

**MINUTES of the meeting of Planning, Transport and Regeneration
Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 14 June 2012 at 7.00pm**

Present: Councillors Gerard Rice (Chair), Garry Hague, Martin Healy (Substitute for Charles Curtis), Sue Gray, Tom Kelly and Richard Speight

Apologies: Councillor Charles Curtis

In attendance: Steve Cox - Assistant Chief Executive
Matthew Kiely - Transport Officer
Andrew Millard - Head of Planning & Transportation
Kenna-Victoria Martin - Senior Democratic Officer

1. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

a) Interests

No interests were declared.

b) Whipping

No interests were declared.

3. Local Sustainable Transport Fund Programme Update (LSTF)

The Head of Planning and Transportation introduced the report informing Members that at the last meeting it was requested that Members have an annual update on the LSTF.

It was explained to the Committee that last year (2011) the Council was one of only five Councils' across the country who were successful in their bid for the full LSTF allocation, which entailed receiving £5Million from the Department of Transport. Members were informed by Officers that it was important all of the funding was spent as otherwise any money not spent would be redeemed by the government.

Officers informed Members that the capital funding was to improve the networks of travel within the borough and the revenue funding was to bring the resources and expertise needed to educate the community. Members were updated on Personalised Journey Planning (PJP) in

which the focus was to speak with residents to find any issues they may have with transport, in addition residents were given information or supporting incentives to encourage them not to drive but instead use public transport, walking or car share.

The Committee were told that the PJP project was to assist in changing the borough's travel behaviour, as well as finding issues which needed to be addressed; examples included improvements to bus stops and cycle paths. Officers explained to the Committee that appendix one showed how the funding was going to be spent. Members enquired as to where the 3,000 cases of PJP had been carried out, officers confirmed that the PJP took place for 6 weeks between December and February around the Grays area with all of Grays being completed this year.

Members queried the costs of the consultation, asking if it was value for money and whether next year the cost would be more or less. Officers explained that without the funding the work being carried out would not have been possible to take place and that over the four years it was value for money.

It was questioned whether there was the potential to continue with the programme after the funding had ceased, Members were informed that the funding had to benefit all of Thurrock as once the funding had finished, there would be no money to support the work streams. Members enquired as to why the PJP project within the workplace was unsuccessful. Officers explained that due to the poor weather at the beginning of the year, it was not possible to visit households. It was therefore decided to carry out a trial workplace-based PJP, Officers pointed out that it was important to gain information on the issues that face commuters using public transport.

The Committee queried how the work streams were decided and officers explained that the government were precise as to what they wanted to see. Examples given were marketing and promotion as people may not be aware of the different bus and cycle routes.

Members enquired as to the work which had already been carried out under the LSTF, asking if it would be possible to receive a report on what had been done and its impact. Officers explained that improvements had been made to highways under the LSTF.

A summary of achievements and outcomes is to be presented to a future meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

4. Thurrock Transport Strategy Refresh

The Head of Planning and Transportation explained to the Committee that the Thurrock Transport Strategy had, had a light refresh due to changes being made since the strategy was developed, though it was still fit for purpose.

Members were informed that some of the changes included the proposed termination of the East of England Plan and Regional Planning bodies; the economic downturn and changes to the timescale of the Thurrock Local Development Framework Core Strategy. Officers told the Committee that there was more information within the refresh of the strategy.

The Committee queried the possibility for free flow tolling at the Queen Elizabeth II bridge in Dartford, expressing opinions that the Council should encourage the government to consider this as an option and write to Ministers.

Members asked as a council what could and should be done in the way of the proposed changes. Officers explained to Members that the Council was in a good position to be in, with regard to Junction 30 which was important at present.

Members enquired as to whether the council had a policy linked with transport and regeneration, Officers explained that there was a business rate income scheme in which the Council could borrow money. The Committee were also informed that Officers were starting to look at such a policy.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted

5. Work Programme

The Committee discussed future items they wished to look at and suggested the following:

- Report update on the LSTF
- Review on Take away outlets
- The Purfleet Centre
- Planning enforcement issues

The meeting finished at 8.00pm.

Approved as a true and correct record

CHAIRMAN

DATE

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Kenna-Victoria Martin, telephone (01375) 652403,
or alternatively e-mail kmartin@thurrock.gov.uk**

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