

ITEM 4

Time commenced 6.00pm
Time finished 8.20pm

PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION 9 MARCH 2010

Present: Councillor Poulter, in the Chair
Councillors Harwood, Lowe, Rawson and Repton

100/09 Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were received.

101/09 Late Items Introduced by the Chair

There were no late items.

103/09 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

104/09 Minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on 28 January 2010 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

105/09 Call-in

There were no items for call-in.

106/09 Councillor Call for Action

There were no items.

107/09 Responses of the Council Cabinet to any reports of the Commission

Minute 169/09 – 2010/11 Highways and Transport Work Programme

The Commission a) noted the response of the Council Cabinet and b) recognised the improvements made to the process and the increased influence of the Neighbourhood Boards' priorities in the finalised programme.

Minute 183/09 – Recommendations for the Overview and Scrutiny Commissions on the draft Revenue and Capital Budgets 2010/11 – 2012/13

The Commission noted the response of the Council Cabinet and commented that it was regrettable that only one recommendation of the Planning and Transportation Commission was not adopted in the Council's Budget.

Items for Discussion

108/09 Highways and Footways: a) Derbyroads, b) Highways Asset Management Plan – Update

Derbyroads Contract

The Commission received a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Community Services providing an update on the performance of Carillion in their delivery of the contract.

Stewart Corbett, Highways Contract Manager, reported to the meeting that steps have been taken to improve performance. The Highways works programme now runs over a two year period. This should enable officers to better plan budgets and align resources. The Chair asked if this would delay projects. The Highways Contract Manager stated that this approach would enable a more even flow of resources. Projects will be designed in the first year and built in the second. The current mentality in local government is to enact schemes once funding has been secured, however, it is often Winter by the time funding is in place and works cannot begin during periods of poor weather.

The Highways Contract Manager informed the Commission that the key performance indicators have been reviewed. They are now more visible to the public and are organised to drive performance. Councillor Rawson asked if the quality reviewer post is going to be reviewed. The Highways Contract Manager stated that officers must be sure that the quality of works is up to the required standard before that post is removed.

The Highways Contract Manager informed Members that the Council has joined the Midlands Highways Alliance. This is a group of Highways authorities who meet to establish best practice and drive down costs across the region.

The Chair asked if payment mechanisms are impacting on performance. The Highways Contract Manager stated that this is not a big issue at present. Productivity is much better than it has been. The Chair noted the officer's comments but stated that capacity appears to have dropped and the service had registered an underspend this year. The Highways Contract Manager informed the Commission that the number of operatives working in the maintenance gangs has increased from 20 to 30 employees.

John Hansed, Head of Highways, informed the Commission that following the six month inspection the current works programme will proceed slower than timetabled. He estimated that it will probably take two months to get Derby's road network back up to the original background level of deterioration. The Chair asked if the current deterioration to the road network was due to mistakes by the Council or the contractor or the materials that have been used. John Hansed, Head of Highways,

stated that the increase in the deterioration to the road network was because of poor weather and a two month review will establish what works need to be done.

Creation of a Highways Asset Management Plan

Martin Follows, Highways Project Manager, informed the Commission that as part of the Local Transport Plan, Highway Authorities are now required to produce highway asset management plans. This has been a slowly evolving process nationally over the last few years and the authority is still in a position where there is not any definitive national guidance on their content. They are complex in nature and require considerable input. The Council have engaged a consultant called EXP to assist it in this work. The Director of EXP is one of the most authoritative and respected voices on Highways Asset Management Plans (HAMP(s)) in this country, having worked in Australia and New Zealand where HAMPs have been in operation for several years.

At present the Plan is being prepared to include the following highway assets:

- Carriageways
- Footways and cycle ways
- Structures
- Drainage
- Traffic Signals
- Pedestrian signals
- Electronic systems
- Arboricultural
- Street Lighting
- Safety Barriers
- Land

Some early data is now emerging from this HAMP development. A figure has now been calculated for the Gross Replacement value of the highway asset and this comes to £1,035,690,000.

The capital spend on planned maintenance within the Local Transport Plan over the last three years has been steadily increasing with year-on-year figures of £1,258,000, £1,770,000 and £2,564,000. The amount available in the 2010/11 Plan is £2,930,000. Although the amount is increasing it can be seen that there is still a substantial gap between actual and required funding levels just to “stand still”. If highway conditions are to improve the gap obviously becomes greater still.

The Chair asked if HAMPs are a legal requirement and how much a document such as this costs to produce. The Highways Project Manager stated that it forms a part of the Third Local Transport Plan and has so far cost £38,500 in consultant’s fees. Additional work towards the document is done by the asset owners during the working day. The Chair asked how a 20 year forecast will help the Council plan its budgets as there will be changes to the pressures facing the authority in this time frame.

Resolved to note the report.

109/09 Member and Neighbourhood Board Involvement in Planning Obligations

The Commission received a report of the Director of Regeneration and Community on Member and Neighbourhood Board involvement in planning obligations.

Councillor Repton welcomed the scheme and stated that for this to work the Neighbourhood Managers need to be fully trained on the allocation of Section 106 funding.

The Chair stated that officers need to get away from agreeing heads of terms and then moving these guidelines on to councillors. He suggested that developers should be made aware at the pre-application advice stage of any neighbourhood priorities that may apply to this site.

Councillor Rawson expressed concern that the limited scope of priorities set by neighbourhood boards would not necessarily be flexible enough to incorporate Section 106 funding which must be spent on specific improvements.

Resolved to endorse the new procedure.

110/09 Darley Abbey Regeneration Plan

This report was withdrawn from the agenda.

111/09 Site Visit to the Bus Station – 10 February 2010

The Commission considered a report summarising their findings and recommendations following a visit to the new bus station on 10 February 2010. Councillors Poulter, Lowe, Rawson and Harwood visited the bus station to identify any problem areas prior to the opening of the facility.

It was reported that the previous evening, 8 March, a pipe in the plant room had burst and leaked throughout the office accommodation, customer toilets and client area. Industrial dehumidifiers have been deployed in the building and once it has dried out contractors will conduct a thorough assessment of the potential damage. It is hoped that this setback will not affect the opening schedule for the bus station.

Resolved:

- A. To note the update of the situation at the bus station;**
- B. To note the information officers intend to distribute to the public in relation to the changes to the bus routes as well as pick up and drop off points and to express the need for flexibility to cope with issues as they arise;**
- C. To note the initial operating schedule of 114 departures per hour and to recommend that this is reviewed, after an initial settling down period, and**

look to increase the usage of the station towards the maximum operating capacity of 140 departures per hour;

- D. The Commission recommends the Cabinet Member negotiates with bus companies with a view of securing at least one service per hour passing through the new Bus Station as the Commission feels there is a public appetite for this service;
- E. To note that the signage has been improved and to request a more expansive explanation be provided to the Commission;
- F. i) To note the reported potential issues that may arise by locating a taxi rank within the bus station and ii) to monitor the situation and, after an appropriate time period, review possible alternatives;
- G. The Commission are unhappy with the developer's attitude regarding reasonable requests of the Council, as tenant of the Bus Station, over:
- Installing small fittings to enable amenities to be provided
 - Steps to improve the visual appearance of the retail space pending its full commercial occupation.
- H. To note the actions in hand to deal with an unattractive triangle of land near the Morledge;
- I. To note the explanation as to why real time information will not be available when the bus station opens and recommend that this be resolved as soon as practicable; and
- J. To recommend that the 18/19 on-street bus shelters be quickly located to locations across the city based on i) length of time on the list and ii) volume of passengers.
- K. The Commission revisit the site close to the end of April as a further stage of this review.

112/09 Annual Overview and Scrutiny Members Satisfaction Survey

Resolved to note the survey form attached to the agenda.

113/09 Matters referred to the Commission by Council Cabinet

There were no items referred to the Commission by the Council Cabinet.

114/09 Retrospective Scrutiny

There were no items identified.

115/09 Council Cabinet Forward Plan

There were no items identified.

MINUTES END