

Tees Valley Joint Strategy Committee

A meeting of the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Committee was held on Friday, 16th December 2005.

Present:- Councillor Budd (Chairman)

Representing Darlington Borough Council:- Councillors Lyonette and Ruck.

Representing Hartlepool Borough Council:- Councillors Coward, Preece and Waller.

Representing Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council:- Councillors Dunning, Empson and Smith.

Representing Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council: Councillors Cherrett, Cook and Dixon.

Officers:- J Lowther, D Peace, S Turner (Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit); N Hart (Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council); B Thompson (Hartlepool Borough Council).

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Payne, Richmond and Mrs Scott.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Cook declared a personal/non prejudicial interest in respect of the item entitled "DICIDA Activities" on the grounds of his employment within the chemical industry.

Councillor Dunning also declared a personal/non prejudicial interest in respect of the same item as a result of his son's employment within the chemical industry.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 29th September 2005 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Regional Transport Board

Consideration was given to the summary of the progress made by the Regional Transport Board (RTB) in developing a ten year transport programme for the North East of England to be funded from a regional funding allocation for transport, commencing at £42 million in 2006 rising to £49 million in £2016.

The Board, upon which the Chairman of this Committee was a member, considered each project submitted against the policy criteria based on the Regional Spatial Strategy and Regional Economic Strategy, which was appraised on :-

- (a) Scheme outcomes
- (b) Consequences of not taking action
- (c) Policy fit
- (d) Value for money
- (e) Deliverability

The following schemes, which had been supported by a full business case, had been included in the appraisal:-

Schemes with Full Business Case £461m	
Scheme	Cost (£m 2005 prices)
A1 Adderstone to Belford Dualling	£14m
A1 Morpeth to Felton Dualling	£80m
A19 Coast Road Junction Improvements	£68m
A19 Seaton Burn Junction Improvement	£29m
A19 Testos Grade Separated Junction	£21m
A19/A189 Moor Farm Junction Improvements	£40m

A66 Cross Lane – Greta Bridge	£19m
A66 Bowes Bypass Dualling	£15m
A69 Haydon Bridge Bypass	£29m
Darlington Eastern Transport corridor	£12m
East Durham Link Road	£10m
Morpeth Northern Bypass	£7m
North Middlesbrough Accessibility Improvements	£15m
Northern Gateway	£14m
Orpheus Bus Corridors (First Corridor)	£5m
Sunderland Central Route	£14m
Sunderland Strategic Transport Corridor	£69m

The following schemes were currently under development and had been considered under the appraisal criteria however, it was noted that both the Metro Re-invigoration and Tees Valley Metro Schemes would not be funded through the regional framework allocation and would be delivered by other funding mechanisms:-

Schemes under development £1400m+	
Scheme	Cost (£m 2005 prices)
A1 North of Alnwick to Scottish Border dualling	Circa £400m
A1 West Mains – Bridge Mill	£21m
A66 Darlington Bypass	£52m
Blaydon/Newburn Haugh Foot/Cycle Bridge	£10m
Durham Northern Relief Road £20m	£20m
East Billingham Relief Road	£19m
Metro Re-invigoration	Circa £400m+
New Tees Crossing	£156m
Tees Valley Bus Network Review	£30m
Tees Valley Metro	Circa £228m
Transit 15 QBC's Durham	£15m
Orpheus Bus Corridors (2 nd phase)	£30m
Redheugh Bridge/Scotswood Road Junction	£10m
Wheatley Hill – Bowburn	£10m

The next Board meeting to consider the above schemes would be held on 5th January 2006 with a view to the finalised programme being submitted to the Government by the end of January 2006.

Members expressed particular support for the inclusion of the following schemes:-

- A66 Darlington Bypass – to be brought forward from current position in programme post 2016
- East Billingham Relief Road – arising from safety concerns regarding use by HGV tankers
- A19/A66 – to be considered as part of the major road network, aka A66/A1, due to its significant role in the Tees Valley
- A66/A1 to be considered as part of national road network

RESOLVED that:-

1. The report be noted.
2. The following proposals be put forward from the Tees Valley to the Regional Transport Board for consideration for funding from the Regional Funding Allocation:-

A66 Darlington Bypass – to be brought forward from current position in programme post 2016

East Billingham Relief Road – arising from safety concerns regarding use by HGV tankers

A19/A66 – to be considered as part of the major road network, aka A66/A1, due to its significant role in the Tees Valley

A66/A1 to be considered as part of national road network

Regional Spatial Strategy

The Committee was advised that the Examination in Public for the Regional Spatial Strategy would be held on 7th March 2006 for a period of five weeks. The Joint Strategy Unit had been invited to attend the Examination in Public and had been asked to produce three reports which would need to be considered and approved by this Committee, namely:-

- (a) Sub-regional housing strategy
- (b) A report justifying the housing allocations for the Tees Valley; and
- (c) A report justifying allocations of employment land

It was proposed that a special meeting of the Joint Strategy Committee be held in the last week of January 2006 to consider and approve the above reports.

RESOLVED that a special meeting of the Joint Strategy Committee be held on 30th January 2006 to deal with any matters relating to the Regional Spatial Strategy Examination in Public.

Post 2006 European Funding

The Tees Valley was linked to County Durham (TVD) in respect of European Programme funding and the eligibility for these funds depended upon a single indicator as calculated by Eurostat. This indicator was based on Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per head, relative to the EU average, and regions that fell below 75% of the EU average would receive Convergence funding. All other regions would be eligible for competitiveness funding.

Consideration was given to the work undertaken by officers from the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit and Durham County Council in lobbying the UK national government, European Commission officials, MPs and MEPs, in order to secure the best deal for the local economy.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and the Committee be kept informed on the progress of meetings with the various parties in the future.

Tees Valley European Legal Support Service

Consideration was given to progress and achievements made by via the European Legal Support Service Project which was currently funded via Objective 2 of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), Single Programme and in-kind match funding from the North East Chamber of Commerce.

The project commenced in July 2002 with an extension approved in August 2004. ERDF funding for the project was to end on 31st December 2005, with an extended end date of 1st March 2006 for Single Programme funding to enable the remaining outputs to be achieved.

Officers were currently working on a proposal to continue the service but refocusing its activity to concentrate on international trade rather than the more domestic topics. It was also intended to deliver the new project regionally and funding for the project was currently being sought from the META 2 bid, which was a regional project funded via ERDF. The possibility of match funding was also currently being explored with One North East.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Priority 4 Activity in the Tees Valley

Consideration was given to an update on the activity and success of the five Tees Valley Priority 4 Partnerships in the North East of England Objective 2 Programme as coordinated sub regionally by the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit.

The Priority 4 measure was aimed at those areas identified as having the highest level of deprivation in the Index of Multiple Deprivation; and the Priority 4 Package Partnerships reflected the unitary authority level partnerships that facilitated the delivery of these measures in the targeted ward areas within the Tees Valley. For the second half of the programme 2004/2008, the Tees Valley were given a sub regional indicative financial allocation amounting to £7.64 million (£3.68 million European Regional Development Fund and £3.72 million European Social Fund). The Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit, as co-ordinators at a sub regional level, were responsible for ensuring a strategic overview was maintained for the list of projects compiled and received from each individual partnership. Once endorsed by the Tees Valley Priority 4 Executive Group, the lists were submitted to the Government Office for information and planning purposes in advance of individual project application submissions. The Tees Valley process had been commended by the European Programme Secretary as being the only sub regional Priority 4 process that currently worked successfully.

The Committee was advised that the value of the ESF element of the North East of England Objective 2 Programme had increased to £9.95 million in January 2005 and for Priority 4 measures, it was decided to allocate additional funds only to those regions where they had demonstrated the ability to commit existing funds. The Tees Valley was the only sub region to utilise the whole of its financial resources and therefore was the only sub region invited to access this money. Projects to the value of just over £466,000 were submitted in September 2005 and a further £2.3 million of projects were currently under development.

Details were also submitted of a number of programme changes agreed by the Programme Management Committee in September 2005 designed to ensure that the programme continued to perform and deliver its intended outcomes. In total, from the commencement of the Priority 4 projects, approximately £37.1 million had been developed that would support activity in the most disadvantaged wards across the Tees Valley.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Monitoring Housing Market Renewal

Consideration was given to the review of the Joint Strategy Unit's work with Tees Valley Living in developing and implementing the system for monitoring the impact of the Tees Valley's housing market renewal initiative. The work fulfilled the ODPM's requirement for effective monitoring, evaluation and review processes as part of the sub region's housing strategy.

As part of the regional low demand plan to be submitted in the near future by the Regional Housing Board, the ODPM required that each sub regional plan should contain clear output and outcome indicators and targets and should address the effectiveness of monitoring, evaluation and review processes. This would require information at the Tees Valley level and for the areas where the initiatives interventions would take place. Behind this need, there was a requirement for a substantial range of relevant information being available regularly at local, neighbourhood level and this would help those working directly on the housing market renewal initiative plus many others in the housing and planning work. A summary was provided of the two types of information for each neighbourhood namely core indicators and general indicators. The information produced, and monitoring undertaken, was summarised as follows:-

- Housing Database – a range of information about each individual house in the Tees Valley
- Neighbourhood Database – relevant information aggregated by neighbourhoods specially designed for HMR purposes and from other data on relevant socio-economic issues;
- Analysis and Monitoring – analysing and comparing the characteristics of individual neighbourhoods, and measuring change over time as the housing market renewal intervention makes an impact; concentrating on reporting how well the sub-regional plan is meeting its targets;
- Website – a useful additional feature, making the Neighbourhood Database readily available via a website to all those in the Tees Valley involved in planning and renewing the housing market.

Consideration was also given to a summary of the information contained within both the housing and neighbourhood databases, together with a summary of how the Joint Strategy Unit would analyse, monitor and report the characteristics of the housing stock and way in which it was changing.

The Committee was also advised that since its inception, the Joint Strategy Unit had provided an increasing amount of information on its website covering the Tees Valley, boroughs and individual wards. Developments were now planned to improve the website to include:-

- More Information – a wider range of information covering a range of topics from the Census, other Government sources and locally produced data; this covers the range of issues relevant to regeneration, like unemployment, educational achievement, poor health, low income and crime.
- More areas – as well as wards, the information now covers neighbourhoods and towns and villages;
- Better presentation and navigation
- Snapshot – a selection of key indicators for one area; designed for those wanting to gain a range of information about a single locality;
- Map and Compare – information and map on one indicator for all areas in the borough or Tees Valley; designed for those who want to know how areas compare, which are highest and lowest

RESOLVED that the report, describing the Joint Strategy Unit's role in monitoring the impact of the Tees Valley Housing Market Renewal Initiative at neighbourhood level; and the provision of a wide range of information on housing and other issues on websites; be noted.

DICIDA Activities

Consideration was given to an overview of the activities and discussions taken at the recent DICIDA conference on the Tees Valley on 24th and 25th November 2005.

The main topics covered by the conference were competitiveness, economic drivers and energy; each of which was important to continuing the sustainable development of the industry in the Tees Valley. With regard to its future work programme DICIDA now had a place on the government's chemical stakeholder forum and would continue to contribute to the forum's work on REACH. Work would also continue on lobbying on REACH both through the UK DICIDA network and in collaboration with colleagues in the European Chemicals Region network. Work on the impact of emissions trading on the industry would also continue, as would the whole question of energy in consultation with local MPs. DICIDA was only one of two UK organisations who contributed to the debate on Sustainable Technology Platforms and it was anticipated that further work in this area would be carried out in collaboration with European colleagues. Work would also continue on studies being undertaken by the European Chemical Regions Network and the North East was co-ordinating the study on skills; contributions to the innovations study; and on bringing back into use land contaminated with chemicals.

The Committee requested that an action plan be drawn up outlining the next stage of activity that could be undertaken by the Joint Strategy Unit/Joint Strategy Committee in support of the DICIDA initiative.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Consultation on Planning Application: Mixed Use Redevelopment to include residential, commercial, leisure, education, hotel, ancillary retail, landscaping and car parking at Middlehaven Central Industrial Area, on land bounded by Dock Street, Bridge Street, Cleveland/Durham Street and Vulcan Street, Middlesbrough (Application No. M/OUT/1990/05/P)

The views of the Joint Strategy Committee were requested regarding the consent of an outline planning application for the Phase 2 Development of Middlehaven, Middlesbrough which included:-

570 residential units
Commercial/office development
Museum/leisure attraction
Primary school
Retail and leisure uses
Hotel

The proposal broadly conformed with the local strategy of both Regional Planning Guidance for the North East and the adopted Tees Valley Structure Plan. Middlehaven also formed a key site within the Stockton-Middlesbrough River Corridor Regeneration project outlined in the Tees Valley Vision.

While all the elements proposed were broadly accepted it was noted that the Borough Council would need to ensure that the housing development complemented the housing regeneration schemes and the retail element did not affect the vitality and viability of Middlesbrough town centre. Officers of the Joint Strategy Unit had also expressed some concerns regarding the projected low level of future background traffic growth on the existing road network given the large scale of the full development scheme and the possible effect on the A19/A66 junction, even taking into account planned highway improvements to the A66 Cargo Fleet and Hartington Interchange junctions and other surrounding roads.

RESOLVED that Middlesbrough Borough Council be informed of the following comments of the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Committee regarding the outline planning application for mixed use development at Middlehaven Phase 2:-

- (i) The Joint Strategy Committee welcomes the proposed mixed use development at Middlehaven and recognises the valuable role the

proposal will make to the successful regeneration of both Middlesbrough and the wider Tees Valley sub-region;

- (ii) The proposal broadly conforms with the locational strategy set out in Regional Planning Guidance for the North East and in the adopted Tees Valley Structure Plan;
- (iii) The Middlehaven development forms a key element in the regeneration of the Stockton-Middlesbrough river corridor and will complement the revitalisation of Middlesbrough town centre;
- (iv) The Borough Council should ensure that the residential element of the proposal complements other housing regeneration initiatives both underway and planned; and
- (v) The Borough Council should be satisfied that retail development proposed within the Middlehaven scheme complements the vitality and viability of Middlesbrough town centre.

Consultation on Outline Planning Application: Erection of New Buildings for the use as retail warehouses within Use Class A1, together with alterations to existing retail warehouse units and associated infrastructure and landscaping works at Teesbay Retail Park, Brenda Road, Hartlepool (Application No. H/2005/5921)

The Joint Strategy Committee had been consulted on an outline planning application for the expansion and refurbishment of Teesbay Retail Park, Brenda Road, Hartlepool; such a proposal to include:-

- Refurbishment of 10 retail warehouse units (approximately 14,211 square metres)
- Erection of 8 retail warehouse units (6,480 square metres)
- 195 additional car parking spaces

The Committee was advised that the proposal did not conform with the locational strategy of both Regional Planning Guidance for the North East and the adopted Tees Valley Structure Plan. The principle of sustainable development reinforced the need to make maximum use of town centres and the Hartlepool Local Plan Revised Deposit Draft therefore focused major shopping development in the primary shopping area and on the edge of centre followed by fringe sites in the overall town centre. Teesbay Retail Park was an out of centre site.

RESOLVED that Hartlepool Borough Council be informed of the following comments of the Joint Strategy Committee on the outline planning application for expanded retail warehouse development and associated car parking at Teesbay Retail Park:-

- (i) The proposal does not conform with the locational strategy set out in Regional Planning Guidance for the North East and in the adopted Tees Valley Structure Plan;
- (ii) The Borough Council should be satisfied that the retail development proposed at Teesbay Retail Park complements the vitality and viability of Hartlepool town centre and complements other regeneration initiatives both underway and planned; and
- (iii) The Borough Council should recognise that it may be necessary to re-examine non-car travel mode assumptions on accessibility.

Projected Outturn Report 2005/2006

Consideration was given to the projected outturn position for the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit for 2005/2006.

At the present time there was an estimated underspend of £192,340; approximately £40,000 of which was due to protracted discussions relating to the management restructuring exercise which meant that a number of vacant posts had been frozen for some time. This amounted to around £140,000, but was offset by the provision of an additional £100,000 to cover estimated redundancy costs. The remaining underspend was primarily due to a successful funding claim against expenditure claim within many of the unit's project area.

Both income and expenditure had significantly greater than envisaged at the time the original budget had been approved and the major element of this was the amount carried forward (£980,735) from 2004/05 for the 'Real Time Information' project. It was noted that the costs of the Joint Waste Management Function provided by the Joint Strategy Unit from 1st October 2005 would be reflected in the next outturn figures.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

List of Meetings

Members received a comprehensive list of the meetings that had been attended by officers of the Joint Strategy Unit.

RESOLVED that the list of meetings be noted.