

Economy Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2015

Present:

Councillor Richards – in the Chair

Councillors Amesbury, Appleby, Bridges, Davies, Ellison, Farrell, Green, Hacking, Karney, Lone, Peel, Raikes, Shilton Godwin, Simcock, Strong and Wilson.

Councillor Priest, Deputy Leader

Councillor Chappell, Executive Member for the Environment

Councillor Fender, Chair of the Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) Committee

Dave Newton, Transport Strategy Director, TfGM

Simon Warburton, Head of Policy & Strategy, TfGM

John Twigg, Planning Director, Manchester Airport Group

Apologies:

Councillors Moore and Razaq

ESC/15/74 Minutes

Decision

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2015 as a correct record.

ESC/15/75 Greater Manchester 2040 Transport Strategy and Transport for the North Update

The Committee received a report of Dave Newton, Transport Strategy Director, Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) which provided a summary of the outcome of the recent consultation on the 2040 Greater Manchester Transport Vision, which will inform the preparation of a new long term transport strategy in 2016. The report also summarised recent announcements made in relation to the work of Transport for the North and HS2.

The Committee welcomed Councillor Fender, Chair of the Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) Committee, Dave Newton, Transport Strategy Director, TfGM and Simon Warburton, Head of Policy & Strategy, TfGM. Mr Newton introduced the report across its main themes.

In response to a member's question, Councillor Fender reported that TfGM was committed to developing a smart ticketing platform across Greater Manchester. He advised members that TfGM had terminated the contract with the technology supplier which was contracted to develop this as it had become apparent that they were not capable of doing so. However, he reported that a smartphone application was now available which could be used to buy Metrolink tickets and the range of ticketing options available through this would be extended in the new year. He informed the Committee that the bus operators had also agreed a smart platform for people to buy

bus tickets. He advised members that the aim was to develop full interoperability and to introduce a daily cap on fares but that this could not be achieved until Greater Manchester had powers to introduce bus franchising, as part of a devolution agreement.

A member reported that some people needed to drive into the city centre – either due to poor transport links where they lived or because they needed to use their car during the day as part of their job – and advised that car drivers should be included in consultation exercises and their views taken into account. Councillor Fender assured members that TfGM took seriously the needs of all road users, including car drivers. He recognised the importance of supporting economic growth by enabling people to take jobs and access services in the city centre and reported that this was largely achieved through developing public transport. However, he reported that this also reduced road congestion and enabled those who needed to drive to get into the city centre. He further advised members that, where possible, TfGM was building capacity for people to park and ride at stations across Greater Manchester.

In response to a member's question, Councillor Fender outlined progress on improving a number of railway lines in Greater Manchester. He informed members that the electrification of the Transpennine route was now going ahead but with an extended timescale of 2022 or 2023. However, he reported that the conditions within the recently awarded train franchises would bring improvements to train services sooner than this.

A member expressed concern about the relatively small number of people who responded to the consultation and asked how this could be improved in the future. Mr Warburton reported that it was challenging to engage people on a high-level vision. He advised members that the costs were kept low with the web-based consultation being provided in-house. However, he advised members that more community-based engagement would be carried out on the draft strategy in the new year. He further advised members that TfGM was contacting organisations which had not responded to the consultation to ascertain their views.

In response to a member's question, Mr Warburton reported that TfGM had commissioned a piece of work to understand the wider value of urban transport investment, such as regeneration in areas close to Metrolink stations, and that this would be used to shape views of the Department for Transport and the Treasury on public transport investment. He further advised members that discussions were taking place regarding increased local control of a medium-term Greater Manchester budget for public transport which would enable Greater Manchester to determine its own priorities, based on this understanding of its benefits.

A member emphasised the importance of active travel and its value to health and the economy and expressed concern that walking in the city centre was becoming more difficult due to obstructions such as potholes.

A member expressed concern at the gaps in public transport provision. Councillor Fender informed members that franchising was key to promoting an integrated network with a more equitable share of provision across different areas and an integrated fare structure across bus providers.

A member expressed concern that commuters at Moston station were unable to board trains during rush hour as they were already full. Councillor Fender reported that increased services and rolling stock should help to address the issue.

Decision

To ask TfGM to consider members' comments on the consultation and to request a further report at an appropriate time.

ESC/15/76 Update on Transport Elements of GM Devolution Agreement

The Committee received a report of Dave Newton, Transport Strategy Director, Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) which summarised the progress being made to deliver against the transport elements of the Greater Manchester Devolution Agreement, which provided for new powers/arrangements relating to bus franchising; local rail stations management and highways managements in Greater Manchester.

In response to members' questions, Councillor Fender reported that, under the current system, the public sector subsidised bus companies to provide concessionary and free travel and to run services on unprofitable routes but wasn't able to fully assess how money was being spent. He advised members that franchising would enable TfGM to assess and improve value for money. He reported that this could be an opportunity to restore some bus services which had been cut but that this would take time. He informed members that work was already taking place on how bus franchising could work, including the specification, the transition process and how opportunities would be available for smaller operators to bid to provide services.

The Chair questioned whether national government, including the Department for Transport (DfT), were supportive of bus franchising. Councillor Fender advised the Committee that the DfT had been sceptical of the proposal initially but that the Chancellor of the Exchequer appeared to understand the need for a strong bus network to support economic growth.

Decision

To request a further report at an appropriate time.

ESC/15/77 Manchester Airport Update

The Committee received a presentation of John Twigg, Planning Director, Manchester Airport Group (MAG), which provided an overview of the proposed Ten Year Manchester Airport Transformation Plan. Mr Twigg briefly summarised the key areas in the presentation.

Members welcomed investment in the airport. The Committee discussed transport to and from the airport from different parts of the region and the importance of increasing the number of passengers using public transport to get to the airport in order to reduce emissions and congestion. In response to a member's question, Mr Twigg reported that the Metrolink was largely aimed at staff and heavy rail was

mainly aimed at passengers because the Metrolink travelled through the main staff catchment areas but did not provide a fast link from the city centre to the airport, when compared to heavy rail. He reported that another challenge was Metrolink's hours of operation but discussions were taking place around that. He advised members that a good, direct rail service was key to encouraging more passengers to use public transport but that this was a challenge due to the airport's wide catchment area, with passengers travelling from all towns and cities across the north of England. In response to a member's question, he informed the Committee that the HS2 line would pass close to Manchester Airport and options were being considered on the best way to connect this to the airport, including a Metrolink extension, bus services or a people mover.

In response to a member's question, Mr Twigg informed members that Manchester Airport was the only major UK airport outside London with two runways and that it had spare capacity and wanted to offer direct services, which would take some pressure off Heathrow Airport. He advised members that Manchester Airport acted as a hub for some airlines and routes but that its main focus was to provide more direct flights for customers in the north of England and that the addition of direct flights to China was a boost to this. The Committee discussed how Manchester Airport could be promoted to the travel trade. In response to a member's question, Mr Twigg reported that Stansted Airport had spare capacity and MAG saw the airport as a regional airport serving the east of England as well as London.

A member requested further information on apprenticeships and links with schools, including provision of work experience and raising pupils' aspirations. Mr Twigg advised members that he would circulate further information on this. He reported that MAG was now engaging with families from the pre-school stage as this was important in raising children's aspirations and improving their literacy and numeracy. He informed members that approximately 3000 of the airport's employees were Wythenshawe residents. He advised members that a pre-jobs fair preparation session for Wythenshawe residents had recently taken place where 650 local residents had received training on skills such as writing CVs and preparing for interviews. He also informed members that the jobs fair would be held in January and local residents would have priority access.

In response to a member's question, Mr Twigg advised that flight emissions needed to be tackled at an international level and that work was taking place at that level to push for sustainable aviation. He informed members that MAG's climate change strategy focused on the airports' emissions and the aim of carbon neutrality had been achieved for all four airports within MAG. He agreed to provide the Committee with further information.

Decision

To request further information on the airport's sustainable development plan, including the community strand, and on local employment and apprenticeships.

ESC/15/78

Manchester Airport City Enterprise Zone: Update

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director (Strategic Development)

which provided an update on the progress of developing and delivering the Manchester Airport City Enterprise Zone. The Strategic Director (Strategic Development) introduced the report across its broad themes.

Members welcomed efforts to employ local residents but expressed concern about the practices of some employers, particularly the use of zero hour contracts. The Strategic Director (Strategic Development) advised members that a meeting would be taking place with Amazon to discuss employment terms and conditions and that the Council would exert influence where it could to promote good terms of employment but it did not have direct control over this. Mr Twigg informed the Committee that he was not aware of any of the jobs available at the jobs fair being on zero hours contracts and that zero hours contracts were not common at the airport. The Chair informed members that she and Councillor Raikes were meeting with MAG to discuss the work of the Living Wage Task and Finish Group and that MAG was engaging positively on discussions relating to the Living Wage and zero hours contracts.

In response to a member's question, the Strategic Director (Strategic Development) advised that this was a 20 year growth strategy and it was likely that there would be one or more recession during this period but that the infrastructure, particularly excellent transport links, was being built to ensure that Airport City would be an attractive location for employers and would attract jobs and growth.

A member asked how residents from elsewhere in the city could access job opportunities at Airport City. The Strategic Director (Strategic Development) advised members that a good transport system - with affordable fares and transport running at times which met the needs of shift workers – was key.

In response to a member's question, the Strategic Director (Strategic Development) advised members that the Council did not want to encourage city-centre based businesses to re-locate to Airport City. Mr Twigg informed the Committee that the aspiration was to attract satellite offices from global businesses looking for a presence in the UK outside of London.

Decision

To note the report.

ESC/15/79 Manchester Strategy 2016 – 2025

The Committee received a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Growth and Neighbourhoods). The report summarised the results of the consultation with residents, businesses and partner organisations about the Manchester Strategy 2016 – 2025 and the changes which had been made to the strategy as a result. The revised Manchester Strategy was appended to the main report. Members were asked to comment on the report prior to its submission to the Executive on 6 January 2016. The Head of Policy, Partnerships and Research introduced the report across its main themes.

The Committee welcomed the report and the way the consultation had been carried

out, effectively engaging with residents. A member recommended that this consultation approach, including the use of social media be replicated in future consultations.

A member reported that the strategy needed to be clear in its distinction between volunteering and the voluntary and community sector as a service deliverer. The Head of Policy, Partnerships and Research informed the Committee that the consultation had highlighted the large number of people who contributed to the city and their local communities on a voluntary basis and were willing to do more. She advised members that many of the people responding to the consultation had provided their contact details, were enthusiastic about improving their city and were willing to contribute to that and that the Council was considering how to build on this.

A member recommended that the consultation responses which related to the city centre be fed into the consultation on the City Centre Strategy. The Head of Policy, Partnerships and Research agreed that this would be done.

A member welcomed the inclusion of the aim of becoming a zero carbon city by 2050. She highlighted the issue of old housing stock, which was often less energy efficient but could be upgraded to improve this, and advised that, doing so could reduce emissions while also developing skills and providing work for Manchester residents. The Head of Policy, Partnerships and Research reported that a lot more work was needed to determine how Manchester would become a zero carbon economy and that this would have to include consideration of housing stock. She advised members that the strategy was high level and a lot of further work would be needed on how to deliver the objectives contained within the strategy.

The Committee welcomed Councillor Watson to the meeting. She reported that she was involved in Manchester's Age Friendly Older People's Board. She reported that the Board had been involved in the consultation and had been disappointed with the earlier version of the Strategy which did not mention that Manchester was the first city to be internationally recognised as an Age Friendly City. She advised members that the aspirations of an Age Friendly City were that older people continue to contribute to the city in a variety of ways and were not seen as a marginal, excluded group in need of help. She reported that, by the time of the second consultation, there had been some improvements to the strategy but that these were still not sufficient. She informed members that the Board had given detailed feedback on the strategy which was partially incorporated into the consultation responses shared with members but in less detail. She expressed concern that the strategy described older people as facing "isolation, loneliness and poor health" rather than recognising how older people could contribute to the city. She advised members that people should be encouraged to remain in and contribute to the city throughout their lives, rather than moving elsewhere after they retired. She recommended that the recognition of Age Friendly Manchester have higher prominence in the strategy and that this then permeate through the themes of the strategy.

Another member supported Councillor Watson's comments. She reported that the City Centre Strategy appeared to be more focused towards younger people but that older people were more engaged in consultations and were also more involved in voluntary groups. She recognised that, while isolation and ill health were issues for

some older people, many older people were leading rich lives and the city needed to enable more older people to remain in Manchester and continue to enjoy its benefits.

The Head of Policy, Partnerships and Research reported that officers had engaged with Manchester's Age Friendly Older People's Board and amended the document following their feedback. However, she advised the Committee that she would take into account members' comments and further consider how to reflect the Age Friendly Manchester message in the strategy. The Deputy Leader reported that it was important that the strategy recognised that older people could continue to contribute to the city, whether through paid or voluntary working or through enjoying its cultural and leisure offer. He advised members that the skills section of the strategy should be amended to recognise the ongoing changes in the skills needed by employers and the need to ensure that older people could continue to develop their skills.

Members emphasised that poverty and deprivation were key issues for the city and asked how the Council could measure the success in delivering on these aspects of the strategy. The Head of Policy, Partnerships and Research reported that provisional metrics had been identified but further work was needed and that the Council was considering new ways of measuring progress, working with partners to develop these. She reported that it was important to acknowledge the differences between different cities, for example, city boundaries, and to consider the specific issues in Manchester, while also identifying good practice elsewhere. She also reported that jobs were important to tackling poverty and that, for this reason, the measure relating to resident wages would be retained.

Members asked how the objectives in this high-level document would be applied at ward level through ward co-ordination and how members could contribute through ward co-ordination on issues important in their wards. The Head of Policy, Partnerships and Research reported that the themes from the strategy were being embedded within the Council and that officers would continue to work to ensure that these themes fed through into the Council's plans and ways of working at all levels.

Decisions

1. To note the results of the consultation and the revisions that have been made to the strategy as a result of the consultation process;
2. Subject to the above comments by the Committee, to recommend that the Manchester Strategy is considered by the Executive and Council in January 2016 with a view to its adoption as a formal part of the Council's Policy Framework.
3. To receive further information around the measurables and the governance arrangements for the strategy at an appropriate time.

ESC/15/80

Overview Report

The Committee considered a report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit which provided a summary of the key decisions due to be taken that are relevant to its remit, an update on actions taken as a result of recommendations and the current

work programme. The Chair asked members to contact her or the Committee Support Officer if they had any recommendations for items to add to the work programme.

Decision

To note the report and agree the work programme.