

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3)
held at 10.00 am on Wednesday, 2 November 2016

Present:

Members: Councillor J McNicholas (Chair)
Councillor S Bains (Substitute for Councillor Lucas)
Councillor J Birdi
Councillor R Brown
Councillor R Lancaster
Councillor T Mayer
Councillor Skinner (Substitute for Councillor Hammon)

Other Members: Councillor Crookes (By Invitation – Shadow Cabinet Member for Jobs and Regeneration)
Councillor Duggins

By Invitation: Richards Mayes, Travel West Midlands
Andrew Harding, Travel West Midlands

Employees (by Directorate):

Place C Knight

Resources G Holmes, M Salmon

Apologies: Councillor R Auluck
Councillor A Lucas
Councillor M Hammon
Councillor H Sweet

Councillor J O'Boyle (By Invitation – Cabinet Member for Jobs and Regeneration)

Public Business

23. Declarations of Interest

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests made.

24. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 12th October 2016 were agreed and signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

25. Report Back on Conference/Event - Marche International Des Professionals De L'Immobilier (MIPIM) 15-18 March 2016

This matter was deferred to the next meeting of the Board being held on 14th December, 2016, to enable the Assistant Director - City Centre and Major Project Development to attend the meeting and to present the report back.

26. **Friargate Progress**

This matter was deferred to the next meeting of the Board being held on 14th December, 2016, to enable the Assistant Director - City Centre and Major Project Development to attend the meeting and to brief the Board on progress of the development in detail.

27. **Coventry Rail Story and Rail Investment Strategy**

The Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) considered a briefing note of the Executive Director of Place that provided a brief guide to the background and current context of the Rail Investment Strategy to inform the Board's Select Committee meeting on 15th February 2017.

Coventry had been historically overlooked by the rail industry in formal investment and planning strategies, despite record passenger growth in the city in recent years. Passenger numbers using Coventry station increased by 179% between 2001 and 2015 to 6.25 million annually – twice the national average growth of 90% and making Coventry the fastest growing railway station in the UK outside London. Passenger numbers were forecast to reach 10.8 million a year by 2043.

In 2013 the Council developed an evidence base that set out the rail interventions and investments that would support Coventry's economic growth. Initially called the Coventry Rail Story, it had evolved into a Rail Investment Strategy for the Council. It set out the Council's ambitions to enhance local and long distance rail connectivity and identified where capacity improvements were required to meet the increasing demand for rail services. Current rail priorities and interventions were: NUCKLE; Coventry Station Masterplan; Long distance rail connectivity; Connectivity to HS2; and Local and regional rail connectivity.

The Board questioned officers and discussed the following issues:

- The need for further exploration of connections between the East and West of the country.
- The progress of the Rail Masterplan – Report being submitted to Cabinet in the new-year.
- The proposals for a multi-storey car park, new lifts for accessibility, a Warwick Road tunnel entrance to Station (managed by Network Rail) and a new Bus Terminus at Coventry Station and a Bay Platform at Central Six.
- Proposals for the further exploration of other rail connectivity opportunities, following the introduction of HS2 and the possible reduction of high speed train services from Coventry to London.
- Exploring other transport opportunities e.g. very light transport, trams, Sprint.
- Work being done on single line tracks and re-doubling of tracks
- Location of Rail Station Bus Interchange and Taxi Rank
- Funding opportunities, following the loss of European Regional Development Funding as a result of Brexit
- Train connectivity to support economic growth

- HS2 – European line to link the North of the Country to Europe
- Expanding the City’s train connectivity to the North of the country

To support an item on business on the agenda for the 14th December 2016 meeting of the Board relating to HS2 (to include all connectivity – very light transport, trams, Sprint), Members requested that a briefing note be submitted to that meeting providing details of the following:

- HS2 – European line to link the North of the Country to Europe
- HS2 in Coventry – impact and other rail connectivity opportunities
- Expansion of the City’s train connectivity to the North of the country

Members acknowledged the work undertaken by officers on the Station Masterplan and the Rail Investment Strategy that would enhance local and long distance rail connectivity and support Coventry’s economic growth, and asked that their thanks be recorded.

RESOLVED that the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3):

- (1) Notes the contents of the report.**
- (2) Identifies ‘Train Connectivity to Support Economic Growth’ as the focussed key line of enquiry for the Board’s Select Committee meeting on 15th February 2017.**

28. **Bus Usage**

The Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) received a briefing note of the Executive Director of Place that provided the current position and background to bus usage, private operator investments, bus infrastructure Improvements, future Infrastructure Improvements, and bus network changes and future proposals, in the city. Richard Mayes and Andrew Harding from Travel West Midlands attended the meeting for this item of business.

Bus services in Coventry were coordinated by Transport for West Midlands (TfWM), the transport arm of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA). Until recently this role was fulfilled by Centro and the West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority (WMITA). These organisations both transitioned into the WMCA on 17th June 2016.

TfWM was responsible for installing new and maintaining existing bus infrastructure in the West Midlands metropolitan area (excluding buses themselves) including bus shelters, bus flags, conveying timetable and passenger information and in Coventry, the 20 stand Pool Meadow bus station.

Bus services in Coventry were provided by private operators National Express Coventry, Stagecoach, Mike DeCoursey Travel, Johnsons Coach and Bus, and Central Buses who set routes, timetables and fares. National Express Coventry was the largest operator with 160 buses operating on 39 routes, TfWM’s expenditure on supporting bus services in the city was £1.33 million in 2016-2017 an increase compared with the previous year due to the end of a £489,000 Section 106 agreement with the NHS.

The Board questioned officers and discussed the following issues:

- Bus value statement for Coventry – Coventry’s financial contribution and the outcomes for the City
- Bus Service Communication and quality of service provision in the City
- Bus interchange proposals for Coventry Rail Station
- Best use of road space in the City (including bus lanes)
- Customer Satisfaction Surveys – independent gathering of data to inform service provision
- Reliability and punctuality of buses
- Location of bus stops in rural areas
- University Hospital Bus Interchange – improved services
- Priority seating/areas on buses for wheelchair users and people with mobility issues
- Approaching private bus companies to discuss the feasibility of them installing external cameras on their vehicles to record video evidence and pursue as appropriate, where cars have parked in bus laybys/at bus stops causing buses to double park and delaying traffic flow.

To support an item on business on the agenda for the 14th December 2016 meeting of the Board relating to HS2 (to include all connectivity – very light transport, trams, Sprint), Members requested that a briefing note be submitted to that meeting providing a Bus value statement for Coventry.

RESOLVED that the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board are recommended to:

(1) Notes the contents of the report.

(2) Identifies focussed key lines of enquiry for the Board’s Select Committee meeting on 15th February 2017 as follows:

- **Bus Service Communication and quality of service provision in the City**
- **Best use of road space in the City (including bus lanes)**

29. Select Committee Recap and Identification of Key Lines of Enquiry

The Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) considered a briefing note of the Executive Director of Resources that provided a recap of the information Members had received this Municipal Year on the subject of public transport, to enable Members of the Board to identify key lines of enquiry for the Board’s Select Committee to be held on 15th February 2017.

At their informal meeting on 8th June it was agreed that the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) would hold a Select Committee Style meeting to address issues around public transport.

The purpose of the Select Committee was to hear evidence on a specific issue, in this case, Public Transport with regard to a key line of enquiry. It was important that the key lines of enquiry were identified before the Select Committee met so the correct background information could be provided and appropriate witnesses could be invited to give evidence.

Board Members had been provided with briefings and background documentation to provide information on the current position on various aspects of public transport.

Members had received briefings on public transport in general and providing transport for an aging population at meetings of the Board on 8th July 2016 and 21st September 2016. Copies of the Briefing Notes on these issues were attached as appendices to the Briefing Note for consideration when identifying the key areas to focus on for the Select Committee.

RESOLVED that the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3):

- (1) Notes the content of the attached briefing notes already considered at the meetings of the Board on 6th July 2016, 21st September 2016 and 12th October 2016.**
- (2) Notes the content of the information provided at the meeting of the Board on 2nd November 2016.**
- (3) Identifies focussed key lines of enquiry for the Board's Select Committee meeting on 15th February 2017 as follows:**
 - Train connectivity to support economic growth**
 - Bus Service Communication and quality of service provision in the City**
 - Best use of road space in the City (including bus lanes)**
- (4) Agrees to write to Coventry Older Voices and other appropriate organisations to invite them to suggest specific issues they may have for the Select Committee meeting and to invite them to attend.**

30. Outstanding Issues

There were no outstanding issues.

31. Work Programme 2016/2017

The Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) considered the Work Programme for 2016/17 and discussed the scheduling of proposed issues for consideration at future meetings of the Board.

Members of the Board requested information on the actions being taken to deal with the misuse of badges issued under the Disabled Blue Badge Scheme.

RESOLVED that the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) notes the Board's Work Programme for 2016/17 and agrees that the following issues be included on the agenda for the Board's 14th December 2016 meeting:

- **HS2 (to include all connectivity e.g. very light transport, trams, Sprint)**
- **Friargate Progress**
- **Report Back on attendance at Marche International Des Professionals De L'Immobilier (MIPIM) 2016 – 15–18 March 2016**

32. Any other items of public business which the Chair decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved

There were no other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 11.40 am)