

Growth & Infrastructure Scrutiny Committee

10 March 2010

Local Transport Plan 3

The Growth & Infrastructure Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 10 March 2010 considered a report of the Local Transport Plan 3 Scrutiny Working Group and the report to Cabinet entitled Local Transport Plan 2011-2030 Draft Policies. On the suggestion of the Chairman it was agreed that the following points and queries raised during discussion be referred to the Cabinet Member for Growth & Infrastructure.

- (A) Report of the Local Transport Plan 3 Scrutiny Working Group
- (1) Committee Members queried how the Council would handle expectation in the towns and villages created by the consultation on the long list. The Cabinet Member for Growth & Infrastructure and officers acknowledged the importance of managing expectations, particularly in the current financial climate. To this end prioritisation criteria had been set up in a very robust way. The LTP 3 was a very long term programme and it was important to find out people's aspirations. There was general recognition that the process of consultation on the long list of schemes had been valuable. It would be important to be very clear about the status of projects going forward and vital that people were kept informed.
 - (2) Councillor Nimmo-Smith asked how the policy review would match with the local expectations generated by the scheme level planning. In the light of the document Councillor Strangwood queried where Members could best put their hopes for schemes important to their local residents, such as the Banbury Relief Road. He suggested that a map plan of where the Banbury Southern Relief Road would actually go, should be drawn up and circulated to the local planning authority, to prevent development being undertaken in the proposed path of any future relief road.
 - (3) Katie Pritchett Consultation Officer explained some of the factors that the Committee could consider during roadshows as suggested in the report and in particular :
 - The purpose of the exhibition or roadshow – would it be to both consult and inform
 - The amount of time that was to be dedicated to the event(s)
 - The type of feedback that would be sought – Written, structured feedback made it easier to analyse the information coming back.
 - Locations.
 - The focus Members might wish to give to the roadshows. LTP 3 was large and there may be key issues that Members would wish to focus on.

- (4) Members supported the value of roadshows. Councillor Purse felt that even if people had not attended an event there was benefit in the publicity that surrounded them. It was vital that people in rural areas knew what was happening.
- (5) Members discussed the possible location of any roadshows. Councillor Hudspeth agreed that rural areas in particular could be challenging to arrange but even in Oxford City there would be differences between areas. He queried whether Area Forums would be useful and stressed the role of County Councillors in getting the message out. There was some suggestion that the 14 localities could be used to inform the choice of venues. Councillor Tanner referred to the need to be aware of public transport difficulties. Councillor Tilley commented that a very successful consultation exercise had recently taken place at Stanford-in-the-Vale Village Hall.
- (6) In discussing publicity Councillor Turner suggested the use of parish magazines who he felt would be happy to include information if it was provided to them. Councillor Nicholas Turner stressed the importance of making good use of the web site. In urban areas he felt that shopping precincts were the ideal place for a road show as that was where people went.
- (7) Responding to a query from Councillor Turner the Committee was advised that work was ongoing to produce the long list and Members would be advised when it was ready. Existing schemes had been the starting point for the list including those from 2006 but members should raise any apparent omissions once the list was available.
- (8) Councillor Mathew asked that consideration be given to the planning role of the highways authority to ensure consistency in consultation.
- (9) Members referred to schemes of importance to their local areas, including the Banbury Relief Road; the duelling of the A420 and Marcham Bypass. Councillor Hudspeth referred to the bid process for large schemes over £5m. Bids took a great deal of officer resources. Councillor Nicholas Turner felt that in order to make such large schemes a serious proposition funds should be allocated for officer resources to work up the detail. He believed that it was important that, even on bigger schemes, work should be done to set them on a map so they became fact. For example with regard to the Banbury Relief Road this would ensure that there was no development on the route that would block it and open the possibility of phased development. It would also give the opportunity to lobby central government for funding for it. There was a danger that without the commitment to plan the scheme then land would be built on and the opportunity lost.
- (10) Responding to a query from Councillor Nimmo-Smith the Committee was given assurances that feedback on the overarching policies would be taken account of.

The Chairman summed up the comments made and stated that the Committee in noting the report had noted that the long list of schemes carried a health warning. In considering the roadshows the Committee felt that they should be widely publicised, focus on key issues but take in consultation on transport detail and make use of the existing town and parish councils.

(B) Local Transport Plan 2011-2030 Draft Policies

Members generally welcomed the report.

- (1) It was noted that the report was a summary and that Annex 2 was a modified list taking into account stakeholder consultation, including the comments of the LTP3 Scrutiny Working Group.
- (2) Responding to a query from Councillor Nimmo-Smith the Committee was given assurances that external feedback on the overarching policies would be taken account of. An addenda would be submitted to Cabinet.
- (3) The Chairman felt strongly that Cabinet Members should consider the full detail included in the policies themselves and not only the summary report. The detailed policies were available to all Councillors and the Councillor Hudspeth undertook to raise the point made by the Chairman with his Cabinet colleagues.
- (4) Councillor Tanner commented that hard decisions would need to be made on the schemes to be undertaken and commended the goals agreed by Cabinet as set out in the report. They would help the prioritisation process and he hoped that Councillors would use the goals when looking at schemes they were putting forward. He felt that the goals should be prioritised and referred to the process undertaken by NAG's that asked the public not just what they wanted but also to prioritise what they wanted most and least.
- (5) Councillor Nicholas Turner suggested that policy ND1 would be an appropriate place to incorporate reference to planning for specific routes.
- (6) Councillor Nicholas Turner felt that there should be some reference to the proposed high speed rail link. Councillor David Turner commented that improving rail links was a very long term project and referred to the work on upgrading the Cotswold Line. This had taken 15 years and consultants had been paid for to undertake preparatory work.
- (7) Councillor David Turner asked that there be reconsideration of using Park & Ride facilities as a destination for buses from the villages, improving their services and taking buses out of the centre. Councillor Mathew commented that it was his belief that all cross country buses should be start from the Park & Ride.
- (8) Councillor Hudspeth responding to a query from Councillor David Turner about support for public transport services to hospitals undertook to discuss the matter with him outside the meeting.

- (9) Responding to comments from Councillor Purse about AT2, The Cabinet Member undertook to look again at the wording.
- (10) Councillor Mathew asked that in referring to bridle paths and other public rights of way the safety of horses be included.