London Waterloo in the morning peak but gains more local services. Moreton retains 2 early peak direct to London (arriving before 9:16) and an hourly stopping service.

4.2 Implications

4.2.1 Resources

There are no additional resource implications.

4.2.2 Equalities

There are no equalities implications.

5. Further information

- 5.1 Off-peak fast services will be quicker than at present, up to 12 minutes faster from Weymouth to London Waterloo.
- 5.2 The vast majority of fast services will now run as 10-car trains between Waterloo and Bournemouth providing additional off-peak capacity and evening capacity.
- 5.3 The local commuter service is improved at Wool, receiving two trains per hour all day and will provide more opportunities for local residents to use the service for regular trips.
- 5.4 Off peak, only fast trains will be direct trains to Waterloo.
- 5.5 The second, stopping train per hour will travel direct to Portsmouth. Passengers on stopping trains will need to change to go to London Waterloo at either Poole, Bournemouth, Brockenhurst or Southampton. As an example, there is 10 minute turnaround at Southampton.
- 5.6 Wareham retains two trains an hour in both directions, one of which is direct to/from London Waterloo. The other is part of the Weymouth to Portsmouth service where passengers for stations between Southampton and London Waterloo will need to change at Southampton.
- 5.7 The proposed stopping service, with a change at Southampton, adds between 13 and 20 mins to existing journey times to London Waterloo (based on journey from Wareham).
- 5.8 There is little difference in the local service between Dorchester and Bournemouth. Wool and Moreton have an extra train to Bournemouth in the early morning.
- 5.9 Holton Heath loses a direct service from London Waterloo in the morning peak but gains more local services. Moreton retains 2 early peak direct to London (arriving before 9:16) and an hourly stopping service. Holton Heath loses its direct peak London Waterloo trains but gains one additional local service each way through the day.
- 5.10 The fast, non-stopping trains will not stop at Clapham Junction but there are opportunities to change at various points on the journey, if required.
- 5.11 Three late afternoon/early evening direct trains from London Waterloo will stop at Moreton. Officers from Dorset County Council have raised concerns about capacity on evening peak

trains for Dorset - London commuters returning home. They will be raising this issue with South Western Trains.

5.12 Dorset County Council Officers will also be raising the issue of impact of a revised timetable on the down time of the level crossing barrier at Wool at a meeting with the train company at the end of October and officers will update this report with any relevant information.

5.13 Overall:

- local commuters will benefit from an improved service;
- most Dorset to London commuters will benefit from an extra direct morning peak service;
- the service will improve connectivity between Weymouth and Portsmouth; and
- travel time will be reduced on the direct non-stopping service to London, but the off peak journey times from smaller stations will be longer.

Background papers:

There are none.

For further information contact:-

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