

West of England Partnership

8th December 2006
The Council House, Bristol

Present:

Bath and North-East Somerset
Cllr Paul Crossley, Leader (Chair)
Cllr Francine Haerberling

Bristol City Council
Cllr Barbara Janke, Leader
Cllr Helen Holland
Cllr Richard Eddy

North Somerset Council
Cllr Alan Hockridge
Cllr Peter Burden (for Nigel Ashton)

South Gloucestershire Council
Cllr John Calway
Cllr Ruth Davis
Cllr Roger Hutchinson

Social, Economic & Environmental Partners

John Savage, Executive Chairman, Business West
Steve Grainger, Biodiversity Partnership
Sonia Mills, Chief Executive, North Bristol Health Trust

Observers

Peter Dawson, Government Office for the South West (GOSW)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Faith Davey, The Care Forum
Ian Ducat, SW TUC
Peter Brown, SWRA
Cllr Muriel Kraft, North Somerset Council
Cllr Nigel Ashton, North Somerset Council

2. MINUTES OF MEETING ON 8TH SEPTEMBER 2006

The Chief Executive stated that Item 3 was factually incorrect regarding funding for TiF. In fact funding would come from the Regional Funding Allocation and from SWRDA.

The Partnership requested an update on Item 5 Business Case.

RESOLVED:

With the change to item 3 the minutes were approved.

PUBLIC SPEAKERS

There were two public speakers;

Cat Hobbs from Friends of Suburban Bristol Railways. (Letter circulated to members). Made the case for a half hourly service on the Severn Beach line and suggested that such a service would attract greatly increased patronage. Finance could be taken from elsewhere in the transport budget.

David Redgewell, Transport 2000. Also spoke in support of a half hour train service from Bristol Temple Meads to Avonmouth/Severn Beach. Stated that there were too many transport maps which do not make reference to each other and that these should be more joined up within a coherent marketing strategy.

3. UPDATE ON PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITY

New Growth Points

The Partnership expressed disappointment with the low level of funding from the “pilot” fund. This was apparently due to the fact that 29 areas had been granted NGP status.

Sub Regional Delivery Plan

The Chief Executive explained that funding was available for this from the NGP fund. He proposed that a workshop would be held for all the working groups and partners of the Partnership in the New Year and that consultants would be appointed to put the Delivery Plan together.

Partnership requested a note explaining the purpose of the Business Plan, Delivery Plan and Partnership Office work programme.

Regional Spatial Strategy

The Examination in Public will be held during April, May and June. There were limited seats available at the EiP and Partnership agreed to make representations for one seat at all sessions for the West of England. During the three days set aside for the sub region it was also agreed to press for a Partnership seat (as well as the ones already allocated for each authority).

Planning, Transport and Environment Group (PTEG)

Partnership welcomed the proposals for the future role of PTEG and for its meetings to relate closely to those of the Partnership. PTEG would also be responsible for drafting responses on consultations from Government and others. In discussion concerns were raised about the way in which rail issues are dealt with particularly as the role of heavy rail was considered to be underplayed in the Greater Bristol Strategic Transport Study.

It was considered important that the Partnership develops an effective lobbying strategy so that its views are made known on important issues (such as the changes to the rail timetable).

Rural Strategy

The Partnership welcomed the changes to the management of the group and noted that a review of Rural Renaissance would follow in the New Year.

West of England Partnership Office

The Chief Executive invited members of the Board to an Open Day on Monday 18th December 2006 between the hours on 10am and 3pm. The budget was still being prepared for the Office.

RESOLVED:

That the Partnership:

- 1. Notes the update report and agrees the plans for future reports to the Partnership.**
- 2. Approves the proposed arrangements for progressing the sub regional delivery plan.**
- 3. Approves the vision for the role and operation of PTEG.**
- 4. Agrees the recommendations from PTEG relating to transport issues.**
- 5. Approves the changes to the management of the Rural Strategy Group.**
- 6. Notes the progress with the establishment of the Partnership Office.**
- 7. Approves the suggested response to the Regional Assembly with regards to the need to increase the number of seats at the forthcoming Examination in Public.**
- 8. Requests that a lobbying strategy is prepared for the Partnership.**

4. REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE FUND

Whilst welcoming the paper the Partnership considered that the diagram on page 5 was too simplistic and did not represent the more complex reality. Given the significant public funding for the RiF it was considered that local authorities and possibly the Regional Assembly should be involved in its governance.

RESOLVED:

That the views of the Partnership be passed to SWRDA.

5. GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS FOR MAJOR TRANSPORT SCHEMES

Partnership welcomed this report which demonstrated “good practice” in setting out arrangements for the governance of major transport schemes. Although a number of amendments were suggested it was generally considered that the arrangements should go ahead in their current form. PTEG would be involved as well as the Partnership itself.

RESOLVED:

That the Partnership approves the proposed governance arrangements for major transport schemes.

6. BRISTOL HEALTH SERVICES PLAN - TRANSPORT & ACCESS

The Partnership welcomed this update report. In discussion it was noted that often the traffic impacts of development schemes were assessed separately when there was clearly scope for “joined up” assessments to be made. It was felt that this represented a useful area for further investigation. As part of the sub regional delivery plan it was considered that strategic health provision would be an important component.

RESOLVED:

That the Partnership notes the report and requests that the Heads of Transport investigate the scope for joining up the transport impacts of different but related developments and report findings to the Partnership.

7. WEST OF ENGLAND WASTE MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING STRATEGY

The Partnership welcomed this update which was presented by David Turner, from North Somerset Council, who leads on waste planning for the sub region (together with Steve Evans from South Gloucestershire Council). Whilst generally endorsing decisions made by individual authorities the Partnership also wished to investigate whether further representations should be made regarding LATS.

RESOLVED:

That the Partnership notes progress with the Waste Management and Planning Strategy and endorses the decisions which have been made by individual authorities.

8. WEST OF ENGLAND:DRAFT ECONOMIC STRATEGY AND DELIVERY PLAN

The Partnership welcomed the overall content and scope of the draft strategy and made a number of detailed points:

- There should be a clearly set out context, based on proposals for regeneration.
- A section on social enterprise should be included. Umbrella groups could usefully be consulted.
- There was scope for including reference to environmental technology and to “spin off” opportunities resulting from climate change.
- Lobbying should also be included as an important activity.

RESOLVED:

That the Partnership approves the draft Strategy and Delivery Plan for consultation with stakeholders.

9. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

Future meetings of the Partnership to be held at 10am in the Council House, Bristol:

- Friday 9 March 2007
- Friday 8 June 2007