



Minutes

ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT AND LOCALITY SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT AND LOCALITY SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 4 MARCH 2014, IN MEZZANINE ROOM 2, COUNTY HALL, AYLESBURY, COMMENCING AT 10.00 AM AND CONCLUDING AT 12.35 PM.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr W Bendyshe-Brown, Mr T Butcher, Mr D Carroll (Vice-Chairman), Mr W Chapple OBE, Mr D Dhillon, Mr P Gomm, Mr S Lambert and Mr W Whyte (Chairman)

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr A Clarke, Ms A Day, Ms S Griffin (Secretary), Mr P O'Hare, Mrs A Sarchet, Mr M Tett, Ms K Wager and Mr S Walford

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP

None

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr Bendyshe-Brown declared an interest in the Community Transport Scheme as he is a driver for the Risborough Community Bus.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the Wednesday 4 February 2014 were agreed as a correct record subsequent to the following amendment;

Page 12 – Stephen Lambert to be amended to Steven Lambert.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



4 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

5 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman gave the following update.

Key performance Indicators (KPIs)

Further work has taken place on the KPIs relating to the Transport for Bucks contract. Work is ongoing and is progressing well. A paper recently issued from the client side of the team will be reviewed.

Strategic Board

The decision should be announced next week about the second member of the Authority on the membership of the Board.

EU funding

Mr Butcher advised that an initial meeting has taken place with Jim Sims and Stephen Walford regarding EU funding and Government grants. There is more work to be done. A follow up meeting will take place in the next 6-8 weeks.

6 UPDATE ON THE GREEN DEAL

Alex Day, Senior Sustainability Officer was welcomed to the meeting.

Ms Day explained that the Green Deal is a Government flagship programme which aims to tackle the energy efficiency of British properties and is a key measure in the Energy Bill.

The Community Interest Company (CIC) called Green Deal Together (GDT) is now a green deal provider which means they can offer green deal services to customers. GDT are also in the process of securing the legalities needed to provide finance to those who need to borrow finance to pay for the energy efficiency measures they wish to have in their homes. GDT is looking to soft launch at the end of April taking a few customers who have already been involved in the Green Deal assessment through the whole process with a view to launch the complete service in the summer.

All 15 shareholders are now paid up members of Green Deal Together. Buckinghamshire County Council has representation on the Executive Committee.

During the update the following questions were asked.

There is concern about the number of Board members as if there are too many people on a Board it can be harder to reach a decision. How many people are Green Deal Together employing, what is the cost and what are they delivering? The number of people that should be on the Board was debated. Because each shareholder is Local Authority it was felt there was the need to have representation; hence the 15 members. In practice a large amount of the executive duties are made by the Executive Committee (a group of six Directors nominated from the Board). The Executive Committee currently meets every 3-4 weeks leading up to the launch. As an organisation, GDT currently employs four members of staff and are looking to recruit a further two people. There are key points of contact for customer services/relations and the supply chain, as well as a Chief Operating Director and a Partnership Manager who liaises with Local Authority members.

It is possible to have an example of how GDT works in practical terms i.e. what is the process if a business would like to go green. GDT is a Community Interest Company so although it's Board Members are Local Authorities, it is an organisation that is in the private sector and is very much driven by that perspective. Green Deal finance is currently not available for businesses as the finance side of the non-domestic part of GDT has not been finalised as yet. An assessment of the property can take place to understand where changes may need to be carried out. There is involvement from Buckinghamshire County Council to make sure that the economic gain stays in the county.

Achievements so far include;

- 60 companies have shown interest in the Green Deal, 20 of which are from Buckinghamshire
- Businesses have to become Green Deal accredited before they can become involved in Green Deal Together. Workshops to help businesses gain the accreditation status and drop in sessions for installers are taking place to find out how they can become accredited.
- Further incentives for installers to get involved are also being looked into i.e. additional training.

It was difficult to get consumers to sign up to the Green Deal when the programme was free. Consumers now have to pay for surveys, interviews and the installation and the charges are added to their property. How many people are currently interested in the Green Deal? The national level of publicity around the Green Deal has not been good. The programme was launched without a clear offer and process. A key aspect of Green Deal is the assessment. The consumer has to pay for the assessment but if some of the suggestions/measures offered are followed through, the charge is taken away. It is important to remember that Green Deal is not just a finance aspect of the programme. It is about making energy efficiency measures more attractive. There is a lot of evidence to say that the 'free' aspect of the Green Deal put people off in terms of what was being offered was too good to be true. The finance aspect is about trying to make people realise the energy efficiency savings side of the programme and to look at it as home improvement in the round.

What evidence is there that the Community Interest Company is doing enough to stimulate the demand which is not there at the moment? Some funding has been secured through DECC's competition for Local Authorities called Pioneer Places which enabled free assessments to be offered. The possibility of a pilot to take the people who took up the assessment through the process is being looked into. There is also a healthy pipeline of people interested in the programme. Consumers could potentially go to other Green Deal providers to carry on the process to secure Green Deal finance or to carry out energy efficiency measures finances through alternative means. However, quite a few have wanted to stay with GDT because of the backing the company has from the Local Authority. A key aspect to the programme is about adding value and making it the best possible package of measures for that particular householder. A lot of time is spent discussing the process with the homeowner to give an understanding of the programme and look at their specific needs.

What has Green Deal Together achieved to date? The Green Deal Finance Company (TGDFC) has completed the legislative process to become a Green Deal provider.

Is it surprising that there is currently limited access to the Green Deal programme. Would it not have been more beneficial to have been able to advise the positives of what residents are going to gain from the programme financially, then the facts and costs to set the programme up? The Chairman explained that there was a Cabinet Member decision in February 2013 to agree investment in the Community Interest Company (CIC) to become a Green Deal Provider. The Cabinet Member for Environment is to be asked to provide an update on the financials and background information on the decision.

The details of those who are prepared to pay or borrow finance versus free delivery related to the market analysis of customers preferences are to be circulated to Committee Members.

Action: Alex Day

The reports mentions keeping the economic benefits in the county and having a healthy pipeline 20 business in Buckinghamshire taking part in the pipeline and an application for Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) funding. There is a benefit to the county both economically and financially.

What is the anticipated take up of the Green Deal programme as there is the move from summer to winter? A low, medium and ambitious sales scenario has taken place in terms of the number of plans it might be possible to achieve. Achieving a medium sales scenario of 616 plans in the first year is felt to be realistic. It is about making sure that the assessments can translate into plans according to customer preference.

The report refers to massive business opportunities in Bucks. How can the Authority ensure there is the correct representation on the Executive Board and the correct decisions are made both in terms of scrutiny and governance if it is one of 6 other Authorities on the Board? A full skills matrix of the Board has been carried out to look at what skills were required by the Executive Committee. A job summary of the skills required was then produced. Finance is a strong element of the Executive Committee. Membership of the Board also an ex-insurance broker and a marketing and communications side to make sure the offer to the customer is clear.

Is there a connection between the Community Interest Company (CIC) and the Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs)? Close working has taken place between GDT and Bucks Business First (BBF) on the business engagement side. There has been less involvement with LEPs but future involvement has been recognised as part of the green deal overall.

There is a lot of work going into the Green Deal project. Energy companies are offering free services i.e. cavity wall installation and double glazing etc. Do you feel that there is a big project left for GDT to deal with? The number of the lofts and cavity walls left to be filled is available if required. There are over 50 measures that the consumer can get under the Green Deal which the energy companies didn't have to offer or offer for free i.e. heating, insulation etc. The list of measures is to be circulated to Committee members.

Action: Alex Day

Buckinghamshire has an elderly housing stock. It is estimated that 70% of properties are not insulated properly. Some householders are not prepared to undertake services such as loft cavity installation as the energy companies do not offer assistance emptying their loft. The offers need to be tailored to cover this aspect and assure householders that any inconvenience that occurs will be minimised.

What steps have been taken to ensure that the more vulnerable and harder to reach individuals are included in the programme and that they can afford it. There are a range of mechanisms in place at different stages. This is a Local Authority backed company who want to make sure that they provide the best for people. This includes an understanding of the associated risks with finance. The company takes out a level of insurance against each plan that will look to address any changes. It is difficult for the onus to be on Green Deal Together. The homeowner needs to think about and understand the use of energy both now and in the future. A key part of GDT is to try to secure ECO for eligible householders. ECO is Energy Company Obligation; energy companies are now obliged to put forward a certain amount of money to energy measures meeting certain criteria. It is about trying to secure the best deal for householders which includes being able to access that finance subject to eligibility criteria.

If there is a change in the ownership of the property, does the new owner become liable for the Green Deal finance? There are a number of options available if the homeowner sells the property. This includes paying off the finance left on the loan or transferring the finance to the new owner.

Marketing and promotion of the Green Deal programme appears to be very limited. Does GDT have an information role in terms of recommending bone fide installation companies? An information list of companies is held centrally which is available to members of the public. GDT has a list of accredited supply chain companies. The list will be made available via the GDT member authorities when it has been finalised and the service is up and running.

What is the cost of the GDT programme to Buckinghamshire County Council? There is a shareholding cost of £35,000 that has been paid up. There are legal fees of £1000 to cover scrutiny of the contracts and 0.6 FTE officer time. There are no ongoing costs apart from the officer time.

The Chairman said there is some uncertainty about the performance of the scheme at the moment. Members of the Committee agreed that the following would be requested;

1. The Cabinet Member for Environment is asked to provide an update on the financials and background information on the decision.
2. The Committee will review and monitor the process in 6 months

Action: Kama Wager

7 LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP (LEPS)

Martin Tett, Leader and Stephen Walford, Senior Manager PLACE were welcomed to the meeting.

Mr Tett began by explaining that the report sets out the background of the LEPs in terms of the partnership with the County Council. Buckinghamshire County Council has been an enthusiastic member of the Thames Valley LEP since its inauguration in 2011, on an equal basis with the four colleague District Councils.

The membership of the Board is balanced with the private sector. There is a private sector chair which concurs with the Government objective of being business led. Membership includes all five Buckinghamshire Councils and a strong business representation from the private sector. The Thames Valley LEP competes very well with the other LEPS in the country. It is highly regarded, works well and punches above its weight in terms of the Bucks economy and by being a lead influencer.

During discussions, the following questions were asked.

The Chairman said the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government is very much of the opinion that the LEPs are advisory partnerships rather than Authorities in their own right with budgets. How does Bucks develop its priorities which then feed in to the LEPs priorities? Mr Walford explained that there has been a discussion at officer level with the Districts and County. The LEPS are not necessarily to replace what the Authorities are trying to do but to add value. There has been some tension in particular around land use planning where a lot of economic growth is intrinsically linked to land use planning and development. LEPs have been created to try to accelerate economic growth. A lot of funding that is being channelled through LEPs has been taken from monies that Local Authorities would have received. There is not much in terms of new monies. In terms of priorities, from a County Council perspective transport priorities will be determined by Cabinet Member decision. There was the requirement last year to set up a Local Transport

Body to look at transport priorities. The County Council, LEP and District Councils have produced a list of priorities for the Strategic Economic Plan based on deliverability. One key items of feedback from Government was how the Strategic Economic Plan is being brought forward in terms of delivery. This is intended to be a six year delivery programme from 2015/2016 to 2020/21.

The diagram of the LEP structure, roles and responsibilities does not include the Local Transport Body (LTB). It would be useful to know how the LTB relates to the Thames Valley LEP and South East Midlands LEP (SEMLEP). Mr Walford explained that the LTB isn't included in the diagram as there are continuing discussions about the use and validity of the piece of governance going forward. There was a requirement to set up the LTB which was based in the geography of Buckinghamshire. The Government wanted to funnel the part of the Transport Major Scheme money that wasn't competitive i.e. that part that was going to be allocated out, via the LTBs to become the governance for that investment. This was £8.3m for Buckinghamshire. At the end of 2013, the decision was made by Government that the funding would go via the LEPs not the LTB. There is the question of duplication of two government structures and what is most appropriate governance going forward.

Paragraph 3.8 of the report refers to Aylesbury Vale District Council being a member of both LEPs. What opportunities and challenges does the dual membership raise? Mr Tett advised that there is no guidance that prohibits any District from being a member of two LEPs. There are approximately 15 Districts across the country who are part of more than one LEP. LEPs were always meant to be economic entities, based around business related criteria. Almost universally across the country they are predominately related to local politics. Aylesbury Vale chose at an early stage to remain within in the original Milton Keynes/South Midlands sub region. The problem this presents going forward is increasingly some Government ministers see the LEPs as vehicles for engines of economic growth money and successors of the Regional Development Agencies where Government would channel money into. Initially money was allocated down to LEPs predominantly on a population basis so for Aylesbury Vale the money would have been effectively divided between the Bucks LEP and SEMLEP. This is roughly £1.2m Growing Places fund, £2.5m of the EU monies and £3.3m Public Works Loan Board money would have come to Buckinghamshire but it went to SEMLEP. One of the challenges moving forward from an allocation methodology to a competitive methodology, is that LEPs will compete with each other for the same pot of money. There is the always the risk of conflict when an Authority is a member of more than one LEP given this competitive.

The level of funding that has gone to the SEMLEP has been mentioned. What can be done to overcome future 'invisible lines' and how can the LEPs work together as partners? Mr Tett explained that in terms of EU monies, because Aylesbury Vale is a member of the both LEPs, a governance process has been arranged whereby SEMLEP sits on the body that adjudicates on the distribution of that funding. In terms of transport funding, Buckinghamshire County Council is the highways authority. If there is a bid from another LEP, discussions would need to take place between the LEPs to agree the priorities, amounts of monies and timelines etc to make sure that money does eventually come into Buckinghamshire. This is an added complication to the process.

An agreement has recently been reached that SEMLEP would no longer bid for Buckinghamshire highways monies.

Mr Walford added that is a matter of timing in a competitive environment. Once the plans are finalised there can be a move forward in partnership as the competitive element will be taken away.

There were some gaps in the timing of the formation of the LEPs (3.1 of the report). Is it not too late to say the relationship needs to be rearranged? Mr Walford explained that

LEPs are only competitive in terms of they all bid for the same pot of money. Local Authorities are used to competing with and working alongside each other. This situation was challenging as it was specifically about transport schemes where another body was looking for funds to implement them which could not be implemented without agreement from the Local Transport Authority.

Mr Tett added that the Transport Authority is Buckinghamshire County Council. To have another body bidding for Buckinghamshire transport monies is an added complication of conflict. The understanding of the agreement reached with SEMLEP is because there is an allocation basis in the north of the county where non-transport monies are effectively divided 50/50, any other infrastructure project in that area would be funded 50/50 by both LEPs.

The LEP appears to be moving away from the Government aims i.e. democratic overview. What is the view on the transport needs in the county and how can the LEP address this? Mr Tett said to his knowledge Government has never said that the LEPs were set up as a democratic overview. They were seen as a vehicle of economic development and regeneration. Buckinghamshire are probably in the minority of LEPs in having all of the Local Authorities as equal members. Many other LEPs only have representation from 1-2 District Councils. As the Bucks LEP is a fairly small size, there are not governance issues some other LEPs have. There is no overarching Select Committee above the Bucks LEP. The democratic overview comes from its membership.

In terms of the roads, there is the aspiration as a County Council to improve the connectivity between Aylesbury and Wycombe. Money has been set aside for the development of various schemes across the country but the biggest problem is about obtaining the capital funds to implement them. In order to generate the scale of local funding contributions required, the only realistic way of obtaining the monies would be from a very large scale housing development.

The County Council has economic development within their portfolio. The LEP are also trying to address economic development. Are there any issues between the two areas and the responsibilities? Mr Tett explained that the County Councils and District colleagues have a responsibility within economic development. The County Council chooses to discharge this function by effectively commissioning an organisation called Bucks Business First. Bucks Business First is comprised entirely of business representatives. It discharges a commissioned, economic development function. The LEP is a partnership between Local Authorities and businesses. It looks more strategically at and puts money into economic development.

How do the priorities of the LEP reflect the priorities of the County Council, is the County Council getting the maximum value for money from the LEPs and what is the vision for the Medium Term Plan and priorities? Mr Walford explained that the LEP's priorities reflect the priorities of the County Council virtually wholesale. The LEPs take technical advice from the County Council with the intention of adding value not simply replicating what the County Council does. The LTB set out its initial priorities last summer and gave the priorities to the LEP. The County Council can choose to use its own resources to develop the transport schemes it wants to deliver. It is down to the County Council to decide what schemes it wants to promote. There is also the element of local match funding to take into consideration. In terms of the Medium Term Plan, the initial priorities are set within the MTP but there is the requirement and there will be the opportunity to update the priorities going forward.

Mr Tett added that the LEPs bring forward a business perspective on what is important for businesses. In addition to the infrastructure, the LEPs are also very focussed on skills across the county.

Paragraph 3.6 of the report outlines various transport priorities and schemes. Is there a list of future priorities, are the priorities driven by Bucks County Council and what is the process for bidding for money? The list of schemes that the LTB prioritised is available as a matter of public record. The papers can be circulated to members of the Committee.

Action: Stephen Walford

Mr Walford said the anticipated process for obtaining monies would be that a scheme is contained with the Strategic Economic Plan and the LEP submits this plan to the Government for review. The DfT's major scheme business case requirement is that for any transport schemes over £5m, the scheme promoter needs to put together a major business case which meets the DfT criteria and evidences the scheme is best value for money and that public money is being used in the best possible way.

This process could also lead to a log jam and a delay in schemes being put forward. Mr Walford explained that takes a certain amount of time to put a business case together which is the same for land permissions and acquisitions etc together which is why the emphasis and feedback so far has been to concentrate on delivery for 2015/16. Work is currently taking place on a number of business plans in advance of 2015/16 which will enable Bucks to demonstrate that they are well placed to hit the ground running.

The LEP seems to be a very successful venture. How long is the funding from Bucks Business First for? Mr Tett advised there is an annual funding agreement in place with BBF and the money to fund this is from the base budget. There used to be additional funding within the base budget for commissioning in-house economic development. As part of budget cuts this money is no longer available. There needs to be smart working around about what and how services are commissioned.

What are the positives/negatives of BBF being chaired by a business person? It is good to have a business person chair the BBF in terms of letting business people decide what is really important in terms of driving jobs and growth is a better way of doing things.

Local Government works in a particular way with particular wants and needs. Businesses work in a different way. Are there any levers, nets, processes that the Local Authority can release back to the business community i.e. the Strategic Plan, in terms of asking businesses for their views and help on delivering regeneration and growth without the constrictions? Mr Tett explained that in the era of Mr Heseltine it was about getting money from Central Government released to Localities in large amounts. Local Authorities thought this was a good idea until the money came from their own budget. The end result is little or no money coming from Central Government and local money being recycled locally. There needs to be an understanding of the views and lobbying about planning. Districts are reluctant to let go of the tight controls that are currently in place for planning go which businesses find very frustrating.

Mr Walford added that in general, the LEPs are going to set out the types of freedoms and flexibility they want in order to unlock economic growth. The reticence of central departments to release budgets is understandable. There is still a lot to be done in terms of bureaucracy and the process to unlock this future investment.

How is the future development of the Bucks LEP seen? It would seem logical to bring Aylesbury Vale out of the SEMLEP into the Bucks LEP. Are there the means to do this? Mr Tett explained there is a similar situation with Cherwell from Oxfordshire being in SEMLEP. This issue has taken a phenomenal amount of time, discussions and negotiations. Bucks LEP has sought to persuade Aylesbury Vale that it would be in their best interest to be part of a common pool that serves Bucks. Aylesbury Vale's view is they want to maximise investment into Aylesbury Vale and this is best achieved by 'double-dipping'. The rationale for this is understood. LEPs were set up by definition to be a wider geography and to have a pooling arrangement for the money. Mr Tett added that to his knowledge there is no evidence that

SEMLEP has invested significantly in Aylesbury Vale. Hopefully the new 50/50 mechanism might correct this.

It is good to hear there is an understanding of trying to avoid duplication from the LEPS and LTBs etc. Clarification is needed of the overlaps that still exist and the funding challenges that have emerged from the changes made by Local Government.

Members of the Committee were referred to the Options paper which outlines the options for the Committee to consider how to take forward further work on the LEPs and agree the next steps. Suggested options could include;

1. That the Committee agree that Members have received sufficient information to understand the role of the LEPs locally and that there is no value to be added in carrying out further work at this time
2. That the Committee would like to further develop their knowledge and understanding of LEPs and their role in Buckinghamshire by undertaking a short inquiry examining the role of the LEPs in more detail.

Members of the Committee agreed that an inquiry into the role of the LEPs is not needed at this stage as LEPs would be taken into consideration as part of the EU/external funding review.

Action: Chairman/ETL Working Group

An update on the LEPs should be given to the Committee in 6 months.

Action: Stephen Walford

8 COMMUNITY TRANSPORT SCHEMES IN BUCKS

Paul O'Hare, Community Impact Bucks and Angie Sarchet, Community and Cohesion Manager were welcomed to the meeting.

Mr O'Hare explained that the Committee received an update about public transport in July 2013 during which Community Transport was identified as an element of public transport within the county. This includes an element of work in the community by Buckinghamshire County Council over the last few years. The report gives details of the current schemes and where they are taking place in the county.

Community Impact Bucks has supported community transport for a number of years. Funding has also come from a number of sources over the years. This includes Buckinghamshire County Council, the National Countryside Agency and District Councils.

Community Impact Bucks currently manages and run the Community Transport Hub which works closely with all the community car schemes across the county. There are approximately 46 schemes that serve Bucks although the scheme may not be based in Bucks i.e. a scheme in Leighton Buzzard goes to Edlesborough. Taxi token scheme one operated at Parish Council level in Gerrards Cross.

The Community Transport Hub is currently jointly funded by Buckinghamshire County Council and Buckinghamshire NHS Trust. The contact for funding expires in May 2014.

[Subsequent to the meeting Mr O'Hare advised that the contract for funding expires at the end of June 2014)

The Hub operates and runs a free phone number for members of the public to call between 9am-4pm Monday to Friday to help them with their transport needs. Once a call is taken help can be given to signpost the individual to the most relevant service to suit their needs i.e.

community transport providers such as Dial-A-Ride and local voluntary car scheme. The vast majority of the calls are from elderly and vulnerable people who need to get to a GP or hospital appointment.

The Community Impact Bucks Team arranged a week of publicity around Buckinghamshire to promote the 'Give a Lift Week' and encourage communities to look at setting up a scheme in their area.

A promotional video on community transport was produced in partnership with Bucks County Council. The video highlights the benefits of running a community transport scheme and the difference it make to those people who use the services and those who volunteer their time.

There were 21 attendees at a recent Community Transport Scheme training day. This included training on manual handling, first aid and doorstep crime. The awareness raising session was built on a training needs analysis carried out by Community Impact Bucks.

Work has taken place with several communities i.e. Downley, Iver and Stoke Hammond to look at setting up a community car scheme and to look at specific needs and identify if the Community Car scheme is right for them.

Work is taken place in partnership with Buckinghamshire Community Foundation to provide information and advice about the Community Transport Challenge Fund i.e. how to apply for funding and what the funding covers.

During the update the following questions were asked.

What is your view on why applications for the Community Transport Challenge Fund have been slow in coming forward? Applications could be slow in coming forward due to being advised that £5000 is the minimum amount that can be applied for. If an individual is looking to replace a vehicle, there are some other schemes available but they only 50% of the replacement cost can be applied for. Match funding would have to be sought elsewhere.

Who set the parameters for the Community Transport Challenge Fund? The parameters were set following discussions between Community Impact Bucks, the Community Foundation and Bucks County Council. There have been discussions about the flexibility of the parameters.

What is the reason for the decline in the number of calls received by the Community Transport Hub? The pilot was started and initially concentrated on the Chiltern area which is represented by the high number of calls at the outset (diagram on page 47 of the report). Most of the people who telephone the Hub are signposted to community transport schemes. A relationship with the transport provider is build up over a period of time and there is no longer the need to call the Transport Hub. Work needs to be done to on second phase of publicity to stimulate demand.

Since May 2013 there have been less than 25 calls per month to the Community Hub. If the service is commissioned until April 2014, should it not be assured that the full benefit of the Hub is being received before then? Tentative discussions have taken place with the NHS and Bucks County Council. In-house work needs to take place to assess what the hub currently looks like and how it could be expanded i.e. the inclusion of other transport schemes.

What measures are in place to determine if the Community Transport Hub has been successful, what could be done to expand the work of the Community Hub to other areas and how could this be measured? Some of the individuals who telephone the Community Transport Hub are quite vulnerable. They can be signposted to a potential

transport solution; however they may be unable to deal with the booking process. Staff at the Community Transport Hub could book transport with the Community Transport providers. Bookings are not done as a matter of course as this point in time. The Community Transport Hub is a signposting service. It was not designed to be more. The Hub could also become a point of contact/resource for transport in general. Work to scope out this possibility would need to be done.

Is there a single point of contact for the booking service across the county? Yes there is a single point of contact for the Community Transport Hub in the form of a free phone telephone number - 0800 085 8480.

The majority of the contacts come from the Chiltern area. What is the age profile of the contacts i.e. retirement age? The majority of the contacts are from those who are retirement age. On a purely anecdotal basis calls are also received from individuals who have suffered a life transforming incident and are no longer able to drive or are unable to get to an appointment as they previously relied on a family member.

Is there a gap in the way the County Council manages/funds not commercial transport schemes or could the service offered by the Community Transport Hub permanently meet this gap? Community transport in general can provide a solution to those needs. For most vulnerable adults using the bus is not an option. They would use either Dial A Ride or a door to door car service. There are two aspects to community transport; what different types of transport are currently available and what could be available. This includes an understanding of scheduled transport (community bus/commercial bus) versus demand led transport solutions (i.e. Community Car Schemes/Dial A Ride).

How are the transport needs of Buckinghamshire residents understood? In terms of being able to access the right type of vehicle for their needs i.e. an individual who has a physical disability and uses a wheelchair would need a suitable vehicle to accommodate their wheelchair. Dial A Ride are very good at providing a solution. Some community car schemes have volunteer drivers who have larger vehicles. The vehicle can therefore be matched to the needs of the client.

Is the Community Transport Hub replicated in other counties and would it be beneficial to have a discussion with the counties on their arrangements? Rural Community Councils (RCCs) have a focus on supporting community transport. There are some potential lessons to be learnt from other counties but engagement has not taken place at the moment. Previously when we had a dedicated Rural Transport Officer sharing across RCCs, this happened regularly. This is a gap we are looking to explore over the next few months.

The Community Transport Hub is presently jointly funded by Buckinghamshire County Council and Buckinghamshire Healthcare Trust. Does the contract and currently funding arrangements need to be looked at as three quarters of the calls received are health related? The funding is currently a direct 50/50 split between the NHS and the County Council.

Non medical users may not know about the existence of the Transport Hub as the Hub is mainly advertised in medical areas i.e. GP surgeries and hospitals.

Are there elements of the Bucks population that are not particularly well served by buses and don't really understand community transport that we need to be reaching out to? Mrs Sarchet explained that from a Prevention Matters point of view there is a cohort of vulnerable adults who cannot access some of the community transport, for example, because they have mental health issues or learning disabilities. There is the issue of how these groups are supported to help them to stay active and connected. The existing schemes are predominantly for medical appointments and many are resistant to opening up to take people

to lunch clubs or other social activities. This would be an area to address when the contract is being renegotiated.

The Prevention Matters agenda is a demand management system around reducing the need for health and social care services by keeping people social and physically active in their communities. There are two elements to this; Community Practice Workers who hold 1:1 sessions with individuals who have been referred into the system to identify their needs and refer them to activities that would help them address those needs. Part of the role of the Community Links Officers Team is to work with voluntary community organisations to identify volunteering opportunities and needs, and to carry out assessments of the community and voluntary sector organisations for future sustainability. Data emerging from the Community Practice Workers shows whilst there is still good capacity in many social activities available across the county, things such as the price of the activity and community transport are putting people off attending. This is still a struggle even where there are bus services. For example, there is the Harlequin bus system in the south of the county which picks people up and takes them to a local shopping centre but the frail, elderly can't cope with this. They need something different.

One immediate priority is around befriending. A co-design workshop looking at community transport is taking place in April to try and bring providers and stakeholders together. There has been some mapping of community car schemes but it has been quite interesting to note how difficult it is to find people who have the information and then encourage them to share that information. The Community Links Officers have identified around 1800 assets and activities so far across the county. However trying to overlay this with information about where the commercial transport and community transport to identify gaps and opportunities for future work is an ongoing challenge. Members were invited to attend the co-design workshop in June 2014. The date of the workshop is to be confirmed.

Action: Angie Sarchet

Community Links Officers recently carried out some work in Buckingham with AVDC to hold an Aging Well Workshop. Community transport is one of the biggest issues that emerged from the workshop. Work is taking place to set up and support an action group to look at the development of community transport. One of the challenges around developing community transport schemes is the need for a group of committed and enthusiastic volunteers. A voluntary community car scheme set up by the Winslow Big Society Group has been running for two years and is a tribute to the work of those volunteers. 12 volunteer drivers were recruited recently as a result of the team working between AVDC and BCC.

The Chairman said the Prevention Matters programme could be a role for some Local Area Forums to take forward.

The current contractual arrangements for the funding of the Community Transport Hub end in May. Have negotiations for a new contract started? There needs to be reassurance the costs are being looked into and the County Council is not covering NHS costs. Conversations have taken place with NHS Buckinghamshire. They are supportive of the hub in what it does but there is the need for them to look at where it is funded. Community Impact Bucks have asked to put proposals and ideas together. The NHS would then signpost Community Impact Bucks to the most appropriate source of funding i.e. a Charitable Trust.

There is now a democratic overview of the NHS through the County Council County. Should the funding issue not be addressed via the scrutiny process with the County Council rather than by an external body? The Policy Officer explained that a piece of work looking at community transport is currently taking place in the NHS and Health arena via Healthwatch. The issue is trying to bring these pieces of work together and addressing the expansion to other activities such as luncheon clubs etc.

The concern is there are lots of small pieces of work taking place but the issue of community transport is not been addressed as a whole.

There is also the perception of local taxis seeing the Community Transport Hub as a threat to their livelihood. Hampshire has put a contract in place for a shared taxi scheme. It would be useful to look at the arrangement and the learning from this.

The Risborough Area Community Bus has been running for 4 years. The service has approximately 30 volunteers and is used by approximately 400 passengers per week. 93% of the passengers use a bus pass. The reimbursement per mile from the County Council is being reduced; the service is therefore becoming dependent on donations. Andrew Clarke, PT Contract Manager explained that the County Council provides funding on a per passenger basis which is agreed with bus providers. The size of the pot for this payment has broadly increased by 10% per year over the last three years. Payment is made on a per trip basis based on the average fare charged. The amount agreed for 2014/15 is 9.5% up on the 13/14 pot size. Reimbursements rates are going up but this may not entirely equate to number of miles the bus does.

What is the maximum amount of funding that can be applied for from the Community Transport Fund? Can the Leader also be addressed and asked for funds? The maximum amount of funding is £20,000. The question about the Leader can be taken away.

Action: Paul O'Hare

Would it be possible for the provision of community transport to take place in collaboration with care homes as many homes have a mini bus which does not go anywhere for a large proportion of the day. The possibility of collaborative working with care homes is one area which is still to be looked at. Also believe other minibuses same and could be used to transport different communities. Potential piece of work to establish the availability of other types of transport i.e. minibuses

A piece of work looking at the use of minibuses is currently taking place in Buckinghamshire. The difficult part is the licenses etc. The Transport Hub has been promoted via GP Surgeries and Hospitals i.e. free fridge magnets which have details of the Hub. There is some cross promotion in terms of some callers have also advised that they have been referred to the Transport Hub by their GP. Calls are also received directly from GP surgeries looking for transport for some of their patients. There needs to be further thought about reaching those who are not in using GP and Hospital services and extra promotion.

What relationship does the Transport Hub have with the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs)? The CCGs would be aware of the Hub at the outset. The publicity would have been quite extensive. The previous Community Transport Officer gave some presentations to a number of different organisations and groups but it not clear whether this included CCGs.

The Chairman explained that when the Environment, Transport and Localities Select Committee initiated their review of public transport in July 2013, the review was about the bigger picture of the accessibility of public transport in Buckinghamshire in general and who would need to use public transport, how public transport looks now and investigate how it would look into 5-10 years. From the report received in July, public transport has yet to be investigated. Community transport is a local service and that the potential for how the role of community transport could change or grow to address the gaps in public transport needs has not been looked into as yet.

Mr O'Hare said if transport in the overall sense is being looked at and the aim is to try and get a sense of where Community Transport schemes can plug some of the gaps, it is about understanding individual transport requirements and building a picture of what would be the

most ideal method of transport and the journey would be for that person and whether Community Transport could plug the gaps. There could be the need to look at those telephoning the Hub and carrying out an assessment of the transport needs for those individuals.

Ms Sarchet advised that the Local Area Forums in South West Chilterns and Marlow have identified local transport as a priority and have set up a working group. Questionnaires have taken place through various parishes and different groups which elderly people attend to ask them their transport needs.

An urgent update is needed on the contract in terms of negotiations and financial decisions. Clarification is also needed of funding streams, what the Transport Hub is achieving and its value for money being received.

Action: Paul O'Hare/Commissioning, Bucks County Council

The following was agreed;

- The Committee would consider Community Transport as part of the wider review of public transport
- A Working Group would be formed to develop the scope of the review of Public transport

9 PAPERS FOR INFORMATION

Members of the Committee noted the letter of recommendation to the Cabinet Members for Environment and Planning.

10 COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Members were referred to the work programme and asked to note the following items.

April meeting

- An information paper has been requested on the Localities aspect of the Committee work. The Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Service Delivery Manager will be attending the meeting to give an update on key changes to library services, possible implications and ideas for the future.
- The Carbon Strategy has been included in the work programme as the Committee requested information on the LED street lighting programme.
- An information paper is being produced on the role and remit of the Crime and Disorder Committee and the Police and Crime Panel

11 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is due to take place on Tuesday 8 April 2014 in Mezzanine 2, County Offices, Aylesbury. There will be a pre-meeting for Committee Members at 9.30am.

Proposed dates for 2014

Tuesday 13 May

Tuesday 17 June

Tuesday 2 September

Tuesday 14 October

Tuesday 18 November

CHAIRMAN