

Time commenced 6.00 pm
Time finished 8.45 pm

**PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
22 SEPTEMBER 2008**

Present: Councillor Poulter (in the Chair)
Councillors Banwait, Batey, Harwood, Holmes, Lowe and Repton

In attendance: Councillors Allen, Care and Willoughby

16/08 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

17/08 Late Items Introduced by the Chair

A report was circulated regarding the away day to be considered with Minute 28/08

18/08 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Harwood declared a personal interest in Minute 26/08 as he had a concessionary travel pass.

Councillor Lowe declared a personal interest in Minute 26/08 as he had a concessionary travel pass.

19/08 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 July 2008 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

20/08 Call-In

There were no items for Call-in.

The supporting information in relation to the call-in process was noted by the Commission.

21/08 Responses of the Council Cabinet to any reports of the Commission

The Commission noted the response of the Council Cabinet to the report of the Commission on Highways and Footways Maintenance Review. A further response was expected in 2-3 months.

Resolved to note the response.

Items for Discussion

22/08 Street Lighting – roles and accountabilities

The Commission met with Steve Conway – Eon Central Networks, Tiz Gibson and Nick Perry – Balfour Beatty and John Edgar – Maintenance Manager, Street Lighting to consider the roles and accountabilities of the implementation of the Street Lighting PFI. It was reported that the first twelve months of the implementation had experienced some teething problems, especially with regard to the time taken to joint new lighting columns. It was noted that there had been little control over the time taken to joint the columns, and this had resulted in open holes being left in the road for a considerable amount of time. From March, further information had been recorded to try gain a little more control over the process. The process had now been tightened and the holes were jointed in a shorter time, so it was hoped that this would provide less disruption for residents.

It was reported that Balfour Beatty were well within their contractual obligations (25 days) for repairing faults, but they were doing what they could to reduce this time. The Commission expressed concern that the 25 day limit was not consistent with the 15 day limit expressed in the performance indicators, and queried whether the performance indicator was realistic, especially when it was considered that from the public point of view a 25 day limit was too long. The Commission were asked to remember that the figures they were considering were averages, and that most faults were fixed within one week. Larger problems were escalated to the contracts manager to try and speed up a response time. The Commission agreed it would be important to receive a breakdown of exact times taken to repair faults.

The Commission also raised concerns over the siting of poles. It was reported that there were standards as to where poles could go, depending on the speed of the road, the lighting standard required for the road and the style of building on it. Once the designers had completed the design stage, site visits were made to check where the pole could go. Leaflets and letters were sent to the surrounding houses informing them of consultation and wherever possible views of the residents were taken into consideration. However, it was reported that there were also minimum and maximum standards for spacing between columns and so they were designed to the minimum standards to allow a little flexibility. Some residents claimed that they were planning to move their driveway as a reason why they could not have a column by their house. It was noted that they could only use this as a reason to move columns when planning permission was in progress. Payment was not made until a whole street had been completed, and so it was in the interests of Balfour Beatty to get the work completed as quickly as possible.

The Commission highlighted concerns that residents were not informed about the proper process to raise concerns and complaints about the street lighting. It was noted that the letters sent to residents did not provide a process map for complaints and it was not clear what residents could do to escalate their complaints further. It was reported that a flow chart could be provided which mapped the complaints process, and this could be circulated to Members and constituents. Members felt it would also be important for the team to visit Neighbourhood Forums prior to

installation in an area to ensure residents felt engaged with the process and that proper consultation could be carried out.

Resolved:

- 1. To receive a breakdown of the BVP indicators on times taken to repair faults in less than 10 days, 10-15 days, 15-20 days and over 20 days, within the next 3-6 months, and to monitor them for a further 6 months**
- 2. To receive a flow chart mapping the complaints process and to circulate this**
- 3. For the street lighting team to visit Neighbourhood Forums prior to embarking on work in an area to ensure full consultation was undertaken**
- 4. To receive figures of complaints made about Street Lighting by area.**

23/08 Duffield Road Bus Lane

The Commission received a request under OS 16 from Councillors Willoughby, Grimadell and Webb to reconsider the Duffield Road Bus Lane. Councillor Willoughby attended the meeting to address the Commission. Councillor Willoughby felt that the initial report had some gaps in the consultation, as not all road users' views had been taken into consideration. It was also felt that there were inconsistencies in the report regarding the number of accidents reported and the suggested support for the measures from petitions and bus companies. Councillor Willoughby felt that some legitimate concerns had not been taken into consideration, including the issues of parking and driveways, and that legitimate alternatives had also not been considered.

The Commission agreed that, as three members of the Council had requested a review, it would be important to respond to this, and it could be accommodated within the work programme.

Resolved to review the Duffield Road bus lane decision, either at the next scheduled commission meeting or at a special meeting of the commission.

24/08 Home-to-School Transport: Update

The Commission received an update on the new home to school transport scheme. The current service provided 1820 seats over 7 schools. 47% of these had now been allocated, although school by school take up had been varied. Applications were still being received, and it was planned to review the numbers once they had stabilised. It was reported that there had been some delay in sending out passes, but the turnaround time was now 2-3 days.

The Commission raised concerns that the current level of uptake was unsustainable, and queried whether it was worth considering a return to the pay-as-you-go scheme. It was reported that the planned review would allow the team to consider the figures and see if there were patterns which would allow them to combine services. It was

noted that a return to the previous scheme would be likely to increase costs, rather than help achieve the required 10% efficiency savings, which had been the reason for devising the new policy.

The Commission felt that parents may have looked at alternative ways of getting their children to school, and that it would be important to receive information on current methods of transport. It would be important to see how this fitted in with the Council's policy of encouraging pupils to use buses, cycling and walking as methods to travel to school. Several members asked for the current review of post-September service provision to be brought forward to October half term. Councillor Allen cautioned against a premature review, as it was felt that the scheme needed a full term to run to see the full extent of the uptake. It was noted that very few pupils were entitled to a free bus service, and as all school buses were subsidised, any review needed to take this into account. It should also consider how this fitted in with individual school travel plans and standard bus routes.

Resolved:

- 1. To request that the review of school transport be brought forward so that the results could be analysed during October half term**
- 2. To receive an update at the November meeting**
- 3. To receive further information on how children were currently travelling to school**

25/08 Regional Spatial Strategy – Proposed Changes

The Commission considered a report from the Corporate Director – Regeneration and Community on the response to the East Midlands Regional Plan (Regional Spatial Strategy) – Secretary Of State's Proposed Changes. Changes had been made to the plan as a result of the recommendations received and the consultation period would end on 17 October 2008.

Members expressed concern about the ambitious plans for apartment accommodation. It was felt that there should be more family accommodation built, and a higher proportion of renewable energy sourced buildings. It was reported that housing policies elsewhere would provide around 30% affordable housing, and that this would be defined in the Local Development Framework. It would be possible to ask for a higher target for renewable energy homes, but viability would need to be demonstrated first.

The Commission were disappointed to note the delays to the A38 junction improvements to 2016, as they felt the traffic situation was intolerable. It was agreed that strong representations should be made regarding this.

Resolved

- 1. To note the key changes made by the Secretary of State to the Regional Spatial Strategy and in particular the concern in paragraph 2.2 regarding the phasing of the housing provision.**

- 2. To record the Commissions' concern regarding the delays in the A38 junction improvements, and for strong representations to be made regarding this issue in the response.**

26/08 The Concessionary Travel Scheme for Elderly and Disabled People

The Commission considered a report from the Corporate Director – Regeneration and Community on the Concessionary Travel Scheme for Elderly and Disabled People. The English National Concessionary Travel Scheme, ENCTS, for people aged over 60 and certain disabled people was introduced in April 2008. This replaced the local Derby/Derbyshire Gold Card scheme which had been in operation for a number of years. The Regeneration and Community Department are now seeking comments from stakeholders following the first 5 months of the new scheme's implementation. Members had already received a paper explaining the development of the concessionary fares scheme in Derby over the last 25 years and the impact of the new national scheme introduced in April.

Some concerns were expressed about the growing cost of the scheme and the affect of operator appeals. The main issue however was the removal of free travel before 9.30am for disabled people and after 11pm for all card holders. However there was no real consensus on what if any additional concessions should be given. Some members wanted free travel after 11pm (likely to cost circa £80k) whilst some thought free travel before 9.30am was more important (but considerably more expensive), others just wanted the system to stay as it was and be given time to bed down. There was however general agreement that changes had to be agreed through the Derbyshire group of authorities. If extra concessions were offered, the money to pay for it would need to come from elsewhere in the council's already stretched budgets, including the possible risk to the continued funding of the recently created routes subsidised under the Transport Act 1985. It was agreed that the Commission would receive an update in April on the first year of the national scheme's operation.

Resolved:

- 1. To note the report**
- 2. To receive an update in April on the first year of the scheme's operation**

27/08 Performance Monitoring

The Commission considered a report on Performance Monitoring 2008-11. N1 047 and NI 178 were the two national indicators relating to the Commission that were included in Derby's LAA agreement, and it was agreed to receive updates on these as regular items for information.

Resolved to note the update and receive the 2 LAA indicators as regular items for information

28/08 Remit and Work Programme

The Commission considered their work programme for the forthcoming municipal year. It was reported that most of the Commission had attended an away day on 18 September, also attended by a large number of resident representatives on the Neighbourhood Boards. At the conclusion Members had met to see if there was a consensus about whether a topic review should be conducted on:

- Neighbourhood Working and Highways and transportation issues or
- Public satisfaction with the planning and building control function

It was agreed to focus on the interface between Neighbourhood Working and highways and transportation issues. The Corporate Director of Regeneration and Community had concurred with this suggestion. Regarding the planning issues, Jonathan Guest had said that he felt his officers could respond seeking to take account of the points raised at the awayday, though this is governed by the law and resources.

The Chair said that there was a need for careful scoping of the topic review but also to make progress and suggested a sub-group be appointed to progress the arrangements..

Resolved:

- 1. To review the interface between Neighbourhood Working and Highways and Transportation**
- 2. To delegate Councillors Poulter, Repton and Batey to undertake a scoping exercise to enable the review to commence in the near future.**

29/08 Retrospective Scrutiny

No items were identified

30/08 Council Cabinet Forward Plan

The Commission considered the items on the Forward Plan relating to their portfolio. It was noted that the earliest date for decisions was 28 October 2008, and so if the Commission had a particular interest in any item it would be necessary to hold a special meeting. It was noted that there would be opportunities to comment on the Local Development Framework in November.

Resolved to note the report

31/08 Matters referred to the Commission by Council Cabinet

There were no items.

MINUTES END