



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 TUESDAY 17 JUNE 2014, IN MEZZANINE ROOM 2, COUNTY HALL, AYLESBURY, COMMENCING AT 10.00 AM AND CONCLUDING AT 12.10 PM.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr W Bendyshe-Brown, Mr T Butcher, Mr W Chapple OBE, Mr D Dhillon, Mr P Gomm, Mr M Shaw and Mr W Whyte (Chairman)

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr R Bunce, Mr A Clarke, Ms S Griffin (Secretary), Ms G Harding, Ms R Vigor-Hedderly and Ms K Wager

1 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

That Warren Whyte be elected Chairman of the Environment, Transport and Locality Services Select Committee for the ensuing year.

2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

That David Carroll be elected Vice-Chairman of the Environment, Transport and Locality Services Select Committee for the ensuing year.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Lambert and Mr Carroll.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

5 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the Tuesday 13 May 2014 were agreed as a correct record.

Matters Arising

Page 12 - Crime and Disorder Annual Update

The Needs Assessment is to be circulated to members when published.

Action: Mr Sainsbury/Clerk

6 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

7 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman reported the following;

Section 106/EU funding & external funding

In addition to the monthly Environment Select Committee meetings, a meeting has taken place with the Chairman of the Finance Select Committee in relation to the inquiry being undertaken by the Finance Select Committee which includes Section 106 planning gains and investment to mitigate development in the county. This will be discussed in more detail under item 10 of the agenda.

EU funding and external funding will also be discussed under item 10 of the agenda.

Public Transport Inquiry Working Group

A very useful first workshop took place on the 10 June with officers and the Cabinet Member. The workshop gave the opportunity to understand the current policies in place and some of the budgetary issues.

Work is taking place to structure the two day evidence gathering sessions that are scheduled for the 24 & 25 July. The evidence sessions will include bus operators, commissioners, providers and contractors of public and client passenger transport. Further details will be published in due course.

8 TRANSPORT FOR BUCKS - STATUS UPDATE

The Chairman welcomed Ruth Vigor-Hedderly, Cabinet Member for Transportation, Mark Shaw, Deputy Cabinet Member for Transportation and Gill Harding, Service Director, Place, to the meeting.

The Cabinet Member for Transportation gave the following overview of the current reviews subsequent to the provision of a fuller update at the September meeting of the ETL Committee:

The opportunity to update Members of the Committee on the current position of the reviews is welcomed. On the 1 April 2014 I was elevated from Deputy Cabinet Member for Transportation to Cabinet Member for Transportation. Following this appointment I made the decision to commission an independent consultant – Gate One. Gate One submitted CV's to appoint an

individual to work with Bucks County Council and Ringway Jacobs to carry out a discovery phase of the review.

Bart Smith was appointed to carry out the interviews and the work programme. He has a wealth of experience in civil engineering and Local Authority working. This piece of work took three weeks during which there was a very intensive amount of interviews with local people, Local Area Technicians (LATs) and Strategic Directors etc. Following the discovery phase, a presentation took place at Green Park which during which the following three options were advised;

- To carry on as we were
- To look at going out to the market again and restarting the whole process
- To work with the current contractor Ringway Jacobs

The decision was made to continue to work with Ringway Jacobs. This decision was not made lightly; it was made because of the determination and the encouragement Ringway Jacobs showed the Local Authority that they wanted to make the contract work. Both the client and the contractor recognised the failings and that the contract didn't work as well as it could have.

When the contract was first written and produced in 2009 it was very unique in terms of only a few Local Authorities, if any, having this type of contract in place. Over the period of 2009-2014 much has changed in legislation and also within Transport for Buckinghamshire.

Work includes looking at developing new governance, new policies and procedures and Bucks County Council becoming the intelligent client. A small forensic analysis will take place of the Value for Money report which was commissioned in January 2014. A workshop with all stakeholders is taking place next week during which future plans will be discussed.

The structure of how Ringway Jacobs operates across the County Council has been looked into. The service has now been broken down into depots. Amersham is a newly created depot. The LATs previously based at Handy Cross who cover Amersham and Chiltern areas are now located at the Amersham depot. Each depot has its own supervisor and manager and has been tasked with looking at how they can become effective and efficient, how savings can be made and how money can be brought back into the service i.e. the set-up of traffic management - 70 plus traffic operations were due to go ahead. This has now been reduced to 14-15 operations. Each closure costs a significant amount of money.

A ditching programme has been started and is working well. £1 million has been invested to take the flooding off of the highway and to help address erosion. The amount of potholes and the categorisation has been looked into. Areas of the county are being looked at holistically. Handy Cross serves Wycombe and the surrounding areas; Griffin Lane will serve Aylesbury and small amount of the surrounding area; Gawcott will have two 2 dedicated LATs at all times.

An open day is taking place at the Amersham depot. Members of the County Council, Town Councillors and Parish Councillors from Chiltern and District have been invited to attend. Each depot has a hub and live screen which shows each areas and the programme of work in place in a specific ward.

Members asked the following questions;

Is it possible to have an update on the responses to the Environment Select Committee recommendations agreed in principle by Cabinet in terms of the Intelligent Client approach and have some appointments been made to bolster the client team? The Value

for Money exercise was due to be commissioned in January 2014. A summary of the report should be available in the next few weeks. In terms of the Intelligent Client Approach, Mike Freestone has been appointed for an interim period. A structure of where we would like to recruit has been developed. No appointments have been made as yet.

Who is involved in the Stakeholder workshop? The stakeholders are the Cabinet Member for Transportation, Mike Freestone, Ringway Jacobs, Eurovia, and the Strategic Director, Communities and Built Environment.

Why is Mr Freestone not at the meeting today? Mr Freestone has been appointed to take a strategic overview. He was not invited to attend the meeting today.

There have been discussions about devolved services which is important as a policy initiative. Devolved services have proven to be exceptionally well received in areas of Stewkley and Amersham Town Council and should be encouraged.

There have been a number of reports on TfB over the years. How can the Committee be reassured that this report is not just another tick box exercise. The Committee can be assured that the Local Authority will not operate this way next year and this is not another tick box exercise.

Will the review look at the operational part of the contract as one of the issues raised is that the way the original contract was drawn up in 2009 is probably not fit for purpose in 2014? There seems to be an enormous amount of bureaucracy on the ground in terms of being unable to repair adjoining parts of a road because there is not written instruction/approval to do so. This is not acceptable. This is one of the mind-set ways of working that the Local Authority wishes to move away from. It is important to empower the operative and for them to think outside the box. Ringway Jacobs have been tasked with changing the mind-set within their workforce. Any issues should be reported back to me to be looked into. The operational part of the contract has been discussed with Gate One lawyers. The contract was found to be sound in structure but lacking in the intelligent client on behalf of BCC which needs to be strengthened.

Would you say that BCC as a client failed to manage the contract? There is a 50/50 split on the failure to manage the contract.

A lot of County Council policies are very aspirational in terms of they do not include target areas. The policies need to be more exacting as well as practical and operational. The current policies are being looked into as part of the review. This includes the possibility of building in targets when the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are set. This particular area of the portfolio is exceptionally commercial. When work takes place with a private contractor there needs to be a commercial mind-set and skill-set to drive forward new ways and ideas and to demonstrate savings to residents.

Now that the opportunity of some savings has been identified within the contract, will the budget be spent on grass cutting? It has previously been brought to the attention of the Committee that the District Council used to be paid five times as much as the County Council are currently paying for the contract. Grass cutting is exceptionally feral this year in so far as the amount of rain and sunshine we have had. It is not possible to commit that any savings made will go towards grass cuttings because there are many other areas that need an injection of funding. There is the awareness that 55/56% of County Council asset is unclassified roads which in some cases are in shocking condition. Priority for any savings made would be given to the most needed areas. The latest mapping information for grass cutting is dated 2009. Ringway Jacobs has been tasked to update the mapping and to engage with Housing Associations, District Councils etc to clarify areas of responsibility.

The Environment Select Committee conducted a mini inquiry into grass cutting last year. There is concern that in some parishes there does not seem to be evidence of lessons being learnt and being applied this year.

The first grass cut was very late. It was at the end of the first cut session and three weeks late in its own right. The quality of the second cut is not good. The number of grass cuts in rural areas has been reduced from three to two per year. The reason for the lateness of the cuts is believed to be due to some of the verges being very wet or flooded and in some circumstances it has been difficult to get vehicles/maintenance to some areas.

With only two cuts per year in rural areas and six in urban areas, an even balance has to be found. The front of the grass cutters have also been replaced by flails which gives an even cut.

Issues to be dealt with in the September meeting include has the quality of the services started to improve, has the trust been rebuilt and with regard to a reduction in the number of services, the services being brought should not impact on the quality. The Cabinet Member gave thanks for the support received through a difficult time. A further update will be given at the September meeting of the ETL Committee which will include evidence of new ways of working and of the intelligent client being in place.

A formal response to the recommendations made by the ETL Select Committee which were approved by Cabinet and an organisational chart of the client structure and roles is to be circulated to the Committee before the September meeting.

Action: Cabinet Member for Transportation

9 PUBLIC TRANSPORT INQUIRY

Andrew Clarke, Passenger Transport Manager and Ryan Bunce, PSD Service Lead, Place were welcomed to the meeting.

The Chairman explained that the initial meeting of the ETL Working Group inquiry into public transport has taken place. Mr Bunce and Mr Clarke were asked to give an overview of the current County Council policies for public transport and the plans to update the policies.

Mr Bunce explained that the County Council's highest level policy starts with the third Local Transport Plan (LTP3) which sets out the objectives for transport across the county. The objectives are listed in figure 1 shown on page 24 of the agenda pack i.e. encouraging sustainable travel and the coach way project.

There are a series of more specific policies such as the Transport for Bucks Strategy which was developed by Bucks County Council in 2012. It sets out the challenges the Council faced; changes in Central Government bus subsidy; changes in rural demand for public transport; and concerns over the sustainability of client transport services. It suggests a core network of bus services across the county supported by community transport and information hubs to promote the use of these services.

This document played a key part of shaping services that are currently in place in Buckinghamshire. The document provides some evidence of the public opinions of bus travel and some of the challenges faced at that time.

The Council also produces area specific strategies to set out its approach to transport challenges in particular areas such as the Southern Quadrant Transport Strategy covering an area of High Wycombe. These strategies tend to focus on infrastructure and physical measures rather than subsidies or timetables etc.

There are also previous and future strategies to consider as some of these have played an important part in shaping the bus services currently provided. LTP2 originally set out the

objectives of reducing congestion and improving accessibility by splitting the network as detailed in the Travel Bucks Strategy (core, urban, inter-urban and secondary rural service). Whilst this document was produced in 2006 document and some of the challenges faced today are quite different, it does explain how we got to where we are. LTP3 expires in 2016 and work is currently taking place to produce LTP4. Areas identified from the Working Group include the need for the plan to link very closely to funding mechanisms and for it to be workable and deliverable. LTP4 will take into account the conclusions of the reviews currently taking place.

The County Council also feeds into the Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership Strategic Economic Plan which sets out proposals for investment in the area, including a range of transport measures such as direct public transport and the quality of transport centres.

Mr Clarke explained that in terms of public transport on the ground, the 1985 Act deregulated the bus industry and introduced commercial operators whereby the operators can set their own bus routes and timetables. They are required under law to operate each route on a profit basis and are overseen by the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) who manage and inspect on the basis of engineering and licensing etc. The duty of a Local Transport Authority is;

- 'to secure the provision of such public passenger services as the Council considers it appropriate to secure to meet any public transport requirements within the County, which would not in their view, be met apart from any action taken by them for that purpose
- To formulate from time to time general policies as to the description of services they propose to secure'

The Act also required that the Authority had regard for the transport needs coming from Education and Social Service function and co-ordinate where possible with Children and Young Peoples Services and Adults and Family Wellbeing.

The Transport Authority is also required to consider the needs of elderly and disabled users when delivering bus services.

The role of the Local Authority is to look at the gaps that are left by commercially provided bus routes and to put these alongside our own policies and seek to fill these gaps by subsidising additional bus services that wouldn't otherwise exist. The Local Authority is not permitted to under-mind commercial bus operators. It has to take the lead from where the commercial operator will put their services and work with them.

The Local Authority may subsidise services by;

- Competitive tender for fully subsidised routes
- Direct negotiation with a commercial operator on partly subsidised routes (known as 'de-minimus' payments)

The bus strategy was set in LTP2 which put in place a twin track approach of trying to develop a good core network which is attractive to current car users (hourly or half hourly buses on interurban routes, tackling congestion etc), and the provision of an accessibility network whereby rural services are provided at a much lower frequency but to allow people who have no other transport option to get to their local market town to carry out functions such as shopping, health and leisure.

The Travel Bucks Policy (2012) recognised budget constraints and introduced some additional partnership working opportunities, looking at the integration of Client Transport and NHS transport, the provision of accessible services in rural areas on reduced budgets by exploring Community Transport options i.e. Dial a Ride, providing support to Community Transport including pump-priming fund and the potential for Transport Information Hubs.

The Concessionary fares scheme is a statutory responsibility given to all upper tier Local Authorities by Local Government. Local Authorities are required to provide a free scheme to all qualifying users which are those of a pensionable age or with qualifying disabilities and to reimburse commercial bus operators for the revenue they lose through the free travel scheme. Central Government sets the guidance and criteria for the re-imbusement and the offer given to passengers through the scheme.

During discussions, the following questions were asked.

In terms of the budgetary challenges that have been mentioned, one of the major driving forces for this inquiry was to see how public transport for the county will evolve in light of future budget changes. It is possible for you to clarify the differences in terms of the immediate savings the County Council might need to make or policies that might need to be looked at to address the budget challenges long term? Mr Clarke referred members of the Committee to page 21 of the agenda pack which gives details of the summary net spend over a number of years. In real terms taking into account inflationary factors such as a significant increase in fuel costs and the two significant further reductions programmed into the Medium Term Plan for next two financial years (£248 and £102K), these are the challenges being faced from a financial point of view.

Is there a policy or business plan to illustrate the savings would be achieved or has this yet to be developed? Mr Clarke said that the savings to be achieved was one of the main drivers of the policy review being undertaken by Place service. The existing policies which were largely set in LTP2 in 2006 deal with the development and maintenance of a network. The policies were not designed at that point to manage significant budget reductions. This is a challenge that needs to be addressed as part of the current policy review. There are criteria by which the value of the current subsidised services will be scored. The criteria is based on the current network rather than taking new or future services into account.

Since the start of the reductions in 2009/2010 to current, has this been purely by alterations and bus cuts or have efficiencies also been realised? Mr Clarke said that some efficiency savings have been achieved by making use of the assets that the County Council has. Work has taken place with commercial bus operators to improve the commerciality for a number of urban bus services. A significant amount of savings over the last five years have been made by withdrawing subsidy by a tapering arrangement with bus operators whereby over a period of two/three years services that were semi commercial are moved into fully commercial.

Why does Public Transport sit within TfB? Ms Harding explained that when the contract was drawn up with TfB 5-6 years ago, it was decided that the right thing at that time was to have a fully integrated transport contract which was put out to the market as part of a tendering process. The contract was awarded to Ringway Jacobs and TfB were formed. The need to understand what was right for services 5 years ago might not be right now and for the future has been indicated. These conversations are taking place as with Ringway Jacobs as part of the transport review.

It is possible to have some examples of how the Bucks Travel Policy is monitored? Mr Bunce explained that the policy is set at a high level. There has been a big change in the way policies are monitored. Under LTP2 where the policies originated, there was a statutory duty to monitor these in detail and reports had to go back to the Department for Transport in a specified format. The reports were used to assess the performance of the Local Authority against that plan and set the level of future funding. In LTP3 the requirement for the format of the plan and the monitoring was taken away by the Government and the level of monitoring was then left up to each Authority. There is now less central monitoring by Place Service. Monitoring now tends to be done by the Service Area which delivers the individual part of the policy i.e. the Passenger Transport Manager will monitor the effectiveness of the service TfB is providing.

Mr Clarke added that a Business Support Review meeting is held on a monthly basis which is attended by the strategic client and senior management from Ringway Jacobs. In the transport area there are a number of KPIs such as passenger numbers and growth, punctuality and reliability etc which are measured and reported on monthly. Satisfaction measures are in place such as the Passenger Transport survey as well as separate measurements around costs of concessionary fares.

When were the KPIs last reviewed? Mr Clarke explained that the KPIs are set at the beginning of the financial year as part of the business planning process and are monitored on a monthly basis. KPI's are signed off by the Bucks strategic client.

Ms Harding said that as a result of the review into the Ringway Jacobs contract undertaken by the ETL Select Committee last year, a number of workshops have been undertaken in terms of reviewing the KPIs and whether they needed to be changed. Approximately 50-75% of the KPI review process was completed but was put on hold following the change in the Cabinet Member, the agreement that a fundamental transport review would take place and to look how the outcomes from the G1 review can be incorporated into the KPIs. Following discussions at Strategic Board with senior management at Ringway Jacobs, the decision was made to continue to use KPIs from 2013. Two KPIs were removed purely because the service changed substantially and the budget was removed. At the last meeting of the Strategic Board it was agreed that when the new KPIs were available they would work in shadow with the KPIs that are in place this year with the absolute view that from the 1 April 2015, the newly developed KPIs would come into force.

Who monitors the Travel Bucks Policies from 2012 to ensure that the County Council is delivering what has been set out? Mr Bunce said the Travel Bucks Policies are cascaded in the Business Plan and captured as an action.

Mr Clarke added that he uses Travel Bucks policy on a regular basis to shape his management of the business.

Transport Act 1985 by its definition has been left a significant degree of flexibility for the County Council. With this in mind and the role of BCC to fill in the gaps in public transport, to what extent does the County Council's current Transport Policy meet or go beyond its statutory duty i.e. could a statutory duty be fulfilled by running a bus once a month and how is the statutory duty implemented. Mr Clarke said that as well as the 1985 Act, there is the 2000 and 2008 Act and various updates, which from a Central Government point of view is a live document. In having regard for transport needs, the Local Authority also needs to have regard for their own policies, budgets and strategic objectives. The Travel Bucks policy and LTP3 are in effect, shaped by the County Council's strategic objectives. A lot of County Council objectives very much require a good public transport network to make things them work as a means not an end.

Putting policies aside, the County Council needs to effectively carry out its statutory duty. What does the County Council need to do to fulfil its statutory duty? Mr Clarke explained that the County Council has a duty to consider transport needs and to formulate policies to respond to these needs.

There are two key strands in the legislation; transport needs must be considered and the County Council must have regard in their own policies and promote public transport and access and the opportunity to travel without a private car. A key part of the policy review is to look at the balance between available funding, the policies and the offer the County Council wishes to make to the public.

What services does the County Council buy from TfB in terms of public transport planning? Ms Harding said in terms of policy delivery this has been outsourced. TfB facilitate the development of the Policy which is then signed off by BCC.

As Ringway Jacobs facilitate the development of the transport policy, in theory the County Council should then benefit from Ringway Jacobs international reach in terms of innovative transport policy options and ideas etc. Ms Harding said this is an area which needs to be exploited further.

Is the current transport policy fit for purpose now and in the future? Mr Bunce said the starting point is that the Travel Bucks Strategy was developed to address different sets of challenges from the ones that are seen now. General areas of the policy that need to be looked at are what things mean and the degree of definition and the criteria set in the Travel Bucks Strategy does not go far enough to meet the current challenges. There is also the need for the Council to consider whether it wants to look further than addressing its current bus services and to develop services in a wider sense i.e. where people want to travel to not just who is on the bus. There are also different solutions to consider i.e. the use of community transport and whether a core network/secondary network should be looked at jointly. There could be a role for a more active decision about efficiency rather than safety and to meet the need for a change in service.

Mr Clarke added that a key issue is the policy talks positively about both accessible services and the core network (high frequency urban and interurban services). These are two very different services which deliver different things and operate in different ways. Through the current policies and criteria it is very difficult to put a relative value between the two services. If you are in a situation where you need to save money, are you just going to proportionally slice each separate budget or is there the needs to take a look at the policy to see where details can be made clearer in terms of priorities.

It seems that the policies do not allow a review of need and a quick adaptation to achieve this. Mr Clarke explained that in terms of the consultation process and statutory requirements to register new timetables with VOSA etc, there is a minimum of six months lead time to make changes to a route which is set by Central Government and VOSA.

How are Community Transport schemes integrated in overall transport policy for Buckinghamshire? Mr Clarke explained that services are run in defined geographical areas. Community Transport services are taken into account in the same way as commercial services are. Better use could be made of Community Transport but one is that is localised and independent.

Is there a reliance on the County Council/TfB to respond to the coordination of Community Transport? Who has the overarching role to co-ordinate what is being done to get people around the county? Mr Clarke explained that the County Council does not have a statutory role to integrate Community Transport with public transport services. However, in the wider role of the management of the public transport network, the County Council are looking at Community Transport in the same way it looks at commercial operations.

Ms Harding added that going forward the County Council needs to be mindful of future financial challenges as they become more acute and the increased community devolvement of services. Part of the agreed review is to look at the provision of transport as whole to ensure that a reduction in money does not necessarily mean deterioration in service. There is also the need to increase links into the different areas of transport. The understanding is there that should be an overarching review to make sure the right efficiencies are delivered from the infrastructure of transport options that the public actually has.

There is already a Travel Bucks policy in place which is felt to be fit for purpose. LTP3 states that 'Buckinghamshire County Council will work in partnership with the third sector to improve the delivery and coordination of community transport'. This was an aspiration in 2012. There is concern that how the policy should be delivered has still not been ascertained.

Has this part of the policy not been delivered because Community buses are not part of TfB and the transport contract? BCC (the client) should be providing the policies which TfB would be responsible for delivering.

Ms Harding explained that there is a Policy department within BCC. The actual transport policies are led within the PSD service Lead Officer's team, which includes ensuring that policies are fit for purpose. BCC can call on the expertise of Andrew Clarke to help formulate the transport policy for BCC. The policy review is not taking place from a blank piece of paper. It is looking at what policies are in place and what needs to be refined or refreshed for the policies to continue to be fit for purpose in the future.

Mr Bunce added that each of the objectives within the Travel Bucks Policy are still worthy and are very still relevant. It is the policy that does not go far enough to help make the decisions. It does not specify how accessibility needs are balanced with the urban core network. There needs to be a definition of what the County Council would like to achieve and how the objectives are to be balanced.

The policies were written when the net spend for the budget was £2.9m. There have been reductions of £210,000 and now a further £110,000. Is there a process in place to deal with subsidy reductions and how the objectives in the policies can be achieved? Ms Harding said her understanding of how the reductions came about was good management of bus operators in terms of continuing business improvement and looking at current areas of subsidy to drive efficiencies and savings for the Local Authority. Given the scale of change being looked at there is the need to fundamentally review the current position rather than be organic year on year.

To what extent are the objectives for supporting bus services (page 19 of the report), in particular providing a basic level of service to smaller communities to ensure a reasonable level of accessibility to shopping and healthcare services and meeting specific transport needs for people who are elderly or disabled, relevant, feasible, achievable and sustainable in the future? Mr Clarke said that the reason for the policy review is to review of the objectives as there is no definition of the basic level of services. It is not unusual for some areas to have a service of 2 buses per week in a smaller community. There are more regular services in larger areas such as Slough, most of which are provided commercially. The objectives in the Travel Bucks Strategy (2012) cover every option in public transport and each objective is of equal value.

There seems to be umbrella policies to try to cover all areas of transport but the policies are not specific or detailed enough. They need to be target based not aspirational. The policy was set in 2006 and updated in 2009 during which there have been yearly budget cuts. There is the expectation of budgetary cuts should be included in the policy.

As an organisation, how does Bucks County Council decide what transport solutions to deliver to meet the needs and demands i.e. the inclusion of officer based work streams, members, bus companies, the customer and how does the County Council know the service being delivered is fit for purpose and is value for money. Mr Clarke said that regular talks take place with bus operators and the providers of commercial services, as well as consultation with members of the public and members of the County Council. The current network of services have been in place a long time which is mainly due to a large amount of the transport links and market towns remaining roughly the same. The policies do not take into account the need to try and assess the potential of a new service. A key area of the policy should be to consider the flexibility to react.

Since the policies were written, Health has changed tremendously in terms of where the services are located. How will policies address these changes? Mr Clarke advised that he met with NHS to discuss transport when the services changed between Stoke Mandeville and Wycombe. There were a number of initiatives around trying to improve public transport links such as a new bus service being developed as well as enhancements to a number of existing bus services, free travel for NHS staff and for those who are visiting someone in hospital. Work is still taking place with the Health service on the delivery of transport. There is not an easy solution as the priorities for NHS transport tends to focus on those with a medical need or on an extremely low income.

The Select Committee has previously been advised that the contract for the Transport Hub facilitated by Community Impact Bucks Transport is funded 50/50 by Health and the County Council. Health uses the Hub 75% of the time which does not correlate with the 50/50 split in funding. Mr Clarke explained that the Transport Information Hub project is a telephone line that provides information, in particular for community transport. The 75/25% split is around the reason for the call not around the duty of either the Health Authority or County Council for providing that transport. Individuals who call the Community Hub are members of the public who do not have a 'statutory right' to free transport NHS or do not have means of their own to get to a health appointment.

It is not just about transporting people from hospital to hospital or town to town. It is about having transport from home to a hospital. Transport needs to be more effective across the county and value for money needs to be demonstrated.

Are the negotiations for the Transport Hub contract continuing? Mr Clarke advised that the current contract for the Transport Hub expires at the end of July 2014. The intention is to continue with the provision of the service but at a lower funding level. The details are still to be confirmed. Community Impact Bucks can be contacted for clarification.

Action: Mr Clarke

In terms of bus routes, it would be useful to know what duty the Trust has to provide patient transport, who is responsible for the services in place at the time of the reorganisation and what happens if the network has to evolve.

Action: Bucks Healthcare Trust

What are objectives/timeframes for the service area review to get the County Council to the MTP for this coming year and are Bucks County Council on their own or in a similar other County Councils try to achieve this? Mr Clarke explained that the review will be taking place until late autumn. A detailed programme has been put in place with the aim of policies being formulated over the autumn for consultation in November. Part of the reason for the timescale is for this Committee to be given the opportunity to be involved and to contribute fully to the review.

Is it possible for the Committee to have an update on the business plan process to meet the MTP objectives? Ms Harding explained that during the MTP process last year there was a discussion about an outline business case being put forward; hence the reason for the business case being in the MTP. It was acknowledged that there was further work to be done because of the quantum being undertaken. There was concern about the level of savings to be achieved and the need for a fundamental review of how would be in the future.

ETL Committee members were not advised that a review was being undertaken at previous Select Committee meetings. How does the Directorate want to engage with members of the Select Committee? Surely the business plan would come to the ETL Committee for discussion/comments as part of the review? Ms Harding explained that the County Council needs to be mindful of duplication of work being carried and to make sure that the recommendations/comments are incorporated in the business plan to enable delivery of the MTP.

The inquiry by the ETL Committee was initiated because there were no reviews taking place. What is the current status of the Business Plan Category review? Ms Harding explained that the timetable for the Internal Service Review is slightly behind schedule. The review needs to be managed to ensure there is no duplication. The ETL Committee would be made aware of the progress and outcome of the internal service review out of courtesy.

Mr Clarke explained that the Public Transport Policy review was undertaken in response to the MTP cuts. How these cuts were going to be delivered from a team point of view promoted talks with the client as there was concern that policies currently in place are not really helping to deliver the MTP cuts in the most effective way possible.

A timeline/scope of the internal service review, the review being undertaken by Gate One and the Transport review are to be provided.

Action: Cabinet Member for Transportation/Gill Harding/ Andrew Clarke

The County Council/TfB to provide a one page document to succinctly clarify what services are commissioned from TfB to enable to the Committee to consider the gaps in the wider strategy as part of their inquiry.

Action: Andrew Clarke/Gill Harding

RESOLVED

The Committee agreed that any proposed policy changes or drafts or consultations that arise from this review currently being undertaken from the delivery point of view are presented to this Committee in September to review and comment on and that the Service takes on-board any comments that have been raised during the meeting today, including timelines. The Committee will consider providing the interim finding of their ongoing inquiry to Place Service.

10 COMMITTEE WORK

a) EXTERNAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES : A COMMITTEE UPDATE PAPER (THEMES AND TOPICS)

Members of the Committee were referred to page 29-38 of the agenda pack which gives a summary of the work undertaken with various members of the Authority to investigate External Funding Opportunities.

The Chairman emphasised that the reason for this area of investigation was regarding the funding opportunities that relate specifically to planning and infrastructure and whether the County Council was maximising the opportunity to secure all external funding. The report includes from useful evidence from Bucks Business First (BBF) and the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)

Members of the Committee AGREED and APPROVED the six draft recommendation areas detailed on page 36 of the agenda pack.

Members of the Committee AGREED that the report is to be sent to the Finance and Resources Committee for endorsement. The timeline is to be given for the return of the recommendations prior to the September meeting of the ETL Select Committee.

A letter is to be produced by the Environment Select Committee for the relevant Cabinet Members.

b) S106 DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS

Members of the Committee were referred to the update on S106 investigations on pages 39-46 of the agenda.

The Chairman explained that S106 Developer contributions arise from developments in the county and are administered by the District Councils as the planning authority. The County Council can often be a major part of the process when it comes to education and transport or infrastructure type mitigations. The report encapsulates the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to a certain extent but it concentrates more on the existing S106s that are in place and the processes for managing how these are delivered and well as negotiations for future S106. The Chairman added that S106 are still in legislation and will always exist for mitigations on site. The CIL is supposed to avoid the general negotiation for known costs to other infrastructure that a development would incur.

Community Infrastructure Levy is to be added to the main report and the summary.

Action: Policy Officer

The Committee AGREED that a working group should be set up to look at the report in more detail with a review to redrafting and sharpening the contents. A meeting is to be arranged with the Chairman of the Finance and Resources Select Committee to discuss the report.

11 COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Members of the Committee NOTED the Work Programme.

Members of the Committee AGREED that the item on Bulky Waste should be moved to the October meeting.

12 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

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

Future dates and times for 2014

Tuesday 14 October

Tuesday 18 November

CHAIRMAN