



West of England Partnership

**Bath & North East
Somerset Council**



**North
Somerset
COUNCIL**

**South Gloucestershire
Council**

Draft record of the meeting of the

Joint Scrutiny Committee

Friday 16 July 2010, 10am, BAWA, Filton, BS34 7RG

Present

Bath & North East Somerset Council

Cllr Martin Veal (from item 9)

Bristol City Council

Cllr Steve Comer

North Somerset Council

Cllr Clive Webb

Cllr David Pasley

South Gloucestershire Council

Cllr Pat Hockey

Cllr Geoff King

Cllr Ian Smith

In attendance

Ed Minihane	Bristol City Council
Colin Medus	North Somerset County Council
Terry Wagstaff	West of England Partnership
Bill Davies	West of England Partnership
Daniel Moore	West of England Partnership
David Draycott	West of England Partnership
James White	West of England Partnership
Laura Grady	West of England Partnership
Barbara Davies	West of England Partnership

NB: Items 1 – 8 are notes from the inquorate meeting. Following the arrival of an additional member, items 9 – 13 are minutes.

1. Annual Business

Due to absences at the start of the meeting Cllr Webb was elected Chair of the meeting. Elections of Chair and Vice Chair were postponed until the October meeting.

At the outset the meeting was inquorate. From item 9 the meeting was quorate.

2. Apologies for absence

Cllr Dr Eleanor Jackson, Bath & North East Somerset Council

Cllr Mark Bradshaw, Bristol City Council

Cllr Tony Moulin, North Somerset Council

3. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Geoff King declared his employment with First Group.

4. Member and Public Forum

David Redgewell made a statement on behalf of the Transport South West Network. A summary of the main points follows:

- Insufficient security in rail stations
- A request for progress updates on taxi and cycle parking in Bath bus station
- Request for information on an unanswered petition presented to Bristol City Council
- Reinstatement of the Portishead Line
- The need to raise more rolling stock for the Greater Bristol Metro service
- Dissatisfaction with the movement of Totterdown bus stops

Barbara Davies presented a compilation of tabled responses to David Redgewell's statement provided by the relevant authorities and Partnership officers. Some points made would be forwarded to the authorities to respond as appropriate.

5. Chair's business

None.

6. Minutes of meeting held on 5 March 2010

Item 8: In reference to papers that had not previously been made available due to contractual confidentiality, Cllr Pat Hockey suggested that all relevant papers should be made available to members of the Joint Scrutiny Committee, including those recently considered.

Terry Wagstaff explained that the recent report to the Joint Waste Management Committee was exempt because it dealt with the terms of the award of a commercial contract. In accordance with previous practice the Chair of the Joint Scrutiny Committee had received the agenda and advised that if he wished to inspect the exempt report he could do so through his council's committee services office.

Cllr Hockey asked for information regarding the reopening of existing landfill sites. Laura Grady said that there was not a sufficiently robust evidence-base to prove effectiveness and justify the cost of doing so.

Cllr Hook queried the core strategies' progress on protecting rail land, stating the need for consistency between the strategies. Terry Wagstaff agreed to write to the authorities and query their progress before responding to the Committee with a written answer.

7. Matters arising from the minutes

6i – Transport Powers

Terry Wagstaff presented a paper proposing that an Integrated Transport Authority would offer no additional powers or functions to those the Joint Transport Executive

Committee could hold, and therefore the West of England Partnership was not pursuing the option of an Integrated Transport Authority.

7 – Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)

Terry Wagstaff updated members on the current status of the West of England's proposals to government to become a LEP and provided a brief explanation of some of the likely features of a LEP:

- The four authorities working in partnership to promote economic, business and skills growth
- Closer links with business
- Constituent authorities encouraged to dictate the shape and structure of their proposed LEP
- No additional resources likely to be available
- Potential changes to the structure of the West of England Partnership.

As the West of England's initial proposals must be submitted by the 6th September, it was agreed that members would convene for a special meeting to express views before the upcoming Partnership Board on the 31st August.

10 – Board Lead on Tackling Disadvantage

The Board did not nominate a lead on Tackling Disadvantage but agreed that the issue would be incorporated into relevant reports on the Board's Forward Plan.

8. **Draft 2010-11 Joint Scrutiny Forward Plan 2010-11**

Terry Wagstaff presented the 2010-11 Scrutiny Forward Plan. The following amendments to the 1st October 2010 plan were agreed:

- An information report would be included, updating members on the four authorities' status on the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS);
- Items 5 & 7 (Multi-Area Agreement progress & Major Schemes Monitor) were to be information only items;
- An additional information item on the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) was to be included.

9. **Agenda for Skills and Competitiveness Board**

David Draycott presented an introduction to the Skills & Competitiveness Board (S&CB), highlighting its function and main objectives.

Subsequent discussion raised the following points and comments:

- The omission of retail, hospitality and Health & Social Care in the list of growth sectors was questioned. David Draycott explained that the list presented included those sectors that grow wealth; for example, advanced engineering would not grow numbers of jobs, but it would grow in terms of Gross Value Added (GVA) per job.
- The skills targets were questioned, with concerns about their relationship to a valid baseline. David explained that one element of the plan was to scrutinise the activities of current groups of employers to identify changing trends and skills demands.
- Advanced engineering was the high value manufacturer in the area.
- Web-based employers also needed to be considered.

- The West of England needed a policy that highlighted the area's strong digital infrastructure, to promote itself as a place for that type of industry to thrive.
- The reference to 'eco tech' in the presentation referred to the manufacturing industry's response to the growing need for green technology.
- The presentation's reference to 'marketing of the city-region' related to increasing inward investment whilst simultaneously promoting the existing advantages of the area.
- The West of England was most in need of 'middle level' skills (or NVQ level 2 and beyond). Mapping was currently being done to assess the level of need.
- Continued learning needed to be better promoted in order to bridge the divide between the well qualified and those with intermediate skills. Apprenticeships were seen as a viable route to achieving a higher level of professional skills.
- Priority wards were being engaged in the new commissioning structure by joining up agencies and encouraging data sharing.
- Cllr Hockey expressed concerns over the historical efficacy of schemes similar to the Skills & Competitiveness Board. David Draycott replied that targets were testing and reports were available with detailed outcomes and timelines.

10. Joint Local Transport Plan 2 (2006 – 2011)

Bill Davies presented an annual progress report on performance against the trajectories and indicators in the Joint Local Transport Plan 2 (JLTP2).

Key points from the presentation included:

- Bus patronage remained above the trajectory for 2009/10
- Rail patronage and cycling had increased substantially
- Road safety continued to improve substantially
- Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) emissions had reduced to within the trajectory in Bristol's Air Quality Management Area
- Traffic growth indicators remained on target.

Cllr Hockey asked how the findings of the report were relayed to affected parties, making particular reference to public transport access to health facilities, and also queried how the information in the report was used to inform future strategies.

Barbara Davies cited the development of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Health Sector to develop closer working, for example around access to hospitals and active travel initiatives. Barbara also explained that data and findings from the report fed into the initial estimations of targets and trajectories for the Joint Local Transport Plan 3. It also helped to inform the public on the Partnership's performance.

Cllr Pasley noted the encouraging increase in rail patronage and its potential to support future investment and lobbying.

Cllr Veal asked for a note to be included in the report to better reflect the impact of hotter summers on Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) levels.

Cllr Comer queried whether 'peak spreading' was taken into account in the central area traffic indicator; Ed Minihane confirmed that this covered the 7-10am period.

Cllr King queried the viability of a single point of contact for those wishing to know if

a bus is low floor. After some discussion on the complex logistics of providing such information, Barbara Davies agreed to consider the issue further.

Agreed:

That Members note the 2009/10 Joint Local Transport Plan (JLTP) progress report.

11. Joint Local Transport Plan 3 (2011 – 2026) Second draft

James White presented a report on the revised draft Joint Local Transport Plan 3.

Key points from the presentation included:

- The Delivery Plan may be subject to change in response to the upcoming Comprehensive Spending Review.
- Major public consultation was due between July and September 2010.
- Provision for demand management had been built into the plan in the form of 'hooks' that authorities might use according to circumstance.
- Initial JLTP3 drafts had been considered by the Transport Plan Commission, chaired by Rachel Robinson.
- That the timescale for Councils' approval would be in December/January, not February, and the programme for responding to consultation outcomes and the Comprehensive Spending Review were being reviewed.

Subsequent discussion raised the following points and comments:

- That good public consultation was essential and that it was necessary to ensure the 25,000 copies of the consultation questionnaire already planned for distribution, alongside posters and web-based consultation, were utilised to their maximum potential.
- Queries were raised about the reality of enforcing 20mph speed limits. The expectation was that they would prove self-enforcing and help contribute to a culture of safer driving.
- The plan highlighted future areas of work where the issue of congestion charges could be considered.
- Feedback was requested on the progress of delivering the Greater Bristol Bus Network.
- National Indicators should have much more of an impact on the plan.

Cllr David Pasley asked about the cost per questionnaire. Printing costs were currently £1998 for 25,000 copies (or 8 pence each) and on street enumerators were approximately £100 per day. Individual councils were choosing the sites and total number of venues per council area. Wherever possible, in-house staff were being used (and always in the first instance) and the work was being offered to all four councils.

Cllr Hockey queried the criteria for the inclusion of stations in the 'Our Transport Vision' diagram. Barbara Davies stated that only stations with 50,000 or more passengers were included and an additional map could be produced which covered other stations.

Where Patchway station was mentioned specifically, Terry Wagstaff referred

members to an earlier written explanation.

Consultation on the plan will end on the 4th October 2010. The revised draft would be taken to the Joint Transport Executive Committee in December (due to the January/February 2011 programme of local authority cabinet meetings). Therefore the Joint Scrutiny Committee would see the revised plan in November 2010, before it went to the Partnership Board.

Agreed:

That Members note the revised JLTP3 Strategy and Supplementary Documents for formal engagement in July to September 2010.

12. Leadership in Tackling Climate Change

Terry Wagstaff reported arrangements for workshops to be led by Jonathon Porritt to examine the challenges and priorities in providing leadership in tackling climate change. Members were requested to nominate two of their number to attend each of the dates. Members agreed to email Daniel Moore indicating which workshop they would attend.

Agreed:

That the Joint Scrutiny Committee note the report and nominate its members to participate in the workshops.

13. Joint Waste Core Strategy

Laura Grady presented the report. Following some discussion the Joint Committee supported the revised wording of Landfill Policy 8, as previously endorsed by the Partnership Board. The report responded to stakeholder consultation representations, notably those from Gloucestershire County Council, SITA and Strategic Land Partnerships. The report also outlined the Strategy's prioritisation of brownfield over greenfield sites.

Laura Grady confirmed that all relevant documents had been made readily available for consultation on the website and that the revised wording to Policy 8 was circulated via direct mail shots to consultees and stakeholders.

Agreed:

That the Committee endorse the report and note the Joint Waste Core Strategy would be submitted to the Secretary of State in July 2010 with an examination likely in October/November 2010, and that final adoption was anticipated by March 2011, subject to Council Cabinet timetables.

14. Next meeting

Friday 1st October 2010, 13.30 – 16.30, Fry's, Keynsham.

The meeting ended at 13.20.

Matters arising from Joint Scrutiny Committee on 16 July 2010

Item 10 JLTP2: Single point of contact to identify bus accessibility

At the Joint Scrutiny Committee on 16 July Cllr King queried the viability of a single point of contact for those wishing to know if a bus is low floor. After some discussion on the complex logistics of providing such information officers were asked to consider the issue further.

When a timetable enquiry is made on Traveline (www.traveline.info) there is a code (LF) at the top of each journey column, if appropriate, that says "this journey is normally operated by a low floor vehicle." The same information is available to telephone enquirers (0871 200 2233). By way of example, on Service 349, the Abus journeys are marked LF but the First ones are not.

This facility has been available on Traveline since June 2006 when operators were asked to confirm which services were run by low floor buses and the information was added to Traveline. This process relies on operators keeping the local authorities informed of subsequent changes.

Following the request from Cllr King the WEP authorities are checking whether the low floor bus flag data on Traveline is up to date and updating the information on Traveline accordingly.

Unfortunately late changes to the bus services cannot be accommodated by the above system.

Barbara Davies
Head of Joint Transport, West of England Partnership.



West of England Partnership

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Somerset Council**



**North
Somerset
COUNCIL**

**South Gloucestershire
Council**

Draft minutes of the

Joint Scrutiny Committee special meeting

Monday 23 August, 10am, Fry's Club, Keynsham BS31 2AU

Present

Bath & North East Somerset Council

Cllr Caroline Roberts
Cllr Martin Veal
Cllr David Speirs

Bristol City Council

Cllr Steve Comer

North Somerset Council

Cllr Clive Webb
Cllr David Pasley

South Gloucestershire Council

Cllr Pat Hockey
Cllr Ian Smith

In attendance

Terry Wagstaff West of England Partnership
Daniel Moore West of England Partnership

1. Apologies for absence

Cllr Dr Eleanor Jackson, Bath & North East Somerset Council
Cllr Alex Pearce, Bristol City Council
Cllr Mark Bradshaw, Bristol City Council
Cllr Tony Moulin, North Somerset Council

Cllr Clive Webb was elected as chair for the meeting. The chair for the year will be elected at the next meeting in October.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were none.

3. Member and Public Forum

David Gray of the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) presented a letter on behalf of the CPRE setting out their views on how the development of the Local Enterprise Partnership in the West of England should address planning, housing and transportation matters. The letter made the following recommendations:

- the LEP should take on no planning responsibilities until a strategic planning

- document for the area is agreed;
- the strategic planning document for the area would be required to fill the vacuum left by abolition of the RSS;
 - there should be public consultation on the strategic planning document;
 - should the LEP be given planning responsibilities, then environmental and other non-business interest would receive equal representation

David Gray also expressed concern at the general nature of the report received by the Joint Committee; he understood officers had been working on more specific proposals.

Terry Wagstaff responded with the following comments:

- the initial proposition being developed for submission by the 6th September would not be the final word
- government had not yet published the promised White Paper on LEPs; it was now expected during September
- government are also working on the Localism Bill and a new National Planning Framework to make appropriate provision following the abolition of RSS
- business had spoken about infrastructure and planning being critical to the LEP proposals
- discussion about the LEP arrangements include the equal representation of business required by government
- Timescales following the September 6th submission were currently unclear.

Cllr Comer requested the Joint Scrutiny Committee make it clear that the LEP should meet in public.

Cllr Veal stressed his view of the dangers of the government's proposal that business should chair the LEP. For example, the transport and spatial plans were matters which the councils had to determine. In his view, the public sector should take the chair.

Terry Wagstaff confirmed that major statutory policy frameworks, such as transport and spatial planning were matters for cabinets and councils to determine.

Members questioned what area the LEP would cover. Terry explained that the current West of England Area was a natural economic area and it was envisaged this would be the core. It was possible that, from time to time, there would be reason to work across these boundaries on specific, strategic issues.

Cllr Veal wanted the Joint Scrutiny Committee to have an overview as well as scrutiny function and therefore be a 'critical friend' of the LEP, both whilst it was being developed and after it was established.

4. Local Enterprise Partnership

Terry Wagstaff briefly presented a report on the West of England's proposals to establish a Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). He drew particular attention to paragraph 12 which summarised governments policy on LEPs so far, and to paragraph 18 which identifies the emerging priorities for the LEP.

Cllr Roberts asked about the deadlines for the submission, as they seemed particularly tight. Terry Wagstaff confirmed that the 6th September was the deadline

for the initial submission. Any deadlines for further submissions or discussions beyond this date were not known.

Cllr Comer asserted that, within the Partnership Area, business growth was likely to come from small businesses, not large or medium, and asked how the LEP intended to accommodate small businesses.

Terry Wagstaff explained that one of the employer members of the Skills & Competitiveness Board was an office-holder in the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB). He would be involved in the further LEP discussion at the Board planned for late August. Major companies also recognised the importance to them of their supply chain of SMEs; they are also important partners in advocating the LEP submission in negotiations with government. Key growth sector representatives were being engaged too and some of these sectors comprised largely SMEs, e.g. creative media and environmental technology. Business would also ensure the engagement of a cross section of businesses.

Cllr Veal asserted that the LEP needed to have an area view and not be Bristol-centric. Terry Wagstaff said that Stephen Harrison, Chair of the Skills & Competitiveness Board and Vice Chair of the Partnership Board, was leading on behalf of business; he had no ties to a particular area, and was engaging all business organisations.

In response to a question, Terry said there had not yet been any discussion on the role of Joint Scrutiny, and that the LEP would be considering matters for which the local authority had responsibility.

Cllr Roberts asked, in light of this, how government proposed to reconcile its demand for an emphasis on business.

In response, Terry explained that current legislation meant that a strong business voice through the LEP would not remove the statutory responsibility of local authorities approving strategic policy frameworks like the Spatial Plan and the Transport Plan. The White Paper now expected in September may deal with such matters.

Cllr Hockey recommended that the LEP proposal include a request for a statutory Joint Scrutiny function.

Cllr Speirs proposed that local authorities, particularly in light of the fact they were likely to provide the higher proportion of LEP funding, should control the chair the LEP.

Cllr Veal wanted a recommendation to be made that any future Joint Scrutiny function should be able to take an overview and be a platform that could take early action rather than just reacting retrospectively.

Cllr Veal stressed the need to engage the press and for the LEP to have to account to the Joint Scrutiny Committee.

Cllr Speirs proposed an equal financial contribution from the private and public sectors, which Cllr Comer seconded, stating that financial parity would reinforce the notion of an equal partnership between the two sectors.

Cllr Hockey proposed that the LEP should not be a replacement for the West of England Partnership, rather, the two bodies should work in tandem. She also queried the implications and sustainability of the West of England's growth, as implied in the letter to Secretaries of State, and stressed the need for jobs for all young people, no matter the type of job.

Cllr Comer explained that the LEP could provide an employer perspective on why local young people were not applying for available work, and perhaps identify what could be done locally to improve the situation. He also re-iterated the need to keep the West of England Partnership (WEP) separate from the LEP.

It was recognised that time for making the current LEP submission was limited and a robust engagement process was key to allowing for timely and useful comment by partners.

Cllr Veal stated that a system whereby a LEP replaced the West of England Partnership was significantly unsafe. The Partnership was needed to challenge the LEP.

In response, Terry explained that much of the work of the current Partnership would be part of the LEP's functions and that current legislation required local authorities to approve key strategies and plans including transport and spatial planning.

Cllr Hockey said that tackling worklessness should be made more specific in the proposal, and that business needed to better understand the needs of young people.

All agreed that the link between business and education must be strong to help young people to gain experience and understand the opportunities available and better match the needs of employers.

Cllr Hockey expressed the need for the LEP to support small businesses in particular.

Cllr Comer asked how business and local authorities would work together to create new opportunities. Terry Wagstaff explained that a wide variety of the LEPs likely functions would support growth in jobs, e.g. increasing skill levels and supporting the allocation of land for business growth. The LEP would need to better understand the market and how to support the best prospect for growth in business and jobs.

Cllr Comer asked how the LEP intended to identify innovation, and therefore the business successes of the future. Terry explained that this would be achieved by working with sector trade bodies, especially in knowledge-based growth sectors like creative and media and environmental technology, by ensuring effective links between business and the universities and by continuing to increase skill levels.

Cllr Veal wanted to know how new technological innovation was feeding into education.

Cllr Webb stressed the need to bolster the West of England's graduate retention by building stronger links between universities and business with the help of the LEP.

In conclusion the Joint Scrutiny Committee also recommended that:

- the LEP meets in public
- the LEP should be parallel to, and not a replacement for, the West of England Partnership
- statutory planning remains a matter for local authorities
- the LEP be chaired by the public sector (the local authorities)
- links between education and business are strengthened.

Terry Wagstaff said a note of the meeting would be circulated to Scrutiny members for comments and then made available to Chief Executives, Peter Jackson as Chair of the Project Team, and Stephen Harrison as the Chair of the Skills & Competitiveness Board.

14. Next meeting

Friday 1st October 2010, 13.30 – 16.30, Fry's, Keynsham.

The meeting ended at 12.00.

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