



Agenda item 4

Bristol City Council

Minutes of the Place Scrutiny Commission

Thursday 23 October 2014 at 10.30 am

Members present:

Councillor Martin (Chair), Councillor Bolton, Councillor Hiscott, Councillor Khan, Councillor Jackson, Councillor Mead (substitute for Councillor Pearce), Councillor Negus, Councillor Threlfall, Councillor Windows

Officers in attendance:

Peter Mann, Service Director - Transport
Robert Orrett, Service Director - Property
Johanna Holmes, Policy Adviser (Scrutiny)
Ed Plowden, Senior Project Manager – Sustainable Transport
Ben Robinson, Transport Intelligence Team Manager
Pete Woodhouse, Group Manager, Transport
Ian Hird, Principal Democratic Services Officer

27. Apologies for absence, substitutions and introductions (agenda item 1)

Apologies were received from Councillor Pearce; it was noted that Councillor Mead was substituting.

Apologies were also received from Barra Mac Ruairi, Strategic Director - Place, and Councillor Simon Cook, Assistant Mayor for Business Change, Resources and the Arts.

28. Declarations of interest (agenda item 2)

Cllr Bolton declared an interest in relation to agenda item 11 (Bristol Cycle Strategy) relating to his employment by Life Cycle local cycling charity and his involvement with the Bristol Cycling Campaign.

29. Public Forum
(agenda item 3)

Public forum items were received as follows:

Questions:

Question 1 - questions from Rob Telford

Subject: 25 bus service replacement / Romney Avenue bus link
A written officer response was provided at the meeting.

Summary of subsequent main points raised / noted:

- a. Rob Telford expressed disappointment that it was not anticipated that the Romney Avenue bus link route would be fully open before Spring 2015.
- b. In response to a supplementary question, the Service Director - Transport advised that he would provide relevant background information to Rob Telford (e.g. in relation to projected passenger numbers) to assist him in terms of his forthcoming meeting with First around this issue.

Question 2 - questions from Steve Virgin

Subject: Ferry operations
A written officer response was provided at the meeting.

Summary of subsequent main points raised / noted:

- a. The Service Director - Transport advised that it had not been possible to provide a full response to each of the questions in the time available since their submission, given their complexity. It was also understood that the questioner had submitted a number of similar questions to the Council under the Freedom of Information (Fol) Act. In discussion with the Service Director - Legal, it had been felt reasonable to defer to the response which was being prepared through the Fol process. It had unfortunately not been possible to respond to the Fol request within the standard 20 working days timescale; the Service Director apologised for this delay and advised that the response would be sent as soon as possible. A copy would also be sent to the commission members for their information.
- b. The Chair advised that he had registered his concern about the "ruling" that the Fol process effectively "trumped" the public forum process. He also expressed his concern and disappointment that it had not been possible to meet his request (made prior to the meeting) that the draft Fol responses be made available at this meeting.
- c. At the invitation of the Chair, Steve Virgin addressed the commission. As part of his comments, he suggested that the commission should in particular give consideration to the issues raised by the 6 points / questions set out in his email to the Chair of the commission (as included within the documents made available at the meeting setting out details of the questions received).
- d. The Service Director - Transport clarified that the report on ferry operations submitted to this meeting (agenda item 14) was essentially a general update report on ferry operations, submitted for information and comment; no decisions were being sought from the commission.

- e. Cllr Negus commented:
- There was a need to separate out the Council's dealings with the ferry companies from the dealings of the ferry companies in terms of their own administration processes.
 - The issues raised by these questions should in his view be addressed through this commission.
 - He had observed from the documents submitted that Mayor Ferguson was the person to whom the largest debt had been left. His recollection was that Mayor Ferguson had, at a previous meeting, made a statement and answered a question on these issues, but he could not recall the citing of any declaration of interest.
- f. The Chair concluded the discussion by stating that whilst there was no decision to be taken under the report to be considered later at this meeting, it would be appropriate for the commission to identify any areas of concern / matters which needed to be addressed, and make recommendations as necessary.

Question 3 – questions from Robert Duxbury

Subject: Residents parking scheme update

A written officer response was provided at the meeting.

Question 4 – questions from Maggie Shapland

Subject: Cycling /pedestrian issues

A written officer response was available at the meeting.

Summary of subsequent main points raised / noted:

- a. At the invitation of the Chair, Maggie Shapland addressed the commission, commenting that she felt further detail should have been provided, in particular detailed flow data / analysis relating to the Harbourside area.
- b. The Chair suggested that the issues raised could be taken into account by the commission as part of their discussion of the Bristol Cycle Strategy (agenda item 11) and the Walking Strategy update (agenda item 12)

Question 5 – questions from Michael Owen

Subject: Residents parking

A written officer response was provided at the meeting.

Note: in relation to residents parking, an observation / comment was raised by a member of the public (speaking at the invitation of the Chair) suggesting that linked to the introduction of residents parking schemes, new double yellow line zones were being implemented at a number of locations (at locations where car parking had been allowed previously).

Petitions:

Petition 1 – petition presented by Rob Telford

Subject: Double yellow lines, Drummond Road, St Pauls

It was noted that a written response would be supplied by the Service Director - Transport.

Statements:

The following statements were received:

Statement 1 - statement from David Redgewell

Subject: Railways / bus service review / transport issues / MetroWest

Statement 2 - statement from Richard Rankin

Subject: Ferry operations

Statement 3 - statement from Maggie Shapland

Subject: Cycling/pedestrian issues

Statement 4 - statement from Julie Boston / Caroline Stevenson

Subject: Bus services

Statement 5 - statement from Martin McDonnell

Subject: Bristol Cycle Strategy

30. Minutes - Place Scrutiny Commission – 15 September 2014

(agenda item 4)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the commission held on 15 September 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair, subject to a. noting that the Mayor and Cllr Bradshaw had attended; b. the inclusion of comments made by the Chair at the start of the meeting and at the conclusion of the public forum section of the meeting; c. amend the last sentence of the narrative comments under minute no. 19 to read: “The Mayor also thanked the commission for a helpful session.”

Matters arising:

Minute no. 19 – issue about parking in the area of the Downs:

The Service Director - Transport commented that consultation was taking place on a proposed, “limited waiting time” parking scheme. Cllr Negus stated that many people were of the view that this approach could have been considered at other locations across the city as an alternative to residents parking schemes,

31. Action sheet – Place Scrutiny Commission – 15 September 2014

(agenda item 5)

RESOLVED:

That the action sheet relating to the 15 September meeting of the commission be noted.

32. Work programme 2014/15
(agenda item 6)

The commission considered the latest update of the work programme.

Summary of main points raised / noted:

- a. In relation to the items listed for November, the Policy Adviser (Scrutiny) advised that the Monitoring Officer was considering (from a governance perspective) which scrutiny commission should most appropriately review the Arena project.
- b. The Chair commented that, in his view, it was entirely appropriate for the Place scrutiny commission to review the project, pointing out that the item had been previously identified within the commission's work programme. He stated it was unacceptable to suggest that this commission should not have a role in scrutinising the Arena project.
- c. Other members of the commission strongly supported the view that the Arena project should be scrutinised at their next meeting. Following discussion, the commission unanimously

RESOLVED -

That in this commission's view, the Arena project should be scrutinised at the next Place scrutiny commission meeting (17 November) and that (in accordance with the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny rule OSR 15), the Proper Officer be requested to give the requisite notice requiring the Mayor to attend the meeting for this item of business.

33. Whipping
(agenda item 7)

None reported.

34. Chair's business
(agenda item 8)

None reported.

35. Key decisions
(agenda item 9)

The commission considered the latest update, setting out detail of key decisions scheduled to be taken by the Mayor at Cabinet.

RESOLVED –

That the update be noted.

36. Transport policy context
(agenda item 10)

The commission considered a report setting the policy context for the series of transport themed reports submitted to this meeting.

Summary of main points raised / noted:

- a. The overview report was generally welcomed as helping to set the context for and draw links between the various transport themed reports.
- b. Cllr Negus welcomed the reference to the internal quality assurance process, designed to ensure that all interests were taken into account when schemes (transport and other public realm) were brought together. He suggested that it would be useful to look to broaden this approach, e.g. to include input from neighbourhood partnerships.
- c. In response to a point raised by Cllr Hiscott over the reference to 20 mph speed limit zones helping to improve perceptions of road safety, the Service Director - Transport clarified that 20 mph zones would help to improve road safety; Bristol streets were becoming safer year on year. In his view, people's perceptions also helped to drive their behaviour. In discussion, Cllr Windows suggested, however, that there was a risk that some people may perceive that certain roads were safer than they were in reality.

RESOLVED –

That the report and the above comments be noted.

37. Bristol Cycle Strategy
(agenda item 11)

The commission considered a report reviewing progress on the Bristol Cycle Strategy, following public consultation.

Summary of main points raised / noted:

- a. It was noted that the strategy was designed to attract and direct continued investment in cycling infrastructure and promotion. The 4 key aims were to make cycling simpler, make cycling safer, make cycling more attractive and to help make Bristol a better place. The strategy had been updated to include the main areas of feedback from the public consultation.
- b. Cllr Hiscott was critical of the fact that the consultation had taken place over the main summer holiday period, when many residents were away on holiday; she also queried how wide ranging the consultation had been. In response, officers advised that the consultation had been conducted over a 5 week period in July – August, promoted through the corporate consultation team. Cllr Jackson was also critical of the consultation, and questioned the degree to which it had, for example, reached residents of his ward in south Bristol. The Chair commented that there may be issues about the representativeness of the consultation, and that the responses may perhaps be drawn from a relatively narrow base. It was noted that a

full list of consultees would be made available to Cllr Hiscott and other commission members.

- c. Cllr Bolton broadly welcomed the strategy. He added that a firmer action plan was now in place and that it would be useful to consider involving key stakeholders (e.g. Bristol Cycling Campaign) in the implementation of relevant elements of the strategy / action plan. He also suggested that officers may wish to visit Hackney, to view the initiatives being taken there to promote and encourage cycling.
- d. Cllr Threlfall raised the issue (as also raised during the public forum earlier at the meeting) about the need to effectively address “conflict” issues between cyclists and pedestrians. She was aware of ongoing concern, especially from older people, about inappropriate cycling behaviour on pavements. In her view, the cycling and walking strategies should be integrated. In response, officers stressed that care was taken to ensure that cycling schemes were not developed in isolation. In general, in terms of “shared space” areas, the current approach was to look to segregate cyclists and pedestrians in “high flow” areas where this was possible. Rolling out cycle training and education was also seen as key in helping to build improved respect and awareness of pedestrian concerns. The experience of European cities suggested that where cities were successful in increasing the proportion of women and children cycling regularly, there was a marked reduction in cycle speeds generally. Work was ongoing with schools to encourage children participating in Bikeability (cycling proficiency and skills courses). In relation to cycle training generally, it was suggested that it would be important to widen communication and education around road use principles, e.g. widen knowledge that cyclists were entitled to take road space to “hold a lane.” The Chair suggested that there was also an issue around cyclists being aware of the importance of bike maintenance.
- e. The Chair suggested that in taking forward the cycle network, it would be important to take full account of and look for opportunities to integrate the network with other key developments, e.g. MetroBus; new school builds. It was noted in discussion that the cycle network was an aspirational network, to be used as a guide to future investment.
- f. It was recognised also that small scale infrastructure improvements (e.g. linked to road maintenance works) would also assist in taking the cycle network forward.
- g. Cllr Khan raised the issue of whether a cycle registration scheme could be brought into place. It was noted that such a measure would need to be introduced on a national, legislative basis.
- h. Cllr Jackson raised the following points:
 - The issue of bike theft needed to be taken more seriously.
 - There were issues around road safety affecting cyclists, e.g. buses not adhering to 20 mph speed limits; e.g. the condition of some roads in terms of uneven surfaces and pot holes.

RESOLVED –

That the report and the above comments be noted and that officers be requested to consider these comments in relation to the cycle strategy.

38. Walking Strategy update
(agenda item 12)

The commission reviewed an update report, reviewing progress on the Walking Strategy.

Summary of main points raised / noted:

- a. The Walking Strategy had been in place since October 2011; the action plan in particular was felt by officers to be in need of a re-fresh.
- b. In response to a question from Cllr Bolton on action point 8, officers outlined details of improvements being carried out or planned at the other key “gateway” roundabouts at the edge of the city centre area, including draft proposals for Temple Circus.
- c. In response to a question from Cllr Negus on action point 13, the Service Director - Transport clarified that action taken by Council parking attendants about parking on footways was linked to the legal power to enforce.
- d. In response to a point raised by Cllr Hiscott on action point 11, the Service Director - Transport confirmed that there was no risk of shop owners being at risk of being sued in relation to an accident taking place if they cleared the footway outside their premises of snow. It was noted that a refreshed plan (and associated communications) was in place around winter maintenance and clearing pavements.
- e. In relation to the Red/Amber/Green (RAG) rating of each action, Cllr Threlfall queried whether a green rating should be awarded where actions were not fully completed – a number of actions ranked as “Green” should in her view be rated as “Amber” e.g. action 27 around school travel plans. In discussion, it was noted that the RAG rating issue could be re-assessed as part of the review of the action plan.
- f. Cllr Jackson drew attention to the importance of delivering more dropped kerbs around neighbourhoods, to assist e.g. parents with pushchairs / buggies and wheelchair users.
- g. The Chair advised that he was aware that the provision of more benches would assist older people who wished to walk more but needed to break their walking journeys by resting.

RESOLVED –

That the report and the above comments be noted and that it be agreed that this commission will wish to be involved in the refresh of the action plan.

39. Public transport update
(agenda item 13)

RESOLVED -

That this item be deferred to the next meeting.

40. Ferry operations (agenda item 14)

The commission considered an update report on ferry operations.

Summary of main points raised / noted:

- a. As per the discussion earlier at the meeting, it was noted that commission members would be sent, for their information, a copy of the response to the Fol request submitted by Steve Virgin.
- b. It was noted that paragraph 10 of the report referred to a sustained negative press campaign against the Council and the harbour authority. Members noted that there had also been some positive media coverage around encouraging ferry use.
- c. In relation to the hydrogen ferry project (paragraphs 22 – 24), the Service Director – Transport clarified that this had been a research / technology demonstration project. The project had shown that powering a ferry via this technology was technically achievable.
- d. It was noted that the lack of a hydrogen refuelling station (and the costs associated with installing such a facility) were key factors inhibiting the development of a hydrogen ferry service. The Chair and other members expressed the view that in terms of the hydrogen economy locally, further work should take place (to be reported back to the commission) to investigate the possibility of external funding being obtained from the forthcoming OLEV (Office for Low Emission Vehicles) “Driving the Future Today” round to fund the establishment of a hydrogen refuelling station on Bristol harbour, which could potentially service a ferry boat as well as other suitable vehicles.
- e. Following further discussion, at the suggestion of the Chair, it was agreed that the Mayor should be requested to provide a “position statement” relating to the future use of hydrogen to support appropriate modes of transport.
- f. In discussion, the Service Director - Property clarified the following points:
 - The report explained the background to the decision taken to terminate financial support to a ferry service.
 - It was important to recognise that the Council was not seeking to commission a ferry service.
 - As set out in the report, the Council did have a licensing role in relation to the docks, which, for example, included the regulation of the use of landing stages by ferry companies.
 - As indicated in paragraph 9, due to the fact that the 2 ferry companies had not reached an agreement relating to their operations, the Council had produced a timetable. This timetable was in operation currently; in retrospect, it was unfortunate that paragraph 9 of the report referred to this as a 12 month “trial”; more accurately, the Council would, in March 2015, review and confirm the position in relation to timetabling.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the report and the above information / comments be noted.**

2. That in terms of the hydrogen economy, officers investigate and report further information to the commission on the possibility of obtaining OLEV funding to support the establishment of a hydrogen refuelling station.
3. That the Mayor be requested to provide a “position statement” relating to the future use of hydrogen to support appropriate modes of transport.

41. Residents parking schemes finance update
(agenda item 15)

RESOLVED :

That this item be deferred to the next meeting.

42. Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) 2015/16
(agenda item 16)

The commission considered a report on the delivery of the LSTF and the sustainable transport element of the Local Growth Fund and wider programme of spend for delivery in 2015/16.

RESOLVED:

1. That this commission endorses the delivery of the LSTF and the sustainable transport element of the Local Growth Fund, and the wider programme of spend for delivery in 2015/16 (as set out at appendix A).
2. That information be collated as an update on the previously funded and delivered infrastructure projects, and reported to a future meeting.