

Regeneration & Transport Select Committee

A meeting of Regeneration & Transport Select Committee was held on Monday, 3rd December, 2007.

Present: Cllr Maurice Perry (Chairman), Cllr Dick Cains, Cllr Mrs Eileen Craggs, Cllr John Fletcher, Cllr Paul Kirton, Cllr Fred Salt and Cllr Michael Smith.

Officers: B Buckley, M Robinson, M Rowell, R Todd (DNS); P K Bell, G Birtle, D Ladd (LD).

Also in attendance: No other persons were present.

Apologies: Cllr Kevin Faulks and Cllr Liz Nesbitt

RTS 39/07

Declarations of Interest

There were no interests declared.

RTS 40/07

Draft minutes of the meetings held on 1st October 2007, 15th October 2007, 23rd October 2007, 29th October 2007 and 5th November 2007.

Consideration was given to the content of the draft minutes of the meetings held on 1st October 2007, 15th October 2007, 23rd October 2007, 29th October 2007 and 5th November 2007.

CONCLUDED that the minutes of the meetings held on 1st October 2007, 15th October 2007, 23rd October 2007, 29th October 2007 and 5th November 2007 be forwarded to Council for consideration.

RTS 41/07

Review of Street Lighting - Progress Report

Members were presented with a Progress Report for the Review of Street Lighting.

Mr B Buckley (Group Leader Highways Network Manager) and Mr M Robinson (Head of Technical Services) were in attendance at the meeting and presented the report to Members.

The Progress Report detailed the recommendations from the review, responsibility for action, anticipated completion date, evidence of progress and assessment of progress. Also attached to the Progress Report was the Action Plan, an inventory of street lighting equipment, results of the Darlington Back Lane dimming experiment, financial summary from possible advertising, street lighting repair performance figures and a draft Street Lighting Policy.

With regard recommendation 1 Members felt that it would be useful if they could access the EXOR Database so they could check on the progress of a street lighting repair. The Head of Technical Services was not sure if this would be possible due to Members being on a different server to the EXOR Database but he would investigate the situation with the I.T Section and report back to Members.

With regard recommendation 2 and the performance figures, it was reported that repairs for non district network operator were taking an average of 2.2 days

and for district network operator repairs were taking an average of 33.2 days.

A Member reported that at the time of the review Members had requested that all Members receive a quarterly report on street lighting faults on a ward by ward basis. The first one had been received but there had not been any further reports for some time. The Group Leader Highways Network Manager reported that he would make sure Members keep receiving the fault reports on a quarterly basis.

It was reported that Middlesbrough Council's performance figures for district network operator street lighting repairs were better than the Stockton Borough due to Neighbourhood Renewal Fund works that were being carried out in Middlesbrough.

The Group Leader Highways Network Manager informed Members that with regard recommendation 3 he was not convinced that there would be any cost benefit for utilising the software created by Jacobs Babtie that related to investment and replacement as Jacobs Babtie had not created a good case. Jacobs Babtie were offering a service and not a software product. This recommendation tied in with recommendation 5 and 6.

It was report that a draft policy document had been produced upon recommendations in Well Lit Highways. This had been in response to recommendation 4. The draft policy document was attached for Members information and it was reported that the report would be taken to Cabinet in 2008 for adoption.

Recommendations 5 and 6 were covered together and it was reported that a meeting had taken place with David Webster Ltd to explore their expertise in this area. David Webster Ltd were willing to share their expertise in developing a business case following recent experiences in PFI/PPP contracts.

With regard recommendation 7 an advert had been placed in a national journal and a preferred supplier accepted. It had also been agreed in principal by CMT and the Cabinet Member to advertise on the highway to generate revenue. The item had been placed in the Forward Plan for January 2008. This had been delayed due to assessment of the business viability by the preferred supplier.

With regard recommendations 8 and 9 and the dimming trial, the Group Leader Highways Network Manager outlined the encouraging results of the energy consumption reductions. The next stage would be to further develop the dimming trial. This would include further consultation and extending the experiment to gain some further evidence and conclusions.

Members reported that the practice of a sign being put on columns where a fault can not be rectified at the first site visit was not happening. Group Leader Highways Network Manager outlined that he would be disappointed if this was not happening and would raise this item at his next monthly meeting with David Webster Ltd.

Members congratulated all of the officers that had been involved in the progression of the Street Lighting Review recommendations.

CONCLUDED that the Progress Report be noted.

**RTS
42/07** **Review of Employability - Draft Final Report**

Members were presented with the draft final report of the Review of Employability.

The Chairman outlined the recommendations contained within the report following a recent Tripartite meeting and gave Members the opportunity to make comments and ask questions.

Members made some changes to the recommendations which were unanimously agreed. Members then agreed to forward the report to Cabinet for consideration on 20th December 2007.

All Members of the Committee thanked Daniel Ladd (Scrutiny Officer) and the supporting officers for their assistance in compiling the Committee's report. Members felt that the report had encompassed the 3 main issues of the original brief. Members also commented upon the ease in which the report could be read and the use of plain English throughout the report.

CONCLUDED that the Review of Employability Final Report be forwarded to Cabinet for consideration on 22nd December 2007.

**RTS
43/07** **Work Programme:-**

The Chairman reported that the next topic for the Committee would be the School Travel Plan.

Members discussed other possible topics for the Committee. Councillor Mrs Craggs requested that a future topic for the Committee be the Light Rail Plan.

Councillor Fletcher requested that information be given to Members on the scrutiny process around Tees Valley Unlimited.

CONCLUDED that the next scrutiny topic for the Committee be the School Travel Plan.