

Bristol City Council

Minutes of the Place Scrutiny Commission

17 October 2016 at 2.00 pm



Members Present:-

Councillors: Jude English (Chair), Tom Brook, Tony Carey, Paul Goggin, Sultan Khan, Steve Pearce, Jerome Thomas, Mhairi Threlfall, Jon Wellington, Mark Weston and Mark Wright

Officers in Attendance:-

Barra Mac Ruairi (Strategic Director - Place), Peter Mann (Service Director - Transport), Ed Plowden, Sarah Toy (Strategic Resilience Officer), Johanna Holmes (Policy Advisor - Scrutiny) and Sam Mahony (Democratic Services Officer)

1. Welcome, Introductions and Safety Information

Everyone was welcomed to the meeting and invited to introduce themselves.

2. Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

Apologies were received from Cabinet Member for Place Councillor Helen Holland

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Action Sheet

The minutes of the 20th September 2016 were agreed as a correct record.

With reference to the action sheet, it was confirmed that the Prince Street Bridge project management and cost was within the remit of Place Scrutiny Commission. **ACTION: The item would be added to the January work programme subject to officer availability.**

With reference to the Megabus bus stop site, officers continued to explore all of the options and had confirmed that Bond Street stop would continue to be utilised until Christmas at the least. It was



suggested that a site behind Cabot Circus (opposite Future Inns) should be considered. The item would continue to feature on the action sheet until resolved.

5. West of England Joint Scrutiny Committee - September agenda and forward plan

The information provided was noted.

6. Chair's Business

The Chair requested an overview from the Service Director, Transport regarding the management of the Long Ashton Park and Ride site. The Service Director, Transport confirmed that the Council were still in discussion with the landowner, the content of which was currently legally confidential at present. A report would be provided to the Commission as soon as possible. It was agreed that any report would be coordinated with the inquiry requested by Councillor Goulandris to avoid duplication.

ACTION: Report regarding the Long Ashton Park and Ride management to be provided when legally appropriate.

With reference to Residents Parking Schemes reviews it was confirmed that Councillor Bradshaw, Cabinet Member for Transport would be attending the next meeting on 17th November. A communication from Councillor Bradshaw to Councillors involved in the current reviews would set out the changes made including a free form box and extension of the first five reviews.

7. Public Forum

The following statements were submitted as public forum and were noted:

PS01 Councillor Don Alexander – Real Time Information Boards

Officers confirmed that RTI suffered from patches of low mobile phone signal availability and it was hoped an officer would be able to provide further information. **ACTION: A further response would be sent to Councillor Alexander following the meeting.**

PS02 David Redgewell – Transport Issues

The statement was noted.

8. Work Programme

The work programme was noted.

9. Draft Corporate Strategy 2017-22, Business Plan 2017-18 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2017-18 - 2021-22



The Commission received a report and supplementary information outlining the draft Business Plan 2017/18 sections for Place, Transport and Homes, including the draft financial and saving proposals contained within. During the ensuing discussions the following points were made:

Our Transport

1. Charge for advisory disabled bays and Keep Clear markings

- a. Members questioned if the approach was 'one size fits all' and if so what would happen with those in receipt of benefits? **(ACTION: Question for response)**

2. Remove funding for local traffic schemes currently devolved to Neighbourhood Partnerships

- a. The current allocation of £410k currently held in the capital corporate budget and devolved to Neighbourhood Partnerships for local traffic schemes could be withdrawn and reallocated to the highway budget centrally as part of the broader capital programme. The saving did not necessarily equate to less spend on traffic schemes. Future schemes would then be identified via objective criteria. It was confirmed that only future years funding would be affected and Section 106 and CIL resources would be unaffected.
- b. Councillors highlighted that importance of ensuring that local people continued to have their say as the proposals would disempower the local residents from influence and the link with Neighbourhoods would be lost.
- c. Officers confirmed that decisions around ideas and options would remain with the use of the Traffic Choices website and engagement would still be expected to continue at a local level.

3. Remove Companion Concessionary Bus Passes and withdraw reimbursements to Community Transport operators for concessionary travel

- a. Members were concerned about the proposed discontinued provision for concessionary bus passes and knock on effect that would have for Community Transport, which was vital for connecting communities.

4. Reduction of subsidies for bus routes with low numbers of passengers

- a. Concern was raised regarding a reduction of spending by half and the knock on effects on many other sectors. Members asked for clarification of how the level of reduction was chosen and what other options may be. Also, whether officers would return following the consultation and before making any final decision. **(ACTION: Question for response)**
- b. Officers confirmed that the process would be similar to the recent consultation on community bus services and other factors such as the financial market and current contracts would also affect the final decision.

5. Stop funding the Freight Consolidation Centre which is not profitable



- a. Councillors requested further information about past efforts to make the venture commercially successful, how the product had been marketed to the private sector and questioned the negotiation of an improved contract with an operator. **(ACTION: Question for response)**
- b. It was suggested that introducing planning conditions around last mile deliveries, permitting electric vehicles use of bus lanes or the implementation of a clean air zone would improve options for the FCC.

6. Reorganise how school crossings are patrolled

- a. Councillors highlighted the importance of working with schools regarding the proposals and any alternative methods for providing patrols for school crossings outside 80 school sites around Bristol.
- b. Officers highlighted that not all schools had the provision and suggested one alternative method could involve volunteers. The development of the culture of safety and slow speeds within the City and specifically around schools may mean a crossing person was no longer a requirement.
- c. Officers were asked if risk assessments had been carried out, and if the cost comparison of a zebra crossing versus a crossing person could simply move the cost to a different budget. **(ACTION: Question for response)**

7. General considerations

- a. Officers reported that the management of the contraction of staff was organisation wide and not specific to a single directorate budget. The consideration for directorates however was for the delivery of the same service following the implementation of efficiencies.
- b. It was highlighted that savings listed did not necessarily add up to the totals outlined. Officers confirmed that there remained other savings outside of those listed within the document such as the reconsideration and consolidation of lease arrangements. Councillors therefore requested clarification of what those figures were. **(ACTION: Question for response)**

8. Gradually reduce funding to Destination Bristol

- a. Members highlighted the Scrutiny Culture Inquiry Day which took place last year at which it was concluded that the net spend on the cultural offer was already low in Bristol compared to other authorities and match funding from the Arts Council would be at risk if there was a change in policy.
- b. It was suggested that any cut to funding to Destination Bristol needed consideration in terms of income from tourism. Officers confirmed that the income based membership model of which BCC were a member needed consideration with clarification of their Business Plan and Service Level Agreement. The effect on surrounding authorities also needed consideration.

9. Review Museum Opening Hours



- a. Members requested further analysis of proposals for museums as closures or changes in opening hours needed to be considered alongside loss of revenue. **(ACTION: Question for response)**
- b. Councillors highlighted that there were collections and museum pieces that were not currently displayed but could be exhibited elsewhere with a charge made which would offset some of the cost of running the museums. Partnerships with universities could also be explored.
- c. Although the first option would be to increase donations without barrier to entry, another option would be the commercialisation of museums and collections. There was also scope for digitalising some of the information and also investment to take advantage of the footfall outside the door of the Bristol Museum & Gallery.

10. Additional income from The Bottleyard Studios

- a. Recent investment had improved the fabric of the building in order to generate a better offer and income.

11. The draft Capital Programme 2017-2022

The following schemes were highlighted:

T104 – Affordable Housing Enabling Budget (Get Bristol Building)

Changes had been proposed for the capital programme and further information would be forthcoming. **(ACTION: Further information to be provided when available.)**

T107 – Residents Parking Schemes

The phrase ‘parking infrastructure’ suggests car parks therefore the heading may need to be reviewed.

T117 – Bristol Temple Meads East Regeneration

It was questioned whether figures outlined were relevant to the original Arena timeline or the revised new timeline. Officers confirmed that T117 referred to the whole site rather than just the Arena and work would continue past the completion of the Arena.

T120 – Investment in Energy Company

Members asked whether the Energy Company continued to be a sound investment, or alternatively, could changes result in BCC paying into the Company as a customer. Officers confirmed that although slightly behind in terms of customer numbers, the start-up company had developed well. The business plans for the Companies would be considered by Shareholders and discussions would take place regarding the investment and how the Companies worked together. The outcome of those discussions would be fed back to OSM via Councillor Gollop.

T121 – Planning and Sustainable Development

With reference to Legible City Funding, officers were asked if there were plans to include parks within wayfinding. **(ACTION: Question for response)**



Officers confirmed that wayfinding was being upgraded including its relationship with advertising. Work would continue to consider i-points through Metrobus and across different media.

T203 – Rail Stations Improvement Programme

Appropriate access continued to be pursued however resource had not been forthcoming. There was some potential within Devolution and Tiers 2 and 3 needed reconsideration in line with the preferences of the current administration.

T301 – M32 Park and Ride

A review of the need for a Park and Ride in the North of the City and the appropriate land for its site was highlighted. Officers confirmed that the Joint Transport Study identified areas within the greater Bristol area and a large piece of work needed to take place.

Officers confirmed that written responses would be provided to the questions that had not been answered or where more information could be provided by officers. **(ACTION: Further information/responses to be provided)**. Further consideration of the draft Business Plan 2017/18 would take place at the Place Scrutiny Commission meeting in January 2017.

10 Draft Public Transport Information Strategy

The Scrutiny Commission received the report from the Service Director Transport and a powerpoint presentation which outlined elements of the Bristol's Public Transport Information Strategy prior to consultation with stakeholders and a Cabinet decision in the New Year.

In response to the presentation the following comments were made:

- a. Members were complimentary about the bus checker app although the trip checker app was sometimes slow where multiple feeds were involved. Officers confirmed that it was hoped that the open market would take over when the current license ran out.
- b. Large Real Time Information displays would be helpful at suburban railway stations as well as a better location at Temple Meads Station for improved integration of rail and bus information.
- c. Information at bus stops was updated four times a year and there was a process in place. However, due to the number of changes and the wealth of data as well as the late hour of the information involved in September, this had taken longer than usual.
- d. If bus stops were vandalised this should be reported. Problem locations could be reconsidered and a bomb proof material utilised for shelters (although it was not suited to all shelters). BCC owned most bus stops with a maintenance contract for their upkeep however, most of the cost of vandalised bus stops was borne by BCC.
- e. There would likely be a renegotiation of contracts in 2020 whereby the approach to advertising could be developed. It was suggested that video screens used for adverts could be utilised for bus information.



- f. The lack of consultation time when services were altered or ceased was raised due to the commercial market where operators preferred to keep strategies and information secret as long as possible.
- g. It was confirmed that a bill was progressing through the House of Lords which would make it easier for franchises. This would be particularly of interest going into a combined authority.
- h. In terms of making the consultation as meaningful as possible it was suggested that the bus checker app could be used for an online survey, as well as 'in person' consultation with bus users. It was suggested that the model used to consult on Supported Bus Services could be utilised, including working with the Neighbourhood Partnership system.

RESOLUTION: The report was noted and comments provided to officers to help shape the development of the Bristol Public Transport Information Strategy.

11 Bristol Resilience Strategy

The Commission received a report and powerpoint presentation from officers which sought views on the Place related implications of adopting the Bristol Resilience Strategy in advance of presentation to Cabinet on 1st November 2016.

In response to the presentation the following points were made:

- a. There had been a rigorous process with support from consultants to identify the points highlighted. Those ten points were to an extent already articulated with identified challenges and outcomes however more points could come to the fore and there was six months to feed in and integrate resilience into future plans.
- b. It was suggested that the measurement of success in 10 to 50 years time would not be easy to identify given the interface between articulating long term aspirations and short term political tensions. Officers planned to allocate a resilience value to each action as information was developed.
- c. The focus on the future population by changing behaviour at a young age (such as through the provision of free public transport for example) was supported.
- d. There was available resource via the Rockafella Organisation with the challenge to hook into opportunities. Value could be extracted from associated companies and organisations.
- e. It was suggested that future flood risk for example, could be managed via a two way flood barrage down river to keep the tide out and river water in order to make the river frontage more beautiful. Such a project could add value to areas such as St Annes, St Phillips and the Avon Cut.

RESOLUTION: The report was noted with comments made provided to officers



Meeting ended at 5.10 pm

CHAIR _____

