

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL

PLANNING, TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Tuesday, 11th November, 2014

Present:- Councillors Marie Longstaff (Chair), David Martin, Liz Richardson, Roger Symonds, Les Kew and Ian Gilchrist (In place of Lisa Brett)

Also in attendance: Louise Fradd (Strategic Director - Place), Peter Dawson (Group Manager, Planning Policy & Transport), Matthew Smith (Divisional Director, Environmental Services) and Rab Smith (Transportation Planning Team Leader)

46 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

47 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

48 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Councillors Brett and Nicol had sent their apologies to the Panel. Councillor David Martin acted as Vice-Chair for the duration of the meeting on behalf of Councillor Brett and Councillor Ian Gilchrist was present as her substitute on the Panel.

49 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

50 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN

There was none.

51 ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS - TO RECEIVE DEPUTATIONS, STATEMENTS, PETITIONS OR QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OF THIS MEETING

David Redgewell addressed the Panel regarding Agenda Items 9 & 10. A copy of his statements can be found on the Panel's Minute Book and online as an appendix to these minutes.

He spoke of the need for further frequency of buses across the region and reliability. He also urged the Council embark on fleet enhancement and to use Government funding to achieve this. He stated that he believed the public expected at the very least now comfortable seating and on board Wi-Fi.

He raised the matter of gaining access to the rail network to the Panel. He said that the ramp at Keynsham Station was near to completion, but that there were a range of equalities issues at other stations. He suggested that the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) be approached to help with this matter.

He also wished to draw to the attention of the Panel the problem of graffiti at train stations and the lack of CCTV at Keynsham & Oldfield Park.

He stated that low floor buses were currently not being used some routes in the Chew Valley area and that this must be addressed as soon as possible.

He said that with Keynsham about to grow in many ways it was important that its bus network be addressed and that more services should stop at the rail station.

He stated that he felt Bath would always be congested in some way and that the Council needed to address solutions in the East of Bath. He highlighted the modal shift success of Oxford.

He said that potential funds would be lost if Ministers are unsure of our plans locally and regionally.

The Chair suggested that the Panel look at buses more generally in January.

Councillor Liz Richardson asked if it was it dependent on the Council or First to apply for funding to improve buses.

David Redgwell replied that Bristol City Council applied to the Better Bus Partnership and received funding to upgrade 400 vehicles.

Councillor Les Kew asked if an officer was available to comment on the non-compliance of low floor vehicles and graffiti at rail stations.

The Divisional Director for Environmental Services replied that he was not able to answer the question, but would source the information for the Panel.

David Redgwell commented that he would be happy to meet with the Transport Police, Network Rail and First Great Western to resolve the matter of CCTV at stations.

Councillor Nathan Hartley addressed the Panel relating to Agenda Item 11.

He said that prior to the meeting he had issued the Panel with his latest press release regarding parking in Peasedown and information on the survey that had been carried out.

He informed the Panel that a huge amount of growth had recently taken place in Peasedown, but that had not been matched by the increase in amenities and services. He highlighted that parking in the centre of the village was a particular problem.

He explained that around 12 months ago a Community Conversation event was held to discuss the matter with contributions received from the Parish Council, local schools and the football club amongst others. Following this event a survey of all residents has been conducted to gain their views. 300 responses were received and the option of proposing to build a new car park near the Primary School proved to be the most popular.

He asked that the Panel consider the results of the survey in their Medium Term Plan discussions and highlighted three points he would like to be incorporated.

- Funding for the new car park (£70,000)
- Traffic Enforcement in the Somer Valley – Additional wardens
- Roundabout at the southern end of Peasedown – a previous 1,000 signature had been submitted to the Council.

The Chair reminded Councillor Hartley that following his comments the onus was on him to find the funds for these projects to gain acceptance as the budget discussion moves forward.

52 MINUTES - 16TH SEPTEMBER 2014

Councillor Liz Richardson asked that as the matter of flood protection had been raised at this meeting could the Panel receive an update at its January meeting.

The Panel confirmed the minutes of the previous meeting as a true record and they were duly signed by the Chair.

53 CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

There were no Cabinet Members present at the time of this item. Councillor Caroline Roberts had sent her apologies to the Panel and was present at the meeting from the conclusion of Agenda Item 9 onwards.

54 KEYNSHAM TRANSPORT STRATEGY

Nick Richardson, Mott MacDonald gave a presentation to the Panel on the Keynsham Transport Strategy. A copy is available online as an appendix to these minutes and on the Panel's Minute Book. A summary is set out below.

Vision

To minimise the negative effects of traffic congestion in and around Keynsham and ensuring it retains its independence and its separate identity within an attractive rural

setting by becoming a more sustainable, desirable and well-connected place in which to live and work.

Objectives

- Minimising the future increase in traffic congestion
- Supporting and enabling the local economy
- Promoting sustainable mobility
- Improving connections, particularly to improved rail services and the town centre
- Improving the quality of life for residents
- Ensuring that all traffic management and pedestrian schemes are designed to take mobility needs into account

Traffic Demand

- Congestion is predicted to worsen with large increases in journey times through Keynsham if nothing is done
- Capacity of the High Street and its junctions is a key constraint

Rail Improvements

Continued co-operation between local authorities will help maximise the benefits of the service improvements:

- Improved accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists, nearby bus stop
- Increased car and cycle parking
- Improved security

Bus Services

- Better multi-media service information (joint initiative between operators, the Council and users)
- Improved links between bus and rail services
- Revised fare structure, especially for inter-urban services
- Measures to reduce delays to buses e.g. as part of capacity improvements at key junctions.

Walking & Access for All

Improved walking network will support a shift from motorised modes - 'more people, more active, more often' in line with the council's 'Fit for Life' Strategy

- Needs of mobility impaired people to take into account age structure: 23% of residents over age 65
- Improvements to benefit people with impairments e.g. crossings, surfacing, lighting, access to bus stops

Cycling

- Short term - improve access to schools through consultation with local cycle groups and schools;
- Medium to long term – new routes taking into account the recent Sustrans review
- More secure cycle parking at the rail station, workplaces, residential developments, leisure facilities and town centre
- Promotion of the new cycle routes through leaflets, route maps, school liaison etc.

Town Centre & Junction Improvements

- Improvements to key junctions will reduce the level of delays
- Two potential layouts were considered with the High Street as one-way southbound
- Traffic modelling showed a better performance with Ashton Way retained as two-way
- Long delays were predicted for westbound traffic in the PM peak due to the constraint of High Street / Ashton Way junctions
- A one-way scheme should be possible with existing traffic levels or for off-peak hours only with future traffic demand

Councillor Liz Richardson commented that rural links to Keynsham should also be addressed.

The Chair sought assurances that the strategies for Keynsham and Bath were linked.

The Strategic Director for Place replied that there was a need to look widely at public transport with the emphasis on a West of England approach. She added that the WoE were reviewing the Joint Local Transport Plan and she was the lead Director for this piece of work.

She highlighted that Keynsham was currently the fastest growing area of B&NES with a large commuter population. She added she was aware of the links required for the Somer Valley and Bath.

Councillor Roger Symonds asked what surveys had been carried out with regard to traffic in Keynsham.

Nick Richardson replied that none had yet been carried out and that the presentation had used the most recent census data from 2011.

Councillor Les Kew said he wished to comment initially in his role as a member of the Development Control Committee. He said that the former Divisional Director for Planning and Transport had promised that proper traffic surveys would be carried out to support the number of housing developments being built and that the residents of Keynsham deserved better.

The Strategic Director for Place replied that the consultation was currently on-going and that they were looking to take the residents along in the process. She added that there was a focus on the High Street and that she was aware of the need to improve the roundabout at Hicks Gate and other strategic links.

Councillor Charles Gerrish addressed the Panel. He said the majority of the feedback that he had received from residents so far was that it has all been a waste of time, that the questionnaire was slanted and that not a true strategy has yet been produced. He added that there was no mention of through traffic within the presentation and that it was too reliant on old data.

He stated that the development at Somerdale requires two access points and that the Council missed out on funding opportunities through this development. He added that any roads built around the new developments must be made wider to address the current on street parking problem.

Councillor Liz Richardson commented that she felt the bigger picture needed to be addressed, not solely a survey of Keynsham residents.

The Strategic Director for Place replied that she would be happy to meet with Councillors to attempt to move their issues forward.

Councillor David Martin asked how the new developments would affect traffic in the future.

Nick Richardson replied that a transport assessment was required for each new development and that these would need to be reviewed thoroughly.

Councillor Roger Symonds commented that Keynsham has a great centre for its residents, but provision was required for additional walking and cycling space. He asked how many responses to the consultation had been received so far.

The Transportation Planning Team Leader replied 83 responses had been received online and 30 in hard copy. He added that a bus service has been provided to Charlton Road through funding associated with the Somerdale development and that a local cycle network was being worked upon.

The Chair asked if further public engagement was necessary and whether a Single Inquiry Day type event would be appropriate.

The Strategic Director for Place replied that a number of exhibitions had already taken place, but was willing to discuss if any further meetings should be held.

Councillor Anthony Clarke commented on the need for an overarching Joint Transport Strategy.

Councillor Terry Gazzard commented that he had attended a community meeting in Keynsham in 2010 that highlighted the needs of residents and hoped that these were now being addressed. He added that funding was required to subsidise bus journeys to make them more affordable for the public.

Councillor Les Kew commented that if a further meeting was held the Panel should be shown the brief given to Mott MacDonald.

Councillor Brian Simmons addressed the Panel in his role as Community Transport Champion. He said that the issue of community transport was not covered in either of the strategies before the Panel today. He added that users of the Dial-a-Ride service had grown significantly in recent years from 300 – 1,300. He stated that more buses should stop at the train station.

Nick Richardson replied that community transport was a very practical response to the needs of some residents.

The Chair said that she would discuss the merits of a further meeting with the Strategic Director for Place.

Councillor Charles Gerrish commented that a Cabinet decision in December would seem a little rushed given the content of debate today.

The Strategic Director for Place replied that she would discuss the possibility of deferral with Councillor Roberts in her role Cabinet Member for Transport.

The Chair thanked everyone for contributing to the debate.

55 BATH TRANSPORT STRATEGY - CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

Robin Kerr, Chairman of the Federation of Bath Residents' Associations addressed the Panel. A copy of his statement is available online as an appendix to these minutes and on the Panel's Minute Book. A summary is set out below.

Traffic congestion and air pollution have consistently been our members' top concerns. Residents are especially worried about the high levels of pollution in the city, which are seriously harmful to health - as well as unlawful. You will have read in the report that traffic levels have reduced somewhat since 2008 but this is not true of pollution, which has remained at the same high level for at least ten years. Bath is a great place to live but is blighted by traffic, and has been for too long.

We support the vision of reducing intrusion of vehicles into the city, especially in the historic core. We should like to see a largely traffic-free city centre. However, as the strategy recognises, traffic also impacts on key arterial routes and this must be tackled too.

FOBRA strongly supports the development of a Park and Ride (or Rail) to the east of Bath. 77% of respondents to the consultation agreed with this. However, none of the P&Rs is actually fulfilling its potential.

We support more pedestrian access, more cycling, better public transport and improved freight delivery arrangements; but these will have a limited impact if motorists remain able to drive into Bath and park at will. Therefore we strongly

support proposals to reduce visitor parking in the centre as the P&Rs are expanded, and to develop a traffic management plan.

We welcome a Low Emission Zone to improve air quality. This should cover the entire Central Area, not just round the bus station proposed so far, and should include the Great Pulteney Street/Henrietta Park area.

Nick Richardson, Mott MacDonald gave a presentation to the Panel on the Bath Transport Strategy. A copy is available online as an appendix to these minutes and on the Panel's Minute Book. A summary is set out below.

Consultation

- Two public exhibitions held – BRSLI 30 June and Guildhall 11 July (60 attendees)
- Stakeholder presentation – 26 June (60 attendees)
- Meetings with individuals/groups –
FoBRA, First Bus, First Great Western, Royal United Hospital, Bath Tourism Plus, Bath Spa University, Bath Cycle Group, Bus Users Group, BID, Bath Initiative
- B&NES questionnaire generated 208 responses (158 online, 52 hard copy). Additional written submissions received

Key Findings

- Two thirds of respondents (67%) agreed with the vision underpinning the Draft Transport Strategy
- Strong support for increasing sustainable transport options including walking (93%), train (91%), bus (89%) and cycling (81%)
- Reducing congestion – support for more Park and Ride capacity
- Reducing the impact of heavy vehicles e.g. new road link
- Strong support for rail improvements, promoting walking and cycling
- Air quality is a prime concern
- Some support for more bus priority and better services

Comments received

- More emphasis on air quality
- Strategy needs to be city-wide
- Neighbourhood hub principle
- More information needed on rail-based P&R proposal and road options
- Carbon reduction as objective
- Low Emission Zones needed
- Protect landscape setting of the city

Changes incorporated

- Stronger reference to carbon reduction, LEZ study
- More emphasis on pedestrianisation / car free zones

- Freight vehicle restrictions supported
- 'Local P&R' focussing on existing bus routes
- Further work with Highways Agency and Wiltshire Council to address through traffic issue

Key Issues

- Potential for interim bus-based Park and Ride to address commitment to eastern site
- Mixed views on coach parking – city centre or periphery
- Need to find a new site for coach drop off in city centre
- Significant delivery programme needed for better accessibility e.g. walk and cycle networks
- Use of the Public Realm and Movement Strategy to guide improvements
- Funding is a key issue

Councillor Charles Gerrish commented on coach parking and advocated the temporary use Weston Island. He added that a proper drop off point was required for coaches delivering visitors to the city. He questioned whether part of the North Quays development could be considered an option.

Councillor Les Kew said that he was concerned by the bullet point 'Funding is a key issue'. He said that he would expect the solutions to be sourced first of all.

Nick Richardson replied that he agreed, but that funding has an impact on the time it takes to deliver a solution.

Councillor Roger Symonds said that he wished to draw officer's attention to the fourth bullet made by FOBRA relating to pedestrian access. He added that he hoped that the strategy would gain a cross party agreement. He stated that the city had a great public transport exchange at Southgate and that the strategy should focus more on buses.

He said he would have liked to have seen more in the strategy for cyclists and called for more road space to be allocated for them.

Councillor David Martin commented that he was pleased to see that air quality was being addressed and called for further information on PM10 levels.

The Strategic Director for Place commented that the Council were looking to incorporate a coach drop off point within the Enterprise Area. She said that an A36 / A46 link road was crucial and that discussions were on-going with the Highways Agency and Department for Transport. She added that an East of Bath Park & Ride was also vital, and that work has commenced to take these projects forward.

Councillor Anthony Clarke commented that he felt there were major gaps in the strategy and that the matter of North to South city travel needed to be addressed. He added that he believed strongly in cycling provision.

Councillor Terry Gazzard said that he wished to raise concerns on behalf of Batheaston Parish Council about a proposed development at Colerne Airfield. He said he had been informed that Wiltshire have declared that transport access to the development will come from Bannerdown Hill and the residents were concerned as this was already a congested area. He asked the Cabinet Member to defend our position and use any development funding on a link road to the A420.

The Group Manager for Planning Policy & Transport replied that the Council has asked Wiltshire for any associated documents and are due to meet with them within a few weeks. He added that he would report back any progress to the Panel.

Councillor Caroline Roberts wished to reassure the Panel that they will discuss the development with Wiltshire.

She said that coach parking would be addressed and that funding for other projects would be sourced where possible.

The Chair summarised the points raised by the Panel.

- Responses to the consultation could have been higher
- Coach parking and a central drop off point needs to be resolved
- Bus services must be improved
- Wider road space required for cyclists
- Air quality needs to be improved
- North – South city travel should be addressed

The Panel **RESOLVED** to endorse the Getting Around Bath Transport Strategy and recommends that it be adopted by Council on 12th November 2014.

56 MEDIUM TERM PLAN AND 2015/16 BUDGET UPDATE

The Strategic Director for Place introduced this item to the Panel, she highlighted some key points from within the report.

- The Core Strategy has now been adopted. This provides a platform to progress the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and complete the Placemaking Plan.
- The adoption of the Bath City Riverside Enterprise Area masterplan and its incorporation within the Placemaking process will ensure that grants and other forms of external funding can be effectively targeted as well as provide developer confidence.
- The production of the Getting Around Bath and Keynsham Transport Strategies is an important aspect of the growth agenda identified within both the Core Strategy and the Bath City Riverside Enterprise Area masterplan.

- Rail electrification and the proposed Metrowest project will have a positive impact on Bath and North East Somerset in terms of future connectivity opportunities. The Place Directorate will continue to work with key partners including Network Rail and First Great Western to ensure that these opportunities are built upon.

She explained that the Place Directorate had gone through a fundamental restructuring process and that the implementation of the new senior management structure had enabled the Directorate to:

- Meet the challenging management savings target as set out in the MTSRP for 2013/14 and 2014/15 (£600k);
- Review values and priorities through the development of a Directorate Business Plan;
- Ensure that key services are linked together to provide value for money and a One Council/One Place approach;

She stated that the Place Directorate had made good progress on the £2.4m 2014/15 savings target.

- Management savings for 14/15 are on track as well as service level efficiencies through restructuring.
- Heritage Service and Destination Management have successfully achieved their targets with additional income and reductions in expenditure.
- Improvements in parking management, enabled by significant investment in systems and technologies have resulted in increased deployment of staff on the ground, increasing parking availability and resulting in more income being recovered.

She stated that the Place Directorate had been instrumental in implementing the Council's significant Capital Programme allocation, with a forecast spend of c£45m in 2014/15, in order to meet the Councils' priorities such as increased capital maintenance to the highways infrastructure including surfacing work to the 683 miles of road network that BANES maintains, implementing Rossiter Road and Radstock regeneration schemes, Bath Transportation Package and Bath Western Riverside. She added that other elements of the 2014/15 programme would also bring improvements to public transport infrastructure, open spaces and walking/cycling schemes.

She spoke of the significant efficiency targets in the plan and those arising from the changes in management and service restructures. She said that the need to increase income opportunities was very challenging to achieve, especially when the call on many services is increasing.

She explained that future financial plans include an aspiration to provide further management savings whilst also delivering a large programme of capital projects,

the impact of this and emerging new priorities will have to be considered as part of the restructuring process.

She stated that the majority of the Place Directorate plans remain on track with efficiency in some areas helping to offset expenditure in other areas which will result in the overall budget for the Place Directorate for 2014/15 being met.

She said that it would not be possible to achieve the £300,000 saving in Management Structure Changes through further reductions in the management team and that the Directorate will continue to consider how this saving can be achieved.

She explained that the £100,000 reduction in level of spending in Planning Policy and Environment would be challenging because of the increasing level of work, however, it is anticipated that this saving will be achieved across the broader Development services.

The Chair recalled that in Year 1 of this MTSRP the budget for Environmental Services was reduced substantially and asked if they were at further risk this year.

The Divisional Director for Environmental Services replied that no sudden shifts were planned in this area for Year 3. The approach to food hygiene inspections has been completely revised in order to better use available resources although there is a balance of cost savings and risk.

Councillor David Martin asked if through the rail electrification work Network Rail could be approached to financially assist with repairs to bridges etc. even though Section 106 funding is not available.

The Strategic Director for Place replied that the Council has a positive relationship with Network Rail and that Section 106 funding was now available on matters of Listed Building Consent.

Councillor Liz Richardson asked how much of the Planning budget was spent on consultants.

The Strategic Director for Place replied that she would source a response on that matter from the Divisional Director for Development. She added that further income was hoped to be gained by engaging in the Pre-Planning Application process and they constantly monitor and balance the need for consultants with the need to increase the staff resource.

She said that regarding the earlier comments made by Councillor Hartley that he needed to engage in the Placemaking Plan.

The Chair asked the Panel to note the comments made by Councillor Hartley.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to note the report.

57 PANEL WORKPLAN

The Chair introduced this item to the Panel. She said that the following items would be added to January on the workplan.

Rail Station CCTV / Graffiti

Bus Contracts (Equalities)

The meeting ended at 5.35 pm

Chair(person)

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services