
INFRASTRUCTURE, HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Draft MINUTES

Of a meeting held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth, on Tuesday 25 September between 7.30pm and 8.54pm.

Councillors present:

Martin Trevett (Lead Member for Infrastructure and Planning Policy)	
Stephen Giles-Medhurst (Lead Member for Economic Development)	
Andrew Scarth (Lead Member for Housing)	
Joanna Clemens	Margaret Hofman
Peter Getkahn	Alex Hayward
Paula Hiscocks	Angela Killick
Joan King	Jon Tankard

Officers Present: Nigel Pollard, Section Head Financial Planning & Analysis
Kimberley Rowley, Head of Regulatory Services
Peter Simons, Senior Transport Planner
Mike Simpson, Committee and Web Officer

Also In attendance: Geof Muggeridge, Director of Community & Environmental Services

Councillor Martin Trevett in the Chair

IHED15/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Heather Kenison, Councillor Cllr Alex Hayward substituted.

IHED16/18 MINUTES

The minutes of the Infrastructure, Housing and Economic Development Committee meeting held on 14 August 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

IHED17/18 NOTICE OF OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman ruled that the admission of the following item: 'Arriva Rail proposals to close the Customer Service ticket offices on the London Overground at South Oxhey Rail Station' had not been available five clear working days before the meeting but was to be considered as a matter of urgency as a response was required by 11 October 2018.

It was agreed it would be taken as Item 8a on the agenda for the meeting.

IHED18/18 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

IHED19/18 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT – PERIOD 4 (End of July)

The Section Head Financial Planning & Analysis introduced the report, which was for information only. Attention was to be paid to those areas that were under the remit of the Committee.

A Member asked about the reported £200,000 shortfall in parking income, and asked why some machines were out of order for a prolonged period, and what was the reason for the delay in implementing parking charges in other areas of the District? The Head of Regulatory Services replied that there were only two periods when two machines were out of action for prolonged periods but generally faults were reported and reacted to very quickly.

The Council was receiving and monitoring income from new short term parking charges and progress was being made.

A Member asked what the timescale was for full implementation of the charges, and the Head of Regulatory Services said she would provide a more detailed update when one was available. She added that the Council continued to look at other charging schemes in other car parks.

The Chairman of the meeting said that the starting deficit was £180,000 and the current figure represented this shortfall. The parking review was still evolving, and the Council was moving in the right direction to clear the deficit.

A Member said delays in implementing the charges were due to a number of factors.

The Member asked whether a breakdown of additional costs incurred with the building of temporary accommodation in Rickmansworth and other sites was available. The lack of detail was unacceptable. The Director of Community & Environmental Services responded that the expansion of the site in Rickmansworth plus unforeseen drainage costs as well as the increased cost of modular housing contributed to the larger than expected figure. A more detailed breakdown was not possible because the final invoices had not yet been received, and figures were based on estimates.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the Budget Monitoring Report – Period 4 (end of July) be noted.

IHED20/18 SOUTH WEST HERTFORDSHIRE GROWTH AND TRANSPORT PLAN

The Senior Transport Planner introduced the report on Hertfordshire County Council's consultation on the draft South West Herts Growth and Transport Plan. The report contained numerous plans for transportation schemes to be phased in over a long period. It was a living document in which some contentious schemes were proposed, and as such was subject to further development. Some significant parts of the District were not included in the plan, such as Chorleywood and Maple Cross. The Committee was asked to provide its reactions to the proposals therein, and all feedback would form part of the consultation process.

The Chairman asked that Members of the Committee look at each package listed and make its observations after every item. Members' comments were listed under each package as follows:

Package 4: St Albans - Watford Corridor

Opposed to the replacing of a road lane on the A405 with a bus lane as it was not a practical solution. It was noted that the off-road cycleway was already in place.

Proposed response: Agreed not to support the County Council's recommendation to provide an additional bus lane in lieu of a car lane.

Package 5: Western Gateway (Watford & Croxley Business Parks)

The request to support the scheme in principle was not feasible until more details were known. Was the scheme really justified as 90% of the buses were run by commercial operators and already a number of bus routes had been cancelled in the District because they were not commercially viable.

A Member stated that agreement to participate in the consultation process did not constitute agreement for the schemes as proposed. A Member said that while he acknowledged the benefits of the route, he had concerns regarding the impact on the Green Belt and aquifer, and the increased volume of buses was not viable.

It was agreed to request removal of this proposed scheme from the GTP.

With regard to the Tolpits Lane southern access Members sought more information if it was to be opened to all traffic and details of feasibility. They added a request to improve vehicle access to Tolpits Lane.

Proposed response: Agreed that the proposed schemes within Package 5 be removed from the GTP.

Package 6: Watford - Hemel Hempstead Corridor

A Member stated that he was opposed to the provision of a bus lane on the A41 and was also concerned about commercial viability of existing and new bus routes. He would want commitment from HCC with regard to the bus services it proposed.

With regard to the proposals affecting the bus route to Kings Langley station, it was questioned why the scheme was included when it had previously been deemed commercially unviable. Reference the Park and Ride proposals at Kings Langley rail station, a Member said that in view of the probable building of more residential accommodation in the area, such a facility might be feasible. It was advised that the location of the station made the scheme unworkable, and the Chairman said it was a conversation to have when discussing the Local Plan.

Proposed response: Agreed that the proposal to increase capacity at Junction 20 of the M25 be supported and the other two schemes to be objected to, in accordance with the report's recommendations.

Package 8: Watford South

A Member was supportive of the building of a new slip road at Junction 4 of the M1 southbound, which would allow better access to Bushey Arches, even though it would be expensive.

Proposed response: The Committee agreed to support the comments within the report.

Package 9: Rickmansworth

The Committee agreed with the removal of the item relating to Ebury Way and agreed to support the 20mph zone in Church Street, Rickmansworth.

A Member opposed the removal of the underpass between Rickmansworth Station and Victoria Close as it is heavily used at certain times of day, especially by school children. The Committee agreed with the Member's suggestion that the underpass be retained, in addition to the construction of a new pedestrian crossing.

It was agreed that the crossing at the A412/A404 Riverside Drive/ Uxbridge Road roundabout required improvement as cars tend not to stop for pedestrians, and it was confirmed that upgraded barriers would be installed at the roundabout near the former Travis Perkins site.

On the subject of buses, the service in Maple Cross was spasmodic at best, to which it was stated that it was remiss of HCC to exclude Maple Cross from the plan, along with other significant areas.

Proposed response: Agreed to support the comments within the report, but to retain the underpass between Rickmansworth Station and Victoria Close in addition to a new pedestrian crossing.

Other interventions:

A Member said the closure of Apsley Station or closure of Kings Langley Station should not form part of any future strategy and should be removed from the plan.

On the matter of the Metropolitan Line Extension, the Committee agreed that it was necessary to support and protect plans for use as a passenger route in some form at a future date.

A Member suggested a request for funding of the rail link be submitted, especially in view of the opening of a new school and housing in Maple Cross.

Proposed response: Agreed to strongly object to any reference to the closure of Kings Langley and Apsley Station in the final GTP.

A Member thanked the Senior Transport Planner for his work on the report. It was reiterated that the comments of all Councillors would form part of the Council's response.

The Lead Member for Economic Development moved, duly seconded, that the response to the plan, including those comments as noted, be submitted.

On being put to the Committee the Chairman declared the motion CARRIED, the voting being unanimous.

RESOLVED:

To authorise the Director of Community Services and Environment to return a response as outlined above to HCC as the formal TRDC response to the Growth and Transport Plan (GTP) consultation.

IHED21/18 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee reviewed the work programme, and a Member asked if a revised date could be confirmed for the Cedars Estate conservation area report, originally scheduled for Spring/Summer 2018 but deferred due to Local Plans work taking priority.

RESOLVED:

That a revised date be advised to the Committee by the time of the next meeting of the Infrastructure, Housing and Economic Development Committee on 20 November 2018.

IHED 22/18

ARRIVA RAIL PROPOSALS TO CLOSE THE CUSTOMER SERVICE TICKET OFFICES ON THE LONDON OVERGROUND

A Member introduced the urgent report, which stated that Arriva Rail London was proposing to close ticket offices at 51 overground stations, thereby impacting residents in three wards within the District. A reply to London Travel/Watch was required by 11 October 2018. He asked that the

Committee consider making a formal objection to the proposals, especially in view of the likely effect on the elderly.

A Member said she would object to the proposal as it was a clear case of cost-cutting, and references to improving customer service were disingenuous. A Member said it sounded like part of a long-term programme by TfL to cut costs, and that all Members of the Committee should support the objection and move on.

A Member raised concerns on behalf of disabled travellers, and possible issues of isolation.

The Lead Member for Economic Development moved, duly seconded, that the Committee formerly objects to the removal of ticket offices across the London Overground Network.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee formerly objects to the removal of ticket offices across the London Overground Network by Arriva Rail London.

CHAIRMAN