

Bristol City Council

Minutes of the Growth and Regeneration Scrutiny Commission



28 March 2022 at 2.00 pm

Members Present:-

Councillors: David Wilcox (Chair), Sarah Classick (Vice-Chair), Jenny Bartle, Chris Jackson, Mark Weston, Emma Edwards and Kye Dudd

1 Welcome, Introductions and Safety Information

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and did a round of introductions

2 Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Kevin Quarterly and Tim Rippington.

3 Declarations of Interest

There was none.

4 Minutes of Previous Meeting

There were no comments from Members.

Resolved; That the minutes of the previous meeting be approved as a correct record.

5 Action Tracker

The Chair gave a brief summary of completed actions and raised the outstanding action regarding Liveable Neighbourhoods. The Cabinet Member for Transport advised that a handbook was already being developed looking



at initial findings from the East Bristol pilot and that a scrutiny inquiry day would take place in the next municipal year.

6 Chair's Business

The Chair noted that an update would be provided by the Head of Development Management on a recent Local Government Ombudsman complaint.

The Head of Development Management updated Commission Members on a recent Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) complaint regarding the council taking too long to investigate complaints about unlawful houses in multiple occupation (HMOs), which was received in May 2020.

The LGO advised that there had been an unacceptable delay and although the decision was a discretionary power, it was important to maintain public confidence in the planning service. The LGO set out three actions for the service, one of which was to report their findings to the Growth & Regeneration Scrutiny Commission, who may decide whether to bring the item back to Scrutiny to check progress in reducing the backlog.

The Head of Development Management noted that the team were working closely with Housing colleagues on HMO licencing to ensure services were aligned and that there was now an enforcement officer within the team to help with tackling the backlog and to focus on this area of work going forwards.

Members asked that a written statement be provided to the commission to confirm details on the recent Local Government Ombudsman complaint, which would be published on the website. Members also requested further information on outstanding cases relating to HMOs with a breakdown by ward.

Action: The Service Manager for Development Management to provide Commission Members with a written statement confirming details on the recent Local Government Ombudsman complaint regarding the council taking too long to investigate complaints about unlawful houses in multiple occupation (HMOs), and further information on outstanding cases relating to HMOs with a breakdown by ward.

7 Public Forum

The following Public Forum questions and statements were received, and detail can be found [here](#).

Public Forum Questions:

Ref	Name	Topic
Q1 – Q4	Kathe Jacob & Nick Crossling	Mina Road Traffic and Active Travel
Q5 – Q12	Rob Bryher	Liveable Neighbourhoods and Clean Air Zone



Q13	TRESA (Totterdown Residents Environmental & Social Action)	Strategic Transport Plans
Q14 – Q15	David Redgewell	Bus and Rail Service Improvements

Public Forum Statements:

Ref	Name	Topic
S1	David Redgewell, South West Transport Network and Railfuture Severnside; Ian Beckey, Gloucestershire catch the bus campaign; and Peter Travis, Somerset bus campaign.	Transport

Suzanne Audrey was in attendance on behalf of TRESA and expressed that they were not satisfied with the response provided. As active travel was encouraged, a route for pedestrians and cyclists needed to be improved. Suzanne asked the following supplementary question: As proposals were not currently being developed to improve active travel routes from Three Lamps junction over Bath Road bridge to Temple Meads, when would the council be looking at possible options?

The Head of City Transport advised that given the constraints on the route, a new structure would be required which would come at a significant cost to the council and also, it was important to look at the network as a whole, any changes may cause congestion in the surrounding areas. It was noted that the team were working with Temple Island colleagues on development plans and a summary could be provided after the meeting with a written response to Suzanne's supplementary question.

David Redgewell was in attendance and asked the following supplementary questions:

What work was taking place regionally to address the revenue support for bus services in the city and, when would planning applications for a train station in Henbury be going to Committee.

The Cabinet Member for Transport advised that the question around bus services was for the West of England Combined Authority but the assured that the council was working with the relevant colleagues on infrastructure and looking at segregated routes which would make the services more commercially viable. With regards to Henbury Station, officer advised that the flooding issues in the area would need to be resolved before any planning applications could be submitted but this was in progress.

Rob Bryher was in attendance and asked the following supplementary questions:

Rob asked what elements made a Liveable Neighbourhood from the council's perspective and how many modal filters could be funded as part of future Liveable Neighbourhood schemes given that small individual measures cost £40k. The Cabinet Member for Transport advised that the council were currently working through to get the



website updated to create a clearer picture of Liveable Neighbourhoods and that they didn't want a top down approach, ideas would need to come from residents.

Rob asked what would be the council's approach if the Clean Air Zone meets compliance by summer 2024 and what other measures will be considered at that point if compliance had not been met. The Head of City Transport advised that the Clean Air Zone would encourage car users to take a different route or mode of transport and noted that as cars got newer, the level of emissions would get lower. It was noted that creating a new scheme would not be feasible as the council would be compliant in the time it would take to implement but the administration would be able to decide at that point if they would like to look at other measures.

Rob asked how much income had been generated from the penalty charge notices on Bristol Bridge since the route closure to general traffic. The Head of City Transport advised that an exact figure wasn't available as all revenue generated by fines goes back into the Parking Services budget.

8 Strategic Transport Plans

The Head of City Transport introduced the item and shared a presentation on the Strategic Transport Plans.

A Member asked if the council would revisit plans for the Henbry loop now that plans for an Arena in Bristol had moved from the City Centre to Filton, but officers advised that this would not be reconsidered due to the cost.

Members also asked if there were any plans for the future of the number 2 bus route and officers confirmed that engagement for the route had concluded in January 2022 and that the team were currently working through responses.

A Member asked how much had been spent to date on engagement for the Liveable Neighbourhoods pilot in East Bristol. The Head of Transport advised that they didn't have the data to hand but would follow up with Members after the meeting.

Action: The Head of City Transport to provide Commission Members with information on the total spend to date on engagement for the Liveable Neighbourhoods pilot in East Bristol.

A Member asked if there was any scope for a development similar to CPNN (Cribbs Patchway New Neighbourhood) in Southmead. Officers advised that various options were considered but none made a difference to the current transport network, which was an ongoing issue in the area however, the team were looking at cycling improvements.

Members raised concerns around the lack of strategic transport plans for South Bristol, specifically around active travel routes, and asked if road improvements would be made around the Bamfield and Airport Road junction to make it safer as part of upcoming BoKlok developments in the area. The Head of City Transport advised that this would be raised with the relevant officers and further information could be provided after the meeting.

Action: The Head of City Transport to provide Commission Members with further information on plans for the roads surrounding the upcoming BoKlok developments in South Bristol.

There was a conversation around mass transit corridors in East Bristol and how it links in with the Liveable Neighbourhoods pilot. Officers advised that Church Road is the main corridor currently from Bristol East, but the road is too narrow for more cycle or bus lanes. Ideally, Liveable Neighbourhoods would allow a route that runs



parallel to Church Road. Members noted that Church Road is a destination and not just a through route and that improving walking and cycling in the area was a priority.

Members raised concerns around quality of bus services in Hengrove and noted that residents feel cut off. Officers noted that this was challenging as the bus services were commercially run so will prioritise areas where people use them the most but that the Clean Air Zone would help protect those services as it will encourage more people to use the bus.

A Member asked if there was anything that the council could do to help subsidise buses for young people and were advised that there are cheaper ticket options for young people and that there are other options such as buying annual tickets to reduce the price.

A Member asked how much the Eastville viaduct renewal would cost and officers advised that they had been meeting National Highways who were still working up plans for the renewal which wouldn't be funded in this period.

9 Highways Maintenance

The Director of Management of Place introduced the item, and the Head of Traffic & Highways Maintenance shared a presentation giving an overview of the Highways Maintenance service.

Members noted the national shortage of engineers and asked what kind of apprenticeship programmes were on offer in the service and if you needed to be a university graduate to access those roles. Officers noted that the team take on apprentices right from school leaver age providing they have the right qualifications and if successful, they would be given the opportunity to undertake full time roles within the team.

Members went on to ask about level of engagement with schools and breaking down stereotypes as apprenticeships were often perceived to be the second class option over degrees, which was not true. Officers advised that the council's apprenticeships team had a range of contacts which helped maximise the reach for apprenticeship vacancies and that there were lots of success stories within the team which were used to break down those stereotypes as some apprenticeships went up to degree level. Members urged the team to take on more apprentices where funding allows.

There was a conversation around funding for road repairs and maintenance and Members asked how the council ensures contractors are held accountable if work is not completed to a good standard. Members were advised that the council would dispute should they be dissatisfied with the work completed but the team carry out regular checks, especially on large projects to ensure work was to a good standard.

There was a conversation around the reporting of highways maintenance issues and officers noted that this could be done in person at the Citizen Service Points if residents were unable to access the online portal 'Fix My Streets' or were experiencing long wait times on the phone. Members asked about wait times for fixing streetlights and asked if solar panels could be an option for powering them going forwards. Officers noted that the team were looking at replacing streetlights with LEDs to ensure better efficiency going forwards and that potential funding had been identified subject to a business case, but this was still in early stages.

Action: The Director of Management of Place to provide information around the average wait time for fixing streetlights once reported.



There was a conversation around the durability of concrete roads and the impact of climate change on the materials used for surface relaying, repairs, maintenance etc. and Members raised concerns around potholes. It was advised that colleagues in the service were looking at more durable materials and conducting research around work that had been completed in hotter climates.

Action: The Director of Management of Place to provide Commission Members with further information around the durability of materials used for repairs and maintenance currently, and around the recent research into the materials used in hotter climates. Also, information around long term plans for concrete roads.

A Member asked if the council has any guarantees with the contractors who completed the surface relaying work on Broad Quay and was advised that the relevant officer would be able to provide further information on this after the meeting.

Action: The Director of Management of Place to provide Commission Members with further information on the council's guarantees with the contractors who completed the recent surface relaying works on Broad Quay.

There was a conversation around funding for the repairs and maintenance of Plimsoll Bridge and Gaol Ferry Bridge and Members asked for more information around timescales for these works.

Action: The Director of Management of Place to provide further information around timescales for the repairs and maintenance of Plimsoll Bridge and Gaol Ferry Bridge.

10 Work Programme

Item not discussed.

Meeting ended at 4:50pm

CHAIR _____

