



West of England Partnership

Bath & North East
Somerset Council



North
Somerset
COUNCIL

South Gloucestershire
Council

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WEST OF ENGLAND PARTNERSHIP JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 4th SEPTEMBER 2009 AT 10.00AM

Members of the Joint Committee

Bath and North East Somerset

- P Councillor Eleanor Jackson
- A Councillor Caroline Roberts
- A Councillor Martin Veal
- P Councillor Nicholas Coombes (for Councillor Roberts)
- P Councillor Gordon Wood (for Councillor Veal)

Bristol City Council

- A Councillor Steve Comer
- P Councillor Mark Bradshaw (Chair)
- P Councillor Barbara Lewis

North Somerset Council

- P Councillor Tony Moulin
- P Councillor David Pasley
- A Councillor Clive Webb
- P Councillor Bob Garner (for Councillor Webb)

South Gloucestershire Council

- P Councillor Pat Hockey
- P Councillor Geoff King
- P Councillor Ian Smith

WEPJSC**13.9/09****APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Caroline Roberts, Martin Veal and Clive Webb. Councillors Nicholas Coombes, Gordon Wood and Bob Garner were their substitutes respectively. Apologies were also received from Councillor Steve Comer.

WEPJSC**14.9/09****PUBLIC FORUM**

The Chair invited Julie Boston from the Friends of Suburban Bristol Railways (FOSBR) to address the meeting in relation to the rail services in the area. A copy of the statement from Ms Boston is placed in the minute book and on the Partnership website.

The Chair thanked Ms Boston for her statement.

A Member asked the officers about the Rail Utilisation Strategy. The Chief Executive replied that this issue had been taken seriously and it would be presented to the Members.

WEPJSC**15.9/09****MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3RD JULY 09**

RESOLVED - that the minutes of the meeting of the West of England Joint Scrutiny Committee held on 3rd July 2009 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair subject to the following amendment:

Page 7, second paragraph, first sentence should read: '.....Joint **Transport** Committee....'

WEPJSC**16.9/09****WORK OF THE PLANNING, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES BOARD**

The Joint Committee received a presentation by the Chair of the West of England Partnership Joint Planning, Housing and Communities Board, Councillor Matthew Riddle.

Following the debate between Members of the Joint Scrutiny Committee (JSC), officers and Councillor Riddle, these points were highlighted:

- Councillor Riddle informed the meeting that he was very confident with the working relationship between his Board and the Joint Transport Board.
- Members of the JSC asked how infrastructure and employment would be considered within the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) when there was no mentioning of it in the Board's workplan. Councillor Riddle and the Chief Executive for West of England Partnership (WoEP) replied that the infrastructure and employment would be regulated through the Section 106 agreement. The Chief Executive also said that Section 106 agreement is the mechanisms that could be applied only on local authority level. Some Members of the JSC felt that Section 106 agreement should not be used for the larger scale developments, but instead authorities, or region, should set a proportion of infrastructure (schools, surgeries, libraries, petrol stations, shops, etc) and employment figures against the number of proposed dwelling units.
- Members of the JSC asked about the significance of the joint Supplementary Planning Document and how this link up with the Board. The Chief Executive explained that the Supplementary Planning Document would be used, by local authorities, to ward off inappropriate developments.
- On a question made by the Member of the JSC on the RSS figures, the Chief Executive explained that all four Unitary Authorities were against the proposed figures and that WoEP proposed new, more realistic, figures to the Government.
- The Chief Executive informed the meeting that he would provide region's total number of people on the housing waiting list.

RESOLVED - that the Joint Scrutiny Committee noted the presentation and that the comments made by the Joint Scrutiny Committee be submitted to the West of England Partnership Joint Planning, Housing and Communities Board.

**WEPJSC
17.9/09**

WEST OF ENGLAND PARTNERSHIP EXECUTIVE WORK PROGRAMME 2009/10 AND 2009/10 SCRUTINY THEMES

Members of the JSC felt that the agenda items 5 and 6 should be debated at the same time. The Chair agreed with this suggestion. Following the debate between Members of the Joint Scrutiny Committee (JSC) these points were highlighted:

- The Chair suggested that the Committee first identify topics for the future meetings that this Committee is obliged to consider. Once topics are selected, they would be placed in the appropriate themes and the priorities for future meetings would be agreed.
- Member of the JSC commented that there was not a lot about the natural environment and climate change in the work programmes. He also felt that the awareness of the rail infrastructure should be included in the second theme.
- The Chief Executive drew Members' attention to the second theme which had 'Build mixed and sustainable communities' included as a sub-theme, which he identified as one of the main issues. He informed the meeting that officers could write a list of issues to this sub-theme and circulate to the Members if the JSC wish so.
- Member of the JSC objected to the title of the first theme. He suggested that the theme should be called 'Strengthening Sub Regional Economy'. The Committee agreed with this suggestion.
- Member of the JSC questioned the purpose of the document. He felt that, looking at the work programmes and themes, there would be only overview of the specific issues and not the scrutiny. The Chair disagreed with this comment by saying that each local authority has its scrutiny bodies to scrutinise their own Executive/Cabinet. The job that this body has is not to duplicate the work of the Executive or Boards.
- Member of the JSC felt that clarification on West of England Partnership (WoEP) Vision was missing. The Chair asked the officers to circulate to the JSC Members what the Vision is.
- The JSC Members agreed that the officers' theme description was correct. The Chair asked the Members to send via email any changes or suggestion on themes to the officers. The Chair also asked the officers to include any key issues from the other work programmes into the JSC themes and have it ready for the next meeting. The Chief Executive commented that the themes would be Members ownership if the Members would want to change the language or the scope of them.
- Members of the JSC debated what issues should be priority on the JSC work programme. Each Member gave their reasons for the items they felt should have priority on the work programme. The Chair took Members' comments and wishes on board and informed the meeting that following items would be at the next meeting agenda: LTA 2008 and potential review, Bus Review and Joint Local Transport Plan. Members also felt that a document on what impact the JSC made so far, and achievements made by the JSC, should be created.

RESOLVED - that the officers take on board comments made by the JSC Members.

**WEPJSC
18.9/09**

STRENGTHENING LOCAL DEMOCRACY – CONSULTATION

The Chair invited Eileen Armstrong, Bristol City Council Service Director for Strategy and Performance, to introduce this document.

Eileen Armstrong explained that this consultation seeks views from interested parties on the proposals being made on whether local government has the powers it needs to meet today's challenges. She also said that the consultation ends on 2nd October 2009.

The Chair felt that the individual responses from the JSC Members, on chapter 4 of the consultation – questions 17-21, should be sent to Eileen Armstrong via email by Thursday 10th September. Once received, officers would draft a response on and circulate to the JSC Members.

A member of the JSC requested that in future consultation documents should be sent to the Members as soon as possible. The Chair replied that the timing of this consultation was not ideal for JSC meetings, hence why the consultation was just presented. It started on 21st July 09 when most of the people were on their holidays.

RESOLVED - that the JSC Members would submit their individual responses, on chapter 4 - questions 17-21, to Eileen Armstrong via email by Thursday 10th September 09.

**WEPJSC
19.9/09**

JOINT WASTE CORE STRATEGY (JWCS)

The Chair invited West of England Partnership officers to give a presentation on this matter (copy placed in the minute book and on the Partnership website).

Following the debate between Members of the Joint Scrutiny Committee (JSC) and officers these points were highlighted:

1. In engaging and consulting with communities it is essential to draw a clear distinction between the partner authorities planning

responsibilities, in drawing up the Joint Waste Core Planning Strategy, and its role in managing the disposal of municipal waste.

2. The independent planning application by EON for a biomass timber disposal facility at Royal Portbury Dock is nothing to do with the Joint Waste Core Planning Strategy.
3. Provision of district heating schemes, based on heat from waste facilities, in urban extensions would not necessarily have to be adopted by developers.
4. It is important to continue to emphasise to the public the practical local impact of the Joint Waste Core Planning Strategy as it determines the potential, preferred location of waste recovery facilities.
5. Joint Scrutiny Members should continue their scrutiny work in the four forthcoming workshops, one in each of the partner local authorities in September.

The outcomes of these meetings will be circulated to the Joint Scrutiny Committee, and an additional meeting of the Committee organised as necessary, prior to the dispatch of papers to the first Council Cabinet.

The views of Scrutiny will be put to the Planning Housing & Communities Board and the Partnership Board. The workshops in Councils will supplement the views from Scrutiny and the two Boards at the subsequent Cabinet Meetings.

6. The Draft Submission Document could be considered as a material consideration when assessing planning applications. More weight would be given after it has been approved by Councils for Publication.
7. The Draft Submission Document is technology neutral although it has been necessary to add relevant conditions based on the various technical assessments of the specific sites now recommended as potential locations for residual waste facilities. These conditions are contained in the JWCS as “Key Development Criteria” and must be addressed in planning applications.
8. The Draft Submission Document sets out criteria for assessing non-residual waste sites. In common with the strategic waste sites these criteria once adopted, would be part of each local authorities planning framework.

9. The Draft Submission Document is required to make available sufficient locations for the recovery of residual municipal, industrial and commercial waste – as specified by the Regional Spatial Strategy. Capacity requirements will be monitored and reviewed to ensure over-provision of locations is not made.
10. When in future authorities receive planning applications against the sites included in the final Joint Waste Core Strategy the usual planning criteria, including impact assessments, will be applied.
11. One member of the Joint Scrutiny Committee expressed disappointment at the low response to some parts of the public consultation.
12. The same member welcomed the progress that had been made with the proposals as a means of ensuring better and proper control of waste disposal on existing and future sites.
13. Demographic factors taken into account in planning appropriate waste sites capacity include population and household projections. A breakdown of population by age/particular groups has not specifically been considered. The total capacity to be provided will meet that required by the Regional Spatial Strategy.
14. Overall, engagement and consultation with the public had been in three phases:
 1. Consultation to develop the Preferred Options.
 2. The most recent consultation on the Preferred Options to develop the Draft Submission Document.
 3. Consultation on the fit for purpose soundness of the Draft Submission Document once approved by Cabinets/Councils in October/November.
15. The outcome of the first phase of consultation directly influenced the development of the Preferred Options.
16. Today's report and background documents set out how consultation and 'Progress Updates' have influenced the scope of the Draft Submission Document.
17. The Development Management Policy will be amended to include de-commissioning of facilities, alongside the scope for limiting the duration of use.

RESOLVED - that the officers take on board comments made by the JSC Members.

(The meeting ended at 1:20 pm)

CHAIR

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