

Transport for Lancashire Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 3rd February, 2015 at 9.30 am at the Cabinet Room 'B' - The Diamond Jubilee Room, County Hall, Preston

Present

County Councillor Jennifer Mein (Chair)

Councillor Maureen Bateson
Graham Cowley

Councillor John Jones

Observers

Tom Carbery (Network Rail)
Richard Perry (Department for Transport)

Mike Sinnott (Highways Agency)

In Attendance

Brian Bailey
Simeon Butterworth (Jacobs)
Leighton Cardwell (Jacobs)
Alan Cavill
Dave Colbert

Peter Hibbert (Jacobs)
Andy Milroy (Company Services)
Tony Moreton
Hazel Walton

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chair, County Councillor Jennifer Mein welcomed all to the meeting, in particular guests from Jacobs.

Apologies for absence were received from Bruce Parker, Steve Browne and Martin Kelly.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 1st December 2014

Resolved: That the minutes of the last meeting held on 1st December 2014 be approved and signed by the Chair.

3. Matters Arising

None

4. Declarations of Interest

None

5. Blackburn to Manchester Rail Corridor Improvement Scheme - Conditional Approval Application

Simeon Butterworth, Peter Hibbert and Leighton Cardwell (all from Jacobs) presented a report outlining the comprehensive review they had undertaken regarding the Blackburn to Manchester Rail Corridor Improvement Scheme. The Committee were asked to endorse the scheme and request that the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Board grant Conditional Approval to the scheme at its Board meeting to be held on 10th February 2015.

The key findings of the review were highlighted to the Committee, with Jacobs recommending the Blackburn to Manchester Rail Corridor Improvement Scheme be granted 'Conditional Approval' status to enable the scheme to progress to the Full Business Case stage, subject to the following conditions:

1. Confirmation is received (when the ITT for the new Northern Franchise is publically available) that the Manchester to Blackburn service is to be included as part of the baseline specification for the next Northern Franchise.
2. Confirmation is received (when the ITT for the new Northern Franchise is publically available) that the operational costs of the Manchester to Blackburn service will be funded as part of the next Northern Franchise, thus removing the need for BwDBC to subsidise the scheme.
3. It was reported that the scheme BCR is currently 1.47 (based on latest guidance), rising to 2.25 with the inclusion of wider economic benefits. In accordance with the LEP's Accountability Framework, the scheme should deliver high VfM (BCR >2 when incorporating both traditional and wider economic benefits), once the target scheme costs are confirmed and with optimism bias applied at 6% (consistent with the DfT's Rail Appraisal guidance for a scheme at GRIP Stage 5). This is considered the key risk associated with the scheme being granted Full Approval.
4. That the results of a more detailed environmental assessment (including consideration of noise and air quality) demonstrate that the scheme does not have a significant detrimental impact upon any sensitive receptors.
5. That the scheme opening year be confirmed, and if necessary the Business Case (including the economic assessment) be updated

accordingly.

6. That clarification be sought that any cost overruns will be met by the Scheme Promoter, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council (in accordance with the LEP's Accountability Framework) to ensure that the scheme will be delivered in its entirety.

The Committee sought clarification that the level of optimism bias incorporated into the review was 6%. It was also noted by the Committee that addressing the first two conditions would significantly reduce project risk.

Resolved: The Committee endorsed the review findings and requested that the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP) be minded to grant the scheme Conditional Approval at the LEP Board meeting on the 10th February 2015.

6. Lancashire Strategic Transport Prospectus

Dave Colbert, Specialist Advisor Transport Planning, Lancashire County Council presented a report (circulated) regarding a draft Lancashire Strategic Transport Prospectus.

It was highlighted to the Committee that the prospectus builds on work already undertaken in developing the five area-based highways and transport masterplans and the Lancashire Strategic Economic Plan, and sets out a clear proposition that will facilitate engagement with the various organisations Lancashire needs to influence if it is to benefit fully from the current momentum to significantly enhance connectivity across the North. Many of the strategic priorities contained therein will require the support and commitment of external organisations such as Network Rail, the Highways Agency and neighbouring city region combined authorities if they are to be successfully delivered.

It was further noted that Lancashire needs to be in a position to influence development of the government-led transport strategy for the North announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in October 2014. An interim report is due in March 2015 with a full report scheduled for March 2016. The prospectus will also enable both the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership and the three local transport authorities to engage positively with the incoming government following the 2015 General Election.

The Committee noted and thanked Mr Colbert for the work to date and suggested a number of amendments to the draft Prospectus. It was suggested that more emphasis be added for Lancashire as a place and what it has to offer. It was also suggested that the Prospectus emphasises the key benefits to Government, wider economic benefits, and tourism.

Resolved: The Committee:

- 1) Noted the contents of the report; and

- 2) Agreed the attached Strategic Transport Prospectus, subject to the incorporation of minor amendments as highlighted, and recommended that it be submitted to the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Board for approval.

7. Public Transport Issues and Opportunities: Update

Tony Moreton, Assistant Director Sustainable Transport, Lancashire County Council presented a report (circulated) which provided an updated on Public Transport Issues and Opportunities.

Further to previous updates reported to the Committee it was highlighted that following consultation with stakeholders held over the summer of 2014, in December 2014, the County Council's Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport approved an amended set of criteria for assessing subsidised bus services. The criteria were circulated to Committee Members with the report. This approach is available for other local transport authorities to consider following, either individually or within the context of more formal joint working such as an integrated transport authority (ITA) or combined authority.

It was further reported that there are a number of options available where enhanced joint working between local transport authorities could assist with delivering better public transport services; these were set out in the previous report to Members. The Coalition Government's preferred approach to authorities seeking greater devolution of transport powers and funding is the combined authority model. However, given the impending General Election, it is not possible to foresee what the situation will be post 7th May 2015. Further consideration will therefore need to take place within the wider context of any incoming Government's devolution agenda.

Resolved: The Committee noted the Public Transport Issues and Opportunities update as presented.

8. Any Other Business

None.

9. Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on the 13th April 2015 at 2pm, in the Former County Mess, County Hall, Preston.