



Buckinghamshire County Council Select Committee

Transport, Environment and Communities Select Committee

Report to the Transport, Environment and Communities Select Committee

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| Title: | Supported Transport Programme Update |
| Committee date: | Tuesday 31 May 2016 |
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| Cabinet Member sign-off: | Mark Shaw |

Purpose of Agenda Item: Information

To update the Committee on the progress of the Supported Transport Programme – a cross-cutting transformation programme, led by TEE. This work encompasses both supported public transport services (managed by TEE) and client transport services (managed by TEE and commissioned on behalf of CSCL and CHASC).

Background

The Supported Transport Programme (STP) is in large measure a response to the ETL Select Committee's 2014 Report (completed 10th November 2014). The STP was established in the Autumn of 2015 and has three principal strands:

- i. Transition: establishing a combined transport unit, bringing together public and client transport delivery teams. This required the in-sourcing and TUPE transfer of these teams respectively from Ringway Jacobs and Amey, plus the bringing together of both the Fleet Management team and elements of the relevant BCC commissioning team. This was successfully achieved as planned on 1st April 2016.
- ii. Improvement: comprises two main components:



- a. *Business improvement* work-strand: to transform the combined unit into a properly integrated and appropriately enabled (including digital aspects) Integrated Transport Unit as envisaged by the Committee. Now that the new team has bedded in the next wave of change activities will commence shortly, combining formal business process review, Future Shape organisational review (utilising the LGA's DMA methodology), and working with HQ on digital improvements around customer experience and efficiency. Work on this will continue through the Summer and should be complete by the end of 2016.
 - b. *Service delivery improvement*: to identify and implement plans that will relieve the pressure on hard-pressed budgets whilst maintaining appropriate levels of support to key cohorts. These plans relate to client transport and should ensure appropriate local transport provision, particularly for rural/remote communities. This includes a review of opportunities for enhancing community transport services with a view to them providing sustainable services to local residents whilst reducing the reliance on subsidised bus services.
- iii. New Delivery Model: strategic options appraisal work conducted in Spring 2015 concluded that it was likely an alternative approach to the provision, delivery and management of supported transport would be required in order to be fit for purpose and financially viable for the long term.

Summary

Transition: complete.

Improvement: ongoing.

- i. *Creating an Integrated Transport Unit*: on target; medium risk.
Activity represents an additional challenge to the operational delivery team and care is needed to ensure that "business as usual" is not affected. The removal of the management fee associated with the Amey and RJ contracts have already brought about a significant cost reduction for the Council. Officers expect to achieve additional savings in developing an ITU, though these are not expected to be large. However, care will be taken not to seek savings to the detriment of key transport solutions, including safeguarding vulnerable members of our community.
- ii. *Service Delivery Improvements*.
Customer Insight and Potential Pilots: On target; low risk
The customer insight exercise for the 4 representative geographical areas (Buckingham, Chesham, High Wycombe, Waddesdon) is nearing completion. The 950 useful responses are now undergoing analysis which will inform our options

when reviewing subsidised bus services, considering hybrid solutions that meet both public and client transport needs, and identifying key areas and scope for focusing effort to develop the capability and capacity of community transport schemes. In addition to existing successful schemes, such as the Chiltern Dial-A-Ride and Princes Risborough Community Bus, we will be working with Community Impact Bucks and developing schemes to establish best practice guidance, models for success and identifying opportunities for pilot schemes.

Consultation on Mainstream Home to School Transport: medium risk

This work will investigate potential policy changes to remove provision that exceeds national requirements. The consultation will also seek views on charging and a range of other practical measures to secure efficiencies, e.g. fewer bus stops. No associated changes are expected prior to September 2017.

Ongoing route efficiency reviews and activity in support of achieving MTFP savings targets across both public and client transport services: medium risk

New Delivery Model: ongoing

This work relates to an options appraisal of potential business models, including Social Enterprise and Community Interest arrangements, being developed; initial findings are expected for the Autumn.

Hackathon: exercise to free-think the potential for a radically different supported transport function that would represent a quantum shift for BCC. Potentially a multi-layered technology based commercial market place through which transport needs and transport provision can be connected.

Key issues

- Growth in demand in both social care and SEND transport is adding to an already significant financial challenge. Major savings will therefore be required if CSCL, CHASC and TEE are to meet budget targets, plus the further Future Shape savings allocated to the STP.
- Delivering meaningful changes requires careful planning, consultation and engagement.
- Developing capability and capacity in community based transport provision is an important element but is not an easy or quick process; whilst there are good examples of successful and robust schemes, there is also evidence of fragility in the demise of other schemes.

Resource implications

The STP is resourced for the delivery of change, but also depends upon the shared effort of CSCL, CHASC and TEE. The financial challenges are significant and these and associated timelines are currently being reviewed for realism.

Next steps

The STP will continue its work to develop and deliver the means to reduce BCC's financial exposure on supported transport services whilst maintaining statutory and key transport services. The STP has its own governance structure which includes the three key Cabinet Members and will be updating both the One Council Board and Leaders' Advisory Group over the coming months with further recommendations being presented by the Autumn.