

**Environmental & Community Services Select Committee**

19 November 2014 – At a meeting of the Select Committee held at 10.30 am at County Hall, Chichester.

Present:

Mr Circus	Mr M Jones	Mr S Oakley
Dr Dennis	Mr J Rogers (V-Ch)	Mr Whittington
Mr Barrett-Miles	Mr R Oakley	

Apologies were received from Mrs Brunsdon; Mrs Phillips; Mr G Jones and Mr Tyler (Ch).

In attendance:

Mr Montyn (Cabinet Member for Highways & Transport)

**Declarations of Interest**

104. In accordance with the Member's Register of Interest, the following personal interest was declared:

- Dr Dennis as a rail season ticket holder between Horsham and London in relation to the Network Rail Consultation

**Minutes**

105. Resolved – That the minutes of the Environmental & Community Services Select Committee meeting held on 18 September 2014 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

**Urgent Matters**

106. None

**County Council response to the Network Rail Draft Sussex Area Route Study Consultation**

107. The Assistant Planner gave a presentation outlining the key features of the Route Study consultation (copy appended to signed minutes).

- o The main focus was on forecast demand for the Brighton mainline and improvements in performance and capacity for journeys to and from London.
- o Projected employment growth in central London was the key driver for this, rather than a possible second runway at Gatwick Airport.
- o The presentation also highlighted the challenges with providing more capacity into London and arguments about the need to invest in rail services to support economic uplift across the South East region.
- o Options for the Arundel Chord to provide a Brighton Mainline diversionary route and connectivity improvement were also considered in the Study, however this generated a low cost/benefit score.
- o A limited stop fast service on the West Coastway line was also proposed to encourage regional connectivity and enhance economic growth.

108. The Assistant Planner outlined the key areas of emphasis for the proposed response by the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, as follows:

- Support for enhancements to the Brighton Mainline
- Emphasis upon a focus away from London regarding economic growth and regeneration.
- Support for investigation of other infrastructure measures aside from the Arundel Chord to improve journey times on the West Coastway and Arun Valley Line lines.
- A request for further information regarding a limited stop West Coastway service.
- Emphasise the importance of work to remove level crossings.

109. Members made a number of comments, including those that follow. They:

- Queried the impact of outcomes from Control Period (CP) 5 and how these had informed CP6 – The Assistant Planner responded that CP5 had only recently started and it was therefore too early to have informed future proposals. However, all schemes in CP4, including the additional platform for Gatwick Airport station had been completed and were now being utilised, and the impacts on demand had informed CP5 and CP6.
- Expressed concern that rolling stock was inadequate for current demand, even in off-peak services, particularly on the Brighton Mainline. The Assistant Planner stated that the morning peak was the busiest period on the network and that there were limits to the number of train paths and carriage lengths. He added that evening services were often shortened to enable stock maintenance and that this issue had previously been picked up with operators, although it would be possible to raise it again.
- Expressed concern that without adequate investment in level crossing improvements, enhancements to infrastructure in surrounding roads would be of limited value – The Assistant Planner responded that crossings were a gap within the study and required more detailed information as to Network Rail's plans and that the County Council was seeking closer collaboration with Network Rail to remove crossings. The Policy Manager added that Network Rail appeared to perceive level crossings as largely a highways matter and that it was for the County Council to consider alternative approaches to alleviate pinch-points at crossings.
- Agreed that the study did not adequately address the issue of station parking and emphasised that the knock-on implications for the County Council of increased on-road parking should be highlighted in the response.
- Doubted that the capacity of the Brighton Mainline could realistically be expanded to meet projected growth in commuter demand – The Assistant Planner responded that the County Council's response recognised that the scope for further capacity increases on the Brighton Mainline was limited and supported investment in routes away from London to improve regional connectivity
- Suggested that differential pricing, as a tool to manage peak demand over a longer time-period, be considered for inclusion in the draft response.
- Suggested that greater use of the Dorking line should be considered for re-routing some Arun Valley Line trains, to alleviate pressure on the Brighton Mainline. The Assistant Planner responded that the rail industry have stated

that it was unlikely this would lead to reduced service times owing to congestion of other services at the London end of the Dorking line.

- Expressed concern regarding the proposed limited-stopping service on the West Coastway as fast trains used more overall capacity and would lengthen level crossing delays, owing to their speed. Inconsistent service reliability would also have implications for other services on a very busy line. Members expressed a preference for a focus on ensuring service regularity and suggested that Reading-Gatwick services should have priority for enhancements. – The Assistant Planner acknowledged the importance of performance issues and stated that the study included potential infrastructure improvements for signalling and passing trains. He emphasised that the County Council's response would request further information on this element of the consultation to have a better understanding of the implications for all stations.
- Raised a number of queries regarding potential additional stations in the North Horsham area, particularly in relation to capacity issues and ongoing residential development. – The Policy Manager responded that the County Council was only able to respond to the information presented by Network Rail and whilst the Council was aware of several developer proposals, these were not included in the consultation. He added that once further information on the proposals had been fully considered they would be discussed at a future meeting of the Select Committee, prior to a Cabinet Member decision.
- Felt that the draft response was not robust enough on improvements outside of the Brighton Mainline and that it should have closer alignment to the County Council's Economic strategy and emphasise economic development on the coastal strip and at Crawley and employment creation at a regional level.
- Stressed the need for Barnham to be included in any limited-stop Coastway service as a crucial interchange on the network.

110. Resolved – That the Committee agrees that its response to the Cabinet Member:

- Highlights the connectivity, congestion and safety issues associated with level crossings
- Stresses the need for sufficient station parking provision
- Identifies the potential for the Horsham/Dorking line to help alleviate certain capacity issues on the Brighton Mainline
- In line with the County Council's economic strategy, is made more robust and takes better account of our strategy and supports regional growth.
- Inserts the words 'at least' into line 5, para 2.4.2
- Includes mention of Barnham in any proposed route for a limited-stop Coastway service (para 2.6.2).
- Stresses the need to balance reliability and capacity with increased speed.

### **Mineral Local Plan Task and Finish Group Update**

111. The Chairman of the Task and Finish Group provided members with a verbal update as to current progress of the Group (copy appended to signed minutes).

112. Members noted the update.

### **Business Planning Group Report**

113. The Committee considered a report by the Chairman of the Business Planning Group (copy appended to the signed minutes).

114. Resolved – That the Committee endorses the contents of the report and particularly the revised Work Programme and that governance arrangements for the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) be added to the items for future meetings.

**Requests for Call-in**

115. Members noted the outcome of the call-in request on the Station Square Bognor Regis – Footway decision (HT09 14/15).

**Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

116. The Committee considered extracts from the Forward Plan for December 2014 – March 2015, including the Leader's portfolio, tabled at the meeting (copy appended to the signed minutes).

117. The Strategic Manager – Economy provided members with an overview of the process for leveraging the Local Growth Funding, held by the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership (Leader, December 2014). He stated that an initial £5m was required to develop business cases for the proposals in order to access the Funding. There would be further funding required to develop the full range of proposals identified in the strategic Economic Plan. Members recognised the benefits of adopting the proposed approach.

118. Resolved – That the Committee notes the Forward Plan.

**Date of Next Meeting**

119. The next scheduled meeting of the Environmental & Community Services Select Committee will be on 14 January 2015 at 10.30 at County Hall, Chichester.

The meeting ended at 12.35

Chairman.