

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD
HELD ON 12TH SEPTEMBER 2013 AT 6.00 P.M.**

P Councillor Pickup (in the Chair)
A Councillor Bailey
P Councillor Champion-Smith
P Councillor Eddy
P Councillor Goulandris
A Councillor Hammond
P Councillor Holland
P Councillor Kent
P Councillor Khan
P Councillor Telford

OSM

25.9/13

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, SUBSTITUTIONS AND
INTRODUCTIONS**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Hammond and Bailey (substituted by Cllr Negus).

OSM

26.9/13

CABINET MEMBER QUESTION TIME

Cllr Bradshaw (Cabinet Member Transport, Planning, Strategic Housing and Regeneration) replied to questions which had been submitted in advance of the meeting from Cllr Martin (Appendix A). He then responded to a range of questions from members of the Board and the public which were asked at the meeting.

In response to a question from Robert Duxbury, the Democratic Services Officer clarified that supplementary questions and questions that were not submitted in advance of the meeting (and verbal answers) were not minuted and therefore not part of the public record.

**OSM
27.9/13 PUBLIC FORUM**

OSM An item of public forum business was submitted by Robert Duxbury in relation to agenda item 11 – Proposed residents' parking zone working group.

It was noted that the draft Terms of Reference for the Residents' Parking Schemes Cross Party Working Group had been circulated to the Board at the start of the meeting for discussion under item 11. It was agreed that the questions raised by Robert Duxbury would be taken into consideration during discussion of this item later on the agenda.

28.9/13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

**OSM
29.9/13 MINUTES – OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT
BOARD – 11TH JULY 2013**

RESOLVED - that the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board held on 11th July 2013 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**OSM
30.9/13 MINUTES – OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT
BOARD – 15TH AUGUST 2013**

RESOLVED - that the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board held on 15th August 2013 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**OSM
31.9/13 WHIPPING**

No whipping was declared.

OSM

32.9/13

CHAIR'S BUSINESS

None on this occasion.

OSM

33.9/13

AFFORDABLE HOUSING DELIVERY FRAMEWORK 2013-2018

The board considered a report of the Affordable Housing Scrutiny Panel (agenda item no. 8) summarising the main findings of the cross party working group that had been set up to explore ways to increase the supply of affordable housing. As Chair of the Panel, Cllr Stone introduced the report and highlighted some of his own comments set out in Appendix B of the report.

The following is a summary of the matters discussed:-

- Cllr Negus, Lib Dem member of the Affordable Housing Scrutiny Panel indicated that he could not accept the introduction of the report as prepared by Cllr Stone because it contained inaccuracies, omissions and some party political bias. Cllr Negus referred to an addendum which he had prepared and circulated in advance of the meeting, which set out his key issues with the report.
- One Member commented that whilst he could agree with most of what Cllr Stone had said during his introduction of the item, it did not actually reflect the written comments he had made in Appendix B.
- The Board felt that that the covering report produced by officers was also confusing.
- Cllr Khan requested information on the exact number of people on the housing waiting list and the number of 1 and 2 bedroomed accommodation.
- The Board supported the Affordable Housing Delivery Framework 2013-18 acknowledging that the delivery of affordable homes was a critical issue and a cross-party priority for the council.

RESOLVED –

- (1) that the covering report be strengthened to reflect issues raised by Cllrs Negus and Stone and made clearer.**

- (2) the contribution of the Affordable Housing Scrutiny Panel to the development of the Affordable Housing Delivery Framework and to exploring opportunities within the Housing Revenue Account to delivery new affordable homes be noted;**
- (3) that the Neighbourhoods and Communities Scrutiny Commission be requested to monitor the progress made against achieving the targets in the Plan and that the Resources Scrutiny Commission review the effective use of resources in the framework after the first year of delivery.**

OSM

34.9/13

CRIME AND DISORDER STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT

The board considered a report of Safer Bristol (agenda item no. 9) which provided an update on the production of the annual Crime and Disorder Strategic Assessment.

Marilyn Harrison, Chair of Safer Bristol introduced this item by providing an overview of performance, priorities and the current challenges for the Partnership and Executive Board and gave an indication as to how national policy changes such as the Police and Crime Commissioner and reforms to the NHS have affected the work of the Partnership.

Following a presentation on the production of the Crime and Disorder Strategic Assessment by Peter Anderson, Service Manager, Safer Bristol, the following is a summary of the matters discussed:-

- Concerns were raised that since the contracts for the Hartcliffe and Withywood Kick Start (HAWKS) and Knowle West Alcohol and Drugs Service (KWADS) had not been renewed by Safer Bristol, the perception in the local area was that there was no longer support available. Under the new commissioning arrangements it was important to get staff transferred over to deal with existing caseloads and not lose the profile.

- It was noted that through the commissioning process a number of small neighbourhood projects had disappeared which was very regrettable.
- It was suggested that an overview on the positives and negatives of the commissioning out of council services to date be put on the OSM work programme for 2014
- Members were encouraged to report any crime and disorder issues in their local area, either to PCSOs or the Safer Bristol Website.
- The Assessment is a public document and will be completed by 30th September 2013 for publication in October.

RESOLVED - that the report be noted

**OSM
35.9/13**

UPDATE ON THE STATUS OF THE MAYORAL COMMISSIONS

The board considered a report of Paul Taylor, Head of Executive Office (agenda item no. 10) detailing the emerging proposals in relation to the Mayoral Commissions, including the timetable and overarching objectives.

The following is a summary of the matters discussed:-

- Members were concerned about the slippage in the timescale for establishing these Commissions. The original intention had been for the Commissions to inform the budget process, however findings would not be available in time for 2014/15.
- Members were disappointed that meetings would not be open to the public, particularly as this went against the Mayor's published commitment to encourage public participation in decision making.
- The question was raised as to whether Elected Members would be able to attend meetings of the Commissions as Observers.
- A Member asked that the membership of each Commission be balanced as far as possible to ensure equality and that invitations be sent out to prospective participants with this in mind.
- The Board requested that the membership of the Commissions and dates of meetings be circulated to all Councillors prior to publication on the website.

- The process and timetable for reporting to Scrutiny was not known at this stage. A member suggested that it would be helpful if the Chairs of the Commission reported to Scrutiny so that they could be held to account.

RESOLVED - that the update regarding the status of the Mayoral Commissions be noted and that a further update would be provided in due course.

**OSM
36.9/13**

PROPOSED RESIDENTS' PARKING ZONE WORKING GROUP

The board considered the draft Terms of Reference for the Residents' Parking Scheme Cross Party Working Group.

The following is a summary of the matters discussed:-

- It was noted that Cllr Kent had some comments on the TOR but unfortunately he had already left the meeting.
- It was agreed that the accountability of the working group be amended to Sustainable Development and Transport Scrutiny Commission.
- It was suggested that the recommendations of SD&T Scrutiny Commission be incorporated into the draft TOR
- It was confirmed that the membership had now been established and that the first meeting would take place as soon as possible.

RESOLVED -

(1) that the TOR be amended to reflect the comments above.

(2) that the revised TOR be circulated to the board together with Cllr Kent's comments, for further comment and approval.

**OSM
37.9/13**

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2013/14

The Board considered the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2013/14.

The following issues were noted during the discussion:-

- ST&D Scrutiny Commission had requested an additional meeting to look at 'Fracking' which was agreed by the Board.
- Cllr Hopkins had requested an Enquiry Day on 'Black Listing'. It was noted that some preparatory work would need to be undertaken so it was agreed that this could take place some time after Christmas.
- Health, Well-being & Adult Care Scrutiny Commission had requested an additional joint review with South Gloucestershire on the Histology Service which was agreed.

RESOLVED - that the work programme and the above amendments be noted.

**OSM
38.9/13**

MAYOR'S FORWARD PLAN AND MAJOR DELEGATED DECISIONS

The Board requested that when items dropped off the Forward Plan there should be an explanation as to why this had happened.

RESOLVED - that the Mayor's Forward Plan be noted.

(The meeting ended at 8.50 pm)

CHAIR

QUESTIONS TO COUNCILLOR BRADSHAW
OSM - THURSDAY, 12 SEPTEMBER 2013
FROM CLLR CHRISTIAN MARTIN

Q1. At the July Overview and Scrutiny Management meeting the Mayor was asked about the Portway Park and Ride Platform and reasons for its delay. He promised to find out but nothing has been heard. At the West of England Scrutiny meeting last week the meeting was informed that Bristol City Council had withdrawn its funding for the new platform. Can you please provide a full update on the project, with details on funding, where we are at with the development and GRIP stage and when the platform will open?

A1. In February 2013 the Department for Transport announced the successful bids got Government funding for new stations. The Bristol City Council bid for funding for Portway Park and Ride Platform was unsuccessful in gaining funding. Bristol City Council officers have since met with the Department for Transport award panel to seek detailed feedback on the unsuccessful application. The DfT indicated that all successful applications had to be advanced to GRIP 3 level. The DfT were unable to award funding for the Portway Park and Ride platform due to the project not being at GRIP 3 level.

The DfT offered advice on how to move the project forward by working with the senior planning team at Network Rail Great Western Region. Bristol City Council officers have met with the Network Rail Senior Planning Team and agreed a framework to advance the Portway Park and Ride Platform project.

The next step is an options selection workshop planned for September 16th with Network Rail and First Great Western. The outcomes from this workshop will identify the critical path and work streams required to advance the project to GRIP 3 and a potential opening date.

The funding commitment for the Portway Park and Ride Platform project remains intact. There has been a re-profiling of funds not used in 2012-2013 to 2013-2014. There is £398k in the 2013-2014 programme and a further £200k of re-programmed funding for 2014-2015 from Investing in Bristol Future funds. A total of £598k is earmarked for this project and remains in the Budget.

Q2. On taking office the Mayor, and you, were written to by First Bus suggesting a series of options for future working which involved consultation on route changes, etc. Can you please provide us with copies of the Mayor's and your responses to this letter from First sent in November 2012?

A2 The letter from First pre-dates my appointment to the Cabinet. I understand that the issues raised in the letter from First in November last year have all been followed up, although not in a single letter response. We have made good progress on a number of areas and are still pushing on others. The outcome of the fares review should become public soon and poor progress on smartcard roll out has now been recognised by First as a particular failing on their part which they are now addressing urgently. Multi-operator tickets are now a reality with the Avon and Bristol Rider having been launched earlier in the year. Liaison arrangements between the Council and First have been strengthened with regular meetings, discussions and co-operative working taking place at various senior levels across the respective organisations.. A joint bid has been submitted to DfT for the Better Bus Area 2 funding and we are hopeful of this being successful. Route and service changes are still something we need to work more closely on. I am not happy that the notice we are given of changes proposed to the Traffic Commissioner does not allow us enough time to properly examine other options and to discuss potential interventions. Whilst clearly as a commercial operator First are at liberty to make commercial decisions, I believe a more constructive and strategic approach to network and service provision is required to achieve what is, after all, a common objective of increasing bus use across the City.

Q3. The Mayor has completely ruled out Quality Contracts here in Bristol. What is your opinion on this as the Assistant Mayor for Transport?

A3. Whilst there have been encouraging steps forward with our partnership working it is prudent to follow through with the Executive decision so that we better understand the range of options we at our disposal. Given the potential risk and administrative and legal complexity surrounding QCs, we are right to investigate this and to better understand their possible application to Bristol.

The project to develop the business case has commenced with both internal and external resources to ensure we achieve best value for money. I anticipate that officers will be in a position to present their findings before the end of the calendar year.

We have not yet formally approached operators in the context of the Quality Contracts review but we do have continual dialogue about how they can adapt and improve their services. As you will be aware, First have responded to our challenge publically with actions such as their review of fares. We very much welcome these positive steps and will consider these initiatives together more formal dialogue as part of the next phase of the Quality Contracts business case.

Through continuing to develop our partnership working with all bus operators we are extending our influence over the offer to the travelling public. The recent work to develop and submit the Better Bus Area Fund application to government will, if successful, further cement cooperation and collaboration between the West of England authorities and the bus operators. This is important regardless of any future decisions on Quality Contracts.

As a result of our partnership working we are continuing to see new investment in both the infrastructure and information the Council provides alongside the quality of vehicles and services from operators. I am encouraged that all the operators are signed up to multi-operator day tickets. We now need to move on from this to offer integration of all tickets and using smart technology.

It is anticipated that a copy of the consultants report on the creation of a Bristol Bus Quality Contract Scheme will be completed and available by the end of 2013.

Q4. The Mayor has recently attacked members of the public in the media for complaining about the delay to local traffic safety schemes. He has denied that the residents' parking schemes have caused any delay. This is despite neighbourhood partnerships having been told the opposite by his own officers in the transport department. Could you confirm that residents' parking has had no additional impact or demand on officers' time?

A4. I do not agree that the Mayor has 'attacked' members of the public in the media. The residents' parking scheme programme has committed resources of its own, underpinned by a loan that will be repaid through scheme revenue. Staff working on residents' parking are separate from those involved in other highways and traffic schemes and the team has recently been expanded to support the enhanced communications and engagement effort that the Mayor and I announced..

£300k per annum was devolved to Neighbourhood Partnerships (NPs) for local traffic schemes in each of the three years prior to 2013/14. Previously, the Highway Services team delivered 12-15 local traffic schemes per year. Following the devolution of this funding, the annual work programme more than trebled in size to include 40-50 schemes.

At the same time, the team has also taken on responsibility for the delivery of the Investing in Bristol's Future (IiBF) highways infrastructure improvement work programme worth £1million.

It was necessary, therefore, to instigate a pause in NP local traffic scheme selection for 2013/14 to enable the backlog of schemes to be cleared and for other work programme items to be addressed.

Work has not stopped on the schemes that are in the work programme and no financial resources have been lost; the current intention is to provide twice the usual budget in 2014-15, i.e. £600k.

Q5. Can the Assistant Mayor provide us with a detailed explanation of why the West of England Partnership are saying that they are no longer planning to deliver Horfield Station as Part of MetroWest Phase2 and provide copies of correspondence from Network Rail, West of England Partnership, senior officers, and himself on this subject so we can better understand the issues?

A5. During the planning phase for four tracking of the Filton Bank it was identified that a complex series of crossing points were required for train regulation over the four tracks. Network Rail carried out a detailed assessment of the best location to construct the crossover to facilitate the most efficient train regulation of this section of track. The location selected was at the former Horfield Station location.

Both Network Rail and First Great Western raised serious concern over original plans to have five stations between Bristol Temple Meads and Bristol Parkway. The congestion caused by trains stopping at five stations would seriously impact on route performance and resilience.

First Great Western stated in May 2013 that they would not support five stations between Bristol Temple Meads and Bristol Parkway. The only location with passive provision for a station on the Filton Bank is Ashley Hill. Based on this information, it was decided that the best location for a new station is at Ashley Hill.

However, at a meeting of JTEC held on 11th September, and following a discussion of Joint Scrutiny, I asked network Rail to work with BCC officers to determine whether an alternative site, which is operationally suitable, can be found to serve the Horfield/Lockleaze area. My colleagues on JTEC supported this request for additional work and I hope that we can publish the results in due course.

Below is a correspondence from Network Rail in response to a question raised by FOSBR regarding a station at Horfield.

“Regarding Horfield, as part of the four-tracking between Dr Days Junction and Filton Abbey Wood a new junction is required to deliver the capacity necessary to accommodate the substantial increase in local and long distance high speed passenger services and freight required to meet forecast demand. These services converge and diverge in the Horfield – Filton area.

We have reviewed a number of locations to identify the optimum position for the new junction that can provide the greatest of benefits to all services and we have consulted with key stakeholders on this. The selected location for the new junction is at Horfield as it provides the optimum location to serve the main and relief lines with the mixture of traffic and maintains the integrity of the track layout to provide the maximum line speeds to improve journey times, and the capacity required to deliver the train service. Therefore it is not physically possible to locate a new Horfield station at the same site as the former station.

It is worth noting the close proximity of the proposed stations at Ashley Hill and Horfield (just over a mile), with this there could be a total of 5 stations within a three and a half mile stretch. This would not be preferable from an operational railway perspective as it reduces track capacity and the number of trains over that section of line and would be detrimental to passenger journey times.

As you are aware we have been working with the West of England Partnership on their MetroWest proposals and as requested, we have included the passive provision of Ashley Hill station in our plans.