

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a MEETING held at COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE on 15 JANUARY 2009.

PRESENT: Mr JB Osborn (Chairman), Mr BE Dalton, Mr E Clark, Mr AN Deane, Dr JM English, Mrs ME Groom, Mr A Molland, Mr RT Rogers, Mrs P Rugg and Mrs JH Rooke.

1. **Apologies** Mr AJ Trotman and Mr RS While.

2. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Resolved: To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2008

3. **Real Time Passenger Information System – Update**

The Committee had been monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of this system for some time. More recently this work had been undertaken outside of the meeting by Jeff Osborn, Tony Molland and Terry Chivers following public concern over reliability.

A report by the Director of Environmental Services was circulated which summarised the project's objectives and updated members on progress since the recruitment of a permanent Project Manager, including performance against the two agreed measures.

Officers explained that following a survey of mast sites it has been estimated that 75% of the system's difficulties could be attributed to radio problems. Connected with this signs at stops were not set up properly to receive signals and some buses needed retuning. Most of the remedial work had now been done at the mast sites and signs. Some isolated geographic areas might still cause minor problems but these would be investigated under the next phase of the project.

Members commented on the value of having a dedicated project officer and that once the signalling had been sorted out full commitment from the operators was needed to ensure the use of properly equipped vehicles and accurate keying of data by drivers. This should then be reflected in significantly improved performance measured against the indicators.

Resolved:

- (1) To thank the officers for their report and for attending the meeting and answering questions.
- (2) To note the update report and the work done by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman between the meetings, and in particular to highlight:
 - (i) the recent upward trend in the performance indicator information although it was still along way off the target of 85-90%;
 - (ii) performance information was circulated monthly to the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Mr Chivers and the Cabinet Member;
 - (iii) the outcome of the radio base station review which demonstrated that radio mast problems were probably responsible for 75% of the system failures;
 - (iv) radio coverage problems may still affect some geographical areas;
 - (v) the need to increase the use of buses by First on the route fitted with appropriate equipment – 22.2% in December; and,
 - (vi) the latest performance of Wilts and Dorset.
- (3) To welcome the improvements in the system to date as a result of the appointment of the Project Officer and agree that the Project continues to the next stage.
- (4) To seek a further report to scrutiny at the completion of Stage 2 of Workstream 2 scheduled for May 2009.
- (5) To agree that the Chairman writes to the Cabinet Member with the views of the Committee in order to ensure continued Executive support for the improvement project and for the system generally in the longer term.

4. Development of the Network Management Plan for Wiltshire

A report by the Director of Environmental Services was circulated along with the draft of the Network Management Plan itself.

The Committee asked for this report during its consideration of the implementation of the provisions of the Traffic Management Act in June

last year. The Team Leader, Transport Policy gave a presentation to members on the main features of the Plan.

Members were informed that the network management was one element of an authority's transport activities which should complement other policies and actions. A detailed action plan had been prepared and was circulated at appendix B to the report

Members asked a number of questions on issues including the definition of congestion, involvement of stakeholders in contributing to the Plan's content, working relationship with the utilities, determining maintenance priorities and flooding. The Chairman recognised the amount of work that had gone in to the Plan's production and although it was intended as a strategic document he felt greater member engagement would enhance its credibility and acceptance as a leading policy document.

Resolved

- (1) To thank the officers for their report and presentation, and for answering questions.
- (2) To note the development of the emerging Network Management Plan for Wiltshire (NMP), and in particular:
 - (i) that it was the most significant and important change introduced by the Traffic Management Act;
 - (ii) it must be consistent with the wider local, regional and national policies and guidance, and the overall policies of the Council; and,
 - (iii) the positive response of GOSW to progress made to date by the Council in tackling congestion and the network management duty.
- (3) To note the development of a detailed action plan to implement the NMP and the progress made, although some delays had occurred due to other work demands.
- (4) To note the intention that the Cabinet Member would be asked to formally approve the NMP for Wiltshire in March, but recommend that was not done until after a meaningful consultation exercise including area boards had been undertaken in order to give the Plan the necessary credibility and ownership it deserves, and hence a greater chance of successful implementation.
- (5) To recognise the significance of this work and the implications for the new Council, and therefore recommend that more

detailed scrutiny is undertaken by the appropriate committee after June.

5. **Transport Accessibility to Health Services**

It was reported that the Health Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 20 November recommended the Management Committee to undertake a review of transport accessibility to health services following work done by its Reforming Community Services Task Group.

The Health Scrutiny Committee had considered a report from its Pathways for Change Task Group in March 2007 (the forerunner to the current task group) in which transport was highlighted. The Local Transport Plan (LTP) and recent LTP progress report commented on the lack of meaningful progress with the PCT on this aspect. In supporting the work and findings of the Reforming Community Services Task Group, the PCT had confirmed their wish to work constructively with the Council on this matter.

Resolved:

- (1) To approve the recommendation of the Health Scrutiny Committee and in response establish a rapid scrutiny exercise to consider the issue in the first instance.
- (2) To invite Tony Deane, Mollie Groom, John English and Pat Rugg to undertake the exercise and report back to the next meeting.

6. **Overview and Scrutiny Arrangements in the Interregnum Period**

A report by the Service Director, Legal and Democratic Services was circulated. This was considered by JOSTB on 21 November which agreed the third option set out in paragraph 10 for recommendation to the Management Committee.

Resolved: To approve the recommendation of realigning JOSTB under the Management Committee from 1 April with the current district members being co-opted as the most appropriate way forward subject to submission of revised terms of reference to the next meeting.

7. **Overview and Scrutiny Arrangements for One Council Transition**

It was reported that since the last meeting, the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Transition Board (JOSTB) had met on 21 November and 19 December.

In addition to holding the IE to account through the receipt of the Towards One Council Progress report and its minutes, the main focus had been through the work of the Joint Board's task groups

Recent activity included closer scrutiny of the Critical Path and Day One Plans, the establishment of transformational priorities, update on

Leisure Services, rapid scrutiny of Electoral Services and Members Support, OS arrangements in the interregnum period and benefit realisation in service areas.

The Board had also developed proposals for overview and scrutiny arrangements for the new council with the support of a LG consultant and these were currently out for consultation with all members of the 5 councils and corporate and service directors.

Resolved: To note progress on scrutiny of the transition to One Council.

8. **Work Programme**

The Committee considered the latest version of the Management Committee's work programme.

Resolved:

- (1) To note the current work programme additional to transition scrutiny and the alterations made as consequence of decisions taken earlier in the meeting.
- (2) To note that the Accommodation Strategy for Older People would now be conducted as a rapid scrutiny exercise in conjunction with JOSTB's Housing Task Group.
- (3) To note that an update on the FOCUS Project was due in October following the rapid scrutiny exercise on 19 June. This has been delayed due to the need for more extensive staff consultation and would now be held later in January.

(Duration of Meeting: 10.30 am – 12.35pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Paul Kelly, Democratic & Members' Services, direct line: (01225) 713049.