
Scrutiny Committee Minutes

**Wednesday 08 July 2020
MS Teams**

Present:

Attendee

Cllr Paul Haslam
Cllr Jim Shorrocks
Cllr Martin Mitchell
Cllr Laura Crane
Cllr Andrew Cooper
Cllr Neil Hughes
Cllr Roger Jones

Cllr Matthew Salter
Cllr John Davison
Cllr Steve Parish
Cllr Kim Groves

Local Authority

North Yorkshire;
Blackburn with Darwen;
Blackpool;
Cheshire East;
Cheshire West & Chester;
Cumbria;
Greater Manchester Combined
Authority;
Lancashire;
North Lincolnshire;
Warrington;
West Yorkshire Combined Authority;

Officers in Attendance:

Name

Gary Rich
Iain Craven
Julie Openshaw
Rosemary Lyon
Peter Molyneux
Owen Wilson
Simon McGlone
Deborah Dimock

Job Title

Democratic Services Officer
Finance Director
Head of Legal
Legal and Democratic Services Officer
Major Roads Director
Major Roads Strategy Manager
Senior Planning and Strategy Officer
Solicitor

Item No: Item

1. Welcome & Apologies

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed all in attendance and informed Members that the meeting is being streamed live.
- 1.2 Apologies were received from Cllr Johnson and Cllr Packard
- 1.3 The Chair explained that Members had raised with him the issue of the size of the paper packs and whether it would be possible if paper copies could be circulated as it is difficult to see both the papers and the

meeting screen. The Chair recommended Members should speak to their Local Authorities to see if a solution can be found.

The Legal Officer explained that it was TfN policy not to print paper packs for Members.

- 1.4 The Chair further explained to Members that the papers pack for the next meeting on 26 August will be distributed through the Modern.Gov platform and more information will be circulated to Members as to how they will be able to access them.

- 1.5 Cllr Hughes raised the issue as to when meetings may return to being face to face.

The Legal Officer explained that this is under continuous review but there are currently no plans to open the TfN offices or return to formal face to face meetings any time soon.

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 14 May 2020 were considered and their accuracy as a correct record confirmed.

- 3.2 Cllr Hughes requested clarification on minute 4.2. He asked if it was the case that services had been suspended.

He also looked to clarify his point in minute 5.6 and requested that the minute should include the word 'their' and should now read "Cllr Hughes asked if there was any evidence that the RTA are looking at encouraging *their* members to change their vehicles to those that are more environmentally friendly.

- 3.3 Subject to the clarification being included the minutes were proposed by Cllr Jones and seconded by Cllr Salter.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 May be approved as a true and accurate record subject to the inclusion of the clarifications.

4. Annual Governance Statement

- 4.1 The Chair explained that this item has already been discussed at the Audit and Governance Committee.

He emphasised the difference that the Scrutiny Committee can make and highlighted the fact that a Committee recommendation with regards to the Membership of the TfN Partnership Board had been undertaken.

- 4.2 Members received the annual Governance Statement from the Legal Services Officer who outlined the highlights of the report.
- 4.3 Cllr Hughes questioned when Transport for the North will begin to consider actions beyond 2050.

The Solicitor explained that Transport for the North's current strategy covers up to 2050. However, a rolling programme of improvements has been developed which is being built upon.

She explained that as the organisation moves beyond the current framework of 2020 to 2050, it is likely that there will be a rolling programme going forward, however, before this there needs to be a complete review of the current Strategic Transport Plan with a full consultation on the proposals in the plan.

The Finance Director added that the business planning process which commences in September will inform the next Strategic Transport Plan.

- 4.4 The Solicitor explained that Transport for the North's current strategy is, up to 2050. However, a rolling programme of improvements has been developed which is being built upon.

She explained that as the organization moves beyond the current framework of 2020 to 2050, it is likely that there will be a rolling programme going forward, however, before this there needs to be a complete review of the current Strategic Transport Plan with a full consultation on the proposals in the plan.

The Finance Director added that the business planning process which commences in September which will inform the next Strategic Transport Plan.

- 4.5 The Chair suggested that there should be reference to achieving the Government's carbon net zero policy by 2050.

The Legal Services Officer explained that as part of the Northern Charter a Decarbonisation Strategy is being developed which will assist in reaching this target.

Resolved:

- 1) That the report be noted
- 2) That the Scrutiny Committee recommends the Annual Statement to the Transport for the North Board.

5. Financial Outturn 2019/20

- 5.1 Members received the report from the Director of Finance which was taken as read. The Finance Director then highlighted the key areas of his report before inviting Members for comments and questions.

The Finance Director explained that the final outturn for 2019/20 was £47 million against the original budget, excluding programme contingencies, of £79 million. The main variance coming arose as a result of the cancellation of Phase 3 of the IST Programme.

- 5.2 Cllr Davison queried the use of the term 'vacancy management' and whether it was necessary due to the underspend.

The Finance Director explained that the term was used in relation to areas of the business where future funding is uncertain.

He also highlighted the fact that Transport for the North budget is resourced from a series of ring fenced funding allocations, meaning that underspends in one programme cannot be used to support expenditure in another.

The Finance Director said he would look into this question further and return to Cllr Davison.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

6. Monthly Operating Report

- 6.1 Members received the Monthly Operating report who were then able to ask questions and make comments.

- 6.2 Cllr Jones raised the issue of rail congestion in and around Manchester. He highlighted that the Prime Minister announced a £10 million allocation for development work in trying to reduce the bottleneck on the rail in the Manchester area. He wondered if schemes dealing with this issue could be promoted.

- 6.3 Cllr Hughes asked a number of questions relating to NPR and the electrification of the Transpennine route.

On the issue of the Network Phasing Strategy the NPR Director explained that four strategies would be being put forward for consideration to build NPR with a preferred strategy being put forward as a recommendation from Transport for the North. This report will go to the Transport for the

North Board in September and will be discussed at Scrutiny prior to this. The report will look at how NPR is built as a network.

Addressing the of the Eastern leg the NPR Director stated that the Eastern leg of the NPR network is definitely going ahead. The Y is being built; the Western leg first followed by the Eastern leg.

Regarding the issue of partial electrification the NPR director stated that there is now a further option being discussed on Trans Pennine upgrade which will allow for full electrification of that route.

On NPR, we will be looking to carry on the electrification from East of Hull station out to Hull and on the other side in Manchester. Electrified to Manchester and the new line out to Liverpool would be fully electrified. The network will therefore be fully electrified from Liverpool to Hull and from Liverpool to Newcastle via Leeds. Manchester for Sheffield is also being considered for electrification and this is being develop.

In relation to the assessment of capacity and connectivity issues and the potential for future growth on all rail services across the North that Cllr Hughes asked about, the Finance Director explained that a report on this is going to the Rail North Committee on 14 July and stated that subject to the agreement of the Strategic Rail Director the report could be shared with the Scrutiny Committee.

6.4 Cllr Salter requested further information about the Transpennine Route Upgrade (TRU)

The Major Road Director explained that the work on the Strategic Outline Business Case for the Transpennine Tunnel has now been completed and will be considered by the Department of Transport's Investments Programmes and Delivery Committee on 20 July with an update on the matter anticipated before the end of the year.

In relation as to how this work relates to TRU the Major Roads Director explained that the projects are working towards different travel markets and don't impact on each other, although work is taking place to try and ensure that they complement each other.

The Finance Director stated that he would get someone from the Strategic Rail Team to provide an update Cllr Salter on the risks associated with TRU.

6.5 Cllr Davison raised the issue of shovel ready projects and if TfN had been able to put any forward.

The Major Roads Director explained that there would be more information on the shovel ready projects in the Economic Recovery report. He further explained that there is a report going to Board at the end of July which will have more detail and will identify which schemes

can be brought forward from the investment programme as well as identifying schemes that will be better devolved to Local Transport Authorities. He also emphasised that TfN will be supporting bids from partners for local investment.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

7. Economic Recovery Plan

- 7.1 The report and presentation of the Major Roads Strategy Manager was received by Members. He pulled out key areas within his report and presentation.

Members were informed that a holding response has been received from the Secretary of State which will be discussed with Member at the TfN Board.

Members were informed that the plan had the support of Officers from across the North and that their input had been very helpful.

- 7.2 Cllr Hughes raised the issue of road dualling and explained that he would not want TfN as a body to be supportive of extensive road dualling which leads to increased traffic on the roads and doesn't help with decarbonization, when public transport is far more environmentally friendly.
- 7.3 Responding to Cllr Hughes the Major Roads Strategy Manager explained that major road upgrades can not be promoted without evidence showing that they are really needed. He further explained that prior to the pandemic 77% of all miles travelled in the north were by highway and in excess of 90% of miles was by freight on the highways.

It was explained that TfN are aware of the need to promote more active travel for local journeys and encourage greater use of public transport. Referring to the upgrade of the A66 the Major Roads Strategy Manager stated that the project is supported by partners as well as TfN and is also a key freight route across the North.

Cllr Hughes also raised the issue of how TfN would support local funding bids following the government announcement on reopening certain rail routes.

In response to the rail reopenings, the Major Roads Strategy Manager explained that all proposals would be looked at.

- 7.4 The Chair stated that he believed that it is important that solutions are tailored that are appropriate for each area.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

8. Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED: That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business because it is likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, there will be disclosure of confidential information as defined in Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and/or exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)

9. Strategic Development Corridors Phase 2 Qualitative Programme

- 9.1 The report and presentation of the Major Roads Strategy Manager was received by Members, who were invited to make comments and ask questions.

Resolved:

That the report and presentation of the Major Roads Strategy Manager be noted.