

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

ECONOMY, SKILLS AND TRANSPORT O&S COMMITTEE

1400 hours on 19th October 2017, Committee Rooms 3&4 – Actions

Present:

Councillor Zafar Iqbal (Chair)

Councillors David Barrie, Zaker Choudhry, Liz Clements, Phil Davis, Mahmood Hussain, Ziaul Islam, John O'Shea and Ken Wood

Also Present:

Councillor Stewart Stacey, Cabinet Member for Transport & Roads

David Harris, Transportation Policy Manager

Matthew Lewis, Head of Swift, Transport for West Midlands

Jon Hayes, Bus Scheme Development Manager, Transport for West Midlands (TfWM)

Danny Gouveia, Bus Scheme Development Manager, Transport for West Midlands (TfWM)

Ali Bell, Head of External Communications, National Express West Midlands (NXWM)

Adam Hawksworth, Commercial Manager, National Express West Midlands (NXWM)

Baseema Begum, Research & Policy Officer, Scrutiny Office

Rose Kiely, Overview & Scrutiny Manager, Scrutiny Office

1. NOTICE OF RECORDING

The Chairman advised that this meeting would be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet site (which could be accessed at "www.birminghamnewsroom.com") and members of the press/public may record and take photographs.

The whole of the meeting would be filmed except where there were confidential or exempt items.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Sir Albert Bore and Timothy Huxtable.

3. ECONOMY, SKILLS AND TRANSPORT: ACTION NOTES 14TH SEPTEMBER 2017/ISSUES ARISING

The Chair, Cllr Iqbal confirmed progress on outstanding actions from the Committee's previous meetings:

1. On 13th October the West Midlands Combined Authority's Productivity & Skills Commission's Interim Findings report was circulated to Members.
2. Councillor Clements was sent an email following her request for a breakdown by gender and ethnicity of members of the Productivity and Skills Commission.
3. The employment team are currently awaiting the latest data which will be collated and an update provided to members in due course on the percentage of young people that have finished the Youth Promise Plus programme and their destinations.
4. The Committee has been provided with an updated list on the work of the Employment Access team in working with employers on major regeneration schemes in the city and area action plans.
5. Cllr Islam has been notified that the information he requested in relation to the number of individuals supported into training and employment by district through the DWP's Flexible Support Fund is currently being collated.

4. DISCUSSION ON THE DRAFT PARKING POLICY

(See document No 1)

The Cabinet Member for Transport & Roads, Councillor Stewart Stacey outlined that the draft parking policy was still a work in progress. He requested that the Committee consider the issue of local car parking in more depth so that it can feed into the work currently being undertaken on the policy.

David Harris, Transportation Policy Manager highlighted the key points from the presentation (document No1) and in particular emphasised that the policy will set the framework in which the City Council will operate.

With reference to local parking he stated that he is awaiting on-street parking data as this is essential to making decisions regarding the balance of providing better and adequate parking for both on-street and off-street vehicles.

During discussion Members made the following points were made:

- Safety for vulnerable people and those with disabilities is paramount. There are issues with motorists parking inconsiderately. Clarity is needed on who is responsible for the enforcement (is it the City Council or Police?) of this as Members receive a high number of complaints from their residents.
- Parking in local centres is of concern to shops and businesses as it affects trade. Members need to understand what the cost is of enforcing parking in local high streets and requested that further information is provided.
- Car Parks owned by the City Council are not used as much as other car parking facilities. What are the costs of enforcement and can this information be provided?

- Parking design standards also need to be looked at to consider the need of appropriate parking spaces i.e. to accommodate bigger vehicles for example.
- Parking on grass verges is a key concern for residents. An allocation per ward was agreed by the Cabinet Member to address local issues and potential options. There are a number of tools available to the City Council to address verge parking however this does need to be used on a case by case basis where the City Council may have to use its powers.
- The consultation on the draft car parking policy is proposed to take place in 2018.
- There is a need to get the balance of the policy right so that there is businesses are not negatively affected as well as considering the impact of air pollution and the rights of citizens to clean air.
- Enforcement is a key issue and needs further discussion as members have concerns and clarity is required on powers, legislation, responsibilities of statutory bodies. It was envisaged by the Cabinet Member that a workshop session for members addressing and discussing these issues would be an ideal way forward in generating ideas to shape the policy.

RESOLVED:-

1. Briefing note for Committee on the actions taken to improve safety in respect of Pershore Road/Edgbaston Road junction for cyclists and pedestrians.
2. Briefing note for Committee on the costs of enforcing parking.
3. Parking enforcement issues with regards to Tesco (Swan Island) staff parking on residential roads – Cllr Choudhry asked for an update on what the City Council can do to ensure that residential roads are not blocked all day. DH to speak to parking enforcement to investigate the issues further.
4. Erdington Parking Scheme – confirm start date and Committee would like to stay informed on its progress.
5. The Committee to have an informal ‘workshop’ session on local parking issues. This will be most likely take place before or after January’s meeting (14th).

5. INTEGRATED TICKETING ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT

(See document No 2)

Matthew Lewis, Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) outlined key points from his presentation and during discussion with Members the following comments were made:

- The Swift card meets the standard for integrated ticketing and can be used in other areas of the country. The Oyster card in London is bespoke and developed at a cost of £1.2b.
- TfWM are looking into capping costs and working with partners to deliver it as soon as possible. The aim is to bring down cost to commuters. The initial cost is the capital to set up but long term it is an efficient way of ticketing.
- The cost of implementing the Swift card is £20m since 2010. This is made up from local funding and a grant from the Department for Transport.

- The use of contactless for passengers more widely would speed things as well as embracing the way in which people use smartphones and technology to pay for services. TfWM are currently working towards this goal.
- TfWM have significantly consulted with disability groups at the start of the process and happy to do further as needed.

RESOLVED:-

The report was noted.

6. BUS STOP RATIONALISATION

(see document No 3)

Jon Hayes and Danny Gouveia outlined the key points from their report. In particular it was highlighted that:

- Bus speed had reduced by 20% in the last 2 years in the region and this affects the existing level of service. It is particularly pronounced in Birmingham.
- Across the region there has been an average reduction in bus patronage of 3% in the last 3 years.
- Accessibility to bus services affects people getting to jobs, training and education which has a direct impact on the economy. The decrease in usage and speed is directly evidenced and is due to congestion.
- There has been an increase in the number of buses to maintain the existing level of service at the expense of services on more suburban and marginal corridors. Therefore more buses are required to provide a poorer level of service however the city needs an efficient and reliable bus service.
- The proposed service changes in south Birmingham are a direct result of the impact of congestion in that area.
- Various mobility and disability groups have been contacted as part of the consultation and are welcome to provide further feedback as the trial is still under consultation.
- The Ring and Ride service is unaffected.

Ali Bell, NXWM added that the bus operator have tried a number of different methods to encourage people to use buses including new ticket machines, incorporation of the Swift card, wi-fi and charging points on the newer platinum buses, lowering fares, low fare zones outside of peak times and on express routes. She added however that if the bus is idle due to congestion it is taking longer for passengers to get onto or to complete their journey then people are discouraged to use it. Therefore NXWM are working with the City Council and TfWM on a package of measures.

Following the presentation of the report Members made the following comments:

- Members of the public felt that there was not enough time given on the consultation especially as it took place over the summer holiday period. It was hoped that next year's consultation will give more time.
- The marginal services that are provided in estates are valuable to a lot of elderly people and those with mobility issues as this is the only way that they

move around using public transport. It is therefore hugely important and needed especially to tackle social exclusion.

- Buses needed to be made more attractive to the public to increase modal shift i.e. cheaper fares as in most cases where applicable and available people will use the train if they can as it is faster.
- More measures are needed to open up road space to all form of road users such as cyclists. London is a good example of this.
- It is imperative to look at the impact of the trial before considering what the next steps are with WMCA.

RESOLVED:-

That TfWM are invited to update the Committee following completion and analysis of the pilot.

7. WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE ECONOMY, SKILLS AND TRANSPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2017-18

(See document No 4)

Members noted the work programme.

RESOLVED:-

The report was noted.

8. REQUEST(S) FOR CALL IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS

None.

9. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

None.

10. 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 1610 hours.