

Place Scrutiny Commission 17/11/16

1. Welcome, Introductions and Safety Information

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

2. Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

None received.

3. Declarations of Interest

To note any declarations of interest from the Councillors. They are asked to indicate the relevant agenda item, the nature of the interest and in particular whether it is a disclosable pecuniary interest.

Please note that the Register of Interests is available at

<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/councillors/members-interests-gifts-and-hospitalityregister>

Any declarations of interest made at the meeting which is not on the register of interests should be notified to the Monitoring Officer for inclusion.

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Action Sheet

The minutes of the 17th October 2016 meeting were agreed as a correct record.

With regards the action sheet more clarification was asked for in regards to freight consolidation and time scales on electric vehicles and more specifics. Committee noted that this was intended as a summary of activity to date on what has been done with existing funding to encourage use and that current contractors were being engaged to make it more commercially viable. **(Action: Officers to provide a more expanded answer on how it can be made viable going forward).**

5. Chair's Business

No business from the chair.

6. Public Forum

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

PS01 – David Redgewell – Metro West Phase 1 & 2 concerns and transport issues

PS02 and PS03 (Chocolate Factory Development Easton) were deferred to the **Development Control A Committee who will be dealing with the planning application, on the advice of officers.**

PS04 –Cllr Olly Mead –Warm Up Bristol (WUB) – Officers are in contact with Cllr Mead to brief separately and a report will be coming to scrutiny committee on WUB in March.

7. Joint Spatial Plan and Joint Transport Study.

The Commission considered the consultation documents 'Towards the Emerging Spatial Strategy' for the West of England Joint Spatial Plan and Joint Transport Study.

Officers presented the documents using the 8th November consultation launch presentation.

Place Scrutiny members were invited to consider these documents in advance of the discussion to inform a response from Scrutiny to be submitted to the consultation (which runs until December 19th).

With four Authorities are considering their ideas and proposing via this consultation committee agreed it is important the Bristol perspective is heard to influence the final strategy displayed to government.

The following remarks were received:

A) The Commission asked for clarity on whether the growth plans of the two universities and the impact this will have. Officers confirmed this had been factored into housing targets. The strategy takes into consideration a variety of factors that impact on growth including students, immigration and other factors.

B) It was noted that the retail centres had not been included in the framework. Officers clarified that this was a practical step to keep the JSP/JTS moving forward. It was too contentious and that the priority was to get a high level plan in place. It was confirmed that decisions on where next growth centres should go will be looked at once this is agreed.

C) Members queried the definitions used for affordable homes in the proposal targets. The definition used is "someone who cannot afford market rent or needs social (publically subsidised) rents". So does not fall in the remit of starter homes.

D) Park and Ride (P&R) was recognised as key to the Transport element of the strategy and officers confirmed Cllr Bradshaw is in discussions with Clifton RFC over their proposed developments. It was noted that the majority of the P & R are not within the Bristol boundary. A fundamental ask of our partners is to deliver these. To

enable us to build the 12,000 homes as the supporting infrastructure is vital. (Members agreed that this should to be a priority part of the plan and that neighbouring local authorities needed to provide the investment required and unlock new Park & Ride sites.

E) Discussions highlighted the clash between a transport focussed and a green belt focussed approach. Officers welcomed this and encouraged such comments to be submitted, to highlight the contrast in criteria for both options.

F) A discussion was had on the options with regards to heavy rail and light transit. Officer confirmed all options are being considered currently as this is a high level strategic document. **(Action Adam Crowther: more information requested on the implications for freight on the Avonmouth line if we pursued trams/light transit).**

G) Members questioned the impact on climate change targets if we build the target number of homes. Whilst there are no explicit targets a sustainability appraisal will happen alongside and modified step by step during the process. Input into whether this was explicit enough was welcomed.

H) Potential impact on council policy of new student housing in the city centre going forward will be addressed in a separate report requested by the Mayor. This will be referred to when ready.

I) A desire to see stronger measures to ensure future housing stock are bought by people not investors was aired. It was suggested to raise this with Cllr Paul Smith when he attends a future Commission.

J) How the Metro Mayor might fit into this consultation work was referenced and it was clarified that this process will continue with the FOUR authorities. The Metro Mayor, once elected, will have their own plan for 2018 with the three devolution authorities that will build on aspects of the JSP/JTS.

Resolved: A response from Scrutiny Members to be collated, agreed and then submitted towards the consultation

(Action: Officers to report JTS and JSP progress and next steps at future Commissions as appropriate).

8. Update on the previous Transport Inquiry Day

The Commission noted the progress from the previous inquiry day and were consulted on whether another Inquiry Day was desired or needed.

Members felt that this work should continue to link in with the JTS. It was noted that the set of recommendations to officers and their responses have fed into the JTS and will be considered in more detail as part of that.

Whilst successful it was felt the Inquiry Day was very broad and could benefit from a more specific area of focus.

It was noted the recommendations had also been passed to Joint Scrutiny.

9) Supported Bus Services – timings were amended and this item brought forward.

The current supported bus service contracts are under contract until September 2017. As part of the review of the supported service network, a consultation was carried out to seek people's views on Bristol City Council's services. Members considered the report and provided comments on the consultation results and proposed tendering options. This covers a 5 year period and retendering would not occur again until 2022. Committee welcome the report and commended its clear layout and good visuals. It was noted that the responses had increased from 200 at the last pre-tender consultation to 1300 this time round.

Officers outlined the progress of the process so far which started on September 30th. This work is closely linked to the wider Budget Consultation which will have implications on the tender process depending on what level of funding is maintained.

Members noted that the current budget is £1.8 Million and that the potential impact of savings proposed is a 50% reduction (25% 17/18, 25% 18/19)

Officers informed Members that the detailed revenue numbers for the routes are outlined year on year within the report.

The current timeline was outlined:

Tenders with bidders – November - Jan

Evaluation of tenders – January 2017

Cabinet – 24 January 2017

Award Services – February/March 2017

Register supported bus services with Traffic Commissioner – July 2017

New timetables to go live - September 2017

Once budget situation becomes clearer early 2017 reprioritisation would then be needed after if cuts were implemented. And officers shared the top criteria for prioritisation.

All potential options and contingencies will be laid out from the current budget through to 50% cuts to a total withdrawal of funding. Cost increases due to inflation will also be factored in.

One clear preference to be looked at was a form of Bedminster/ Central loop to Temple Meads. To be decided before Monday tender decision. **(Action for Officers: To ask the Cabinet Member for Transport if shuttle trains from Bedminster Station to Temple Meads would be a more viable alternative than new buses)**

Officers were asked about the subsidisy of any route in light of disruption and what happens if it is disrupted or amended. It was confirmed there is a long list clawback penalties in place for part or full cancellations.

Members noted that Section 106 money for the 505 will last for 2-3 years and the hope is this will become commercially viable and standalone thereafter. **(Action for presenting Officers to provide breakdown for Members)**

Members commended the quality of the work of officers especially in light of the difficulties faced with upcoming budget decisions.

10) Cabinet Member for Transport Q & A Session

Committee members had a chance to table questions to Cabinet Member for Transport, Councillor Mark Bradshaw

The following comments were made during the discussions:

On the note of buses Cllr Bradshaw updated the committee that discussions were ongoing with operators to update maps of the city on stops.

The Commission requested an update on the deferral of electrification on the line between Bath Spa and Bristol Temple Meads. It was felt that Network Rail had been asked to do too much. Both the Members and Cllr Bradshaw were disappointed at the tagging of Temple Meads as a "Branch Line" giving its 11 Million passengers a year.

Cllr Bradshaw, together with the Mayor, will be calling for a clear time line from the government and a commitment for funding from the Department for Transport (DFT).

Joint lobbying was discussed and Members noted that the Mayor had already written a robust letter to the Minister for Rail. Cllr Bradshaw welcomed the scrutiny commission adding their voice and it was noted there is precedent working cross party with MPs across the city region to lobby Government. It was agreed that the Commission would also write to the Minister for Rail.

The impact on Metro West phase two was also raised by the committee as this is an essential pre cursor to any electrification work. With the Audit Office report deferring the electrification work it could provide an opportunity to push for Bristol East

Junction work and Cllr Bradshaw confirmed this was a priority to press for commitment and funding.

Resolved: that the Commission would write to the Minister for Rail expressing how vital it is that the network is fully electrified to Bristol Temple Meads

(Action: Officers Mayoral letter to be circulated to Commission to inform their own written response to the Minister)

An update was provided on concerns regarding Hartcliffe Way MetroBus works (committee noted this overlaps with the later update)

Members raised concerns regarding child safety caused by works and resulting disruption, especially on Novers Hill, that had been echoed by ward councillors in Fillwood. Added pressure was added by house building happening concurrently.

Cllr Bradshaw shared the concerns of the committee and was of the view that previous communication was not good enough in 2014 when planning was approved initially. But he was able to confirm that contractors had been working with Parson Street School on their issues.

Committee noted that Novers Hill was the only viable alternative route. The project in question is not light touch but requires major works. Cllr Bradshaw updated the committee on efforts to make the work to the route as safe as possible, including collaboration with Police and Sat Nav providers Tom Tom & Garmin. Other measures include pedestrian barriers and school crossing patrol evaluations.

The Commission welcomed the updates but highlighted that communication issues were a recurring theme and requested better management of information flows on issues such as this.

Management issues around Resident's Parking enquiries were raised.

Some members had been encountering issues when trying to get timely answers to issues raised via the email address they had been asked to use and in some cases face to face meetings being cancelled on the day by officers it was asked what could be done to manage things better.

The Commission and Cllr Bradshaw noted it was important to not use lack of resource as an excuse and it was important to manage things properly to avoid these problems.

Members of the committee also wanted to highlight that positive meetings had been held successfully also. They also wished to thank Cllr Bradshaw and officers for making some changes to the RPS consultation.

Action: Peter Mann & Cllr Bradshaw offered his apologies and a further meeting will be set up to replace the cancelled one. Cllr Bradshaw also asked

members to copy emails to him highlighting the issues and where things are being held up).

The challenges around deploying the priority 'cleaner and greener' vehicles for Ashton Vale were discussed. Cllrs Bradshaw confirmed that a tranche of new "Euro G" vehicles would be arriving next week – the highest standard of emission standard available to us.

Further upgrades are expected within two years once better standards become available, currently behind due to lack of capacity to deliver the technology in the market. The need for better communication of the issue being a technical, market driven problem rather than a council or service provider failure was raised.

On the issue of clean transport, Members also asked how we can encourage smaller operators (who lack the resources of the likes of First who lead in clean technology) to go cleaner and greener? A discussion was had about the number of smaller but vital providers who operate throughout the city and how any enforcement would impact them.

Government funding is being used to help retrofit engines and this is one avenue the committee wished to see further explored. A grant from the Department of Transport is currently in negotiation.

11. MetroBus

Report recommendations and an update on the progress of the project were presented to the committee for their information. A reminder of the core impact of the scheme (linking the south and north and economic opportunities) as well as the environmental mitigation being built in was highlighted.

It was queried whether the issue of the Skew bridge specifications being altered by network rail (due to electrification) could be raised in the letter to the minister and compensation sought for the delay and costs.

Officers confirmed that work is on schedule to be complete for September 2017 and they do not anticipate more disruption to the cenotaph and memorial services come November 2017.

Stoke Lane issues and the timetables for reopening are being evaluated. Two public meetings were being held the following day to present options and find out preferences. An announcement will be made off the back of this.

It was noted that one will be 2-4pm in UWE for those interested.

12. Work programme and AOB

The scrutiny work programme was noted.

The Chair updated the Commission that future scrutiny of the Arena project will come back to the Place Scrutiny Commission. The chair also gave a reminder to members to submit any particular items of interest for future agendas and to join planning meetings to ensure a broad input.

It was noted that the Air Quality briefing date was being rearranged by the scrutiny officer. However, it was likely to take place on the 12th December at 6pm.