

# Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry

# **STRATEGIC PLAN**

## 2018-2022

# INTRODUCTION

The Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry are co-owned by Plymouth City Council and Cornwall Council.

Although the two authorities guaranteed the loans required to build the bridge, since 1961 when the Bridge first opened the two crossings have operated on a self-financing basis with operations, maintenance and improvements funded through tolls paid.

Oversight of the crossings is undertaken by a Board of 10 elected Councillors – five from each Authority, the “Joint Committee” – who meet quarterly to review the progress of the operation and consider annual and special reports and to set the budget for the coming year.

This document represents a development of previous Business Plans, setting out the organisation’s strategic framework and goals for the period April 2018 to March 2022. This document will be supported by an annual plan which documents detailed actions being taken to progress towards the strategic goals.

# STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

## Mission

The Joint Committee's mission is to provide the travelling public with safe, reliable and efficient crossings of the Tamar through the operation, maintenance and improvement of the Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry.

## Values

### *Respect*

- ensuring an inclusive approach to balance sometimes competing needs

### *Excellence*

- providing good service and routine reliability of service

### *Creativity*

- identifying innovative and value for money solutions

### *Integrity*

- the proper stewardship of public assets and funds

### *Openness*

- engagement with communities and transparent decision making

### *Ownership*

- taking responsibility for issues and where necessary, implementing solutions

### *Teamwork*

- working together to deliver the service and contribute to the area's transport needs.

## Measuring Success

- Achieve very high levels of service reliability and predictability.
- Ensure an injury free workplace and offer a safe and secure environment for service users.
- Remain financially sustainable and self-financing.
- Maintain recognition that the organisation is a high performing organisation amongst peers and comparator organisations.
- Adopt appropriate and innovative technologies that improve customer experience and interaction, promote safety and assist traffic management.
- Maintain an appropriately trained and well-motivated workforce that is capable of delivering strategic and operational goals.
- Maximise the life of the bridge and ferries through appropriate and timely maintenance.
- Show transparency in decision making and adapting governance arrangements to support that aim.
- Support the wider transportation policies of the owning Local Authorities as they affect cross-Tamar transport.

The Annual Operational Plan will support these strategic goals and a range of performance indicators are used to monitor progress and challenge management. These are published on our website and reported to Committee at quarterly meetings.



## **Financial Stability**

The crossings maintain a reasonable reserve to reduce the risk that tolls will need to increase at short notice because of unexpected maintenance or because of unexpected trends within the wider environment.

The organisation will carefully consider funding methods for major capital projects which significantly improve the facilities or extend the operating life of existing assets. A balance will be sought between smoothing the cost of such works over time and the extended financial commitment this requires.

Tolls will only increase when the projected financial demands associated with the operation, maintenance and improvement of the crossings are such that it is predicted to fall below prudent minimums.

## **A Safe, Reliable and Appropriate Service**

The Joint Committee recognises the strategic importance of both crossings to the sub-region, the interaction the crossings have in the delivery of public policy and the reliance users place on the crossings to live their lives normally and fully. In planning services, programming maintenance and anticipating improvements the organisation recognises the wider impacts of restrictions on capacity. The Committee plans services with consideration to these broader contexts.

## **Maintaining the Assets**

Maintenance programmes are designed to ensure that assets achieve the maximum achievable lifespan and continue to provide appropriate service to contemporary standards and expectations.

A conservative approach is taken towards routine maintenance, given the appreciation of the impact of any unreliability in service.

Major projects are structured in such a way that the impact on users is minimised, whilst maintaining value for money and accounting for safety considerations.

## **A Responsible and Accountable Organisation**

The organisation recognises its public responsibilities and the fundamental way in which access to the crossings is an essential part of users' lives and the way in which organisations operate and deliver services or create wealth.

Decisions will continue to be taken in a consultative and collaborative way, involving stakeholders wherever appropriate. The organisation will continue to work in a transparent way and develop communication routes and methods so that stakeholders can identify progress and track the decision making process.

# TRENDS, ASSUMPTIONS AND CHALLENGES DURING THE PERIOD OF THE PLAN

## Economic, Business and Consumer Environment

- a relatively stable and benign environment is assumed;
- no significant change is anticipated in the transport environment (there will be no significant switch from the private motor car);
- national forecasts of a continuing shift towards a cashless society have been included;
- an increase in tolls will be required towards the end of the period covered by the plan;
- the way in which work is undertaken will continue to develop over the period.

## Demographics

- potential housing developments in the Saltash area have been anticipated to have limited impact during the period of this plan;
- the population of users will not grow significantly and underlying growth in vehicle traffic will remain at around 1% compound annually;
- there will be increased demand for personalised or customised services;
- the age of the average user will increase.

## Regulation and Values

- no significant change in the general legislative environment is anticipated in the next four years;
- safety is predicted to be of increased importance, as is a respect for the environment;
- it is anticipated that there will be increased regulation of public bodies during the next few years;

- increased public demands for greater transparency from public bodies is anticipated as are more general demands for corporate responsibility;
- the organisation will undertake a significant review of its governance arrangements during the period of the plan.

## Technology

- There will be an increased reliance on technology;
- technology will begin to impact on transport towards the end of the period, including “smart” vehicles and shared ownership whilst “driverless” technologies will continue to progress;
- alternatives to cash will continue to expand;
- social and other e-media will expand, impacting on the relationship with users;
- There will be no significant change within public policy during the next four years towards tolling and no progress towards an interoperable toll service in the UK.

## Risks

- there is increased uncertainty within the wider economic environment (eg higher inflation, lower growth);
- a request to increase tolls will not be approved;
- demand may exceed or fall below forecasts creating pressure on capacity or finances;
- unexpected maintenance issues with aging infrastructure will be identified;
- governance structures will not be developed to keep pace with public expectation;
- user expectations will outstrip the organisation’s capacities in terms of infrastructure and technology.

# STRATEGIC GOALS

To progress our mission five strategic goals guide Tamar Crossings:

## Meeting Customer Expectations

Ensuring continued reliability of journeys and providing modern interfaces with our customers.

## Fiscally Sustainable

Maintaining financial responsibility through effective and appropriate deployment of capital and operating resources.

## Transparent Governance and Clear Decision Making Processes

Fit for purpose governance arrangements with clear lines of responsibility and accountability that are transparent and clear to users and the general public.

## A Modern, Diverse and Well Trained Workforce

Providing roles that are fit for purpose whilst offering a range of opportunities for as wide a cross-section of the potential workforce as the service provided allows.

## Quality and Standards

Improve safety, maintenance and processes and demonstrate progress through the adoption of appropriate certifications.

# PROGRESSING OUR STRATEGIC GOALS 2018-2022

## Meeting Customer Expectations

Desired Outcomes

- Predictable Journey Times
- Minimising delays
- Modern and varied communications with users and stakeholders
- Using appropriate toll technology
- Engagement with the community

Strategies to Achieve Desired Outcomes

- Proactive maintenance programmes
- Monitoring usage and predicting future demand
- Actively engaging in social media
- Maintaining expertise in tolling and engaging with developments in payment technology
- Active engagement with schools, local councils and social groups

## Fiscally Sustainable

Desired Outcomes

- Revenues are sufficient to fund all revenue and capital funding requirements
- Timely and effective financial management
- Efficient and effective management, operations and maintenance activity
- Maintenance of appropriate, but not excessive financial reserves

Strategies to Achieve Desired Outcomes

- Maintain and routinely update long term financial models
- Proactive management of reserves
- Compare expenditure to benchmarks
- Enhance budgeting and financial monitoring processes
- Maintain stable levels of TamarTag usage

## **Transparent Governance and Clear Decision Making Processes**

### Desired Outcomes

- Effective and transparent corporate oversight and challenge
- Positive, efficient and timely decision making processes
- Clarity of management accountabilities
- Transparency, a broad publication policy and a consultative approach

### Strategies to Achieve Desired Outcomes

- Develop and maintain a comprehensive independent publication policy
- Review current governance arrangements and corporate status

## **A Modern, Diverse and Well Trained Workforce**

### Desired Outcomes

- Employees capable of engaging positively with users and contributing to the continued development of the crossings
- A workforce that represents the demographics of the workforce in the surrounding areas
- Flexible opportunities that support long-term employment
- Investment in individuals
- Clear leadership of the workforce

### Strategies to Achieve Desired Outcomes

- Routinely reviewing terms and conditions
- Maintain a corporate training programme
- Design training programmes for unique roles within the crossings
- Set challenging performance goals and manage performance against those goals
- Measure employee satisfaction and act on feedback

## **Quality and Standards**

### Desired Outcomes

- Extended life of the core assets – the bridge and ferries
- An injury free workplace
- Improved public safety
- Service levels that meet the expectations of users and the communities reliant on the crossings
- Environmental responsibility

### Strategies to Achieve Desired Outcomes

- Achieving and maintaining ISO18001 and ISO14001 or equivalent standards
- Ensure relevant safety issues are including in training programmes
- Engage communities and provide feedback mechanisms



Tamar Bridge  
and  
Torpoint Ferry  
*Joint Committee*

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