

Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning, Transport, Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 8 November 2016 at 7.00 pm

- Present:** Councillors Barbara Rice (Chair), Peter Smith (Vice-Chair), John Allen, Oliver Gerrish and Terry Piccolo and Jocelyn Redsell (Substitute for Councilor Tom Kelly)
- Apologies:** Councillors Tom Kelly
- In attendance:** Chris Atkinson, C2C Communications and Stakeholder Manager
Andrew Millard, Head of Planning & Growth
Ann Osola, Head of Highways & Transportation
Adrian Barritt, Transport Development Manager
Matthew Brown, Regeneration Programme Manager
Helen Horrocks, Strategic Lead Commissioner for Public Health
Stephen Taylor, Programmes and Projects Manager
Carl Tomlinson, Finance Manager
Jessica Feeney, Senior Democratic Services Officer
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Before the start of the Meeting, all present were advised that the meeting may be filmed and was being recorded, with the audio recording to be made available on the Council's website.

15. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 13 September were approved as a correct record.

16. Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

17. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

18. Air Quality & Health Strategy

Members were informed that in 2015, a decision was taken by Thurrock Council to develop an integrated Health and Air Quality Strategy through which to tackle the health problems associated with and exacerbated by air pollution within the borough.

The Transport Development Manager and the Strategic Lead Commissioner for Public Health presented a power point presentation to members which outlined the following.

Thurrock's Air Quality & Health Strategy framed the authority's approach to improving air quality and to reduce air pollution exposure to safe levels for human health across the borough. The Strategy provided the context for the council to manage air quality through a suite of borough-wide policies to prevent new Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) from arising as well as outlining a number of actions and measures to improve air quality in each AQMA with a view to moving towards advisory limits and future revocation.

The overall strategic aim of this Thurrock Air Quality & Health Strategy is to improve air quality in the borough to reduce the health impacts of air pollution.

The Chair of the Committee stated that the new AQMA's for Aveley (Ship Lane) and Purfleet bypass were unacceptable.

Members discussed the current HGV width restrictions in the borough in Ship Lane in Aveley and the Cross Keys in Chadwell St Mary. The Chair of the Committee stressed the need for joint Police and Council enforcement to prosecute offenders.

Councillor Smith questioned what improvements would be made within the next 12 months. The Committee was informed by the Head of Highways and Transportation that actions of the strategy would be implemented, Members were also made aware that camera enforcement for weight restrictions would be implemented through the Capital Programme which would be outlined in the report for Overview and Scrutiny in January. Councillor Gerrish asked for confirmation as to when the cameras would be erected, it was explained that this was due to take place at the end of the financial year.

Members felt that the education transport plan required a reassessment to aid in the reduction of air pollution in the borough.

The Chair of the Committee stated that some vulnerable members of the community more frequently used public transport and were exposed to air pollution.

Councillor Gerrish highlighted that the Clean Air Zones were ambitious and requested that detailed consideration was put forward.

Councillor Allen stated that Tilbury would be impacted greatly if the Lower Thames Crossing Proposal was implemented by the Government.

RESOLVED:

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the Air Quality & Health Strategy and provided comments for final document for submission to December Cabinet.

19. C2C Update

The Head of Highways and Transportation introduced the report explaining to Members that on 13 December 2015, c2c changed train journey times with the aim of increasing capacity on their services to accommodate 3,000 more passengers during the morning peak. The main beneficiaries of the new timetable improvements are most likely to be the passengers of Basildon, Benfleet, Chafford Hundred and Ockendon stations. The changes to train timetables were also a part of plan to increase capacity on c2c services. The new timetable accommodates an additional 3,000 passengers on short trips and 1,400 more seats available to long distance passengers travelling during the morning peak hours into London.

Christ Atkinson a C2C representative gave his apologies as he was unable to attend the committee in July 2016. A PowerPoint presentation was then presented to the committee highlighting the following points:

- The number of passengers borough-wide in the AM had increased by 9.8% and 12.4% PM.
- Forthcoming changes included 10 Thurrock trains lines being increased to eight carriages.
- The seat availability train calculations had demonstrated improvements in the number of passengers able to gain a seat in the AM and PM.

Councillor Redsell queried if there was any safety issues regarding the number of passengers on board during peak hours. The C2C representative explained that C2C had invested in expensive machinery that eliminated the danger of any passenger being at risk.

Councillor Gerrish questioned what the future was likely to hold in relation to growth. The C2C Representative confirmed that the new carriages that were being allocated would be likely to cater for the growth expected up until 2019.

RESOLVED:

That the Planning, Transport, Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee received the c2c service update report and agree the timing of future updates to the Committee.

20. Tilbury Community Led Local Development

Members of the Committee were informed that the Community Led Local Development (CLLD) was a new intervention using European Funding which works with targeted communities to develop a bottom-up approach to tackle long-standing and complex issues around employment, skills & business growth.

In November 2015 the Council submitted an Expression of Interest to develop a CLLD programme targeting Tilbury. The CLLD programme focuses on the 20% most deprived areas of the country. The two Tilbury wards: Tilbury St Chads, Tilbury Riverside & Thurrock Park were identified as having amongst the highest levels of deprivation in the borough, whilst at the same time

providing a contiguous area that included significant and emerging employment opportunities through the expansion of Tilbury Port. The expression of interest was approved and a small amount of funding was made available to support development of a delivery strategy. The final strategy was submitted in August 2016 and is now being considered by the Local Enterprise Partnership and by the Government authorities responsible for managing the programme.

Members were provided with an update on the progress made since the last report to Cabinet.

Members congratulate the regeneration team on securing the funding.

Councillor Piccolo queried what differences there would be through this funding programme compared to previous funding programmes. The Regeneration Programme Manager explained that the development would involve peer to peer involvement and the use of Tilbury companies' services.

The Chair of the Committee echoed the view that peer to peer involvement was needed and that the Regeneration team must work and listen to the residents.

Councillor Redsell stated that the heart of the community had been taken out of Tilbury through the Port and the River, it was highlighted to the Committee that the Ferry from Tilbury to Gravesend currently did not run on a Sunday.

RESOLVED:

Members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee gave their views on the priorities identified within the CLLD strategy, and on the principle that The Council takes on the role of the Accountable Body in the full applications to the EU funding streams.

21. Council Spending Review Update

Members were informed by the Finance manager that the report highlighted the main changes to the MTFS for the period 2017/18 through to 2019/20 and the governance structure for the Council Spending Review and Transformation Programme, including the budget planning table enabling agreement of the budget in February 2017. It was explained that The MTFS presented to Council in February 2016 shows the budget gap over the 3 years 2017/18 to 2019/20 as £18.443m. This already assumes delivery of £2.484m savings previously agreed for 2017/18 and assumes a Council Tax increase of 3.99% in each year.

Given the level of saving previously delivered across the council, the pressures identified in 2016/17 and that there are minimal reserves to call upon, it is essential that there is a clear strategy to close the budget gap set out in the MTFS. As a result, the focus would be on 3 key areas:

- Income generation.
- Achieving more / same for less.
- Demand management / early intervention.

Members of the Committee shared the view that the budget Gap would prove a difficult challenge for the council.

The use of consultants in the Council was discussed amongst the Committee. Councillor Redsell highlighted that Consultants must only be contracted when specifically needed. Councillor Piccolo also felt that there was a need for effective use of consultants.

Councillor Gerrish requested that all savings proposals were to be presented at the Planning Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee for scrutiny before being implemented.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That Planning, Transport & Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the revised MTFS position, and the Council Spending Review approach and timetable.**
- 2. That Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee commented on the proposals currently being considered within the remit of this committee.**

22. Cycling Infrastructure Plan Update

Members were informed by the Head of Planning and Transportation that in July 2014 Thurrock was awarded £5 million towards cycle route improvements to be delivered across the Borough by 2019. The Council was committed to enhancing Thurrock's cycle network; making it easier and safer to get around the Borough by bike, connecting routes, providing access to key employment and residential centres; offering an attractive alternative to using the car.

The Transport Development Manager provided a PowerPoint presentation which updated the committee on progress with the implementation of the Thurrock Cycle Infrastructure plan since the award of the growth fund monies in April 2016 with the first phase of £1.6m schemes planned of construction in spring and summer of 2017-18.

Members suggested the use of multipurpose pathways which could be used by different modes of transport such as bikes, skateboards, roller-skates and pedestrians. Councillor Rice explained that she had witnessed the success of similar schemes in previous years.

Councillor Redsell stated she did not see many people traveling on bikes throughout the borough, it was highlighted to the Transport Development

Manager that there was a previously established cycle path through Orsett merging onto Stifford Road that hadn't been completed, it was confirmed that this would be investigated.

Councillor Smith advised the Transport Development Manager to carefully consider structure nine and fifteen which were located in Aveley.

RESOLVED:

That the Planning, Transport, Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee received an update on the roll-out of Thurrock Cycle Infrastructure Programme and provide comments to inform subsequent phases of the programme.

23. Work Programme

The Head of Planning and Growth requested that the Design Guide and Tilbury Port Expansion update was allocated to the January 2017 Committee.

The Head of Highways and Transportation requested that the Capital Programme was also allocated to the January Committee.

The meeting finished at 9.15 pm

Approved as a true and correct record

CHAIR

DATE

Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact Democratic Services at Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk