

Scrutiny Committee Minutes

Thursday 15 April 2021
Virtual

Present:

Attendee

Cllr Paul Haslam
Cllr Shorrock
Cllr O'Hara
Cllr Laura Crane
Cllr Neil Hughes
Cllr Jones

Cllr Sean Chaytor
County Cllr Matthew Salter
Cllr Mark Walsh
Cllr Tom Furneaux
Cllr Chris Lamb
Cllr Ashley Waters
Cllr Steve Parish
Cllr Manisha Kaushik
Cllr Stephen Fenton

Local Authority

North Yorkshire;
Blackburn with Darwen;
Blackpool;
Cheshire East;
Cumbria;
Greater Manchester Combined
Authority;
Hull;
Lancashire;
North East Combined Authority;
North East Lincolnshire;
Sheffield City Region;
Tees Valley;
Warrington;
West Yorkshire Combined Authority;
York;

Officers in Attendance:

Name

Barry White
Gary Rich
Iain Craven
Tim Foster

Rosemary Lyon
Peter Molyneux
Jack Snape

Deborah Dimock

Job Title

Chief Executive
Democratic Services Officer
Finance Director
Interim Strategy & Programme
Director
Legal and Democratic Services Officer
Major Roads Director
Principal Data and Analytics Modelling
Officer
Solicitor

**Item
No:****Item****1. Welcome & Apologies**

- 1.1 The Chair paid tribute to His Royal Highness Prince Philip before Members observed a minutes silence in respect of His Royal Highness passing.
- 1.2 The Chair welcomed all in attendance and apologies were received from Cllr Stathers, Cllr Davison and Cllr Cooper.

2. Declarations of Interest

- 2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2021 were considered and their accuracy as a correct record confirmed. The minutes were proposed by Cllr Parish and seconded by Cllr Fenton.
- 3.2 Cllr Parish highlighted a typographical error in minute 5.2 stating it should say Microsimulation rather than Micro-imulation.
- 3.3 Cllr Hughes suggested that Cllr Parish may want to clarify his comments in minute 5.2. Cllr Parish stated that the wording 'by stopping services short' should be added to the minute to clarify his comments.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2021 be approved as a true and accurate record subject to the typographical error and the additional clarity provided to minute 5.2 by Cllr Parish be included.

4. Monthly Operating Report

- 4.1 Members received the Monthly Operating report from the Interim Strategy & Programme Director. He explained that the February report received by Members is the most up to date, he then provided an update on activity that has happened since the report publication. He explained that at the March Board the business plan and the budget for the current financial year were approved with the business plan now finalised and published. Members were also informed that the appointment panel has decided on a preferred candidate for Chief Executive. It was explained that this is due to be taken to a special meeting of the TfN Board on 16 April for approval.

- 4.2 Cllr Hughes referred to a number of issues in the report including, the letter sent to the Secretary of State, the Freight Modelling commission, the A66 Dualling project and virtual meetings.

The interim Strategy and Programme Director explained that TfN had yet to receive a response of substance from the Secretary of State on the Integrated Rail Plan following the letter. In relation to the A66 he stated that he would update the Committee. Regarding virtual meetings the Solicitor informed Members that Transport for the North are bound by legislation on this matter. She explained that there are however issues regarding the safety of holding large face to face meetings from June. She further explained that whilst planning is taking place for next steps from May 7 definite decisions could not be made until after the court has come to a decision regarding remote public meetings.

Cllr Chaytor highlighted that the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government has backed the action being taken. He then went on to highlight the benefits to him of virtual meetings, he explained that prior to attending the meeting had been able to attend a meeting of his constituent authority, which he would have been unable to do if meetings were being held face to face. Cllr Chaytor suggested the possibility of hybrid meetings going forward.

- 4.3 Cllr Parish enquired as to whether there are any quick wins left on line speed.

The Interim Strategy and Planning Director explained that a number of places have been identified across the network in the North where services can be sped up as a result of tweaks to the timetable or infrastructure work. A briefing note will be issued to the Committee.

- 4.4 The Chair asked about the Build Back better Bus Strategy and how it may impact on TfN.

The Interim Strategy and Planning Director explained that the role of TfN in relation to bus travel has not been clearly defined. He highlighted the issue of getting the best out of end to end journeys and issues such as active travel, bus travel and local road networks becoming a big part of TfNs work going forward.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

5. Corporate Governance and Scrutiny Function Review

- 5.1 Members received the report from the TfN Solicitor who highlighted the key points in the Annual Governance Statement.

- 5.2 Cllr Hughes requested a distinction between the composition and roles of the Rail North Committee and the Rail North Partnership.

The Solicitor explained that the Rail North Committee is made up of Transport for the North Board Members whilst the Rail North Partnership Board is made up of the officers from the constituent authorities and the Department for Transport.

- 5.3 The Solicitor then highlighted the key points of the Scrutiny review report and the function of the Scrutiny Committee. She proposed that a questionnaire be developed and circulated to Members of the Scrutiny Committee and the Transport for the North Board.
- 5.4 The Chair proposed that a Scrutiny panel be set up to review the function of the committee and that a report be presented to the Committee at the meeting on 4 November.
- 5.5 Members were supportive of the Chair's proposal.
- 5.6 Cllr Chaytor stated that he believed that the current Scrutiny first was the right approach but suggested that consideration needs to be given on how the Committee are going to do things.

Resolved:

- 1) That the Annual Governance Statement be received and recommended for approval.
- 2) That the report on the Scrutiny function be received and a that a consultation of members be undertaken, and a Scrutiny panel convened to review the function of the Committee.
- 3) That a report be brought back to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.

6. Decarbonisation Strategy

- 6.1 Members received the report of the Interim Strategy & Programme Director who provided Members with an overview of the report and the key areas of the Strategy. The Principal Data and Analytics Modelling Officer highlighted the key areas of the report before Members asked questions and made comments on the strategy.
- 6.2 Cllr Hughes congratulated the team on an outstanding report and suggested that at the end of the consultation period the Strategy return to the Scrutiny Committee for further discussion before going to the

Board. He then went on to raise the issues of road pricing, the compatibility with LEP strategies and the fact that the figures in the strategy are based on the Government's original 80% zero carbon, which has now moved on to zero by 2050 and questioned if the strategy would be amended to reflect this.

- 6.3 The Chair raised the issue of co-ordination with other local authorities as well as LEPs. He also suggested that the issue of air quality should also be addressed.
- 6.4 On the issue of Road pricing, the Interim Strategy and Programme Director explained that the broader issue of demand management on the transport network is something that is flagged in the strategy. He explained that this is an important piece of work, however it must be robust and evidence based. He stated that TfN have a role to play in this by bringing people together and facilitating the debate.

On the issue of the assessment of LEPs he explained that this is a standalone piece of work that he been developed since the start of 2021 and has explored the emerging strands around LEPs and clean growth.

- 6.5 The Principal Data and Analytics Modelling Officer explained that the change from 80% to net zero had been built into the strategy. Prior to December 2020 the TfN trajectory was always more ambitious than the National trajectory and whilst it still remains more ambitions the gap has narrowed.

On the issue of air pollution he explained that there has been no additional modelling yet but this is something that they hope to do going forward. He explained that he believes that local authorities should lead on this issue with TfN playing into it.

- 6.6 Cllr Fenton suggested that communication could be sent to Scrutiny Committees once the consultation goes out, whilst the Chair suggested that the strategy be sent to all the Scrutiny Committees in the North before going out to public consultation. It was also suggested that it should be circulated around the LEPs as well as the Yorkshire and Humber Climate Commission.
- 6.7 The Chair informed Members that if possible the next meeting should be face to face in either Manchester or Leeds and that Members would be advised of the situation as soon as details are known.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

7. Exclusion of Press & Public

Resolved: That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Item 8 on the grounds that

- (1) It is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during such item(s), confidential information as defined in S100A(2) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) would be disclosed to them in breach of the obligation of confidence; and/or
- (2) it / they involve(s) the likely disclosure of exempt information as set out in the Paragraphs [where necessary listed below] of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

8. Part 2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- 8.1 The private minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2021 were considered and their accuracy as a correct record confirmed. The minutes were proposed by Cllr Haslam and seconded by Cllr Fenton.

Resolved:

That the private minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2021 be approved as a true and accurate record.