

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
TRANSPORT & INFRASTRUCTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD ON THURSDAY, 17 NOVEMBER 2022 AT CONFERENCE ROOM
1/2, WELLINGTON HOUSE, 40-50 WELLINGTON STREET, LEEDS, LS1
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Present:

Councillor Tina Benton	Calderdale Council
Councillor Kayleigh Brooks	Leeds City Council
Councillor Joanne Dodds	Bradford Council
Councillor Jackie Ferguson	Wakefield Council
Councillor Caroline Firth	Bradford Council
Councillor Dot Foster	Calderdale Council
Councillor Tony Hames	Wakefield Council
Councillor Jessica Lennox	Leeds City Council
Councillor Harry McCarthy	Kirklees Council
Councillor Andrew Pinnock (Deputy Chair)	Kirklees Council
Councillor Mark Thompson	Kirklees Council
Councillor Anna Watson	Bradford Council

In attendance:

Noel Collings	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Helen Ellerton	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Matthew Page	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Dave Pearson	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Hannah Scales	West Yorkshire Combined Authority

10. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Amanda Parsons-Hulse and Ian Cuthbertson.

The meeting was confirmed as quorate, with 12 members present out of 11 needed for quorum.

11. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

12. Possible exclusion of the press and public

There were no items requiring the exclusion of the press and public.

13. Minutes of the last meeting held on 22 September 2022

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 September 2022 be approved.

14. Chair's comments and update

The Committee received a verbal update from the Chair. The Chair addressed his deputising as chair for the meeting.

Resolved: That the Chair's verbal update be noted.

15. Decarbonisation

The Committee received a report which updated members on the Combined Authority's Decarbonisation programme, including an overview of the work pertaining to the carbon impact assessment. The Committee also received further detail verbally on appendices A and C of the Mott MacDonald report, linked but not included in the agenda pack.

Net Zero Targets and Carbon Impact Assessments:

- The net zero targets are different at different levels (WYCA 2038, Leeds City Council 2030, and National Government 2050) but all a common methodology for carbon impact assessment (CIA), across all schemes.
- The CA and the five authorities are attempting to align all carbon neutral work, despite the differences in targets.
- These are carried out by the scheme promoters and included in business cases at the appropriate decision point in the assurance process. The early stage of assessment is qualitative, in the second stage when the scheme is further developed the carbon emissions can then be quantified and confirmed.
- Concerns were expressed that the CIAs in the Mott Macdonald report appeared to show that carbon emissions had not been reduced to date.
- Officers reported many of the assessments did not consider things such as "induced impact traffic" that would have shown lower traffic and emissions over time.
- Officers confirmed that, according to analysis, the Combined Authority was on target to achieve the 2030 target – though a lot of work is still needed between then and now.
- The CA's Climate & Environment Committee is responsible for monitoring progress on net-zero targets and scrutiny can also be provided sight of these reports.
- Scrutiny members requested further information and data in future, for closer analysis by members, so they can see the challenges and progress areas for themselves, including data regarding the current emissions from the transport sector, the projections to 2030 as a result of policies and when the pathway will be decided.

Behaviour Change & Young People:

- In addition to work undergone by local authorities and the national government, every person in the region would ultimately have to be a part of any long-term reduction in carbon emissions through changed habits.
- The scrutiny committee had previously discussed behaviour change principles, such as gamification, last year and some of these are now in development at the CA as part of wider work, officers confirmed.
- Further information on this, building on the committee's previous discussions, can be shared, and revisited at a future date.

Bus Service Quality and Transport Emissions:

- Transport, roads, and cars is one of the biggest emitters of carbon in the region, at nearly half of all emissions.
- A reliable bus service which encourages people to use it is vital to reaching decarbonisation targets.
- Despite Combined Authority initiatives subsidising bus travel, as long as services remaining unreliable or are reduced on certain routes, patronage will not rise to the level needed to meet net zero targets.
- Bus services are still struggling and facing persistent issues with workforce and reduced patronage which has not been replaced following the pandemic.
- Other historic structural challenges in the bus network also remain and are exacerbated by the reduced income and investment from reduced patronage – currently relying on central government funding, currently being renewed on six monthly basis following negotiation without a long-term guarantee.
- Wider work related to the Bus Service Improvement Plan is underway will continue to be monitored by the Transport Committee and scrutiny.
- The CA is intervening where it can, within a deregulated and commercially controlled bus network, for instance, to procure and roll out electric buses and other measures which seek to reduce the carbon footprint of bus services. The technology is still in its infancy but is progressing with time.

Energy Generation and Natural Environment:

- Members shared concerns with regards to the robustness of the power supply and its ability to sustain growing demand in the context of cleaner and more renewable energy sources and greater use of electric vehicle. Officers were assured by the National Grid that the system can withstand this increase in use.
- Offshore and onshore wind is the cheapest form of electricity to in principle, but currently the cost of wind and other cheaper sources are tied to the price of gas, which makes them more expensive in practice. Discussions have been taking place nationally to decouple renewable energy prices from gas in order to incentivise its uptake further.
- Some members also shared concerns with the definition of renewable energy, considering some power stations have reverted to burning wood which has a large carbon footprint and also affects the wider sustainability of the environment, as defined by the UN other goals related to natural environment, such as trees and animal habitats.

Resolved: That the report be noted, and the Committee's feedback, conclusions and requests for further information be considered further.

16. Transport Scrutiny Work Programme

The Committee noted the Work programme for 2022/23. Members discussed the Mayor's Question Time (MQT), including the MQT Planning workshop scheduled for 20 December 2022, and reiterated the request made in the previous item for further information and sight of net-zero related activity. Members also discussed an intention to oversee and monitor the work of the main Transport Committee more closely in future.

Resolved: That the appended 2022/23 Work Programme be approved.

17. Date of the next meeting - 19 January 2023