



**Buckinghamshire County Council**  
**Select Committee**  
Environment, Transport and Locality Services

# Minutes

## *ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT AND LOCALITY SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE*

**MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT AND LOCALITY SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 24 JULY 2013, IN MEZZANINE ROOM 2, COUNTY HALL, AYLESBURY, COMMENCING AT 10.00 AM AND CONCLUDING AT 12.15 PM.**

### **MEMBERS PRESENT**

Mr W Bendyshe-Brown, Mr T Butcher, Mr D Dhillon, Mr P Gomm, Mr S Lambert and Mr W Whyte

### **OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Ms K Agbabiaka, Ms G Badhan, Ms J Blake, Ms S Griffin (Secretary), Ms G Harding, Heeley, Mrs M Keyworth (Secretary), Mr L Merces, Mr S Rooney, Mr D Sutherland and K Wager

### **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Bill Chapple and David Carroll.

### **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **3 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on the Wednesday 26 June 2013 were agreed as a correct record.

### **4 PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

There were no public questions.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



## 5 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman explained that the Environment, Transport and Locality Services Select Committee has a varied and wide workload.

One of the challenges during the year will be to schedule the agendas as the items arise as well as address some of the big issues/topics already on the agenda for the Committee.

## 6 OVERVIEW OF THE ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

The Chairman welcomed Gill Harding, Country Parks and Property, Gurbaksh Badhan, Waste Service Business Manager and David Sutherland, Sustainability Service Business Manager to the meeting.

Gill Harding explained that the Place Service Senior Management responsibilities were as follows;

Martin Dickman, Senior Manager, Place;

- 'Go To' for the Cabinet Member for Environment
- gypsies and travellers – contract manager (the management contract currently sits with Oxfordshire County Council)
- Energy from Waste Project Lead

Gill Harding

- general overview of Place Service and Environment, Green Spaces and Country Parks, finance and performance

Gurbaksh Badhan

- household waste and recycling

David Sutherland

- sustainability and future proofing services

Joe Nethercoat

- waste and sustainability

Stephen Walford

- Planning, Advisory and Compliance Service (PACS) (a new team brought together as a result of the Place restructure 18 months ago)

### **Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs)**

Gurbaksh Badhan gave the following overview of the Household Waste Recycling Centres;

- Buckinghamshire County Council has a statutory function as a Waste Disposal Authority to provide one or more Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) where Buckinghamshire residents can recycle and dispose of their own household waste.
- BCC have 10 Household Waste Recycling Centres operating under Performance Based contract by FCC Environmental
- The contract commenced in April 2012 and includes:
  - Self monitoring of 36 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
  - Recycling and diversion targets for encouraging submission of a business case for new recycling streams
  - A share of net income/cost on recycled materials
- The contract is for a period of 7 years with the option to extend the contract for a further 3 years.

- 75% of waste collected across the 10 sites was reused or recycled in 2012/13
- The Waste Acceptance and Access Policy was brought in in 2006 to replace the use of height barriers and to deter trade waste being brought in for free and by setting limits, restrict quantities of non- Household waste.
- The policy has been implemented through a 'Permit Scheme'.
- Householders can apply for a permit in various ways i.e. via the BCC website, by telephone or in writing.
- There are four types of permit, general, recyclable, DIY and/or asbestos. Permits are free and are for a fixed duration (general/recycle – 1 month (3 month on renewal), DIY 31 days / one visit for six items of DIY waste).
- Local Businesses may dispose of Commercial and/or construction & demolition waste at one of five Trade Waste HWRC's. Charges apply and are published on the BCC website.
- A project took place from April – June 2013 under PRINCE 2 to look at how to deliver services, the location of the HWRC's, the impact, the delivery of services in the last 6 years and the legislation elements. The project is 90% complete. An options list will be developed in July/August which will be presented to the Project Board for detailed analysis and modelling. The aim is for the Project report to be reviewed and finalised by September 2013.

### **Sustainability and Future Proofing Service**

David Sutherland, Sustainability Service Manager gave the following overview;

The two key objectives are:

- To reduce the County Council's costs by improving its resource efficient and that of its partners and enabling Buckinghamshire to grow, whilst reducing its impact on the environment.
- To reduce car use through the promotion and facilitation of sustainable travel choices, enabling economic growth, improving health, wellbeing and accessibility and reducing congestion and environmental impact.

The Sustainability Action Plan was approved by Cabinet in March 2013. The key themes of the Action Plan are;

- Energy Efficiency (including the Carbon Management Plan)
- Renewable Energy
- Resilient services and communities
- Employment and business
- Sustainable travel
- Waste prevention

### **County Parks**

Gill Harding gave the following overview:

The key themes are;

- 3 main park areas; Black Park, Langley and Denham
- Last year there was an income generation level in excess of £650k with £700k projected this year
- There was an operational expenditure of £570k last year with £630k predicted this year
- The main sources of income are filming and card parking
- There is a new strategy to deliver further step change in income to cover;
  - Below the line costs
  - Develop a reserve for improvements
  - Be able to manage good and bad years so that business never falls into deficit

- Current estimated target to do this is a further £300k income delivery
- The strategy for the future is a move towards a trading account model to demonstrate financial self sufficiency
- To facilitate this an investment of over £900k has been made through the Medium Term Plan over a three year period
- Main projects being explored are:
  - Intelligent car park charging and enforcement – the current arrangement is a flat charge on a daily basis – enforcement measures which are fair across the board are being looked into
  - Temporary and permanent expansion to the car park at busy times taking into account the impact on the road network.
  - Development of a multi-functional structure to expand the current season at the parks i.e. an all weather centre

### **Green Spaces**

- Due to MTP efficiencies the decision was made to divest Green Spaces to other likeminded organisations in order that they would be kept for public use.
- A divestment strategy is currently in place around working with local parishes to move Green Spaces into a different delivery model.
- A saving in the region of £180,000 was made.
- Of the 27 Green Spaces, 17 are in the final stage of agreeing Heads of Term on 99 year leases. The County Council has been mindful that the leases protect the green spaces.
- The remainder of the Green Spaces has been flagged up with the Cabinet Member for Environment to look at how this can be taken forward.

During discussion, Members asked the following questions and made the following points:

**What is the mechanism for updating and making Local Members aware of what property assets or Green Spaces are within their division and how they might be involved in dialogue if the process is to be reviewed?** Property primarily falls within the Finance and Resources portfolio (Ian Boll is lead on the property area). There are lots of services including Environment where there is both property and land currently within the service area. The move towards the Corporate Landlord arrangement means there is a lot of debate around how BCC work with the services and Local members e.g. the walks and the windmill in Brill where Local Members were very aware what was going on. There should be dialogue between Officers and Local Members. If this is not happening it can be feedback.

**Action: Gill Harding**

**Wycombe District Council has outsourced 200 acres of woodland which are now freestanding and money earning. Can BCC do the same as for the properties? An Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) scheme is being rolled out for all car parks in Wycombe. Is it possible to do something similar in the Green Parks?**

**Do the green spaces/property that BCC is trying to divest consist of small verges/parcels of land? From personal experience the process residents have to go through to purchase land is so complicated they then don't want to go ahead with the purchase. This could have an effect on income opportunity/capital opportunities.** The Green Spaces being discussed are currently sat in the Environment portfolio and are small patches of woodland/land. The divestment strategy is being looked at as a way of maintaining their use for the public in the future. Land purchased by individuals or organisations would go via the Finance and Resources portfolio which sits within the property remit. This comment can be fed back to Ian Boll

**Action: Gill Harding**

**Does the property sit within the Environment portfolio or within a different department?**

It depends on the areas of land and where they are actually located. Strips of transport land sit with the Transport portfolio. Purchase of the land would generally go through Property Services. The aim is that all assets owned by BCC would be managed by the Corporate Landlord structure which would then be managed under the Property Service structure. This management structure is still to be developed for the future.

**Members need to be kept well informed about how the consultation for the intelligent car parking charges in country parks would take place with members of the public.**

**Wycombe District Council has a thermal imaging camera and by using this has recognised that 70% of the buildings across the district are poorly insulated. Do BCC have similar equipment which could be loaned out or could staff be trained to carry out this process?** There is a thermal imaging camera in the BCC team. The possibility of loaning out the camera can be looked into. It has emerged that approximately 40-50% of emissions come from domestic housing due to inefficient housing stock in Buckinghamshire. Commercial property stock is also very old and poor within the Bucks Authority – this is a key issue which needs to be addressed.

**The Community Interest Company (Green Deal provider) has had very little take up. Those doing the surveys and installation receive funds/payment but at the end of the day the person who pays is the Householder.** The Green Deal is one of the Government flagship proposals around how to address the lack of efficiency across housing and commercial stock. The key part is that the savings/payment is drawn down on the energy bill of the household and the repayment stays with the property not the person. To date 38,000 households have had a Green Deal assessment across the UK. This is positive bearing in mind this is the start of a 20 year programme. The reason by BCC as an Authority took the decision to go ahead with the Green Deal to try and keep some of the supply chain local (assessors, installers etc).

The Chairman asked for a written response to be provided about the Green Deal as it would be useful to understand reasons for its creation, the benefits and why BCC decided to go ahead with the programme.

**Action: David Sutherland**

**The two new re-use shops at HWRCs are run by a local charity. It is interesting to hear there could be the opportunity to extend this to other sites as members of public would welcome the opportunity to recycle at all of the centres rather than just the two specific sites.** There has been some negative feedback about the new re-use shops but there was also some negative customer feedback about the other delivery model in terms of some sites being an open area and people just standing around which gave the feeling of intimidation. Money is now going to a local charity for a local hospice which is a much better position than it was previously. There are currently only re-use shops on two of the larger sites They appear to be very success at the moment but are victim of own success as there is the need to look into expanding the areas.

The process is that a donation can be made on all the sites which is then brought into the central site and sorted. What can be realistically sold will go into the shops, what can't be realistically sold will go into the high street chain shops and what still can't be sold after 2-3 weeks will be auctioned. The new arrangements have been in place for one year. There is still room for improvement as we go forward.

**How do the HWRC's deal with commercial vehicles with private domestic waste who have not obtained a permit as they did not realise there is a procedure in place. Some traders have also commented that it is difficult to drop their waste on the site. Do they have a waste transfer license within their remit?** Traders need a Waste Carrier License

which is quick and easy to apply for from the Environmental agency. A regular carrier needs to have a license; however if the quantity of waste is under the set amount, it is not necessary to have a license. The Waste Centre needs proof of a license before accepting waste. The process is that waste is weighed on a weighbridge and a ticket is issued. The waste then has to be separated into the same container that members of the public use. On the leaving the centre the weight of the vehicle is taken again which is how the appropriate charge is made. Disposing of the waste is a relatively quick and easy process. Aylesbury, Aston Clinton, High Heavens and Beaconsfield accept waste.

With regard to commercial vehicles that do not come in to the waste sites on a regular basis, this can be addressed on a discretionary basis by completing an onsite disclaimer.

**The graph on page 8 of the presentation shows that the recycling rates dropped from 80% in 2012/2013 to 75% 2010/2011. Is the reason for this reduction known?** There are several reasons for the drop in the recycling rates. The recession has affected the volume of material coming through and also the changeover of contract (style, operational aspects and the fact that some material can no longer be removed). The way of delivering the services on the ground has changed.

**The next stage needs to be considered i.e. rural access to sites and carless access. If an individual does not have a car, how would they dispose of their household waste? Recycling in a conservation area is not particularly easy as some of the County Councils have started to remove waste points from town centres.**

**If there is £1m Capital Budget to spend on improvement to sustainability transport programmes, the problem of most schools facing traffic jams at 8.30am/3.30pm needs to be addressed. There is also the knock on effect on local air quality management and impact on local traffic planning and management to take into account. It would be interesting to know where the £1m in the Capital budget is going to and to have more detail about the schemes.** The Chairman asked for a written response to be given to the questions raised about the Capital Budget

**Action: David Sutherland**

A further report can be provided about LED street lights as this is a big programme and there are large energy savings to be made in terms of switching to LED. Primarily the switch to LED street lighting is on A&B roads as this is where the funding is currently in place. There is however, the aspiration to extend this further.

**Action: David Sutherland**

It was suggested that the Committee looks at the following as part of their future work programme;

- The Green Deal as it affects sustainability and future income and setting up these companies changes the entire environmental portfolio across the council.
- The impact of the street light switch off programme and migration to the LED lighting.
- Food recycling and bulk waste items
- It would be useful to understand the relationship between fly tipping and accessibility to trade waste

The Chairman thanked Gill Harding, Gurbaksh Badhan and David Sutherland, for their very useful and detailed update.

## **7 PROPOSED COMMITTEE WORK**

Kama Wager, Policy Officer referred Members to the documents enclosed with the agenda detailing two proposals for committee work.

Members were asked for their agreement that the two areas proposed fall with the remit of the Committee and that they should be looked into further.

### **Proposal No 1 - Tackling Problem Debt in Buckinghamshire**

The key areas that could be addressed are highlighted (payday loans, prevalence of people using payday loans, high interest lenders, high unemployment etc)

### **Proposal No. 2 - Bus usage and public transport links in Buckinghamshire**

This is a legacy item from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee passed onto the ETL Select Committee to look at areas such as transport networks bus routes based on historic demands and future demands, if services meet demands and rural accessibility.

Members of the Committee agreed to look at both of the items at the September meeting after more research has taken place and further evidence has been gathered.

### **Welfare Reforms**

Members were advised that a number of projects were taking place across the county to look at the impact of welfare reforms. The requirements may only be for extra background research/ information to be fed into areas where the Committee may be able to add value and to take this through as a draft scope for a future inquiry topic.

The Chairman said that it would be useful to hear what work is Community Impact Bucks are carrying out on behalf of BCC.

**Action: Kama Wager**

## **8 TRANSPORT FOR BUCKS, RINGWAY JACOBS CONTRACT**

The Chairman welcomed Janet Blake, Cabinet Member for Transport and Planning, Sean Rooney, Senior Manager- Transport, Karen Agbabiaka – Senior Manager, Place Service and Martin Heeley, Design, Construction and Business Manager, Ringway Jacobs/TfB to the meeting.

The Cabinet Member introduced Lee Mercedes, Contract Director, Ringway Jacobs/TfB.

Sean Rooney took Members through a Powerpoint presentation on the Transport for Bucks (TfB), Ringway Jacobs contract during which the following key points were highlighted:

### **The rationale behind the Transportation Services Contract**

The Transportation Services contract started in 2009 at which time it was a quite innovate and unique in terms of the way things are done in the industry. Highways expertise was provided by Ringway Jacobs to work towards improving the service provided to businesses, customers and residents of Buckinghamshire.

The contract was not a traditional client/consultation. It was an arrangement very much about a self-audit and self-monitoring from Ringway Jacobs as part of TfB. There was strategic client support of the contract with the ability to check and challenge on an on-going basis. The important aspect was moving towards a different approach. Instead of a tripartite arrangement there was a single TfB alliance. Focus was on delivery across the service

## **Task Orders**

Task Orders are the instruction BCC gives to the Contactor to carry out works on behalf of the Authority.

A Task Order is a culmination of a significant business planning process which starts in October every year for the following financial year. There is significant challenge and involvement from the client throughout the process

Task Orders are led by the contractor but are checked and challenged by BCC. There is also involvement from the Cabinet Member towards the latter stages.

## **Principles of payment**

This is the level of detail which gets picked up in the latter stages. Each area of work is issued a specific Task Order which is linked into breakdown of the work which is expected to be delivered within the year. This is also recorded for Capital and Revenue.

## **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**

Key Performance Indicators set out the standards against which TfB's performance is measured;

- 'minimum acceptable performance'
- 'expected performance'
- KPI's are reviewed yearly.
- Contract extension is based on successful KPI performance
- 90% of KPIs must meet Acceptable Performance
- If the performance is not achieved for two consecutive years, any extensions granted are reduced by a year (although contracts are awarded, there is still the ability for the Contractor to lose the contract)
- If performance is not achieved for three consecutive years, ALL extensions granted are lost
- Current extensions take the contract to 2012, with the potential of running until 2024.

During discussion, Members asked the following questions and made the following points:

**There are two progress reports to Council with Cabinet response (27 February 2012 and 23 October 2012) from the previous Overview & Scrutiny Committee. There 8 keys items outstanding from the October report. Is it possible to have an update on the response?** The last response was made by Peter Hardy, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources. Work is still taking place towards some of those key recommendations. A paper has been shared on the role of the Strategic Board. An update can be provided which includes details of the monthly reviews and the 'We are Working on It' programme.

**Action: Sean Rooney**

The report on each of the recommendations to be given to the Committee should include the following information:

- The role of the Strategic Board and how this relates to the Select Committee
- How the Select Committee is informed about what the Strategic Board decides and discusses
- An update on complaints and trends and how they are resolved
- Managing expectations (councillors and members of the public)
- Expected delivery
- KPIs
- Monthly reviews (OMT/OMB-Management Team/Board) and the outcome
- The concept of potholes in one area not all being repaired at the same time

**Action: Sean Rooney**



The Cabinet Member explained that BCC are driven to making sure that the appropriate repairs in an area are completed in one visit but this dependent on the Capital Expenditure available. BCC would sooner deploy a workforce to make sure the repairs are right the first time rather than having to return to the site for further repairs and therefore incurring additional costs.

**Is it possible to have a further explanation/clarification of Task Orders?** The Business planning process takes into account budgeting from the Medium Term Process (MTP) and is driven from those values and budgets from September to 1 April. Each activity/output/cost is defined for the type of service and level of service is agreed. The cost for that service is put into a Task Order, a 3-4 page document which sets out the financial implications to deliver the Business Plan and those activities. Each contract KPI is attached to a Task Order.

Task Orders are related to the related Business Plan. The Business Plan breaks down each item of the service which is expected. The Task Order is an instruction to carry out work within the Business Plan that has been instructed by the client. There is the obligation and statutory requirement to maintain highways in a safe and serviceable condition.

**How many Task Order are there for this current year?** There is one Task Order but this is sub set into each service area (approximately 14 in total). There is one Task Order for Capital and Revenue for TfB which is sub divided into Service areas such as Asset, routine etc.

**Where do Client Reference Numbers (CRN's) fit in with Task Orders?** The CRN is the unique number given to a customer when they make a complaint. The CRN is sent to TfB and a works order is generated. Task Orders are about the 'business' that the County Council expect TfB to deliver on their behalf.

**Is a Task Order is fundamental to what services are delivered by the Local Authority each year.** Yes a Task Order is linked to the Business Plan.

**How is the percentage of acceptable performance calculated i.e. 90%? When a contract is issued and the base rate for the price of the contract is agreed, if the contractor doesn't perform or if they increase their performance, does the contractor receive a bonus and if they don't perform does BCC receive a reduction within the process?** TfB does not get a bonus for over performing just a cut for under-performing. The fee profit element is reduced if TfB do not meet the KPI performances throughout the year.

When KPIs are defined there is a minimum expected period indicated. Performance for each indicator is linked into where it sits in each band. If the performance figures are achieved as a minimum, TfB gain the full fee. If performance is in-between it is rated and ranked in-between i.e. £10 for delivering a perfect service and £5 if a perfect service is not delivered.

**Is there an element of overheads and profits in Task Orders if some of the work can be procured at a cheaper rate during the year?** The fee at risk is a contractual figure within the KPI. A proportion of that is linked with overheads and profit. It is the profit element which is at risk.

**In previous years has there been any element of a Task Order which has not been paid in full as a result of the work not being up to standard i.e. lack of performance?** Although there are individual Task Orders, the year- end outturn is taken as a whole. The process is managed throughout via the governance process (the Ringway Jacobs performance review) and reporting to the Operational Management Board. Elements have not been paid rather than an individual Task Order.

**A document received from the Policy Officer advises that grass cutting has been reduced to two cuts per year in rural areas. There are areas where large swathes grass are not cut back but they were brought by the County Council to allow visibility of traffic i.e. B4009. As part of the Medium Term Plan process last year, TfB were asked to review the Business Plans in relation to making efficiency savings. The decision was made to reduce the levels of cuts of grass from three to two. Concerns have been received from members of the public about the new process in place as they are used to seeing a certain numbers of cuts. There is a new plan and process in place.**

**How are the 'hot cut gangs' accessed and how are arrangements made for them to carry out work - is this via CRN?** 'Hot cut gangs' would carry out the grass cutting work at junctions. Although the process is now two cuts, visibility splays around junctions are classed as 'as and when' which depends on the grass and how quickly it grows. Local Area Technicians and Inspectors should pick up any areas to be addressed whilst carrying out county visits/inspections. 'Hot cut gangs' should be contacted via the Contact Centre.

**There is no option on the drop down menu on the website to report problems with grass verges.** This issue will be taken back to the team and will be looked into. Interaction with the Local Area Technician also needs to be encouraged

**Action: Sean Rooney**

**There are two areas in North Bucks where the first cut of the grass has not taken place. Reflectors on the corners of the roads cannot be seen and there is impaired vision space. Residents have been advised that the first cut will take place in August. What is the reason for the delay and are there any savings to be had from the first cut taking place in August?** The specific concerns about the two cuts per year can be fed back to the team. The number of grass cuts is linked to the programme of delivery which is built into this year's Performance Indicators. If this is not as per the published programme which is defined at the beginning of the year it affects KPIs and there is a risk to the contractor's fee.

**With regard to grass cutting if a KPI is not met obviously there would be a reduction or non-payment in the KPI but if work is not carried out and the grass is not cut on time does that mean the Task Order value for the grass cutting will be reduced as well?** There is a process in place to review KPIs. If a service has not been delivered it will not be paid for. If the elements of the Task Order which refer to the Business Plan are not delivered, they will not be paid for.

**There is the need for clarity around the process as the way the information is being presented infers that a KPI is at risk but not the Task Order.**

**There needs to be more transparency, openness and honesty with members of the public as there is the assumption that the Contractor is being paid whether or not a service is delivered. Members of the public are not aware of the reduction process as part of the procedure.** BCC officers provide a robust challenge to Ringway Jacobs. If work is not done or if Ringway Jacobs do not meet the achieved performance targets, they will not be paid or achieve the fee.

**Are KPIs set in stone the day the contract is given or are they moveable? One example is a problem with the gully's and the LAT advising that this year only metropolitan classified gully's are being cleared. The gully's being referred to are soak-aways. Does the KPI move with this as only 50% work being done?** KPI's are moveable. They are reviewed on an annual basis as they drive what BCC want the contractor to deliver. TfB are measured on the gully emptying programme. If they do not deliver on an element of the programme it affects performance and the fee is at risk.

In previous years the requirement was to empty every gully at least once a year. This year as part of efficiency savings and a review, gully emptying has now gone to a risk based

approach. A review of gulley's identified that in some areas there are gulley's that do not need to be emptied every year. The risk based approach means that some will be emptied more than once a year but others will not be emptied at all. If there are issues such as a blockage, the LATs/Inspector should be contacted to request the work is added to the drainage programme and CRN process.

**During a meeting with a local LAT, Parish Chairman and clerk the issue and problem of flooding was raised.** Some additional Capital money has been successfully identified this financial year to put into drainage improvement and a work programme has been put in place to deliver the improvements. The LATs have been involved with this piece of work. Although funding is available resources need to be managed carefully and work carried out in the most effective way. This particular issue can be fed back to the appropriate team.

**Action: Sean Rooney**

**The mission to repair potholes is greatly welcomed and praise should be given to the team for the resurfacing of the Mursley Road.**

**Going forward the management of one of the county's biggest and most used assets (TfB) needs to be looked at. The contract being shown looks obscure and confusing. A way to make this simpler to understand would be welcomed.** The Cabinet Member said there is the need to review Asset Management and the effects of variance such as has been outlined today to see what takes priority within the constrained budgets BCC have.

**Action: Janet Blake**

Ringway Jacobs are contractually obliged to deliver an element of efficiencies year on year. A contractual figure is written into their contract.

**A contract extension has just been given to service that started in 2009. What opportunities were taken to change the KPI's and for more reactive work to take place?**

**Are LATs still in-house or have they moved to TfB?** LATs are a mixture of Ringway Jacobs and BCC employees. There has been a consultation over where the LATs should sit. A final decision has yet to be made.

**There are over 500,000 people living in Buckinghamshire. In some areas the weeds on the roadside are waist high. Is this a good management of BBC strategic assets that the grass is allowed to grow this high and self seed.** Weed spraying is a hot topic. There needs to be the priority of resources available to the issues that are most key and most important to residents. The client is driven to manage the assets in the most appropriate way. In the money allocated to weed spraying BCC/Ringway Jacobs are not able to do as much as the public would expect to be done.

**Partnership working needs to be clarified as in some areas there is more than one body responsible for cutting the grass (Parishes, Districts, Housing Authorities) and they also have different ways of cutting i.e. some leave the grass cut on the top.**

**Why was there no engagement with the Parishes who have own grounds maintenance staff on an ad hoc basis to help with the grass cutting service.**

**On line reporting is a good tool but it needs to be widely accessed and there needs to be increase of awareness of the tool.**

**If the workload is agreed each year, how are efficiencies identified and is this to the degradation of services?** Treatment of weeds is a preventative maintenance activity. At the moment there are not enough funds to undertake that kind of preventative work; the

consequence is therefore damage to the assets. Part of solution is to look at the overall maintenance strategy and come up with a more coherent strategy.

**How are efficiencies captured and signed off?** The system is evidence based. Efficiency savings are being driven through the whole service. The information is captured on a monthly basis and is reported on a yearly basis to the Operational Management and Strategic Board.

**Is it possible to give an example of efficiency? Surely the contractor shouldn't accept the Task Order if insufficient funds are allocated to complete a task.** An example of efficiency is that Ringway Jacobs was tasked to provide network improvement. There was confidence and regular monitoring in getting efficient rates as the scope and scale of the work allows them to be sharper in the process.

**Is the contract stifled by the process which then prevents delivery of efficient and effective service to the client? Why has taken three months to get a white line painted. The LAT advised that the process has to go out to tender.** The contract is not stifled by process. It is important to have the right level of governance throughout to ensure effective delivery of services. It is in everyone's interest to go out to tender and to tender for best prices at every opportunity.

With regard to road marking, Ringway Jacobs/TfB has a supply partner to deal with program of marking work. There shouldn't therefore be a significant delay. Larger pieces of work would be tendered for individually.

The communication element has been a problem. The role of the LATs has been reviewed which ensures that the is LATs are fully trained, understand all of the processes in place, what is classed as statutory and legal requirements and what can be done as part of the programme There are a large number of LATS and consistency needs to be ensured across the board.

**It is possible to involve Members in the training and awareness sessions as they are key in Local Area Forums (understand processes and training)?**

Perception and reality need to be aligned and the communication element of contract service delivery is enhanced. Communication is a key priority i.e. getting things right the first time and establishing contact points to the right people. Meetings take place on a regular basis with Ringway Jacobs during which issues and action plans are reviewed and developed. A communications review is currently taking place. Investment is also taking place in an online reporting system.

**The suggestion was made of speaking to the Local Area Technicians to get their view which would give a better understanding of issues with service delivery.**

The Chairman said there were still a large number of unanswered questions and proposed that pre enquiry work takes place over the summer to look at areas such as Contract/Task Orders/KPIs, the definition of efficiency to understand the mechanisms in place, how Task Orders are costed, priced and are paid for to enable more constructive questions to be put to the contractor.

Dates of the TfB Ringway Jacobs contract Working Group meetings are to be circulated.

**Action: Kama Wager**

## **9 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

Members were given a written update on HS2 for information.

### **Committee Work Programme**

Suggestions made for the Work Programme and points made about priorities have been noted.

Priorities for the Work Programme and timescale are to be discussed

**Action: Warren Whyte/Kama Wager**

## **10 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is due to take place on Wednesday 25 September 2013 in Mezzanine 2, County Offices, Aylesbury. There will be a pre-meeting for Committee Members at 9.30am.

### **Future dates and times for 2013**

Wednesday 6 November (12.30pm)

Wednesday 4 December (1.00pm)

### **Proposed dates for 2014**

Tuesday 4 February

Tuesday 4 March

Tuesday 8 April

Tuesday 13 May

Tuesday 17 June

Tuesday 2 September

Tuesday 14 October

Tuesday 18 November

**CHAIRMAN**