

Notice of a Meeting

Growth & Infrastructure Scrutiny Committee Thursday, 20 October 2011 at 10.00 am County Hall

Membership

Chairman - Councillor David Nimmo-Smith
Deputy Chairman - Councillor Nicholas P. Turner

<i>Councillors:</i>	Anne Purse	Pete Handley	John Tanner
	Roger Belson	Charles Mathew	David Turner
	Michael Gibbard	Keith Strangwood	

Notes:

Date of next meeting: 15 December 2011

What does this Committee review or scrutinise?

- Transport; highways; traffic and parking; road safety (those areas not covered by the Safer & Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee); public passenger transport
- Regional planning and local development framework; economic development; waste management; environmental management; archaeology; access to the countryside; tourism
- The planning, highways, rights of way and commons/village greens functions of the Planning & Regulation Committee

How can I have my say?

We welcome the views of the community on any issues in relation to the responsibilities of this Committee. Members of the public may ask to speak on any item on the agenda or may suggest matters which they would like the Committee to look at. **Requests to speak must be submitted to the Committee Officer below no later than 9 am on the working day before the date of the meeting.**

For more information about this Committee please contact:

Chairman	-	Councillor David Nimmo-Smith E.Mail: david.nimmo-smith@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Committee Officer	-	Liz Johnston, Tel: (01865) 328280 liz.johnston@oxfordshire.gov.uk



Peter G. Clark
County Solicitor

October 2011

About the County Council

The Oxfordshire County Council is made up of 74 councillors who are democratically elected every four years. The Council provides a range of services to Oxfordshire's 630,000 residents. These include:

schools	social & health care	libraries and museums
the fire service	roads	trading standards
land use	transport planning	waste management

Each year the Council manages £0.9 billion of public money in providing these services. Most decisions are taken by a Cabinet of 9 Councillors, which makes decisions about service priorities and spending. Some decisions will now be delegated to individual members of the Cabinet.

About Scrutiny

Scrutiny is about:

- Providing a challenge to the Cabinet
- Examining how well the Cabinet and the Authority are performing
- Influencing the Cabinet on decisions that affect local people
- Helping the Cabinet to develop Council policies
- Representing the community in Council decision making
- Promoting joined up working across the authority's work and with partners

Scrutiny is NOT about:

- Making day to day service decisions
- Investigating individual complaints.

What does this Committee do?

The Committee meets up to 6 times a year or more. It develops a work programme, which lists the issues it plans to investigate. These investigations can include whole committee investigations undertaken during the meeting, or reviews by a panel of members doing research and talking to lots of people outside of the meeting. Once an investigation is completed the Committee provides its advice to the Cabinet, the full Council or other scrutiny committees. Meetings are open to the public and all reports are available to the public unless exempt or confidential, when the items would be considered in closed session

If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named on the front page, giving as much notice as possible before the meeting

A hearing loop is available at County Hall.

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence and Temporary Appointments**
2. **Declarations of Interest - see guidance note on the back page**
3. **Minutes** (Pages 1 - 4)

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 22 September 2011 (GI3) and to receive information arising from them.

4. **Speaking to or petitioning the Committee**

SCRUTINY MATTERS

5. **Briefing on the Countryside Service and Partnership Working**
10:15am

The Committee are invited to receive a briefing on the Countryside Service Partnership Working.

Contact Officer: *Victoria Fletcher (Natural Environment Manager)*
Victoria.fletcher@oxfordshire.gov.uk

6. **Infrastructure Planning and Financing** (Pages 5 - 8)
10:45am

The Committee are invited to receive an update on the County Council's approach to Infrastructure Planning and Financing.

Contact Officer: *Martin Tugwell (Deputy Director, Growth & Infrastructure)*
Martin.tugwell@oxfordshire.gov.uk

7. **Director's Update**
11:15am

The Director for Environment & Economy will update the Committee on the current activity and priorities of the directorate, including an update on the Capital Programme. The Committee is invited to receive the presentation which will be followed by a question & answer session.

Contact Officer: *Huw Jones (Director, Environment & Economy)*
Huw.Jones@oxfordshire.gov.uk

8. Community Transport - Q&A Session (Pages 9 - 12)

11:45am

The Committee and Members are invited to ask questions of a panel comprising community transport providers and those who support them, as well officers from other local authorities to provide background to assist members in scrutinising the development of a community transport strategy for Oxfordshire.

Approaches taken by other local authorities represented are not necessarily right for Oxfordshire, but are intended to structure and stimulate discussion about possible options.

Contact Officer: *John Disley (Strategic Manager, Transport)*
John.disley@oxfordshire.gov.uk

9. Forward Plan

The Committee is asked to suggest items from the current Forward Plan on which it may wish to have an opportunity to offer advice to the Cabinet before any decision is taken, together with details of what it thinks could be achieved by looking at any items.

INFORMATION SHARE

1.00pm Close of Meeting

Declarations of Interest

This note briefly summarises the position on interests which you must declare at the meeting. Please refer to the Members' Code of Conduct in Part 9.1 of the Constitution for a fuller description.

The duty to declare ...

You must always declare any "personal interest" in a matter under consideration, i.e. where the matter affects (either positively or negatively):

- (i) any of the financial and other interests which you are required to notify for inclusion in the statutory Register of Members' Interests; or
- (ii) your own well-being or financial position or that of any member of your family or any person with whom you have a close association more than it would affect other people in the County.

Whose interests are included ...

"Member of your family" in (ii) above includes spouses and partners and other relatives' spouses and partners, and extends to the employment and investment interests of relatives and friends and their involvement in other bodies of various descriptions. For a full list of what "relative" covers, please see the Code of Conduct.

When and what to declare ...

The best time to make any declaration is under the agenda item "Declarations of Interest". Under the Code you must declare not later than at the start of the item concerned or (if different) as soon as the interest "becomes apparent".

In making a declaration you must state the nature of the interest.

Taking part if you have an interest ...

Having made a declaration you may still take part in the debate and vote on the matter unless your personal interest is also a "prejudicial" interest.

"Prejudicial" interests ...

A prejudicial interest is one which a member of the public knowing the relevant facts would think so significant as to be likely to affect your judgment of the public interest.

What to do if your interest is prejudicial ...

If you have a prejudicial interest in any matter under consideration, you may remain in the room but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the matter under consideration, provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise.

Exceptions ...

There are a few circumstances where you may regard yourself as not having a prejudicial interest or may participate even though you may have one. These, together with other rules about participation in the case of a prejudicial interest, are set out in paragraphs 10 – 12 of the Code.

Seeking Advice ...

It is your responsibility to decide whether any of these provisions apply to you in particular circumstances, but you may wish to seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer before the meeting.

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GROWTH & INFRASTRUCTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Thursday, 22 September 2011 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 12.05 pm

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor David Nimmo-Smith – in the Chair

Councillor Nicholas P. Turner (Deputy Chairman)

Councillor Anne Purse

Councillor Roger Belson

Councillor Michael Gibbard

Councillor Pete Handley

Councillor A.M. Lovatt

Councillor John Tanner

Councillor David Turner

Officers:

Whole of meeting Liz Johnston
Arzu Ulusoy-Shipstone

Part of meeting Sue Kent
John Disley
Joy White

The Scrutiny Committee considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting [, together with a schedule of addenda tabled at the meeting/the following additional documents:] and agreed as set out below. Copies of the agenda and reports [agenda, reports and schedule/additional documents] are attached to the signed Minutes.

26/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS
(Agenda No. 1)

Cllr Sandy Lovatt was present as a substitute for Cllr Keith Strangwood.

27/11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - SEE GUIDANCE NOTE ON THE BACK PAGE
(Agenda No. 2)

There were no Declarations of Interest.

28/11 MINUTES
(Agenda No. 3)

The minutes of the meeting on 14 July were signed and approved.

29/11 SPEAKING TO OR PETITIONING THE COMMITTEE
(Agenda No. 4)

There were no requests to speak to or petition the Committee.

30/11 COMMUNITY TRANSPORT
(Agenda No. 5)

John Disley (Strategic Manager, Highways and Transport) updated the Committee on work with the Community Transport Strategy. In particular, the scope of the project has been difficult to agree as it ties into a number of broad cross-cutting issues. Cllr David Turner was concerned with the proposed timetable and requested that Officers progress the work regarding Dial-a-ride with particular urgency.

The Committee RESOLVED to have a Q&A session with providers and other local authorities at the next Scrutiny Committee meeting to consider possible options.

31/11 ENERGY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY
(Agenda No. 6)

Sue Kent (Environment & Climate Change Manager) introduced the Committee to Oxfordshire County Council's approach to energy management, which takes into consideration the significant likely increases in energy costs and flexibility required to deal with these fluctuations. The Committee were informed of the ways the Council is trying to cut its energy use, and how it is supporting and encouraging schools to cut theirs.

The Committee RESOLVED that a communication to all Councillors setting out what they could do, as individuals and as community leaders, to reduce energy consumption would be created.

32/11 DELIVERING DIRECTORATE SAVINGS
(Agenda No. 7)

Arzu Ulusoy-Shipstone (Capital, Strategy & Transformation Manager, E&E) updated the Committee on progress on delivering savings in E&E. 82% of planned savings for 2011/12 have already been delivered. The only area where savings are not going to be achieved is under Street Lighting, due to a change in costing structures from our energy provider. These savings will be met from elsewhere in the E&E budget.

The Committee RESOLVED to receive further updates on progress against savings targets at appropriate intervals in the scrutiny work programme going forward.

33/11 FORWARD PLAN

(Agenda No. 8)

Cllr Charles Mathew suggested an item on the planning Committee and its role in planning enforcement be considered for future meetings.

Cllr Nimmo-Smith requested that an item on potential new government planning policy comes to the Committee at an appropriate time.

34/11 CLOSE OF MEETING

(Agenda No. 9)

12:05

..... in the Chair

Date of signing

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Growth and Infrastructure Scrutiny Committee 20 October 2011

Progress in Preparing the Strategic Infrastructure Framework for Oxfordshire

Report by Deputy Director (Growth & Infrastructure)

Purpose of Report

1. This note outlines the work being undertaken to prepare a Strategic Infrastructure Framework for Oxfordshire and the next steps in progressing it, including the involvement of District Councils, the Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Partnership (SPIP), and the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

Background

2. The Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership identifies investment in infrastructure as being at the heart of ensuring that Oxfordshire realises its full potential. The Government has placed a clear emphasis on the planning system doing everything it can to support sustainable economic growth, via the Draft National Planning Policy Framework, which is currently out for consultation. Earlier this year SPIP confirmed its commitment to producing a Strategic Infrastructure Framework for Oxfordshire as the overarching framework for strategic investment needs.
3. The purpose of the Framework is to:
 - a. Identify priority items of infrastructure which are required to deliver economic growth
 - b. Provide a framework which encourages and facilitates the co-ordination of investment decisions and programmes across agencies
 - c. Provide clarity on the most appropriate funding stream(s) to pursue for specific investments.
4. The Infrastructure Framework will:
 - a. List and rank strategic infrastructure priorities, in particular those supporting the three spatial priority areas of Bicester, Science Vale and Oxford, and show why they are important, what outcomes will be achieved and how they meet wider strategic objectives
 - b. Set out delivery issues associated with schemes and the practical steps that need to be realised for successful implementation
 - c. Discuss the potential range of funding sources.

Progress in preparing the Strategic Infrastructure Framework

Identifying strategic infrastructure requirements

- Work is under way to compile schedules of strategic infrastructure requirements. This stage of work has updated information originally prepared for the Local Investment Plan and in particular seeks to arrive at a better definition of “strategic”, looking at schemes which foster economic development and growth, and create significant numbers of jobs.
- Initial work has focussed on the three spatial priority areas identified by the Local Enterprise Partnership – Bicester, Science Vale and Oxford; and is being developed for the other main settlements.
- Discussions have been held with key external agencies such as Thames Water, Scottish and Southern Energy, the Environment Agency, the Primary Care Trust. Discussions have also been held with County Council colleagues on education and skills, and broadband.
- Profiles of places are being compiled drawing on existing strategy documents (including Core Strategies) and other evidence looking at what we are trying to achieve in these areas and what the challenges are.

Development of a Prioritisation Methodology

5. A key issue is the method used to prioritise strategic infrastructure requirements. Work is under way to develop an approach to prioritisation which targets schemes delivering the outcomes that are sought, particularly in relation to economic growth.
6. Prioritisation criteria were originally set out in the Local Investment Plan but these are in the process of being substantially revised, in order to develop an approach which enables comparison of the relative merits of projects.

Next Steps and key milestones

7. The aim is to have the Infrastructure Framework prepared by March 2012.
8. Over the next few months a key focus for work will be developing and refining the prioritisation methodology. A workshop is proposed for November 2011 to allow SPIP members to input into the prioritisation methodology, with input from the LEP.
9. An initial draft of the Framework document and the final prioritisation methodology will be presented to SPIP on 1 December 2011.

10. Work on prioritising projects will begin in early 2012. The final Framework will be reported to SPIP on 15 March, thence to Cabinet on 17 April 2012.

MARTIN TUGWELL
Deputy Director (Growth & Infrastructure)

Contact: Peter Lerner
Service Manager – Infrastructure Planning
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E: peter.lerner@oxfordshire.gov.uk

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COMMUNITY TRANSPORT STRATEGY

Briefing note for Growth and Infrastructure Scrutiny Committee 20th October 2011

Project sponsor: John Disley

Project manager: Joy White

Purpose of this briefing note

The purpose of this briefing note is to provide background information for the question and answer session on Community Transport that will comprise the Community Transport Strategy item on the agenda for this meeting. It is hoped that this will help members prepare some of the questions they would like to ask the panel. Items arising at the Members Steering Group meeting on Thursday 13 October will also be used to help structure and steer the Q&A session.

Background information

Community Transport is a crucial, but frequently overlooked part of the transport system in the UK. Where commercial bus services are not viable, or are subject to funding cuts, Community Transport is a means of complementing existing transport provision. By doing so, Community Transport provides a valued and essential service, often for the most vulnerable in our society. It can provide efficient and effective transport solutions of both a general and specialist nature, whilst combating social exclusion and rural isolation.

Community transport provisions are often delivered in partnership with the voluntary sector with or without county and district council funding. However, many authorities offer a number of 'in-house' services in addition.

Community Transport can be defined broadly as being transport solutions for people of all ages who have no other transport options to access places and services they need to.

This is likely to include;

- People in rural areas where there is no public transport provision and other options are not practical
- People with mobility impairments who require support/assistance when travelling or to travel in adapted / suitably equipped vehicles.
- People on low incomes for whom alternative transport options are unaffordable

Currently community transport provision in Oxfordshire is focused on the following:

- Accessible, cost-effective and flexible transport services run by the community / voluntary sector e.g. car share schemes, community minibuses. Some of these are subsidised by Oxfordshire County Council. These vary in the purpose for which they can be booked (some are medical related only) and whether they can carry passengers in wheelchairs. Some operate on fixed routes, and some vehicles are available to hire. There is usually a modest charge for the service to cover costs.
- Dial-a-Ride (DAR) services provided in partnership by Oxfordshire County Council and one or more of the five district councils (VOWH, WODC, SODC, CDC & Oxford City), primarily for disabled and older people.

Demand for community transport is likely to increase over time due to the aging population and the number of elderly people staying in their own homes, among other factors. Funding pressures mean there could be more of a reliance on communities and volunteers in future.

The panel has been selected to provide members with an opportunity to talk to community transport providers and those who support them, as well as hear first hand about the approaches to community transport being taken in other local authority areas. However, no suggestion is made that particular approaches taken by other local authorities represented are necessarily right for Oxfordshire.

The panel

The following have confirmed their attendance:

- Phil Clark, FISH Community Transport, Sonning Common*
- Patricia Chirgwin, Volunteer Link Up (West Oxfordshire)*
- Andy Stokes, Warwickshire County Council*
- Jennifer Sherrey and Nick Small, Northamptonshire County Council
- Vicky Freeman, Community Transport Association
- Philip Newbould and Emily Lewis, ORCC

Officers from other neighbouring local authority areas have also been invited, but have not yet confirmed whether they will attend.

Those marked with an asterisk have supplied the following information:

FISH is a community transport provider run by volunteers, serving elderly, infirm and disadvantaged people in the Sonning Common area, with a 16-seater bus primarily for shopping and social trips and a car scheme which is primarily for medical purposes. Established 31 years ago, FISH provides 500 car trips and 185 bus trips annually. It has 50 car drivers, 12 bus drivers, and 12 people managing logistics.

Volunteer Link Up (West Oxfordshire) is the nationally-accredited volunteer centre for West Oxfordshire, recruiting volunteers for local charities as well as for its own projects which include befriending isolated people, gardening and DIY and a very busy and successful community transport scheme, with between 450-500 clients registered who cannot use or access public transportation due to infirmity or because of their rural location. Transport is provided by volunteers using their own cars and requests include taking clients to hospital, doctors', dentists', opticians' appointments as well as providing transport to day centres, regular club activities, or for social appointments such as visits to hairdressers or to do some shopping. Volunteers also regularly provide transport to allow clients to visit loved ones who may be hospitalised or in residential care. Established in 1983 it has four paid part-time members of staff. It is funded partly by OCC (for transport, befriending and gardening/DIY work) and by the Big Lottery (for volunteer infrastructure support for local voluntary organisations).

Warwickshire County Council currently (2011/12) provides funding for the following Community Transport projects, though some of these may be under threat due to reduced budget:

- Busterwerkenbak - Demand responsive travel to work in North Warwickshire (fully funded from s106 developer funding)
- Shipston Link - Section 22 community minibus operating scheduled bus services in Stratford District
- Back & 4th - Minibus hire, with or without a driver, serving disadvantaged organisations and individuals in Stratford District
- Volunteer Community Car Schemes - Various health related schemes - Stratford District
- Care To Share - Brokerage minibus project - Rugby Borough
- Community Links - Dial a ride service in Stratford District (funded by Stratford District Council) for those stuck for transport as a result of mobility problems or rural isolation. All vehicles also provide SEN home to school transport
- Health Travel Service Warwick - Health related car scheme (funded by Health Service)
- Rugby Hospital car scheme - Health related car scheme - Rugby Borough
- Bee Line - Health related car scheme - North Warwickshire
- Medi-Car - Health related car scheme - Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough
- Warwickshire also operate a network of 'Flexibus' services funded from the revenue support budget. Fully accessible vehicles operated by the commercial sector running to a semi-fixed timetable, which will pick up/drop off closer to homes for people with mobility problems. All operate SEN home to school transport.

Joy White
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7 October 2011

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