



West of England Partnership

**Bath & North East
Somerset Council**



**North
Somerset
COUNCIL**

**South Gloucestershire
Council**

Minutes of meeting of the

West of England Partnership Board

Thursday 3 December 2009, 2pm, BAWA, Filton

Present

Bath & North East Somerset Council

Cllr John Bull
Cllr Paul Crossley
Cllr Francine Haeberling

Bristol City Council

Cllr Helen Holland

North Somerset Council

Cllr Nigel Ashton
Cllr Elfan Ap Rees

South Gloucestershire Council

Cllr John Calway
Cllr Ruth Davis
Cllr Roger Hutchinson

Social, Economic and Environmental Partners

Ian Ducat, South West Trade Union Council
Rachel Robinson, Bristol and West of England ChangeUp Consortia
Steve Grainger, Avon Biodiversity Partnership
Professor David Clarke, University of Bristol

In attendance

John Everitt, Bath & North East Somerset Council
Jon House, Bristol City Council
Graham Turner, North Somerset Council
Amanda Deeks, South Gloucestershire Council
Peter Jackson, South Gloucestershire Council
David Crook, Government Office for the South West
Ian Knight, South West Regional Development Agency
Dr John Bradford, Science City Bristol
Stephen Hilton, Digital City, Bristol City Council
Terry Wagstaff, West of England Partnership
Barbara Davies, West of England Partnership
James White, West of England Partnership
Penny Bell, West of England Partnership

1. Apologies for absence

Cllr Barbara Janke, Bristol City Council
Cllr Richard Eddy, Bristol City Council
Cllr Nan Kirsan, North Somerset Council

Sonia Mills, Social, Economic and Environmental Partner
Stephen Harrison, Social, Economic and Environmental Partner
Jan Ormondroyd, Bristol City Council
Hilary Neal, Government Officer for the South West
Peter Brown, South West Councils

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Member and Public Forum - Statements

David Redgewell of Campaign for Better Transport presented a statement that highlighted various concerns as follows:

- Consultation leaflets for the North Fringe to Hengrove Package were not available in South Gloucestershire and did not join up with the Bristol consultation leaflet.
- The loss of rolling stock should be addressed by securing 30 carriages from Department for Transport (DfT) for the June timetable, and efforts should be made to ensure rolling stock is of good, refurbished quality.
- There was a desire for the Radstock to Frome rail line to be included in the Great Western Draft Route Utilisation Strategy (RUS).
- Attention was drawn to the condition of bus shelters across the sub-region, and in South Gloucestershire particularly, and cleaning and maintenance of them was a concern.
- The Partnership should closely examine its transport powers and consider how they compare to powers available to Integrated Transport Authorities (ITAs).

Barbara Davies informed members that there had been an unfortunate incident with the consultation leaflets for South Gloucestershire not being delivered in time for the first consultation meeting, but both sets of leaflets were now available for all future events and the consultation was co-ordinated.

James White informed members that a joint response had been submitted to the RUS consultation, but that the RUS was about filling gaps and not about aspirational schemes.

Resolved:

To write a letter to DfT supporting delivery of 30 carriages of good, refurbished quality.

4. Minutes of meeting held on 22 October 2009

The minutes were agreed a true record of the meeting.

5. Matters arising from the minutes

Transport Infrastructure: Weston Package

A letter had been written to the Minister on 24 September 2009 but no reply had been received to date.

Draft RUS

A joint response to the consultation had been submitted by the deadline of 27 November. It addressed the issues raised at the last meeting.

Meeting with First Bristol, Somerset and Avon

A meeting had taken place between Justin Davies, Managing Director of First Bristol, Somerset and Avon and Executive Members regarding concerns about local bus services and planned service cuts. The meeting had proven to be very positive and had identified actions that would be taken forward.

Provision of Information on Major Transport Schemes

In response to a request at the previous meeting, a written summary was provided that detailed the outcomes and impacts of the West of England Major Transport Schemes' bids submitted to Government. This can be found as Appendix 1 to agenda item 10.

Application Process for Gypsy and Traveller Site Funding

In response to concern raised at the previous meeting, Penny Bell provided members with a response that had been received from Bob Deacon at Government Office for the South West (GOSW). The response stated that both GOSW and Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) were aware of the limitations of the current bidding round approach, and would prefer to move towards a continuous market engagement approach, which would enable authorities to bid for funding at any time of the year. This approach would need to be agreed centrally by HCA, CLG and the GO network.

In the meantime, Bob Deacon advised that authorities should work very closely with both GOSW and HCA as early as possible in the scheme's development to maximise potential for future funding.

6. Science City and Digital City

Dr John Bradford, manager of Science City Bristol, gave a presentation on the Science City agenda and how it related to the West of England Multi-Area Agreement (MAA) and other areas of the Partnership's work. Science City was funded by the Regional Development Agency (RDA) but was a regional collaborative partnership.

Science City Bristol's vision was to support and develop the area's science and innovation assets to deliver sustainable economic and social benefit. This vision related to one of the key actions in the MAA which was to increase business-led innovation and enterprise by further strengthening collaboration and partnership working between Higher Education Institutions and business. The MAA identified further targets and timescales.

Stephen Hilton, Head of Programme for Digital City, gave a presentation on the Digital City and Connecting Bristol Programmes and their priorities for 2009/12. The overall Programme sought investment in Digital Infrastructure to support innovation in business and public services, to underpin greener working and living, to develop digital skills and to tackle digital exclusion.

ICT and digital infrastructure was a key strategic issue that the Partnership needed to address. A strategy was needed to take forward the commitments in the MAA and to assist the West of England to secure the funding required to take these issues forward.

Reference was made to the Digital Britain – Digital Economy report, which highlighted the importance of digital/knowledge industries and paved the way for the Digital Switchover of public services from 2012. More information on the report, and on the Digital Economy Bill, is available at: http://www.culture.gov.uk/what_we_do/broadcasting/5631.aspx.

Some current priorities included a study that had been commissioned to look at digital infrastructure around Bristol, Tele-health and Tele-care work, Home Access initiatives to assist disadvantaged households and practical opportunities around new homes in terms of Next Generation Broadband connectivity.

Both John Bradford and Stephen Hilton both wished to highlight that their programmes covered the whole West of England Partnership area and that they were willing to work with any person or authority with an interest in these issues.

Copies of both presentations can be found by following the link below:
<http://www.westofengland.org/meetings/partnership-board-/list-of-meetings/3-december-2009>

Councillor Calway thanked both John Bradford and Stephen Hilton for their presentations and reported that the issues were being addressed by the Partnership through the MAA Delivery Plan.

7. Joint Local Transport Plan 3

James White presented a report and gave a presentation that provided background to the current Local Transport Plan and information and updates regarding its emerging replacement, Joint Local Transport Plan 3 (JLTP3).

JLTP3 was divided into 3 main sections. The first section was the strategy, taking a long-term policy view from 2011 to 2026. The second section was the delivery plan; a shorter-term plan of a rolling 3-year period. The third section was a range of supplementary documents.

JLTP3 would be based around the 5 key goals from DfT's 'Delivering a Sustainable Transport Strategy' (DaSTS). These were:

- Reducing carbon emissions
- Supporting economic growth
- Promoting equality of opportunity
- Contributing to better safety, security and health
- Improving quality of life and a healthy natural environment

The final version of JLTP3 was to be completed by March 2011 and a programme for its development, which showed key milestones, was included in the report.

- Councillor Holland commented on the good work that had been done to date, but highlighted the importance of widening the debate and engaging members of the public in the consultation as much as possible. It was also important that JLTP3 was brought back to the Board at regular stages in its development. Councillor

Holland also enquired who is on the Travel Plan Commission and requested details of the workshops so that members could attend if they wished.

- Councillor Holland felt that climate change should be among the highest of the DaSTS priorities, and was interested to see how it linked to other strategies such as housing, employment and skills, and particularly integration with health outcomes and deprivation & exclusion outcomes.
- Councillor Crossley acknowledged the challenge of engaging the public effectively but felt that public involvement in the process was crucial and that rigorous attempts needed to be made to obtain the voices of the users, not just the pressure groups. In relation to the DaSTS targets, Councillor Crossley felt that they were too broad and that sub-targets providing more detail should be considered.
- Councillor Ap Rees commented that the language used in documents such as JLTP3 should be plain English to assist understanding and felt that supporting economic growth should be the highest of the DaSTS priorities, with all other priorities secondary to that. Main focus should be placed upon getting people to and from work in the best way possible, and bringing to completion the major schemes that were already in development. Councillor Ap Rees also highlighted how effectively the Partnership had worked together on joint transport schemes to date.
- Ian Ducat agreed that a priority should be engaging and involving the public in developing the vision and goals so that they could more easily identify with it.
- David Clarke agreed that getting people to and from work and the involvement of stakeholders were both high priorities. A key issue for stakeholders was the need to receive the draft JLTP3 for consultation much earlier than June, as many organisations shut over the summer months. Key stakeholders and major employers needed the opportunity to comment in advance. David also commented that there did not appear to be anything in the plan to discourage car use, and recommended that a reduction in car parking spaces at work and on the streets and the implementation of charging schemes proportionate to salaries could assist with this.
- Councillor Bull felt that the DaSTS priorities were difficult to prioritise and that some of them were interrelated. He commented that high car park charges and the pedestrianisation of streets were already in force to discourage car use. Councillor Bull also referred to the aspirations for the Frome to Radstock rail line; he would like to see this in the Plan.
- Councillor Ashton commented that it was difficult to discourage rural residents from car use, as the public transport in rural areas was not sufficient to be a viable alternative.
- Councillor Davis agreed with this, and also suggested that further work was required with Park and Ride sites, particularly the need to locate them further out from the cities to avoid ring-road congestion.
- Councillor Haerberling agreed that it was a priority to deliver the schemes already in the RFA2 programme, as it would be difficult to discourage car use without

appropriate public transport in place.

- Councillor Calway commented on the negative publicity that had been published recently (about governance for transport functions) and also the pressure from local campaign groups and extended a plea for people and groups to be more responsible and back the schemes in progress. The negativity from the groups was beginning to be counterproductive and could potentially hinder the Partnership from moving forward if it continued.

8. Multi-Area Agreement Delivery Plan

Terry Wagstaff presented the Plan and explained that it had been modified since the last meeting to include details of accountability within each section. Some further work remained to conclude the actions planned for the Competitiveness and Skills sections of the Plan. The Plan was to be updated periodically and brought back to the Board when appropriate.

Councillor Davis requested some amendments to the Plan, as follows:

- Page 1 – The South Gloucestershire Council date for publication should be amended to either June or September 2010, and the date for submission should be March 2011. This is taking into account the Elections next year.
- Page 3 – The target of March 2010 on Action A5, which related to the re-negotiation of the numbers of additional homes required, needed to be brought forward as there were appeals queuing up. David Crook reported that talks with officers were taking place regarding re-negotiations and were making good progress. It was agreed that this should be concluded as a matter of urgency.
- Page 7 – Councillor Ap Rees requested that any reference to sub-region or city-region should read 'West of England'.

Resolved:

- 1. To conclude the re-negotiations of the national targets of additional homes required as a matter of urgency.**
- 2. To approve the Delivery Plan subject to the amendments above.**

9. Revised Waste Budgets 2009/10 – 2011/12

Terry Wagstaff presented the revised budgets and described how Partnership activity on waste was reducing.

The preparation of the Joint Waste Core Strategy was still running. The Examination in Public should be complete by the end of next summer and the budgets would be adequate if the current statutory timetable was uninterrupted and the Examination lasted no longer than 10 days as planned.

The Partnership office was also overseeing the mobilisation of the hardware by the Phase 2 Contractor, for a contract start of April 2011.

Expenditure on Phase 3 budgets had ceased. Every year, planned waste management expenditure was lower than originally anticipated. This was primarily because Phase 3 was not being actioned at West of England level and the authorities would have to make

provisions within their own budgets.

Resolved:

- 1. To note the 2008/09 out-turn and the 2009/10 estimated out-turn for the Waste Budgets.**
- 2. To endorse the 2010/11 and 2011/12 proposed Waste Budgets and recommend appropriate provision within the authorities' budgets, subject to finalising the costs of Bristol City Council mobilising and managing the Phase 2 Waste Management contract.**

10. Update on Partnership Progress

Terry Wagstaff presented the report and informed members that it provided a routine update on Partnership activity since September. The information that had been requested at the last meeting regarding Transport Major Schemes was presented in the table appended to the report.

Barbara Davies informed members that there were currently 2 major transport schemes' consultations in progress; the North Fringe to Hengrove Package consultation was out until 8 January 2010, and the South Bristol Link consultation was out until the end of December 2009.

Councillor Davies commented on the report by Roger Tym and Partners, Sub-Regional Infrastructure Requirements, and enquired whether it had received political sign-off. Terry Wagstaff informed members that the report had been circulated at a very early stage and was now awaiting final sign-off from one authority; the other authorities had asked if the report could be published. This was expected to be by the end of the year.

Resolved:

To note the report.

11. 2009/10 Partnership Forward Plan

The current version of the Forward Plan was provided.

Councillor Hutchinson enquired about the position of the Partnership in relation to the governance of transport functions. He felt progress so far on transport had been commendable. He had understood that with the establishment of the Joint Transport Executive Committee the West of England had the means to secure the powers of an Integrated Transport Authority (ITA) without actually establishing one. He said that it would be helpful to have clarification on what could be achieved through the Joint Committee.

Councillor Ap Rees informed members that the Joint Transport Executive Committee was considering this matter at present and was concentrating on exploiting existing powers that were available.

Terry Wagstaff explained that the Joint Committee was already exploiting its current powers on its actions in securing the MAA transport 'Asks' and following up with the planned engagement with the Highways Agency and the rail industry. It was also

reviewing the scope for action to substantially improve bus frequencies, reliability, quality and fare structures and levels.

After further discussion Terry Wagstaff agreed to produce a statement on the local powers that could be exercised by a Joint Transport Executive Committee and how this would compare with the powers available through an ITA. He would confer with Department for Transport (DfT) officials.

Councillor Holland recommended that the Local Transport Act item at the 25 February meeting should read 'To consider the outcome of a review of the opportunities for increased transport powers and investment provided by the recent Local Transport Act, including governance, particularly measures to increase the quality of bus services'. Members agreed.

Councillor Holland also requested that updates on JLTP should be added to the work programme and members agreed.

Councillor Davies felt that the wording for the 'Supplementary Planning Document' (SPD) item at the 25 March meeting was misleading, and recommended that the title was re-worded to reflect the following comment:

'What is envisaged is a SPD to take forward the 'ask' agreed as part of the MAA, to enshrine the high level sub-regional Delivery and Investment Plan in a SPD, to provide the evidence base on sequencing, phasing and infrastructure prerequisites of the potential development areas'.

Members agreed that the title should be amended to reflect the above.

Resolved:

- 1. To note the current version of the Forward Plan.**
- 2. To amend the Forward Plan as agreed above.**

12. Next Meeting

Thursday 14 January 2010, 10am, Fry Club, Keynsham