

Scrutiny Committee Meeting – Minutes

Meeting: Scrutiny Committee Meeting
Date: Thursday 14 June 2018, 11-00am -2.00pm
Venue: Albert Suite, Leeds Town Hall, The Headrow, Leeds, LS1 3AD

Attendees:

Cllr Andy Paraskos	North Yorkshire
Cllr Eric Firth	West Yorkshire
Cllr Cathy Mitchell (Chair)	Warrington Borough Council
Cllr Sean Chaytor	Hull City Council
Cllr Martin Mitchell	Blackpool Council
Cllr Harold Davenport*	Cheshire East
Cllr Ann Reid	York
Cllr Bruce Pickard	North East
Cllr Roy Miller	Sheffield City Region
Cllr Natalie Nicholas*	Liverpool City Region
Cllr John Davison	North Lincolnshire Council
Cllr Phillip Jackson	North East Lincolnshire Council
Cllr Jim Shorrocks	Blackburn with Darwen

*Deputy in attendance

Officers:

Deborah Dimock	TfN Solicitor
Alastair Richards	TfN IST Director
Megan Bradley	TfN Governance and Engagement Lead
Rosemary Lyon	TfN Legal and Democratic Services Officer
Jonathan Spruce	TfN Strategy Director
Robin Miller-Stott	TfN Senior Policy and Strategy officer

Apologies:

Cllr Ian Stewart	Cumbria
Cllr Gordon Friel	Liverpool City Region
Cllr Don Stockton	Cheshire East
Cllr Nick Wallis	Tees Valley
Sasha Wayne	TfN Head of Legal Services
David Abdy	TfN Portfolio Director
Dawn Madin	TfN Director of HR and Mobilisation

1.0 Welcome and Apologies (v) Action

- 1.1 Colleagues were welcomed to the meeting.
- 1.2 Apologies for absence were noted.

2.0 Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair (p)

- 2.1 A report detailing the arrangements and proposed nominations for Chair, and the two Vice Chair roles was provided to the meeting.
- 2.2 The meeting noted that the pre-meeting of Scrutiny Committee held on May 22 had agreed to nominate the following members to the following positions:
 - **Chair:** Cllr Cathy Mitchell
 - **Vice Chair Majority Party:** Cllr Eric Firth
 - **Vice Chair Minority Party:** Cllr Andy Paraskos
- 2.3 Members were asked to consider the nominations for approval. Members consented, and the nominations were noted for the minutes as appointed to the above roles for a term of 12 months.
- 2.4 Chairmanship of the meeting was passed from Debbie Dimock, Transport for the North (TfN), to Cllr Cathy Mitchell, Warrington Borough Council, referred to as The Chair for the remainder of the minutes.

RESOLVED: Scrutiny Committee confirmed the recommended nominees for the positions of Chair, and Vice Chair x2, as discussed at the Scrutiny Committee pre-meeting on 22 May 2018.

3.0 Approval of Shadow Scrutiny Committee (p)

- 3.1 Members were provided with the minutes of the Scrutiny Committee pre-meeting held on 22 May 2018.
- 3.2 It was reported that Cllr Friel had requested that his comments emphasising the importance of proper consideration of Equality Impact Assessments should be noted in the

minutes This was agreed and the minutes were approved as a true and accurate account of the meeting held 22 May 2018 subject to Cllr Friel's comments being noted.

RESOLVED: Scrutiny Committee confirmed that the Minutes of the pre-meeting held on 22 May 2018 were a true and accurate account of proceedings.

4.0 Strategic Transport Plan (p)

4.1 Prior to the delivery by Jonathan Spruce (JS), TfN, of a presentation on the Strategic Transport Plan (STP), The Chair announced that written representations had been received from 4 members of the public and these would be considered.

Mr. Rae, a member of the public who was attending on behalf of Environmental Transport Organisations (ETOs) including Friends of the Earth, Campaign to Protect Rural England, Rail Future, and Zero Carbon Yorkshire, was invited to address the Committee.

4.2 Mr. Rae used his time to address concerns on behalf of the above interest groups regarding the draft STP consultation process, and the subsequent Ipsos MORI Independent Report.

4.3 Mr. Rae expressed the view that he felt there were serious flaws in the methodology used by Ipsos MORI, and these had disadvantaged environmental groups. The methodology was perceived as being opinion orientated and based on surface level detail around closed questions, whereas environmental groups focus on specifics and therefore responses did not necessarily conform to the questionnaire used.

Mr. Rae conveyed the opinion that the views of said groups have been ignored in the Independent Report, including a submission by himself and another colleague.

Mr. Rae continued, and confirmed that he would provide written examples of absent materials.

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- 4.4 Mr. Rae highlighted that no environmental organisations are mentioned in the report nor are their themes evident. For example, there is no mention of a carbon reduction target. This was of particular concern as it raised the question of how TfN would achieve its outcomes as an organisation without operating under a carbon target, which Mr Rae felt was required under its founding regulations.
- 4.5 Mr. Rae concluded by expressing the view that the methodology employed by Ipsos MORI was unsound and had resulted in the elimination of environmental concerns, and that a revision or intervention in the methodology should be explored to rectify this.
- 4.6 Discussion by members resulted in the following options and views being considered/debated/noting:
- a) Should Scrutiny Committee seek to flag up issues concerning environmental responses with the TfN Board?
 - b) The need for a detailed, itemised breakdown on the process used by Ipsos MORI and how TfN has used this information, for a comprehensive analysis with fully rounded conclusions to be made.
 - c) That balance must be sought between the views expressed by environmental groups against that of all other stakeholders, and that the views expressed not be taken as factual representations.
 - d) Time limitations on any analysis of the process as defined by the next meeting of the TfN Board.
- 4.7 JS addressed the concerns raised by Mr. Rae, and the options/views expressed by Members. JS explained that the report was the first time a pan-Northern consultation had taken place on such a scale, as such, an independent organisation with expertise had been commissioned - Ipsos MORI. Ipsos MORI conducted their analysis within the necessary legislative and regulatory requirements, and best practice, and it was

important that this was recognised. Ipsos MORI would welcome any comments on the report, but will only accept factual corrections or inputs, as opposed to views or opinions, as the report cannot be influenced after the consultation has closed.

- 4.8 The independent report, it was explained, represented a first draft containing headlines from the analysis undertaken so far. TfN is operating under civil service good practice and has published the report and the proposed next steps within the 12-week period after the consultation had closed under these guidelines.
It is not a comprehensive breakdown of analysis, examples, conclusions and does not contain a matrix of responses, which will instead be presented alongside the Final STP for the TfN Board to consider. This draft report is for consideration and comment by Scrutiny Committee and TfN Board to give Officers a clear steer in the development of the STP, with another, comprehensive version to be submitted to TfN Board in September. Thus, Scrutiny Committee would have the opportunity to delve into the detail of the consultation, its analysis and its conclusions in August.
- 4.9 JS concluded, stating that Mr. Rae's comments and any written submissions received by him or those groups he represents will be fed back by TfN to Ipsos MORI for consideration. However, it was noted that that TfN was not beholden to provide a response once this was completed, as it could breach the independence of the report and its impartiality. JS/RMS
- 4.10 Members agreed the need for a longer meeting in August to properly scrutinise the independent STP consultation report and the detailed response by TfN that would be available by that time. An 11am start was agreed with an 4-5-hour meeting likely. It was requested that this meeting take place in Manchester, Leeds or Sheffield. Rosemary Lyon (RL), TfN, to coordinate rooms and catering. RL

- 4.11 JS presented a series of slides to the meeting, which provided a summary of the independent report, which itself was composed of headlines and examples.
Points covered included specific responses to the Major Roads Network (MRN) and Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) proposals. In particular, JS outlined the new approach to defining economic assets and clusters across the North which was designed to address some of the key points raised during the consultation.
JS also stressed that the STP was the first to present a holistic view of transport which did not see road and rail competing for funding as standalone programmes.
- 4.12 Members raised multiple points relating to economic assets missing or problematic routes/junctions not flagged. JS addressed these concerns, explaining that the maps only demonstrated 3 examples of 40-50 projected clusters, with more information to be brought back to the TfN Partnership Board in September.
- 4.13 Cllr Martin Mitchell (MM), Blackpool, flagged the focus on Gross Added Value to the Northern economy as, if not managed correctly, potentially leading to inequalities. This could especially be the case between the large conurbations and smaller towns/rural areas.
- 4.14 JS addressed this point, explaining that the plan was informed primarily by the Strategic Economic Plans of local authorities provided to TfN by its partners. This enabled TfN to identify prime capabilities and assets within each area, and identify economic assets and clusters accordingly. Thus, the clusters are scattered and not just focussed on urban areas and are defined by partners themselves in a bottom up approach. However, as the plan is pan-Northern in scale there will be variations in benefits generated.
- 4.15 MM raised the absence of freight in the report.
- 4.16 JS addressed this query, informing members that Freight was contained within a separate

report which was used to inform the Strategic Development Corridors.

- 4.17 Members raised a number of questions relating to specific planned links or obstacles within regions, which JS addressed. These are detailed as below:
- a) 4.18: Freight Links
 - b) 4.19: Owner – Operators
 - c) 4.20: East-West connectivity
 - d) 4.21: North West – North East connectivity
 - e) 4.22: South Humberside freight
 - f) 4.23: Rail plan alignment with the Department for Transport (DfT)
- 4.18 Cllr Eric Firth (EF), West Yorkshire, raised the lack of rail links between industry and distribution centres, and potential benefits to carbon reduction. JS confirmed that TfN is clear on the need for gauge cleared routes and for freight to be prioritised alongside, not instead of, passenger routes.
- 4.19 The Chair queried if TfN was considering owner-operator rail infrastructure as opposed to separate entities contracted to each. JS confirmed that TfN was setting up a plan on how to do this, with partners to decide how it would be implemented.
- 4.20 The issue of east-west connectivity was raised in regard to freight, as well as its impact outside of the TfN geographical area. JS explained that TfN is working with the Scottish and Welsh governments as well as coordinating with partners such as Highways England and bordering authorities to ensure transport links up outside of the region.
- 4.21 Cllr Bruce Pickard (BP), North East, raised the importance for a cross-Pennine link between the north west and north east, not just a southern route. JS agreed, highlighting the need for a system of ‘rungs’ that span the Pennines in order for a robust transport system to withstand sudden closures without becoming paralysed.

4.22 Cllr Sean Chaytor (SC), Hull, highlighted the lack of rail connectivity for freight between the ports of Grimsby and Immingham and distribution centres in Doncaster. The option to close the railway line to passenger trains between midnight and early morning was raised, in order to allow freight to utilise. JS confirmed TfN is exploring options to reopen parallel lines to freight only use. A holistic approach is needed.

4.23 EF asked how TfN can deliver its 5-year plans if they are in conflict with the DfT and partner organisations own schemes. JS confirmed that TfN had synced its plans against the DfT's own Rail Control periods in order to deliver and make recommendations.

RESOLVED: That Scrutiny Committee note the content of the Ipsos MORI report but defer to the next meeting further consideration and comment upon the detail of the recommended changes to the Final STP.

5.0 Draft Memorandum of Understanding with the Secretary of State (p)

5.1 Megan Bradley (MB), TfN, presented the draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between TfN and the DfT and opened the document to comments and questions.

5.2 BP queried the wording of paragraph 29 of the MoU in relation to the Secretary of State retaining decision making powers that may result in a course of actions being decided upon contrary to that recommended by TfN Board. The query asked that clarification be inserted as to mechanism for feedback from the Secretary of State to TfN Board on why decisions are made that are contrary to the Board's recommendation.

5.3 MB agreed to revisit the wording of this paragraph to better reflect a feedback mechanism.

RESOLVED: That Scrutiny Committee review and endorse the draft Memorandum of Understanding between TfN Board and

the Department for Transport, pending the amendment requested at item 5.2.

6.0 Disclosure of Exempt Information (v)

6.1 Information exempt from public discourse was noted as under discussion in item 7. The Committee requested that all members of the public present vacate the meeting room, and thanked them for their attendance.

RESOLVED: That Scrutiny Committee resolved that members of the public be excluded because it is likely that there would be disclosure of exempt information under paragraph 3 (financial or business affairs) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

7.0 Integrated and Smart Travel Programme (p)

7.1 Alastair Richards (AR), addressed questions raised by members and presented slides updating them on progress in respect of Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the Programme

RESOLVED: That Scrutiny Committee consider the development of the IST programme to date.

8.0 Any Other Business (v)

8.1 EF informed the meeting that a room for the August 30 meeting of Scrutiny Committee was available in Wellington House, Leeds, pending confirmation from TfN. RL

8.2 Members raised the issue of lunch provision, sighting the length, timing and travel to and from meetings as impacting the group negatively.

8.3 DD outlined the catering policy of TfN as requiring a meeting to run between the hours of 11am-1pm and be three hours in length e.g. 11am – 2pm. It was noted that the August meeting would meet these criteria, and exploration of options would fall to TfN. RL

8.4 NN informed the meeting that Liverpool City Council was willing to provide rooms for future meetings if needed.

- 8.5 NN raised a point on behalf of Cllr Gordon Friel, asking the Committee to consider adding a standing item to the agenda relating to Costs and Revenue Streams. The proposal was agreed. RL
- 8.6 No additional items were raised, meeting closed.

Date of next meeting – 30 August 2018 – 11.00am – 4.00pm venue TBC
r = report; p = presentation; v = verbal