



Buckinghamshire County Council
Select Committee
Transport, Environment and Communities

Date: Tuesday 19 April 2016

Time: 10.00 am

Venue: Mezzanine Room 2, County Hall, Aylesbury

AGENDA

9.30 am Pre-meeting Discussion

This session is for members of the Committee only. It is to allow the members time to discuss lines of questioning, areas for discussion and what needs to be achieved during the meeting.

10.00 am Formal Meeting Begins

Agenda Item	Time	Page No
1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	10.00am	
2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST To disclose any personal or disclosable pecuniary interests.		
3 MINUTES Of the meeting held on 1 st march 2016 to be confirmed as a correct record.		5 - 12
4 PUBLIC QUESTIONS		

This is an opportunity for members of the public to put a question or raise an issue of concern, related to Environment, Transport and Locality Services. Where possible, the relevant organisation to which the question/issue is directed will be present to give a verbal response.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



The member of public will be invited to speak for up to four minutes on their issue. A maximum of 30 minutes is set aside for the Public Questions slot in total (including responses and any Committee discussion). This may be extended with the Chairman's discretion.

For full guidance on Public Questions, including how to register a request to speak during this slot, please follow this link:

<http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/about-your-council/scrutiny/get-involved/>

5 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

For the Chairman of the Committee to provide an update to the Committee on recent scrutiny related activity.

Members are asked to note the attached written update from the Archaeology team.

6 TEE REVIEW OF THE FIRST YEAR

A presentation reviewing the first year of operation for the Transport, Economy and Environment (TEE) Business Unit, highlighting challenges and opportunities.

Contributors:

Mr Mark Shaw, Cabinet Member for Transportation

7 TRANSPORT FOR BUCKINGHAMSHIRE UPDATE

10.45am

**To
Follow**

A regular update with Transport for Buckinghamshire, following Committee items in 2015 which focussed on service improvements, changes to the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) used in contract management and concerns around customer service standards.

Contributors:

Mr Mark Shaw, Cabinet Member for Transportation

Mr Basil Jackson, Interim Director of Transport

8 S278 UPDATE - DEVELOPER WORKS ON THE HIGHWAY

11.15am

13 - 28

Members will receive an update on S278 Developer Works on the Highway and the progress and impact of improvements to the processes associated with this, which were discussed previously at Committee in June 2015.

Contributors:

Mr Mark Shaw, Cabinet Member for Transportation

Miss Christine Urry, Head of Highways Development Management, TEE

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| 9 | ENGLAND'S ECONOMIC HEARTLAND
The Committee will receive an update on the progress of England's Economic Heartland, a strategic alliance with neighbouring local authorities.

http://www.englandseconomicheartland.com/Pages/home.aspx

Contributors:
Mr Martin Tett, Leader of the County Council
Mr Martin Tugwell, Director Growth and Strategy and Strategic Alliance | 11.45am | 29 - 36 |
| 10 | COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME
Members are asked to note forthcoming items on the Work Programme. | 12.15pm | 37 - 38 |
| 11 | DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING
The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 31 st May 2016 at 10am in Mezzanine Room 2, County Hall, Aylesbury. There will be a pre-meeting for Committee Members only at 9.30am. | 12.20pm | |

Purpose of the committee

The role of the Transport, Environment and Communities Select Committee is to hold decision-makers to account for improving outcomes and services for Buckinghamshire.

It shall have the power to scrutinise all issues in relation to the remit of the Transport, Economy, and Environment Business Unit. In addition it will also have within its remit all areas relating to Communities issues/services (currently structurally under the Communities, Health and Adult Social Care Business Unit).

This includes, but not exclusively, responsibility for scrutinising issues in relation to:

- Strategic business planning & commercial development
- Growth & Strategy (including economic development)
- Regeneration & Infrastructure
- Environment Services (including country parks and waste management)
- Transport Services (including highways maintenance)

Communities issues

- Localism strategy & Voluntary and community sector engagement
- Libraries
- Resilience (emergency planning)
- Crime and disorder and crime and disorder reduction partnerships (community safety partnerships)*
- Museums; Registrars & Coroners.
- Impact of Welfare Benefits Reforms.
- Local Emergency Support

** In accordance with the BCC Constitution, this Committee shall act as the designated Crime and Disorder Committee and will hold the countywide Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership to account for the decisions it takes and may take part in joint reviews with District Councils of District Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships.*

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If you would like to attend a meeting, but need extra help to do so, for example because of a disability, please contact us as early as possible, so that we can try to put the right support in place.

For further information please contact: Kelly Sutherland on 01296 383602; Email ksutherland@buckscc.gov.uk

Members

Mrs P Birchley (VC)
Mr T Butcher
Mr D Carroll (C)
Mr W Chapple OBE

Mrs L Clarke OBE
Mrs A Davies
Mr P Gomm
Mrs J Teesdale



Buckinghamshire County Council
Select Committee
Transport, Environment and Communities

Minutes

TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE

Minutes from the meeting held on Tuesday 1 March 2016, in Mezzanine Room 2, County Hall, Aylesbury, commencing at 10.00 am and concluding at 12.25 pm.

This meeting was webcast. To review the detailed discussions that took place, please see the webcast which can be found at <http://www.buckscc.public-i.tv/>
The webcasts are retained on this website for 6 months. Recordings of any previous meetings beyond this can be requested (contact: democracy@buckscc.gov.uk)

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mrs P Birchley (Vice-Chairman), Mr T Butcher, Mr D Carroll (Chairman), Mr W Chapple OBE, Mrs L Clarke OBE, Mrs A Davies and Mr P Gomm

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs J Austin-Lavery, Ms R Carley, Mr B Ford, Mr A Fowler, Mr M Freestone, Mr N Gibson, Ms G Harding, Mr D Jones, Mr M Phillips, Mr M Shaw, Mrs K Sutherland and Mr W Whyte

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Jean Teesdale.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Avril Davies declared an interest for item 6 of the agenda as she was Chair of Beacon Villages Community Library.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 17th November 2016 were confirmed as a correct record.

4 PUBLIC QUESTIONS



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



There were none.

5 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman reported that Cabinet had accepted seven of the Committee's eight recommendations when he had presented the Flooding Inquiry report on 7th December 2015. The Chairman also advised that the Committee would shortly be commencing their next Inquiry into Economic Development in Buckinghamshire.

6 FUTURE OF THE LIBRARY SERVICE

The Chairman welcomed Mr Martin Phillips, Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Public Health, Mr David Jones, Library Services Manager and Ms Ruth Page, Project Manager to the meeting. The Library Services Manager took Members through his report on the Strategic Options Appraisal (SOA) that had recently been undertaken to evaluate different options for the future of the Library Service. During this presentation the following main points were noted:

- Libraries had saved £2million from its budget over the past 5-6 years, but needed to save a further £1million. Alternative service delivery methods were being considered to retain the existing library network and range of services, and ensure future sustainability.
- An Assessment Panel had been established and evaluation criteria agreed. Following initial consultation with Stakeholders, including County Councillors, Library staff and Community Libraries, a number of options had been considered against the evaluation criteria.
- Collaboration was dismissed as an option as none of the neighbouring local authorities were in a position to move quickly towards a merger. Although the 19 Community Libraries in Bucks had worked well, it was felt that this model could not be scaled up for the larger, busier libraries. Remodelling the service in-house would not produce sufficient savings and suggestions of outsourcing the service to the private sector raised concerns amongst stakeholders, who felt there could be a conflict between the needs of a commercial operation and the community run libraries.
- The Assessment Panel agreed that the 'Spin Out' option was the best choice. There were precedents for this in other areas and there were options in terms of which legal arrangement to choose, such as a public service mutual (as in Devon) or charitable trust (as in Peterborough or Luton). The service intended to develop a full business case to further explore options, understanding any implications and risks arising and including a robust public consultation exercise. As part of the Budget process an investment pot had been agreed, in the form of a loan, for implementation costs.

The Chairman invited Member's questions and comments. The following main points were noted:

- Libraries should act as community hubs, as they deliver a wider range of services than simply lending books. It was envisaged that Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC) would still be able to commission the 'Spin-Out' service to deliver the wider elements of the Library offering. The Library Service had been in discussions with

Marlow Town Council about developing a community hub around their library and in Chesham, the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) were considering co-locating in the library.

- Concerns were raised about how easily charitable status could be achieved as the Charities Commission were looking closely at local authority 'Spin Outs'. Members also questioned whether the success of a new organisation might be undermined by the associated redundancy and pensions costs of staff who tumbled over.
- It was noted that a Local Authority Trading Company (LATC) option had not been considered viable, as Libraries were not a trading service. A charitable model was the only way to deliver the scale of savings set out in the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).
- In response to a comment about using library properties more commercially, Members were advised that income generation through property was currently being explored as part of the Cultural Quarter project.
- The Committee's concerns were acknowledged and Members assured that the business case would provide more financial details. By learning lessons from BCC's existing alternative delivery vehicles (ADV) and the experiences of other authorities, it was felt that Library staff and Community Library partners could embrace the opportunities afforded by the 'Spin-Out' option.
- The Cabinet Member reminded Members that his portfolio had already successfully established the Museum Trust and merged the Trading Standards service with Surrey, and was confident that the 'Spin-Out' for the Libraries could be delivered without library closures.

The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Member, Mr David Jones and Ms Ruth Page for attending the meeting and requested that the detailed business case and information on the plans for public consultation should be shared at a future meeting of the Select Committee. It was agreed that the Committee and Governance Adviser would liaise with the Library Services Manager to facilitate this.

ACTION: Committee and Governance Adviser

7 LOCAL AREA FORUMS - TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Chairman welcomed Mr Martin Phillips, Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Public Health and Ms Rebecca Carley, Locality Services Manager to the meeting. The Cabinet Member reported that he had revised his approach to governance of the Local Area Forums (LAF) and a review of the Terms of Reference had been undertaken, alongside a survey of LAF attendees.

The Locality Services Manager highlighted that this was the first review of the LAFs since 2012. Costings for the meetings had been established at £110,000 per annum, the majority of which was linked to officer time. Attendance at LAF meetings had steadily increased since their introduction in 2008 and comments from attendees raised a variety of issues including operation, agenda focus and the localities budget. It was proposed that the new Terms of Reference (TOR) should apply to all LAFs. The TOR and comments from LAF attendees

would be discussed at a LAF Chairman's meeting on 4th April, ahead of a Cabinet Member Decision being taken in May or June.

The Chairman invited Members' comments and the following main points were made:

- The proposed Terms of Reference suggested that the Vice-Chairman would be nominated by the Chairman and confirmed by the Cabinet Member. A Member expressed concerns, as currently at their LAF the Vice-Chairman was nominated by LAF members and the LAF voted to confirm their choice.
- Another Member commented that the proposed Terms of Reference remained rather loose and further clarity was needed around the Terms of Reference and the purpose of the LAFs. On p100, it was stated that an expected outcome of LAFs was that County Councillors would feel better connected to BCC and it was stressed that this should apply to all County Councillors attending, not just the LAF Chairmen.
- It was confirmed that the LAF boundary review would be completed by the end of 2016. A Member suggested that the LAF boundaries should be co-terminus with County Council divisions and the areas covered by Transport for Buckinghamshire's (TfB) Local Area Technicians.
- A Member suggested that as the funding allocated to LAFs had been reduced, the number of meetings could also be cut back. Another suggestion was that the local County Councillor could allocate funding rather than using the LAF structure. In response, the Cabinet Member advised that he wanted the community to allocate the budget, rather than one person. The areas which had run local voting for proposed schemes had seen a lot of community engagement and this should be encouraged. Mr Phillips stated that if individual LAFs wanted to meet twice a year, instead of three or four times, that would be acceptable.
- The Cabinet Member also commented that LAFs were an important mechanism to ensure that BCC could engage effectively with Parish, Town and District councils.

The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Member and Locality Services Manager for attending the meeting. The Cabinet Member thanked the Committee for their comments which would be fed back to the LAF Chairman's meeting in April.

8 DEVOLUTION OF SERVICES

The Chairman welcomed Mr Mark Shaw, Cabinet Member for Transportation, Ms Gill Harding, Commercial Development Director, TEE, Mrs Jaqueline Austin-Lavery, Business Improvement Senior Officer, TEE and Mr Bradley Ford, Project Officer to the meeting.

The Cabinet Member reported that he was very excited by the devolution of services and officers were investigating alternative arrangements for High Wycombe which was unparished. The Committee were given a presentation which provided an overview of the number of Parish and Town Councils that had agreed to take on services which had traditionally been delivered by BCC (latterly via Transport for Buckinghamshire). During the presentation and in response to subsequent questions from Members, the following main points were noted:

- There had been some historic agreements with Parishes between 2006 and 2012. These had mainly been with Parishes in the south of the county and did not include a fixed range of services or consistent rates of pay.
- In 2015, BCC made a concerted effort to offer a fixed set of services which could be devolved to Parish and Town councils – this was Tranche 1(T1). These services included grass cutting, hedging, weed killing and maintenance of signage. 44 out of 169 Parishes signed up. BCC received positive feedback from the Parishes involved and complaints about grass cutting to BCC's Call Centre fell by 50%.
- Tranche 2(T2) has been introduced for 2016. A further 12 Parishes had already signed agreements to date and more were expected – it was hoped that across T1 and T2, 90 out of 169 Parishes would take on responsibility for devolved services. This would leave 79 Parishes relying on TfB for these services and TfB were currently developing their work programme for 2016-17. The team working on this project had achieved a 90% response rate from Parishes which was very positive.
- The Cabinet Member advised that he had recently written to all Parishes advising that grass cutting would be reduced from six cuts per annum to four, which had prompted further enquiries about devolution.
- Through devolution of these services Parish and Town Councils were able to have more control over how their local area is presented. In some areas, larger Parish or Town councils, provide services for smaller Parishes surrounding them.
- Further devolution opportunities were being explored. A Parish and Town Council conference had been held a few months ago and a number of Parishes had volunteered to undertake pilot projects with BCC.
- A Member asked if funding was allocated with the devolved services and whether this would cover the costs. It was explained that TfB activity and rates had been calculated and the corresponding funding had been passed down to Parishes in T1. In T2, the funding was slightly less due to budget cuts. Some Parishes had found that the budget was sufficient, whilst others were concerned that it was not enough. The funding was protected for the duration of the agreement.
- A Member suggested that it would be useful for County Councillors to know which services had been devolved to Parishes in their area, as this would help with queries from residents. It was agreed that once T2 had been completed a Member Newsletter would be produced to advise Members of the Parishes who had taken on devolved services and what those services were.

ACTION: Business Improvement Senior Officer, TEE

The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Member and all the officers for attending the meeting and requested that the Committee should be kept updated of any progress towards further devolution of services.

9 COUNTRY PARKS UPDATE

The Chairman welcomed Mr Warren Whyte, Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment and Mr Andrew Fowler, Head of Country Parks and Green Spaces. The Cabinet Member explained that he had decided to retain the Country Parks as they were an asset to BCC, but

he had set tough commercial challenges for the Parks going forward. Mr Fowler took Members through the highlights of his report and then invited questions. The following main points were noted:

- The income target for the Parks was increasing from £85,000 per annum to £157,000 per annum in just two years' time. This would coincide with the end of the Heritage Lottery Funding (HLF) which currently funded a gardener post, adding a further £25,000 of pressure.
- Visitor numbers were increasing by approximately 6% year on year, Go Ape attracted a lot of visitors to both their Adult and Junior high rope courses and the car parks at both Langley Park and Black Park were being extended to accommodate more visitors at peak times. A lease for a café at Denham Country Park had been agreed and the operator had secured funding for a new play area, as well as improvements to the café. In November 2015, BCC held its first Hackathon to produce business ideas for the Country Parks and two, a Park Live App and Holiday lodges/Treehouses, have been chosen to have full business cases developed.
- The Head of Country Parks and Green Spaces acknowledged that whilst the Parks had progressed, there was a need for a more formal commercial plan, as well as further customer insight, through engagement with users of the parks and also those who have not been before.
- The Parks were vulnerable to wet weather, but a Visitor's Centre to perhaps include function rooms or all-weather activities, would require planning permission and as the Parks lie in an area of green belt, this could be contentious.
- The Country Parks team would be restructured to ensure it would comply with BCC's Future Shape programme and to enable the commercial growth needed to meet the stretch targets within the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).
- Members voiced some concerns as to whether the new income targets could be achieved and suggested a number of different ideas to boost visitor numbers including Glamping/TeePees with hot tubs, Open-Air Classical Concerts and organising bus trips from Aylesbury and the North of the County for walking groups to visit the parks for the day.
- The Cabinet Member was asked if the complex land ownership of the Parks which had been discussed at Select Committee last year had been resolved. In response, he explained that he had investigated this, but felt that it would be very costly to unpick and it was not strictly necessary at this time.
- A Member asked if there were any parks in the North of the County but the Cabinet Member advised that there were not any BCC owned parks, although there was green space in Quarrendon which was managed by the Bucks Conservation Trust. He also commented that BCC needed to consider how Green Park in Aston Clinton could be used more widely.

The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Member and the Head of Country Parks and Green Spaces for attending the meeting. The Committee congratulated the Country Parks team on their achievements to date and wished them luck with working towards their future targets.

10 TEE REVIEW OF THE FIRST YEAR

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

11 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 19th April 2015 at 10am in Mezzanine Room 2, County Hall, Aylesbury. There will be a pre-meeting for Committee Members only at 9.30am.

CHAIRMAN



Buckinghamshire County Council Select Committee

Transport, Environment and Communities Select Committee

Report to the Transport, Environment and Communities Select Committee

Title:	Highways Development Management: Review and Improvement Report
Committee date:	19 th April 2016
Author:	Martin Dickman – Director for Environment Services
Contact officer:	Christine Urry –Head of Highways Development Management (01494) 475355
Cabinet Member sign-off:	Mark Shaw – Cabinet Member for Transport

Purpose of Agenda Item

This report is to provide an update following the presentation of the findings and associated recommendations of the WSP Parsons Brinkerhoff review of Highways Development Management in June last year. The report will outline progress that has been made since the review was published and will set out an action log for completion of the outstanding recommendations.

Background

Following concerns raised by the previous Chairman of the Select Committee, it was agreed that the Environment service would commission an independent review of Highways Development Management. The review was undertaken between March and May 2015 by WSP Parsons Brinkerhoff (hereafter referred to as PB).

The review process included an examination of existing procedural documents, interviews with officers and Members, as well as an assessment of a case study. The review also benchmarked with other authorities to compare with and define what 'best practice' looks like across the sector. It should be noted that it was explicitly not intended for the review to be an audit or inquiry into any one specific scheme.

The report outlined 32 recommendations, of which 12 were categorised as areas to be addressed promptly. It was however recognised that implementing solutions to each of the recommendations within the report would have both time and cost implications.

Summary

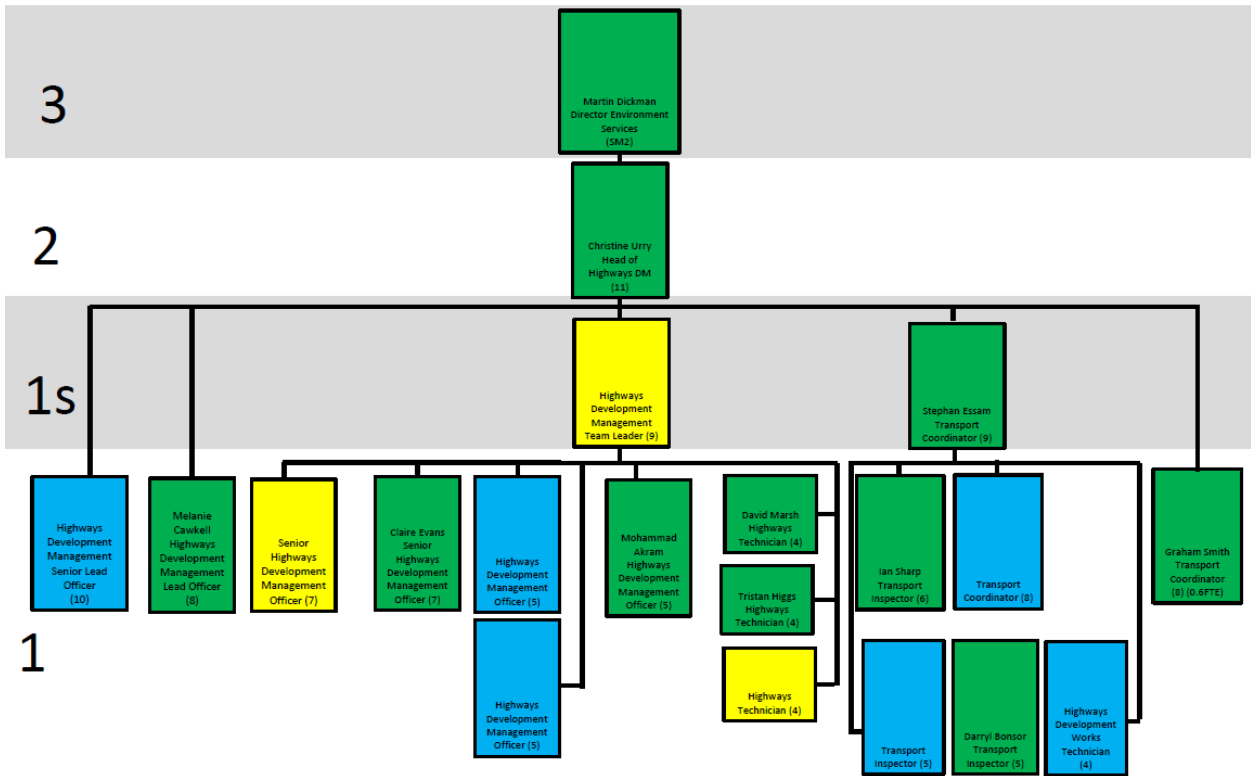
Over the past year, 11 recommendations have been completed and 5 are being progressed. This leaves 16 recommendations which still require action, as set out in appendix 1 below.



Staffing:

One of the critical concerns raised in the PB report was the ongoing staffing resource ‘deficiency’ when compared to levels at other authorities. The PB report stated that the Highways Development Management team at Buckinghamshire County Council is small in comparison to other local authorities.

As part of the MTFP an additional 5.5 posts have been secured in the team structure:



The Highways Development Management team are currently recruiting into 7 vacant posts:

- 2 x Highways Development Management Officers (R5)
- Transport Inspector (R5)
- Highways Development Management Senior Officer (R7)
- Transport Co-Ordinator (R8)
- Highways Development Management Team Leader (R9)
- Highways Development Management Lead Officer (R10)

A recruitment strategy for Highways Development Management has been developed with HR to advertise these roles within a competitive market, through a source of different channels including Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn:



The image shows two social media posts side-by-side. On the left is an Instagram post from 'promotingpeop1e' with the text: 'When you turn geography into dynamic transport networks - you matter'. On the right is a Facebook page for 'Promoting People' with the text: 'Find out where a career at Buckinghamshire County Council could take you!'. Below this is a collage of photos showing a woman, a road, a bus, and a bicycle, with the Buckinghamshire County Council logo and the text 'TRANSPORT ECONOMY ENVIRONMENT'. Below the collage is the text 'Rethink our communities...' and 'Our aim within Transport Economy Environment is to manage the major growth pressures within Buckinghamshire in a tough financial climate. Commercial and innovative, we are developing policies that...'. There are 'Like Page' and 'Learn More' buttons.

Securing the additional posts and filling the vacancies within structure is fundamental to the delivery of the outstanding recommendations of the PB review.

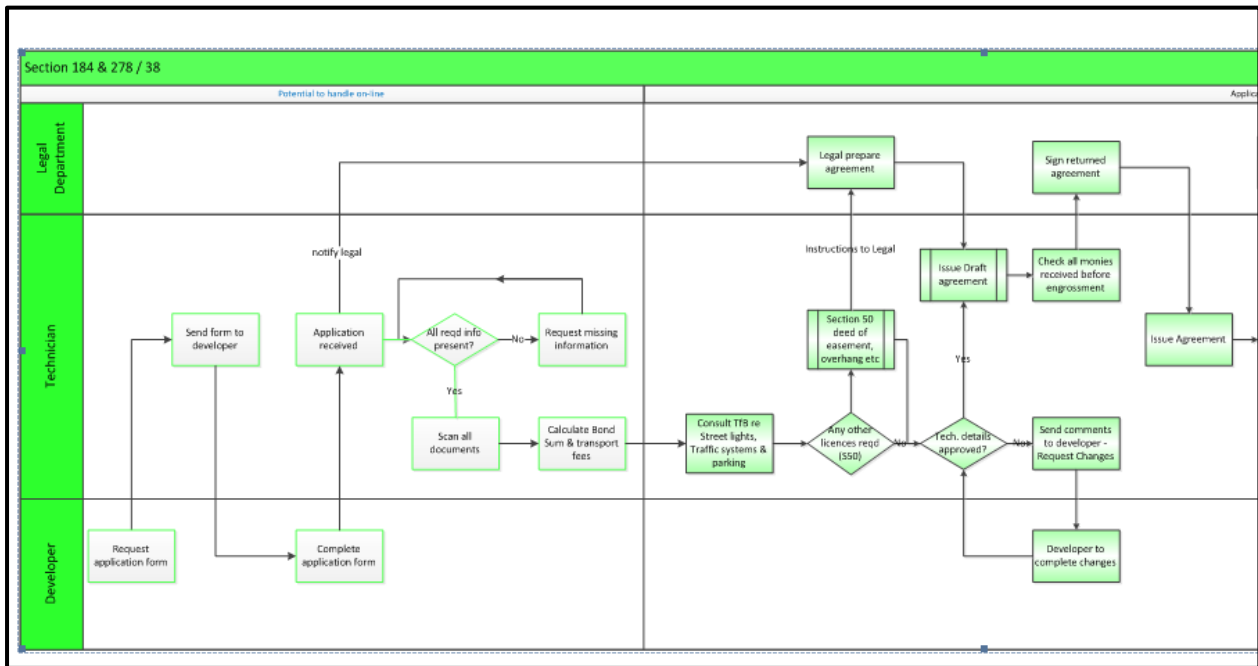
Efficiencies:

Standard wording, conditions and reasons for refusal have been developed and adopted by the Highways Development Management team. These have been included on Uniform, a planning database which can be used to store application details and generate responses. The team has received training on how to use Uniform from the operators of the system, Idox. Once all letter templates have been uploaded, the Highways Development Management team will be fully utilising Uniform to maximise efficiencies.

The team have mapped process flows for all work streams, through an agile event held by TEE's Business Improvement Team.



This piece of work highlighted efficiencies that could be made through digitalisation and better web provision:



The Highways Development Management Team is currently working with BSP’s commercial team to digitalise application forms through Firm Step, which could potentially include online payments. This will significantly improve our current service offer and customer experience.

TEE Business Improvement Team is currently working on developing a TEE Developer portal webpage (a one stop shop for Developers). This webpage will allow developers and their consultant’s easier access to all services offered within TEE, including Highways Development Management. Not only will this provide access to guidance and documents, it will also be used to market chargeable services in order to maximise income generation across the business unit.

Next Steps

Considerable change has taken place since the review last year, however it is recognised that further work is still required. An action log has been created for the outstanding recommendations and forms part of the team’s Delivery Unit Plan, please refer to Appendix 1.



Appendix 1 – Recommendations

Recommendations Completed in 2015/16

Ref	Description	Solution	Comments
1	Some refusals are being written and sent out by junior staff. This puts BCC at serious risk, including the potential for awarding of costs against BCC.	It is imperative that all refusals are fully checked by a senior member of the DM team be sent out in their name.	All reasons for refusal are signed off by a Senior Member of the Highways DM team.
2	Various forms of DM triage have been tried within BCC, but none has been fully effective. The systems have always placed a significant burden on the DM team, as well as senior DM staff.	A dedicated DM administrative assistance should be provided to perform a significant amount of the triage tasks. They would also be able to input the information into Uniform and/or an application tracking spreadsheet / database.	Since September 2015 the team have had a dedicated project officer.
3	Many of the consultations which the Development Management team receive are for smaller schemes. However, written responses to planning applications for these schemes are still often long and therefore time-consuming.	Standardise text to save officers from having to rewrite the same or similar responses. Standardised text should be reviewed and compared against other local authorities; it may be possible to include this within Uniform.	Standardised wording, conditions and reasons for refusal have now been written and included in Uniform. The team have received training in Uniform and once the letter templates have been uploaded the team will be using this system to generate responses.
4	It is crucial that all highway works are appropriate and have been fully agreed by BCC before construction begins. There is significant risk to BCC in allowing works to begin without all technical approvals being in place, all legal issues being dealt with and all monies being provided.	The review team strongly recommends that no highway works are allowed to begin until a full technical approval has been issued. This may be best achieved by coordinators/inspectors checking technical approval is in place at the point of road space booking.	Highway works are no longer allowed to start on site until full technical approval has been issued.
5	Current processes for processing incoming applications and requests are functional but not clearly defined. This has seen procedures not robustly enforced and meant important groups (sometimes TEE themselves) are left out of the loop during correspondence	It is recommended that Figures 3-6 should be used to form the basis of a clearly defined process outlining how BCC will conduct development management.	The Business Improvement Team in TEE arranged an 'agile' event where Highway Development Management officers mapped process flows for both agreements (S278/184/38) and planning applications. In addition a check-list has been created to assist junior members of the team when assessing minor planning applications, to ensure that all issues are considered.
6	The DM team are responsible for providing advice to the LPA when they are producing their Local Development Plans (LDPs). DM officers have not have had the	More time and resource needs to be spent on communication with the district councils regarding their LDPs, so that they do not become a limitation to proceedings. The quality of the DM response to the	Responses to Local Development Plans are being led by the Strategic Planning Team. A member and officer growth board have been set up to ensure that the County Council provides a

Appendix 1 – Recommendations

	<i>time required to give serious thought to the impact of local plan developments and this may be limiting future applications.</i>	<i>LDP process should be reviewed and a lessons learned note created.</i>	<i>comprehensive response to District Consultations.</i> <i>Whilst officers in the Highways DM team would like to contribute more to the Local Development Plan process, until the new posts within the structure are filled this has to be managed against other competing demands.</i>
7	<i>It was noted that some Local Planning Authorities can be slow to forward applications and can fail to forward on to BCC other people's consultation responses, which are relevant to transport. This may be as a result of relatively poor relationships between the DM team and the LPA.</i>	<i>BCC should make a commitment to improve the working relationships with the planners</i> - Spend more time with the planners and consider more frequent visits to the LPA offices. - Be available and willing to discuss larger applications throughout the process, rather than simply sending a final response.	<i>Highways DM team now regularly visit the district offices. In Aylesbury Vale and Wycombe District Council the Highways DM team have been given the capabilities to work remotely from the District Council offices.</i> <i>The Head of Highways DM has regular 1:1s with the head of planning at Aylesbury Vale District Council and Wycombe District Council.</i>
8	<i>BCC are consulted on applications from four Local Planning Authorities. BCC's standard conditions for each one of these districts is different. This makes it hard for DM officers to respond quickly and efficiently and may lead to future mistakes.</i>	<i>It is recommended that a single set of standard conditions should be created and agreed across all of the LPAs. A review against other Local Authorities should be carried out to ensure that wording of each condition is correct and that all appropriate standard conditions are included.</i>	<i>See Recommendation 18</i>

Appendix 1 – Recommendations

9	<p>Despite a move towards regionalisation of roles, some BCC staff including transport co-ordinators and inspectors must cover work across the entire county</p>	<p>It is recommended that BCC consider assigning regions to inspectors. This will require recruitment of extra inspectors to provide adequate coverage, as shown in table 3</p>	<p>As part of the new structure approved as part of the MTFP there is a new inspector post, which will allow adequate coverage across the County.</p> <p>BCC are currently out for recruitment for all vacant posts and we are confident that the inspector post will be filled.</p>
10	<p>It appears that there is no breakdown available for days spent by TfB on DM work. It is unclear whether days allocated in the budget have actually been used on DM work. The process certainly appears to require further investigation.</p>	<p>It is recommended that BCC conduct a review of the work undertaken by TfB on the highways DM work and ensure that the correct number of days has been utilised.</p>	<p>Highways DM has been working closely with Transport for Buckinghamshire to review the number of support days required in 2016/17. Monitoring reports are to be provided every quarter, allowing for better service management.</p>
11	<p>Reasons for refusal may not be properly justified in transport terms. These can lead to appeals which lead to diversion of effort to respond and may lead to costs against the authority for unreasonableness.</p>	<p>Ensure that adequate training is provided to staff and that knowledge is continuously maintained. (As an example, in Suffolk, all new staff above technician level attend the 4 day IHE course on Development Management).</p>	<p>Four members of the team are currently undertaking a HNC in Engineering which they are due to complete in May.</p> <p>Learning and Development Plans have been created for all members of the team, which are updated on a regular basis.</p> <p>Due to the spending freeze, TEE has been unable to invest in a number of courses required to support training of the Highways Development Management team.</p> <p>We have however focused on work shadowing and mentoring, which has had a great deal of success. A good example of this is Ian Sharp/Graham Smith.</p> <p>Further work is currently taking place in order to ensure work force planning and succession planning is managed, in particular through Talent</p>

Appendix 1 – Recommendations

Management.

Recommendations in Progress 2015/16

Ref	Description	Solution	Comments
1	<i>There are clear gaps in the publically available guidance on the BCC website, focussed around application and design guidance.</i>	<i>It is recommended that these documents plus the information pack are immediately made available publically through the BCC website. This will lighten some workload from the DM team, whilst also bringing BCC into line with other local authorities in the region.</i>	<p><i>Highways Development Management is currently working with Business Improvement team to produce a Developers landing page. This will include all services offered by TEE Environment Services, acting as a one stop shop.</i></p> <p><i>The BIT team have carried out customer research and have begun mapping the website.</i></p> <p><i>In addition all S184, S278, S38 application forms are to be made digital and included on Firmstep. This will offer significant efficiencies in the current process.</i></p>
2	<i>The review highlighted several documents which could provide efficiency, consistency and transparency across the development management process.</i>	<i>It is recommended that BCC review the current portfolio of internal documents, and strongly consider the benefits of implementing some or all of those additional documents highlighted in figure 2 in leading a consistent, clearly defined and streamlined process.</i>	<p><i>Please refer to action log.</i></p> <p><i>It should be noted that the majority of the external documents will need to be outsourced and funding.</i></p>

Appendix 1 – Recommendations

3	<p><i>BCC's website contains the least publically available guidance of any of the surveyed authorities, and was difficult to use.</i></p>	<p><i>BCC would benefit from one, central page focussed entirely on information for developers. Perhaps this could be located under a new '_TEE' page, as opposed to the current position within transport and roads. This should become a central hub bringing together into one place all relevant documents, application forms, contacts and guidance notes.</i></p>	<p><i>Highways Development Management is currently working with the Business Improvement team to produce a Developers landing page. This will include all services offered by TEE Environment Services, acting as a one stop shop.</i></p> <p><i>The BIT team have carried out customer research and have begun mapping the website.</i></p> <p><i>In addition all S184, S278, S38 application forms are to be made digital and included on Firmstep. This will offer significant efficiencies in the current process.</i></p>
4	<p><i>On a strategic level, whilst the Buckinghamshire County Council Strategic Plan does include a planning and transportation portfolio plan, its focus is not on development management</i></p>	<p><i>It is recommended BCC develop a strategic document outlining forward development management policy, as part of a network of cross referenced publically available guidance. This document should undergo an appraisal process similar to the LTP, or could even be included as part of the next LTP for Buckinghamshire, due for release in March 2016.</i></p>	<p><i>LTP4 is to be made up of several sub documents including a Highways Development Management policy document. WSP Parsons Brinkerhoff are currently drafting this document, in liaison with Transport Strategy and Highways Development Management officers.</i></p>

Appendix 1 – Recommendations

5	<p>The main issue encountered by the reviewers concerning technical approval is time taken for TfB to issue technical approval.</p>	<p>It is recommended that additional KPIs are added to the contract at the next available opportunity. These KPIs should be around a quick turn around of work.</p> <p>It is also recommended that the number of man days required to support the highways DM team is reviewed. If it is considered that there is a need for greater time, then this should be agreed with TfB. This will enable them to recruit the specialisms in house. Given that the cost of bringing in expertise above the fixed number of days agreed up front is so much more expensive, and given the need for the work to be carried out quickly, this might be a solution which is relatively cost neutral.</p>	<p>Highways Development Management has been working a lot more closely with TfB to improve monitoring of time spent on Highways DM work throughout the year.</p> <p>In particular significant progress has been made with UTMC in terms of tracking and monitoring schemes from pre-application through to adoption.</p>
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Outstanding Recommendations to be Actioned:

1	<p>Life-cycle tracking of planning applications and section 106/38/278/184 agreements was a common concern raised with the review team. This currently manifests itself as a lack of accountability for incoming developer fees on a scheme by scheme basis, and missed revenue from section 106 agreements</p>	<p>It is recommended that central spreadsheet databases (or similar) are introduced to track planning applications and section agreements from first contact through to archiving of plans. Ideally, these should be collaborative, including input from district councils as well as TfB, or provide links to other databases.</p>	<p>Highways Development Management already record planning applications through Uniform and Highway Agreements using excel. The two programmes are however not linked.</p> <p>The team will investigate options for tracking the life-cycle of planning applications, including archiving of documents. This may require development of a database.</p> <p>This will need to be outsourced and funding secured.</p>
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Appendix 1 – Recommendations

2	<p>While a checklist of requirements for a Section 278 agreement has evolved within the DM team, it is not used by every officer involved and there is no consistent protocol for the handling of requests or the guidance of promoters.</p>	<p>It is recommended that guidance in the form of a Section 278 Protocol is drawn together as soon as possible from best practice of other highway authorities, adapted to the requirements of BCC. It is recommended that adherence to consistent processes for Protocol (and Supervision – see below) then becomes mandatory in the DM team and applied consistently in all future cases. Figure 4 provides a model for this protocol.</p>	<p>Process flows have been created for Section 278 Agreement. This will be developed into a protocol, using best practice of other highway authorities.</p>
3	<p>A significant period of time may elapse between planning consent and commencement of a development. In this period it is possible that continuity between the planning stage and the implementation stage (S278 & S38).</p>	<p>It is recommended that a handover file is set up at consultation stage for every large application containing significant roadworks, or that a system is put in place which records all relevant information to an application for later retrieval.</p>	<p>Highways DM currently save all planning application responses and associated files on the N-Drive. A new process will be created for the handover of files – including a meeting with officers (as per recommendation 07/21).</p> <p>The handover should be assisted through the creation of a database to track the lifecycle from planning application to agreement (recommendation 05).</p> <p>This will come into effect when the team is fully resourced and can dedicate sufficient time to compiling and attending handover meetings.</p>
4	<p>To the review team's knowledge, TEE does not currently have standard drawings in place for common highway features.</p>	<p>It is recommended to produce standard drawings for common highway features. This process could align with the earlier recommendation to produce a county level design guide.</p>	<p>Standard Details will need to be created in consultation with Transport for Buckinghamshire.</p> <p>The development of Standard Details will need to be outsourced and funding secured.</p>
5	<p>BCC does not currently have standard details for construction of typical highway features. While details are provided in individual sets of S278 plans, a standard set is desirable in the interest of standardising items for future maintenance.</p>	<p>Standard details for items such as illuminated bollards, street lighting, traffic signals, accesses, pavement construction and special paving should be provided.</p>	<p>Standard Details will need to be created in consultation with Transport for Buckinghamshire.</p> <p>The development of Standard Details will need to be outsourced.</p>

Appendix 1 – Recommendations

6	<i>Developers are referred to national guidance such as the Manual for Streets regarding design and construction.</i>	<i>It is recommended BCC produce supplementary or standalone design, construction and/or materials guides for development work in the county.</i>	<i>The development of design, construction and/or material guides would need to be outsourced and funding secured.</i>
7	<i>It is not uncommon for other authorities that allow contractors to carry out S278 works to limit the selection of contractors to a list of companies who have further satisfied the authority in respect of a number of additional requirements.</i>	<i>It is recommended that S278 agreements require that contractors provide additional information about contractors.</i>	<i>Highways DM to produce a list of requirements for contractors working on the publicly maintained highway, considering best practice from other councils.</i> <i>In the meantime Highways DM have been carrying out more comprehensive checks of contractors, including obtaining references from other authorities.</i>
8	<i>BCC DM officers provide a high quality of communication with BCC Councillors and the public. Whilst commendable, this resource intensive process is preventing DM officers from completing their core work. It has also tended to raise the level of expectation amongst the public as to the level of communication they expect to receive.</i>	<i>It is recommended that the DM team take a step back from the significant levels of communications they undertake. Particularly with the public, the level of expectation needs to be reset at a more manageable level. Developers should be required to keep the public and Councillors informed and engaged in the process. The LPA also have a consultation role.</i>	<i>Procedure for dealing with correspondence from residents and councillors to be developed by Highways Development Management in consultation with the cabinet member.</i>
9	<i>S184 permits are being used for smaller scale road works. This section of the act does not provide the same level of protection to BCC and may leave BCC open to paying to deal with issues arising from the works.</i>	<i>The review team recommends that S184 permits are retained for minor access alterations and additions. Works of the value of £15-25,000 should be carried out under a shortened or abridged S278 agreement.</i>	<i>This will be taken forward with legal services.</i> <i>The existing guidance notes will need to be revised by Highways DM.</i>
10	<i>S278 guidance documents will help to reduce the burden on DM officers when dealing with S278 works.</i>	<i>It is recommended that a set of documents are produced or revised and made available to developers. A shorter version of guidance should be developed for abridged S278 works and access alterations under S184.</i>	<i>Guidance notes and Fee schedules to updated and revised by Highways DM.</i>
11	<i>Some processes and checklists have been created by the team to help during the inspection process. The review team feel that there are potential benefits from ensuring consistency across the board.</i>	<i>It is recommended that these documents are used as the back bone to a set of guidance documents, checklists and sign off sheets for use within the inspection process. These should be made publically available to allow developers to be aware up front of their requirements.</i>	<i>Check lists and sign off sheets to be created for use within the inspection process, building on the work already undertaken by the Highways DM team.</i>
12	<i>BCC should protect itself from future over-</i>	<i>The S278 agreements should be amended to</i>	<i>This will be taken forward with legal services.</i>

Appendix 1 – Recommendations

	<i>running schemes and poorly performing contractors.</i>	<i>include a window of works and a description of the reapplication process (including additional fee) in order to provide BCC with greater control over the process.</i>	<i>There is a need to review our standard legal agreements.</i>
13	<i>The risk of inconvenience to road users caused by a poorly performing contractor can be further mitigated by means of governance agreed with the promoter.</i>	<i>It is recommended that the S278 agreement for very large schemes should include a requirement for the promoter and contractor to participate in a project board and co-operate to the authority's satisfaction.</i>	<i>In order to offer this level of service additional resources will be required (please refer to recommendation 09).</i>
14	<i>Assurance would form part of the project board structure, and would ensure pro-active involvement in issues on buildability and minimising risk of disruption to road users</i>	<i>In order to avoid yet more pressure on inspection resources and to augment skills available for assurance, it is recommended that assurance is supplemented with suitably experienced inputs from external sources during works of a potentially disruptive nature.</i>	<i>In order to offer this level of service additional resources will be required (please refer to recommendation 09).</i>
15	<i>Innovative or non-standard design outside the scope of DMRB (for instance special paving required for aesthetic reasons, non-compliant crossings and textured paving) has led to design liability and penalties under Health and Safety legislation elsewhere on public and private roads.</i>	<i>It is recommended that any non-standard design is accompanied by a sufficient risk assessment and competent approval. They will need to be agreed by the TfB Asset Management team.</i>	<i>Highways DM to create a process of assessing non-standard designs in consultation with TfB Asset Management.</i>
16	<i>BCC should protect itself from future works unduly affecting the operation of the road network.</i>	<i>When S278 works are on traffic sensitive areas, it is recommended that a simple assessment of traffic delays during stages of construction and, where possible, options to minimise delays should be provided. The assessment may show the relative impact on construction cost and traffic delays of alternative options.</i>	<i>Highways DM to create a process for assessing traffic management on sensitive roads in consultation with TfB Street works team.</i>

Appendix 1 – Recommendations

Action Log for 2016/17

2016/17	BCC Lead	Highways DM Lead	By When	Signed Off
Recruitment into the posts secured through MTFP	Rob Taylor BSP	Christine Urry	Adverts end of March for interviews in April 2016	
Implementation of PPA and Pre-application charging and protocol		Melanie Radley	May 2016	
Revise the scheme of delegation for Highways Development Management		Christine Urry	May 2016	
Developer landing page to be completed	Lucy Fenton BIT	Christine Urry	TBC	
Online application forms and online payment options implemented	BSP	Ian Sharp	TBC	
Update Section 278/38/184 fee schedule		Steve Essam	June 2016	
Update Section 278/38/184 guidance notes		Steve Essam	June 2016	
Updated Section 278/38/184 Agreements		Steve Essam	June 2016	
A bridge agreement between S184 and S278 and protocol		Steve Essam	July 2016	
Standard Section 278/38/184/106 instructions to legal		Steve Essam	June 2016	
Development of TfB process flows	Martin Healey – Transport for Buckinghamshire	Christine Urry	TBC	
Communication Policy		Claire Evans	August 2016	
Infrastructure Contributions Guidelines and Processes (S106/CIL)	John Rippon – Growth and Development	Christine Urry	TBC	
Highways Development Management Policy document	Ryan Bunce – Transport Strategy	Melanie Radley	July 2016	
Inspector Checklist		Ian Sharp	August 2016	
Adoption Checklist and processing guidance		Ian Sharp		
Incoming processing guidance		Christine Urry	July 2016	
Email/post handling guidance		Joseph Bates	June 2016	

Appendix 1 – Recommendations

Action Log for 2017/18

2016/17	Comments
Standard Details	This will require funding, as will need to be commissioned externally
Development Design Guide	This will require funding, as will need to be commissioned externally
Development Material Guide	This will require funding, as will need to be commissioned externally
Development Construction Manual	This will require funding, as will need to be commissioned externally
Commuted Sums Protocol	
Rural Diversification	This will require funding, as will need to be commissioned externally
Equality Analysis	
Section 38/278 bond calculation sheets	
S106 developer contrition negotiation and spending tracker	This will need to be led by Growth and Development who are responsible for the monitoring and implementation of S106 monies.
Infrastructure needs identified for S106	This will be developed through work on the District Local Plans



Buckinghamshire County Council Select Committee

Transport, Environment and Communities Select Committee

Report to the Transport, Environment and Communities Select Committee

Title:	England's Economic Heartland
Committee date:	Tuesday 19 April 2016
Author:	Martin Tugwell
Contact officer:	Martin Tugwell, Director Growth & Strategy and Strategic Alliance
Cabinet Member sign-off:	Cllr Mark Shaw, Cabinet Member Transport

Purpose of Agenda Item

This report provides a briefing update on the work of England's Economic Heartland Strategic Alliance.

Background

- 1.1. England's Economic Heartland Strategic Alliance was initially the initiative of the Leaders of three County Councils – Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Northamptonshire. The initiative came about through their recognition of the fact that:
 - In terms of strategic infrastructure the issues (and solutions) often extended beyond any one single upper-tier authority
 - Issues that were common to one or more upper-tier authority administrative area could benefit from a co-ordinated response
 - There was a need for stronger integration of investment by Government, its agencies, local authorities, as well as infrastructure and service providers
- 1.2. In this regard the partners shared a common aim: to look beyond current success and through collaborative work look to:
 - a) Raise local productivity to match, and where possible exceed, that of our global competitors



- b) Address identified barriers to the delivery of economic growth
- 1.3. In this way the Strategic Alliance partners initiative offered the opportunity to:
- a) Strip away duplication and remove inefficiencies, enabling faster, more agile decisions
 - b) Simplify funding streams wherever possible so that the time (and cost) taken to develop proposals and get them delivered on the ground is reduced
 - c) Provide greater certainty for private sector investors thereby encouraging them to commit sooner to investments with greater confidence
- 1.4. Originally launched in December 2014, the three County Councils invited the three county-based Local Enterprise Partnerships to become involved in early 2015. This brought Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership, Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership into the discussions.
- 1.5. The initial focus of the partners was on establishing the foundations for an effective working partnership and, through discussion, develop a more detailed proposition that would demonstrate the benefits of collaborative working at a sub-national level.
- 1.6. This led to the preparation of a 'transport proposition' in July 2015. A discussion document, this was submitted to Government in response to their invitation for local partners to submit their proposals for devolution of powers from Government. The proposition, unlike the county based devolution proposals submitted by some authorities in September 2015, was focused on strategic/sub-national issues.
- 1.7. The transport proposition was shared with a number of neighbouring Local Transport Authorities who had expressed some interest in the idea of addressing strategic issues at a sub-national level. This led to invitations being extended to Milton Keynes Council, Bedford Borough Council, Central Bedfordshire Council, Luton Borough Council and Cambridgeshire County Council. In addition an invitation was extended to SEMLEP. These invitations were accepted and the organisations began participating in Strategic Alliance discussions from autumn 2015. Interest has also been expressed by Peterborough City Council – another Local Transport Authority – to become involved in the Strategic Alliance.

2. England's Economic Heartland - Profile

- 2.1. England's Economic Heartland is an economically successful area: with an economy valued at £92.5bn, it is as large as the Welsh economy. It has a population of 3.45m



people, has 175,000 businesses that employ over 1,650,000 people. It is a part of the UK that makes a net contribution to the Exchequer.

- 2.2. Although it is economically successful, a core message from the start has been that that economic success cannot and should not be taken for granted. That there is no guarantee that the inherent advantages of the Heartland area as a place for business to invest will continue to be realised without further investment in infrastructure.
- 2.3. A key message has been that a failure to maintain the area's strategic infrastructure or to invest in additional capacity will put economic success at risk. Indeed a failure to invest is likely to result in a decline of its competitive position globally.
- 2.4. Drawing on the evidence base that underpins the Strategic Economic Plans across the Heartland area, we know that whilst levels of economic productivity are amongst the highest in the country, there remains a gap with the global competitor regions. This evidence base also shows that pressures on strategic transport infrastructure and services will continue to grow: a consequence of economic success.
- 2.5. We also know that tackling the pressures on our strategic transport system will also benefit the UK as a whole. For the strategic transport corridors that criss-cross England's Economic Heartland are the arteries that also support ambitious plans for economic growth in the Midlands, the Northern Powerhouse and beyond.

3. Guiding Principles for the Strategic Alliance

- 3.1. Where the Alliance partners agree that it is appropriate to address an issue on a joint basis, they can agree to establish collaborative working arrangements that could include, but are not limited to:
 - Establishing a joint project team to represent and take forward the partners' shared interests
 - Establishing a 'task and finish' team to develop a common position within an agreed timetable
 - Establishing a 'strategic forum' where there is a need to co-ordinate a series of projects in order to enable a system-wide perspective to be maintained and/or to realise efficiencies in the use of resources available (both financial and human).
- 3.2. A key principle of the Alliance approach is that participation in it:
 - Does not oblige partners to be involved in all activities, projects or proposals

- Does not preclude any partner from working cross-boundary with other organisations or partners.

3.3. In this way the Strategic Alliance offers partners the opportunity to participate in a single conversation on strategic issues at the sub-national level, whilst retaining their responsibilities and accountabilities within their own administrative area.

4. The Strategic Transport Forum

4.1. Building on the original transport proposition, there was early agreement amongst the partners that strategic transport issues were an area in which there was added value to be realised through collaborative working. To that end the Strategic Transport Forum has been set up.

4.2. The Forum is a non-statutory partnership, the purpose of which is to:

- Provide the opportunity to share technical expertise and resources across the partners to assist in the development, assessment and implementation of proposals
- Enable a more efficient and meaningful engagement with the Department for Transport, infrastructure agencies (such as Highways England and Network Rail) and service providers (such as bus and train operating companies)
- Provide the focus for a single conversation on strategic transport and infrastructure related activities.

4.3. In this way the partners are able to:

- Enable rationalisation of standards, practices and policies in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of day-to-day operation of the transport system and response to disruption (accidents, emergencies and extreme weather events)
- Build upon locally identified needs to develop and maintain a single overview of strategic transport priorities in liaison with the Local Transport Authorities/Boards and other stakeholders as appropriate
- Manage the resources available to establish project teams as a means of providing leadership required to develop strategic proposals, including engagement with business and the wider community
- Establish joint bidding teams to undertake and commission technical work (including the development of business cases) to secure investment funding to enable the delivery of strategic proposals

- Work with Government and its agencies to co-design nationally delivered transport investment programmes.
- 4.4. Membership of the Strategic Transport Forum covers Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire, Milton Keynes, Bedford, Central Bedfordshire, Luton and Cambridgeshire – 8 Local Transport Authorities (represented by Leader/Cabinet Member), 4 Local Enterprise Partnerships (represented by a Board member), plus officials from the DfT, Highways England, Network Rail, public transport operators, the Transport Systems Catapult and the Civil Engineering Contractors Association
 - 4.5. The first meeting of the Forum took place on 12th February 2016. All meetings of the Forum are held in public.
 - 4.6. The Forum is developing its programme of work on a collaborative basis. Its first priority is to draw on the existing evidence base to develop an overarching transport strategy.
 - 4.7. This will enable the Alliance to ensure the Heartland’s strategic priorities are fed into this autumn’s discussions on strategic infrastructure priorities for Highways England’s road network, and Network Rail’s track infrastructure. These discussions will shape the investment priorities of these national organisations for the period between 2019 and 2024. Adopting a strategic/sub-national approach offers the partners the opportunity to increase their influence over these national programmes
 - 4.8. The Forum has a strong emphasis on delivery. Integral to the work of the Forum is developing a collaborative working arrangement with the private sector delivery partners. The delivery partners have already expressed their support for the Strategic Alliance initiative and have set out their commitment to work with the Alliance to develop innovative approaches with the aim of improving cost effectiveness and realising efficiencies in delivery across the Heartland.
 - 4.9. Although the Forum has only recently been established, it is already gaining credibility within Government and national organisations. The Alliance initiative is increasingly referred to alongside initiatives such as Transport for the North and Midlands Connect as examples of sub-national transport initiatives.
 - 4.10. The Forum provides the Alliance partners a means of developing and agreeing responses to consultations of strategic significance, such as that recently undertaken by the DfT and TfL that set out proposals that would affect the specification and management of train franchises that serve London. Many of these franchises also serve the Heartland area and the Alliance response emphasised the need to give equal weight to the Alliance view alongside that of TfL.

5. Sub-national Transport Bodies

- 5.1. Within the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act there is provision for local transport authorities to prepare a proposal to establish a statutory Sub-national Transport Body.
- 5.2. In introducing the provision, the Government set out that such a body 'would be able to develop transport plans for their areas and come together to tackle issues that are currently decided in Whitehall rather than by local councils, relating to, for instance, longer-distance road or rail networks or systems that cross geographical boundaries..'
- 5.3. The key benefit of a statutory Sub-national Transport Body would therefore be the ability for local partners to have a direct influence over decisions that are currently within the control of Government and its agencies.
- 5.4. The Alliance Partners have begun to explore the potential of building on the Strategic Transport Forum to develop a proposition to Government that could lead to the establishment of a statutory Sub-national Transport Body.

6. Strategic Infrastructure

- 6.1. The Alliance partners have begun to consider how the initiative could be used to align investment in the transport system with other infrastructure that is of strategic importance. The partners have identified that strategic infrastructure issues could cover areas such as ports and airports, roads, rail transport, energy, digital and broadband, water supply, waste and flood defences – a remit that mirrors that of the National Infrastructure Commission.
- 6.2. The National Infrastructure Commission forms part of the Government's commitment to 'shake Britain out of its inertia' when it comes to infrastructure planning and delivery.
- 6.3. The Commission is already working in 'shadow' form, providing the Government with advice on a small number of specific challenges. In parallel, work has begun on developing a longer-term view (10-30 years) of the UK's infrastructure requirements.
- 6.4. The Alliance partners have responded to the consultation on the governance, structure and operation of the National Infrastructure Commission. The consultation document made it clear that the Commission will be required to work closely and collaborate with economic regulators (such as ORR) and relevant public bodies. The consultation document goes on to suggest that relevant public bodies may include sub-national groupings and use Transport for the North as an example of the kind of body they have in mind.

- 6.5. In March 2016 the Chancellor of the Exchequer agreed that the Commission would undertake a detailed review and make recommendations as to how to maximise the potential of the Cambridge-Milton Keynes- Oxford corridor as a single, knowledge intensive cluster that competes on a global stage.
- 6.6. The Commission is required to make an initial report to the Chancellor – most likely in autumn 2016, with a final report submitted in autumn 2017. The identification of the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford corridor in this way is recognition of its significance to the UK economy. The Strategic Alliance provides the opportunity for the partners to engage with the Commission in what will undoubtedly be an important piece of work.

7. Resources

- 7.1. The work on the Strategic Alliance is led by the Programme Director employed on a 0.5FTE basis. The Programme Director's role is now combined with the Director Growth and Strategy at Buckinghamshire County Council (also on a 0.5FTE). The cost of the Programme Director is shared amongst the Alliance partners.
- 7.2. The work of the Strategic Alliance in specific areas – such as on transport – is being undertaken using resources that currently exist across the Strategic Alliance partners. Initiatives such as Transport for the North and Midlands Connect have received some capacity building funding direct from Government once they had been established. The Strategic Alliance partners will look to secure funding from Government as a contribution towards capacity building.
- 7.3. There is explicit provision within the legislative framework for Government to make a grant towards the operational costs of statutory Sub-national Transport Bodies, with an expectation that any such grant would sit alongside local contributions.



Date	Topic	Description and purpose	Contact Officer	Attendees
Transport. Environment & Communities Select Committee				
31 May 2016	Community Transport Pilot Projects	To receive an update on the outcomes of the Community Transport pilot projects and how this will inform future engagement in other areas of the County.	Andrew Bluck, Head of Client and Public Transport	Cabinet Member for Transportation, Martin Tugwell, Programme Director, Andrew Bluck, Head of Client and Public Transport
31 May 2016	HS2 Update	Martin Tett, Leader of the the Council, will provide the Committee with an update on HS2 and the mitigation that has been secured.	Jackie Copcutt, Project Officer	Martin Tett, Leader of the Council, Jackie Copcutt, Project Officer
31 May 2016	Modern Slavery	An overview of the issue of Modern Slavery, the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner's Strategic Plan and the Council's statutory responsibilities in this area.	Martha Edwards, Community Safety Co-ordinator	Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Public Health, Martha Edwards, Community Safety Co-ordinator
31 May 2016	S106 Inquiry - 12 month progress report	For Members to receive a 12 month update to monitor progress towards the Committee Inquiry recommendations.	John Rippon, PAC Service Business Manager	Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment, John Rippon, Head of Growth and Strategy Development

