

Lancashire County Council

External Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 16th April, 2019 at 10.30 am in Committee Room 'B' - The Diamond Jubilee Room, County Hall, Preston

Present:

County Councillor Edward Nash psc (Chair)

County Councillors

D Stansfield	Mrs L Oades
A Ali	G Oliver
A Cheetham	J Rear
C Crompton	J Shedwick
D Foxcroft	C Towneley
T Martin	

1. Apologies

There were no apologies.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None were disclosed.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 March 2019

Resolved: That the minutes from the meeting held on 5 March be confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

4. Transport for the North: Revised Strategic Transport Plan

The Chair welcomed from Transport for the North (TfN), Robin Miller-Stott, Senior Strategy Officer; and Owen Wilson, Project Manager. A presentation was given on the revised Strategic Transport Plan, Investment Programme, Central Pennines Corridor and next steps.

It was reported that the objectives of the Strategic Transport Plan had evolved following the consultation which were now:

- Transforming economic performance.
- Increasing efficiency, reliability, integration and resilience in the transport system.
- Improving inclusivity, health, and access to opportunities for all.
- Promoting and enhancing the built, historic, and natural environment.

The Committee was informed that since the Strategic Transport Plan had become a statutory document the Department for Transport had to have consideration of the plan when taking decisions on national improvements. Likewise the Transport for the North Board took decisions that had been devolved from central government and had to have consideration for national improvements.

There were significant areas of employment in the North that TfN hoped to connect. Economic clusters in the North must also be better connected. One of the key findings of the Northern Powerhouse's Independent Economic Review was the distribution of prime capabilities across the area. These were advanced manufacturing, digital, energy, and health innovation. These prime capabilities also needed enabling capabilities to support growth in those areas being: education services, financial and professional services, and, the logistics sector.

The committee was informed that around 60% to 70% of commuting in the North was outside of the local authority where people lived which indicated that there was potential for people to travel further. It was vital therefore that there was a transport system in place to allow people to do this.

Regarding demand on the transport network it was noted that car travel was the dominant mode of travel. The rail network had only a 1.1% share of total trips. Capacity on rail services had increased.

TfN was committed to sustainability and its Transport Plan supported a series of Government policies including the Road to Zero Strategy and Clean Growth Strategy. TfN supported the delivery of a low carbon Northern transport network including a zero carbon public transport network by 2050. The 'Pathway to 2050' would set out how TfN's implementation of policies would contribute towards meeting carbon budget targets. Work would also explore Sustainable Return on Investment in business cases.

It was noted that transport investment was not just about the economic case but the social case as well and how to ensure there was better social value for transport. Overall TfN's vision was for the transport plan to be an economic plan.

TfN was working to improve East / West connectivity especially through the Central Pennines corridor. This would benefit all of the North due to connecting some of the North's important economic centres. It was also working with businesses to discover the potential of current and future logistic hubs and how goods were being moved across the country. Members stated that East / West connectivity was vital and welcomed investment in this.

The committee was informed that integrated and Smart Travel was already underway. This was contactless payment for travel on public transport across the North. The programme would transform the passenger experience in the North by working in partnership with the rail and bus sectors, and key transport organisations. £150m had been secured from Government to implement Smart travel to help revolutionise public transport across the North.

On funding the Investment Programme it was explained that there was a funding requirement for between £60 and £70 billion over the next 30 years. However, TfN was calling for an additional funding of £21 billion to £27 billion of transformational growth to support its ambitions and funding requirement.

In response to questions raised by members, the following information was clarified:

- Members enquired how the North had got itself into this underperforming state. It was felt that this was mainly down to underinvestment and decisions being made elsewhere.
- In terms of the transportation of freight the committee was informed that there had been a lot of investment through the private sector regarding logistic hubs, distribution centres and ports. TfN was working with the private sector to understand what the future was for the freight market especially rail freight. Container freight was the future in terms of freight on the network. In terms for restricting HGVs going through towns and cities, this was the decision of the local authorities. TfN would work with local authorities to identify depots outside of towns for freight to be distributed.
- On timescales for the replacement of Pacer Trains the committee was informed that they would be gone and replaced by the end of 2019.
- Members were informed that Northern Powerhouse Rail would be a multi-million pound scheme but there were also a lot of small schemes that collectively when put together had great potential.
- In terms of low carbon emissions TfN was looking to decarbonise transport on the highways as well as on the rail network. The long term aim was to see a move towards electrification. However there needed to be the infrastructure in place to enable greener travel.
- The committee enquired how TfN was building a collaborative and constructive relationship with the North's 72 local planning authorities. This took up a lot of time but the time spent with the authorities was valuable and TfN would continue to engage with them as much as they could. The TfN also maintained good relations with the 20 local transport authorities.
- It was stated that multi-user non-motorised networks were just as important as fast rail and better road infrastructure. It was felt that these networks were not integrated into the Transport Plan. Members were informed that part of the issue in delivering active travel was funding. Within the Transport Plan the TfN fully supported the National Infrastructure Commission's recommendation that there should be a significant uplift in local transport funding to support active travel.
- Members welcomed the new trans-pennine road study led by Highways England and suggested the findings from this be presented at a future meeting of the Committee.

Resolved: That;

- i. The report be noted.
- ii. Transport for the North be invited to attend a future meeting of the External Scrutiny Committee following the completion of the trans-pennine road study led by Highways England.

5. Chair's update

The Chair provided a verbal update to the Committee on progress that had been made since the Committee last met.

1. Following the resolution to a Notice of Motion on Climate Change at Full Council's last meeting in February, the Internal Scrutiny Committee at its last meeting in March agreed that consideration be given to a joint task group between it and External Scrutiny to review low carbon technology and the county council's land and site usage. Since then the Chair had discussions with the Chair of Internal Scrutiny Committee and it had been decided that the External Scrutiny Committee considered adopting climate change and low carbon technology as a theme for future meetings. This would not preclude the committee from doing anything else or its usual statutory work.
2. Rapporteur work had begun on the Committee's request to determine how the Lancashire Energy Strategy could be progressed. The Chair had recently met with Andy Walker from the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership for an initial discussion on the strategy. The Chair hoped to present a report at the next scheduled meeting of the Committee.

Resolved: That the Chair's update be noted.

6. External Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2018/19

The report presented set out the External Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme for the municipal year 2018/19.

Regarding County Councillor Oliver's rapporteur report on Universal Credit, a request was made to invite an officer from the Department for Work and Pensions to attend a future meeting of the External Scrutiny Committee to present on dealing with people in Lancashire.

Resolved: That;

1. The report be noted.

2. A representative from the Department for Work and Pensions to attend a future meeting of the External Scrutiny Committee to present on dealing with people in Lancashire.

7. Urgent Business

There was no Urgent Business.

8. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the External Scrutiny Committee would take place on Tuesday 16 July 2019 at 10.30am in Cabinet Room B (The Diamond Jubilee Room) at the County Hall, Preston.

L Sales
Director of Corporate Services

County Hall
Preston