

## Place Select Committee

A meeting of Place Select Committee was held on Monday, 7th September, 2015.

**Present:** Cllr Nigel Cooke(Chairman), Cllr Derrick Brown(Vice-Chairman), Cllr Sonia Bailey, Cllr Evaline Cunningham, Cllr Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr Ken Dixon, Cllr Maurice Perry, Cllr Rachael Proud and Cllr Bill Woodhead.

**Officers:** Louise McDonald, Paul Dobson, Richard McGuckin, Jamie McCann, Craig Willows, Jane Edmonds, Julie Nixon (DNS), Graham Birtle, Jenna McDonald (LDS)

**Also in attendance:** Kate Stow (Head of Marketing and Communications - Peel Airports Management)

**Apologies:**

**PLA 12/15 Evacuation Procedure**

The evacuation procedure was noted.

**PLA 13/15 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**PLA 14/15 Minutes for Signature - 15 June 2015**

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2015 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

AGREED that the minutes were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**PLA 15/15 Draft Minutes - 20 July 2015**

Consideration was given to the draft minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2015.

AGREED that the minutes be approved.

**PLA 16/15 Scrutiny Review of the Future of Durham Tees Valley Airport**

Members were provided with an action plan and progress update on the scrutiny review of the future of Durham Tees Valley Airport (DTVA). The following points were highlighted based on the recommendations from the Action Plan:

- The Peel Group (Peel) aimed to increase leisure options over the summer months of 2015 and a number of ad hoc flights had been added to the airport services.

- A new website for DTVA launched in January/February 2015 as part of a marketing investment for the airport. Members heard that the new site and marketing campaign had delivered double the number of website visitors consistently on a monthly basis since the launch.

- It was noted that the owner of an airport had little influence on airlines which chose to use it.
- Statistics highlighted an increase in flights during 2014/15 including all 3 measures of traffic; Point to Point (P2P), mid haul and long haul all of which were required to be seen as working for the success of DTVA.
- DTVA appointed an Aviation Development Manager to work closely with new and existing airlines in order to develop relationships and create new route opportunities.
- Peel committed £5M in addition to the Local Growth Fund contribution to create a new link road between the north and south side of the airport.
- A bid submitted by Peel for a Belfast City service was short listed in August 2015 for which further discussion was due to take place.
- In order to increase marketing promotion with KLM and Eastern Airways, Peel introduced new campaigns such as; a new website, a radio campaign and a billboard campaign. A loyalty privilege campaign was also launched in 2015 in addition to a business survey which created 26 new leads.
- In relation to recommendation 7, Members heard that the Enabling Development Plan was submitted to Darlington Borough Council and was being assessed by consultants on behalf of the Local Authorities.
- The five local authority Councils across the Tees Valley were working closely with DTVA to find solutions to sub-regional and local public transport connections to DTVA.

Members raised the following points/questions:

- As the number of visitors to the website did not give a clear indication of the number of people who went on to buy flights, Members asked whether the success measures of the website were measured purely from the number of people visiting the site. It was heard that the true measure of success was focusing on the number of people utilising the airport. Members heard that Peel tried to develop key metrics on how progress was measured.
- Was it possible for Peel to identify success measures from sites such as Expedia? Members were informed that it was not possible to determine whether DTVA influenced a sale through a third party website however if the product was owned by Peel, more information could be gathered.
- Members asked whether the new link road between the north and south side of the airport had been approved, and heard that the proposed plans were currently in the planning stages.
- It was asked whether any additional information could be added to the devolution process and in response heard that the deadline for information was 4 September 2015.

- Members asked how likely it would be that landing charges would be reduced at Heathrow and were informed that it was open to the market to set costs. A variety of mechanisms were to be assessed to ensure that airport prices remained competitive.

- It was important for people to understand that it was vital that those flights which were important to business connectivity remained in place.

- The Committee asked whether the decline in the oil industry had an impact on DTVA. It was highlighted that the airport had been affected on traffic but were in a stronger position due to its relationship with KLM.

Members heard that the recommendations made by the Committee were showing positive progress.

AGREED that all recommendations be noted and approved by the Committee.

## **PLA 17/15 Overview of Environment, Housing, Regeneration and Transport Services**

The Committee was provided with an overview of the Economic Growth and Development Services Division. Key achievements and emerging issues were highlighted together as follows:

- Following a review in 2014/15, the new division of Economic Growth and Development Services was formed from the former service areas of Planning, Regeneration and Technical Services.

- The physical regeneration of Stockton High Street was completed in March 2015 with a successful high profile opening attracting thousands of people to the town centre. Improvement works were also carried out on Yarm High Street and Billingham Town Centre.

- The Committee heard that the biggest challenges throughout 14/15 included finance/budget pressures and service restructures.

Members were provided with an overview of Direct Services from the Head of Service. Key points were highlighted as follows:

- Direct services functions included:

Care For Your Area (CFYA) Community Services, which focussed on areas such as Waste and Recycling Collection, Grounds Maintenance, Cemeteries, Parks, Arboriculture, Street Cleansing, Registration and Bereavement Services, and Community Transport.

CFYA Technical and Commercial Services which focussed on areas such as Vehicle Maintenance, Highway Maintenance, HVE, Building, Street Lighting and Fleet Management.

Catering and Cleaning Services which focussed on areas such as civic, school and event catering as well as a range of building cleaning functions.

- It was highlighted that Support functions within Direct Services included Business Support and Procurement
- Waste Management was an additional function which provided a strategic approach to waste delivery and waste minimisation alongside other LA's in the region.
- A review was due to be carried out on the Waste Management Strategy and was expected to be a significant piece of work.
- The Committee heard that the key achievements during 2014/15 included the implementation of a key management review within transport and fleet management, incorporating Community Transport as an additional key frontline service within Direct Services and also maintaining high customer service surveys across key areas of the service.
- It was highlighted that a range of the small depot locations used by Direct Services were no longer fit for purpose and there is an aspiration to provide a facility which would allow the integration of highways and street lighting into a single site.
- Members were presented with information based on the future key strategic priorities for Direct Services
- It was noted that a number of site visits were scheduled in 2015 in order to discuss how Direct Services could utilise and publicise more effectively.

The Committee raised the following points/questions:

- Why did a higher level of street cleansing take place on main roads in comparison to smaller streets off route of a main road? It was highlighted that resources have been cut significantly across front line areas and the resilience to deliver the same standards as we perhaps did in the past have been impacted. However, we do have a greater requirement for increased cleansing cover in primary retail areas, main arterial routes, secondary retail areas as these are locations which are likely to result in a greater amount of litter due to footfall etc. Members were reassured, however, that a programme was in place based upon national best practice which ensures that resources are delivered effectively across other areas of the borough which ensures that litter is managed effectively.

Members were provided with an overview of Housing and Community Safety Services from Head of Housing and Community Protection. Key achievements and future challenges were highlighted as follows:

- Functions which were managed by Housing Services included Benefits Service, Housing Options, Housing Strategy and Regeneration and Private Sector Housing.
- A significant part of the work carried out within the Benefits Service was transactional focusing on processing claims. However there was an increasing focus on working alongside Housing Options and Welfare rights to consider the impact of welfare reforms and the potential options available to support the most

vulnerable.

- The Housing Options Service operated a triage service and unlike many other local Authorities provided a service over and above the Councils statutory duties the service also provided advice, assistance and in many cases a tailor made homeless prevention/intervention plan.

- The Housing Strategy team focussed on understanding the needs of local housing and what could be done to help meet those needs. It was heard that the team carried out market assessments.

Members noted the key achievements of the Housing Services as a whole during 2014/15.

Members heard that the continuous increase in private sector housing was a challenge moving forward in addition to the introduction of a legislation affecting the private rented sector.

AGREED that the information be noted.

**PLA  
18/15**      **Work Programme**

Members gave consideration to the Work Programme 2015/16.

Agreed that the work programme be noted.

**PLA  
19/15**      **Chair's Update**

The Chair provided no update.