

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

SUSTAINABILITY AND TRANSPORT O&S COMMITTEE

1000 hours on 24th July 2019, Committee Room 6 – Actions

Present:

Councillor Liz Clements (Chair)

Councillors Olly Armstrong, Zaker Choudhry, Eddie Freeman and Timothy Huxtable.

Also Present:

Councillor Jon Hunt

Councillor Waseem Zaffar, Cabinet Member Transport & Environment

Mel Jones, Head of Transport Planning and Network Strategy, BCC

Alison Kennedy, Principal Transport Policy Officer, BCC

Andy Middleton, Project Manager, BCC

Peter Parker, Head of Infrastructure Delivery, BCC

Anne Shaw, Director of Network Resilience, Transport for West Midlands (TfWM)

Baseema Begum, Scrutiny Officer

Rose Kiely, Overview & Scrutiny Manager

1. NOTICE OF RECORDING/WEBCAST

The Chair advised those present that the meeting would be webcast for live and subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet site and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there are confidential or exempt items.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Standing declaration from Councillor Huxtable as a member of the West Midlands Combined Authority's Transport Delivery Committee.

3. APOLOGIES

Councillor Muhammad Afzal.

4. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE AND CHAIR

Noted.

5. ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR

The Chair confirmed that Cllrs Armstrong and Johnson would be joint deputy-chairs for the municipal year.

6. TERMS OF REFERENCE

Noted.

7. SUSTAINABILITY & TRANSPORT O&S ACTION NOTES

The action notes of the meetings held on the 11th April and 10th July 2019 were agreed.

8. DRAFT WALKING AND CYCLING STRATEGY AND LOCAL CYCLING AND WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN CONSULTATION

(See document No.1)

Alison Kennedy highlighted the key points from the presentation that was circulated as part of the agenda pack. In doing so the following points were made:-

- There is a need to look carefully at bus routes and cycling lanes especially where changes to the road layout are required. Many roads in the city would need widening to accommodate and this is not always possible due to the width of the road.
- Cllr Zaffar stated that there is a commitment to increase the number of bus lanes across the city by reallocating space already available and giving priority to buses. This includes creating a separate safe space for cyclists where possible and creating a network similar to the canal network. It would also allow the city to achieve quick wins in tackling inconsiderate parking on the public highway that impacts on the most vulnerable such as those with disabilities.
- A report on active travel released by the Government yesterday highlighted the percentage spend on cycling. In Birmingham 40% of the budget is spent on cycling. To increase and keep the momentum up on getting more people cycling there is a need to secure resources as previously funding for cycling infrastructure and education has come from ring-fenced monies.
- On new developments sustainable transport measures should be included as early as possible at the planning stage. The Development Control section within the Transport & Connectivity team are consulted as part of the process in the assessing of planning applications. However any advice given can only be

taken forward by planning officers. The Birmingham Transport Plan currently being drafted will provide a more robust process to challenge decisions made.

- Could reconsideration be given to increasing the percentage of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) given to wards so that local councillors and residents can allocate to more sustainable forms of travel?
- The school streets pilot programme (currently only 6 schools) is due to commence in September 2019 aimed at encouraging children and parents/carers to walk to school by excluding cars within a particular zone. The pilot is being delivered by Living Streets in conjunction with Transport for West Midlands and has been offered to schools across the city.
- An increase in funding is needed to roll-out the programme to all schools. It does require a staff resource from schools interested in the programme and this is not always possible due to staffing capacity. Currently there is limited funding so the schools in the pilot have been selected carefully and funded through the safer routes to schools budget. The school streets pilot will need to be monitored carefully to see if it has had an impact on the air quality around schools as well as other impacts such as a change in travel behaviour and modal shift.

RESOLVED:-

1. Cllr Huxtable to be provided with more information on allocation of CIL monies in wards for more sustainable transport measures.
2. Cllr Huxtable requested further information the school streets project specifically which of the 6 schools in the pilot project are being supported by Living Streets.

9. QUARTERLY UPDATE ON THE A34 PERRY BARR HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE CONSULTATION

(See document No. 2)

Cllr Zaffar talked Members through the key points in the presentation circulated to the Committee.

During discussion with Members the following points were made:-

- The impact of the proposed work in the Perry Barr area are far-reaching and the parameters of consultation have been a cause for concern. There is a need to run the consultation and engagement in parallel.
- There will be a negative impact on bus users in the area and therefore National Express West Midlands (NXWM) as a major stakeholder need to be consulted with as concerns were raised in a meeting with Cllr Hunt.
- Cllr Zaffar confirmed that he had met with NXWM last week and he was aware of the concerns raised. Reliability for bus users in the 18-24 months on construction phase to deal with the 475,000 passengers is of huge importance. He added that an engagement plan is in place for all stakeholders.

Anne Shaw, Director of Resilience gave a presentation covering areas of work that the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) are responsible for. During the presentation and discussion the following points were made:-

- WMCA work with the City Council, contractors and project teams (for example engagement with NXWM goes through the Council's team) to ensure effective co-ordination of delivery plans. This is where issues are pre-empted as far as possible and dealt with before they become a concern.
- Cllr Hunt queried why the transport plan was not part of the planning application presented at Planning Committee and noted the importance of including traffic diversions to be put in place in reports being agreed by Cabinet.
- It was confirmed that the Leader had presented a full business case at a meeting of the Cabinet that sets out the framework for the works. Once the contractor has been appointed to build the scheme then further details will be available and then finalising of the traffic arrangements can be done. These details can be provided when they are available including any tender information that can be shared publically and is not commercially sensitive.
- In terms of more cycling and walking spaces/infrastructure it was confirmed that an extension to the Birmingham Cycling Revolution (BCR) route from Heathfield Road in Lozells to Perry Barr on the eastern footway is planned. This cycle route is segregated from other traffic for the most part. Priority to cyclists is also being given on side roads. The Aldridge Road is to be closed off to general traffic and the public realm will be only for buses, cycling and walking. Cycling routes to Perry Barr One Stop shopping centre and Birchfield Island will all include and increase walking options. Bus diversion and how this will work practically will be worked through bus priority measures with different routes into the city centre being assessed. Work is also being undertaken with Highways England to help manage construction across the wider area.
- There is a lot of work going into promoting the Commonwealth Games as a 'public transport' games to help people choose sustainable modes of travel. Park and Ride options at Junction 7 will be delivered as part of work on SPRINT Bus routes. Work is also taken place on the Games with neighbouring authorities (Sandwell and Walsall).
- A number of other schemes to improve connectivity and safety along key route networks are in place across the city and will be delivered in the period up to 2026.
- It is very helpful for people to see how the plans will work now that designs have been agreed and ensure that a lasting community is created as part of all the work.
- Sustainable inclusive growth is key with more options and additional public transport to improve employment options.

RESOLVED:-

1. Cllr Zaffar to provide Cllr Huxtable with a response to his query on if it is theoretically possible to consider a phased approach and separate the funding packages relating to the possibility of going ahead with work on the Birchfield Road island and not the Flyover once feedback from the consultation has been considered.

10. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Noted.

11. SUSTAINABILITY & TRANSPORT O&S COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

(See document No. 3)

The Chair, Cllr Clements outlined the future work programme and added two items for consideration:

- Looking at the Commonwealth Games Village from a sustainability point of view.
- Considering issues with the Veolia waste contract and how the City Council will manage exiting the contract in light of the Council's commitment to address the climate change emergency.

12. REQUEST(S) FOR CALL IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS (IF ANY)

None.

13. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

None.

14. AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS

Agreed.

RESOLVED:-

That in an urgent situation between meetings the Chair, jointly with the relevant Chief Officer, has authority to act on behalf of the Committee.

The meeting ended at 12:22 hours.