

Berkshire Local Transport Body – Meeting held on Thursday, 16th November, 2017.

Present:-

Councillor Page (in the Chair)	Reading Borough Council
Stuart Atkinson	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
Councillor Bicknell	RBWM
Councillor Brunel-Walker	Bracknell Forest Council
Councillor Clifford	West Berkshire Council
Charles Eales	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
Ingrid Fernandes	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
Peter Howe	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
Councillor Lee (from 4.06pm)	Wokingham Borough Council
Councillor Matloob	Slough Borough Council
Councillor Sleight (deputising until 4.06pm)	Wokingham Borough Council
Matthew Taylor	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP

Apologies for Absence:- Graeme Steer

PART 1

11. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Page declared that he was the councillor representing Reading Borough Council which was the project sponsor for the East Reading MRT Phases 1 & 2 (item 4) and South Reading MRT Phases 3 & 4 (item 6).

Councillor Bicknell declared that he was the councillor representing the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead which was the project sponsor for the Maidenhead Station scheme (item 5) and was seeking supporting for unallocated funds under TVB Local Growth Deal (item 8).

Councillor Sleight (deputising for Councillor Lee at the commencement of the meeting) declared that he was representing Wokingham Borough Council which was the project sponsor for schemes related to Thames Valley Park & Ride.

Matthew Taylor declared that he worked for Stewarts Coaches, which provided services to East Reading Park & Ride (item 8) and East Reading MRT (item 4).

Charles Eales declared that he worked for Microsoft based near to the Thames Valley Park Park & Ride scheme.

12. Minutes of the Meeting held on 20th July 2017

Resolved – That the minutes of the Berkshire Local Transport Body (BLTB) held on 20th July 2017 be approved as a correct record.

13. Briefing Note - TVB LEP / BLTB 'How We Work' - To Note

Members noted a briefing note that summarised the process by which Thames Valley Berkshire LEP and the Berkshire Local Transport Body operated in investing in local transport schemes. The purpose of the note was to set out the process, roles and responsibilities. It would be a standing item on future agendas.

Resolved – That the BLTB 'How we work' briefing note be noted.

(Councillor Lee joined the meeting)

14. Financial Approval 2.14 and 2.25 Reading: East Reading MRT Phases 1 & 2

A report was considered that sought to give financial approval to schemes 2.14 and 2.25 Reading: East Reading MRT Phases 1 and 2 which would create a new public transport link between central Reading and the proposed new Thames Valley Park Park & Ride site.

Representations from a member of the public, Mr John Sharpe, had been received and were circulated to the LTB for consideration. The points raised in the representation were noted and Members were given the opportunity to ask questions of the scheme promoter on any of the issues raised. A deferment had been requested in the representations, however, the LTB noted that its decision to give financial approval to the business case would in any event be dependent on the scheme securing planning consent.

The scheme promoter outlined the key aspects of the proposal which sought £19.07m towards a total cost of £23.87m. The scheme had a high value for money score taking into account the benefit cost ratio and wider benefits. The linkages to the separate Thames Valley Park P&R scheme were noted, however, it was emphasised that the MRT scheme would deliver wider benefits. Members discussed a number of aspects of the scheme and welcomed the fact it would promote modal shift and would help tackle congestion.

After due consideration, the LTB unanimously agreed the recommendation to give full financial approval to the schemes.

Resolved – That schemes 2.14 and 2.25 Reading: East Reading MRT Phases 1 and 2 be given full financial approval in the sum of £19,067,000 over three years (2018/19-2020/21) on the terms of the funding agreement set out at paragraph 11 step 5 of the report.

15. Financial Approval 2.16 Maidenhead Station

A report was considered that sought to give full financial approval to scheme 2.16 Maidenhead Station which would support improvements to connections,

links to the town centre, environmental enhancements, car parking and traffic management.

The LTB welcomed the progress that had been made to bring the scheme to the point of seeking financial approval and it was noted that it was a reduced version of the original proposal. The options for the use of the unallocated sum that would be released by proceeding with the lower cost scheme would be considered elsewhere on the agenda.

Members unanimously agreed to give the scheme full financial approval.

Resolved – That scheme 2.16 Maidenhead Station be given full financial approval in the sum of £3,750,000 over two years (2018/19-2019/20) on the terms of the funding agreement set out at paragraph 14 step 5 of the report.

16. Financial Approval 2.23 Reading: South Reading MRT Phases 3 & 4

A report was considered that sought full financial approval for scheme 2.23 Reading: South Reading MRT Phases 3 and 4 which would support a new public transport link between central Reading and Mere oak Park and Ride.

The scheme would expand on the existing bus priority measures in the A33 corridor. Phase 1 had been completed and Phase 2 was currently being constructed.

It was unanimously agreed that full financial approval be given to the scheme.

Resolved – That scheme 2.23 Reading: South Reading MRT Phases 3 and 4 be given full financial approval in the sum of £10,148,000 over three years (2017/18-2019/20) on the terms of the funding agreement set out at paragraph 11 step 5 of the report.

17. 2.07 Bracknell Coral Reef - One Year Impact Report

A report was considered that provided a one-year impact report on scheme 2.07 Bracknell: Coral Reef.

The scheme had received £2.1m to improve the Coral Reef junction and the initial assessment was that the scheme had been successful in providing increased capacity in a very busy corridor between the M3 and M4. There was significant growth in the area and it was considered that the scheme had had a positive impact. A question was asked about plans to tackle congestion elsewhere in the corridor and it was responded that the highway authority would continue to look to tackle pinchpoints.

At the end of the discussion, the impact report was noted.

Resolved – That the reports from the scheme promoter and the independent assessor be noted.

18. Thames Valley Berkshire Local Growth Deal 2015/16 to 2020/21

A report was received on the progress of the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Growth Deal which set out the status of approved schemes, updated financial profile and identified risks. It was noted that excellent progress was being made overall. Updates were provided by scheme promoters on each of the approved schemes:

2.01 Newbury: Kings Road Link Road – update noted. The scheme was underway, however, there had been an increase in costs due following geotechnical and contamination reports. Discussions were ongoing with the developer to address the issues.

2.02 Bracknell: Warfield Link Road – update noted.

2.03 Newbury: London Road Industrial Estate – the scheme was completed in March 2017 and the impact report would be received by the BLTB at a future meeting.

2.04.4: Wokingham: Arborfield Relief Road – update noted. A planning application had been submitted and was due to be determined early in 2018.

2.05 Newbury: Sandleford Park – update noted. There had been a delay due to increase construction costs although it was anticipated that the issues could be managed. The road was expected to be completed in 2019/20.

2.06 Reading: Green Park Railway Station – update noted. An additional £2.3m from the DfT New Stations Fund 2 had been secured to provide more facilities at the new station.

2.07 Bracknell: Coral Reef Roundabout – project completed.

2.08 Slough: Rapid Transit Phase 1 – update noted. The works were almost completed.

2.09.1 Sustainable Transport NCN 422 – update noted. Works were on site and progressing well.

2.09.2 Sustainable Transport A4 Cycle Route with Bucks – update noted. The Slough section was due to be completed in February 2018.

2.10 Slough: A332 Improvements – update noted. Progressing well and due to be completed in March 2018.

2.11 and 2.12 Reading: South Reading MRT phases 1 and 2 – update noted.

2.13 Wokingham: Thames Valley Park & Ride (previously called 2.13 Reading: Eastern Park & Ride) – update noted. Detailed design was proceeding with works due to start in Spring 2018.

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2.14 Reading: East Reading MRT Phase 1 and 2.25 Reading: East Reading MRT Phase 2 – update noted.

2.15 Bracknell: Martins Heron Roundabout – update noted. Phase 2 would start in January 2018.

2.16 Maidenhead Station Access – update noted.

2.17 Slough: A355 Route – the scheme had been completed. The impact assessment would be received by BLTB next year.

2.18 No scheme.

2.19 Bracknell: Town Centre Regeneration and Infrastructure Improvements – update noted. The Lexicon town centre regeneration opened in September and early footfall figures were positive.

2.20 No scheme.

2.21 Slough: Langley Station Access Improvements – update noted. Due to start in January 2018.

2.22 Slough: Burnham Station Access Improvements – update noted. Due for completion in March 2018.

2.23 Reading: South Reading MRT Phases 3 and 4 – update noted.

2.24 Newbury: Railway Station improvements – update noted.

2.25 – see 2.14

2.26 Wokingham: Winnersh Relief Road (Phase 2) – update noted. Work was proceeding and the planning application was being prepared for submission next year.

2.27 Maidenhead Town Centre: Missing Links – update noted. It was expected that the Business Case would be considered by BLTB in March 2018.

2.28 Bracknell: A3095 Corridor Improvements – update noted. Business Case expected at the meeting in March 2018.

Unallocated amount

Members noted that Scheme 2.16 Maidenhead Station had originally been allocated £6.75m towards the £8m cost of the scheme. As per the decision taken earlier in the meeting (Minute 15 refers), the LTB contribution had been reduced to £3.75m for a £4.5m scheme. This left £3m unallocated and the LTB considered the options to reallocate the available capital as set out in

paragraph 21 of the report. These were to award programme entry status to the next scheme on the 2016 prioritised list; award programme entry status to the highest priority scheme following a new call for bids; or award programme entry status to a scheme submitted by the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead for infrastructure improvements to enable housing development at the Maidenhead Golf Club site. Councillor Bicknell summarised the position of the Royal Borough and explained the significant benefits of the proposed scheme at the golf club site.

The LTB recognised the potential importance of the golf club scheme and encouraged the LEP to work with the Royal Borough to bring it forward. However, it was agreed that the prioritisation methodology was robust and remained the most appropriate way to allocate the funding in this instance given the limited sum for allocation and the availability of a strong scheme. Members asked whether the Business Case for the next scheme on the list, Wokingham, Winnersh Parkway, was ready and it was responded that it would be prepared once it was given programme entry status. The LTB voted in favour of Option A – Award Programme Entry Status to the next Scheme of the 2016 Prioritised List (Wokingham: Winnersh Parkway), with the exception of Councillor Bicknell who voted against.

Resolved –

- (a) That Option A be approved to Award Programme Entry status to Wokingham: Winnersh Parkway, the next scheme on the 2016 prioritised list for the allocation of the £3m identified in paragraphs 16-21 of the report.
- (b) That the progress made on schemes previously given programme entry status be noted.

19. Transport for the South East - Subscription Report

A report was considered that sought agreement to a BLTB subscription to Transport for the South East. It was proposed that the subscription of £20,000 for 2017/18 and £58,000 for 2018/19 split equally between the six constituent authorities be approved.

Mark Vallleley of East Sussex County Council joined the meeting and summarised the budgets for the next two years on which the subscriptions were based and answered questions from Members. A three year business plan was now in place for Transport for the South East and the contributions would enable the organisation to take forward its work programme. It was noted that the previously anticipated contribution from DfT was now very unlikely to be forthcoming in 2018/19.

Members discussed a range of issues including the role and status of sub-national transport bodies and some of the specific budget proposals. Some concerns were expressed that local authorities had not budgeted for a contribution this year and that DfT were not providing any funding. Assurance

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was provided that the local authority contributions requested were not replacing the lack of DfT funding. It would take some time to develop the transport strategy and securing the funding to start this work was important, particularly as other parts of the country were already much further ahead than the South East in this regard.

The LTB agreed the importance of working collaboratively to promote shared strategic transport interests across the South East. Members highlighted the importance of ensuring the body had 'teeth' and was effective. It was agreed that an impact report be considered after a year and that papers be circulated to keep Members informed of progress. At the conclusion of the discussion, it was unanimously agreed that the 2017/18 and 2018/19 subscriptions be approved as recommended.

Resolved –

- (a) That the budgets set for 2017/18 and 2018/19 be noted.
- (b) That the method of apportionment between the 16 authorities in TfSE be noted.
- (c) That the request for £20,000 in 2017/18 and £58,000 in 2018/19 from BLTB be agreed.
- (d) That collection of subscriptions by equal shares between the 6 constituent authorities of BLTB be agreed.

20. Airport National Policy Statement - Second Consultation Response

A report was considered that sought approval for a draft response to the second consultation on the Airports National Policy Statement.

There was relatively little new or revised information in the second consultation and the proposed response was set out in paragraph 14 of the report. This included restating the key points made during the first consultation, including support for expansion at Heathrow, ensuring that the appropriate and enforceable mitigation was in place for the adverse impacts.

The LTB agreed the draft response as set out in the report. Councillor Bicknell (RBWM) requested that his dissent from the decision be recorded given the Royal Borough's position on Heathrow Airport expansion.

Resolved – That the draft response as set out in paragraphs 13 and 14 of the report be endorsed.

21. Assurance Framework

A report was considered that set out the conclusions of a review of the BLTB Founding Document, as agreed in November 2013, as part of a wider review of the LEPs Assurance Framework.

The review had been undertaken by a working group to ensure the BLTBs procedures continued to meet government guidance and best practice. The revised BLTB Assurance Framework was considered as at Appendix 1 to the report, and the principle change was to provide for members of the public to be able to address meetings of the LTB when financial approval for a scheme was being considered. The provision was closely modelled on public participation schemes for planning applications.

A time limit of four minutes in total for public speaking would be provided, however, there was some flexibility for the chair to vary this in exceptional circumstances. Members welcomed the principle of permitting public speaking and approved the revised Assurance Framework.

Resolved – That the BLTB Assurance Framework as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

22. BLTB Forward Plan

The forward plan was considered which set out the pipeline of schemes anticipated to come to the LTB for funding approval at future meetings.

Resolved – That the BLTB Forward Plan be noted.

23. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 15th March 2018 at 4.00pm at The Curve, William Street, Slough.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 4.00 pm and closed at 5.41 pm)