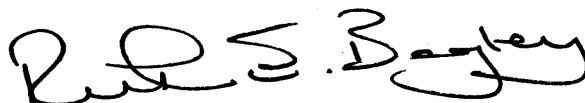


Date of issue: Friday, 19 June 2015

MEETING:	NEIGHBOURHOODS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL (Councillors Dar, Davis, N Holledge, Malik, Mansoor, Morris, Plenty, Sohal and Wright)
DATE AND TIME:	MONDAY, 29TH JUNE, 2015 AT 6.30 PM
VENUE:	MEETING ROOM 3, CHALVEY COMMUNITY CENTRE, THE GREEN, CHALVEY, SLOUGH, SL1 2SP
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER: (for all enquiries)	DAVE GORDON 01753 875411

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are requested to attend the above Meeting at the time and date indicated to deal with the business set out in the following agenda.



RUTH BAGLEY
Chief Executive

AGENDA

PART I

<u>AGENDA ITEM</u>	<u>REPORT TITLE</u>	<u>PAGE</u>	<u>WARD</u>
	Apologies for absence.		
1.	Declarations of Interest		
	<i>All Members who believe they have a disclosable pecuniary or other pecuniary or non pecuniary interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting must declare that Interest and, having regard to the circumstances described in Section 3 paragraphs 3.25 – 3.27 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter is discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with paragraph 3.28 of the Code.</i>		
	<i>Members are asked to confirm that they do not have a declarable interest.</i>		
	<i>All Members making a declaration will be required to complete a Declaration of Interests at Meetings form detailing the nature of their interest.</i>		
CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS			
2.	Election of Chair		
3.	Election of Vice Chair		
4.	Minutes of the last meeting held on 30th March 2015	1 - 6	
5.	Member Questions		
	<i>An opportunity for Panel Members to ask questions of the relevant Director/Assistant Director, relating to pertinent, topical issues affecting their Directorate – maximum of 10 minutes allocated.</i>		
SCRUTINY ISSUES			
6.	Subletting fraud amnesty	7 - 10	
7.	A4 Brands Hill	11 - 24	
8.	Real time passenger information for bus service	25 - 28	
9.	Forward Work Programme	29 - 32	
ITEMS FOR INFORMATION			
9.	Date of Next Meeting - 3rd September 2015		

Press and Public

You are welcome to attend this meeting which is open to the press and public, as an observer. You will however be asked to leave before the Committee considers any items in the Part II agenda. Please contact the Democratic Services Officer shown above for further details.

The Council allows the filming, recording and photographing at its meetings that are open to the public. Anyone proposing to film, record or take photographs of a meeting is requested to advise the Democratic Services Officer before the start of the meeting. Filming or recording must be overt and persons filming should not move around the meeting room whilst filming nor should they obstruct proceedings or the public from viewing the meeting. The use of flash photography, additional lighting or any non hand held devices, including tripods, will not be allowed unless this has been discussed with the Democratic Services Officer.

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Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel – Meeting held on Monday, 30th March, 2015.

Present:- Councillors Plenty (Chair), N Holledge, Malik, Mansoor, Sohal and Wright

Also present under Rule 30:- Councillor Strutton

Apologies for Absence:- Councillor Chahal, Shah and Sidhu

PART 1**57. Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Malik declared her interest as a tenant in a property owned by Slough Borough Council (SBC).

58. Minutes of the last meeting held on 26th February 2015

The minutes of the meeting on 26th February 2015 were approved as a correct record.

As a matter arising from the minutes, it was agreed that the KPIs regarding tenants' and leaseholders' satisfaction would be circulated to members.

Resolved: that the KPIs regarding tenants' and leaseholders' satisfaction be circulated.

59. Member Questions

No written questions were submitted prior to the meeting.

60. A4 Brands Hill

The Panel had made enquiries regarding the safety audit recommendations and their rejection by SBC; the Panel wished to record their dissatisfaction that some central issues had not been addressed in the papers provided. In a wider context, members felt that the process had been disorganised with Councillors not being sufficiently informed on progress. The roundabout near the motorway was also a concern and required as much consideration as other matters across Slough. Under the current arrangements, buses stopping caused congestion which was a problem given the route's role as a link between Heathrow and Slough. The situation was causing safety concerns, and the Panel was also disappointed that no officers had been present to discuss the matter.

The Panel raised the following matters in discussion:

Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel - 30.03.15

- There had been a previous undertaking that bus lay-bys would only be affected in areas with a speed limit of 30mph. However, this was a 40mph zone. The Panel also questioned whether a previous statement (that changes to bus lay-bys would not have an impact on safety) still applied given these alterations.
- As a three lane highway, the middle lane was shared by traffic; this increased the potential for a major road incident.
- There had been a statement that the changes were made to ensure that buses' punctuality was not affected. However, more information would be required if this impact was to be verified.

Resolved:

- 1) That the Panel request information on accidents which cause damage to cars (rather than statistics which only reflect injuries to people).
- 2) That officers be required to attend the next meeting of the Panel on 29th June 2015 to discuss the issue.

61. Garage management

Since the last report to the Panel in January 2015, occupancy rates had increased from 37.4% to 38.5%, which had also helped reduce the number of active applications from 185 to 144. All of these active applications had been reviewed and contacted in the last month. In addition 33 inspections had been completed since January 2015; of these, 12 had no potential for development, 1 site was rated as 'amber (rights of way would be required for development), 15 sites had potential for development and 5 were pending.

Consultation with customers had been undertaken, with Coniston Crescent having received 55 responses. Of these 14 stated that they would pay and 41 that they would not. On a supplementary question, 10 indicated that they would pay for guaranteed parking and 38 would not. At Eden Close the consultation would continue until 3rd April 2015, with initial indications pointing towards the adoption of open parking.

A pilot project was also underway with larger garages having been placed on 3 sites; these had a 68% occupancy rate. Whilst the rent for these facilities was higher, it appeared that full occupancy in areas of higher demand was possible for these garages.

The Winborough site had experienced a temporary interruption to work. This had been caused by the main contractor entering receivership and would be resolved.

The Panel made the following points in discussion:

- The number of applicants on the waiting list had been caused by several factors. Of these the requests for very specific sites was a major issue, meaning that applicants had to wait for vacancies to arise. Inspections of garages could be prioritised on the basis of this although

Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel - 30.03.15

this was not a perfect solution; individual cases could be investigated if reported to SBC.

- The evaluation process investigated the cost of building new garages, providing a tarmac area which was open to all residents and parking bays with barriers. The benefits of building garages which could then be paid for through rents of £16 or £12 per week (depending on size) had become apparent; whilst tarmacking was the cheapest option in terms of initial outlay it offered no return on income. However, the policy would be evaluated and applied on a case by case basis and would also balance the payments made by tenants with the expenditure of SBC in any work.
- Garages could be used for storage but not as business premises. Agreements also specified that tenants could not store dangerous materials in garages. Inspections of this policy were based on complaints; it was not feasible to inspect all garages, given the requirement that tenants would be in attendance and open the garage.
- Empty garages attracted anti-social behaviour, fly tipping and other undesirable activity. The installation of gates had not taken place; cases could be investigated.
- SBC had been successful in applying for part funding on lighting for garages. These facilities would be placed in sites which were to be retained on a long term basis by SBC. In terms of identifying sites with long term potential, the size and their ability to house larger modern cars was a major factor.
- The contract currently held by Interserve would be reprocurd in 2017. The issues relating to garages could be examined as part of the new arrangements; asset intelligence would help in this process. In addition sites running at a loss could also be identified during this.
- The potential for selling off garage roofs to be used as space for solar panels had been investigated. A major obstacle was the fact that the Government would only fund if the tariff was given to tenants rather than SBC (who would be required to make the investment). However, whilst this was not currently viable it was not permanently ruled out.
- Asbestos cement was safe until damaged; SBC addressed any major damage immediately, with minor cases evaluated on needs.
- An evaluation of garages across the Borough would be completed in the summer; the Panel could decide to receive a report on this once in the new Municipal Year it had seen the results.

Resolved: that the results of the evaluation of garages across Slough be circulated to members once completed.

62. Review of allocation scheme 2013 - 18

The report presented to the Panel followed on from the discussions in January 2015, with particular reference to the Spare Room Subsidy. 318 tenants were affected by the subsidy; of these 144 were in receipt of discretionary housing payments. SBC had been working with tenants to ensure that debt was avoided. However, this position would require modification in the long term.

Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel - 30.03.15

Those who received the payments had little incentive to move at present, but a 45% reduction in Government funding was due to be enacted in the future.

At present there was no evidence that the level of debt amongst SBC tenants had increased. The last year had seen a decrease in rent arrears from £1.3 million to £920,000, with 37 evictions from a total of 6,300. SBC had also appointed a Housing Arrears Officer to work alongside tenants, and had helped to contribute to a rent collection rate of 98.4%.

A change in rent policy had been made. At present some new build housing was more expensive than larger old properties which could present problems in terms of downsizing and increase the likelihood of tenants resisting proposed moves. As a result, a tenants' incentive scheme had been launched, with three levels of standards (gold, silver and bronze) offered to tenants to offer incentives to move.

The Panel made the following points in discussion:

- The cash incentive for tenants had stood at £1,000 for a considerable period of time. It was in line with similar incentives offered by other authorities, although a cost / benefit analysis could be made and then reported back to the Panel. SBC had a budget of £50,000 which was an absolute limit; 19 tenants received incentive payments, although some were relinquishing more than 1 bedroom.
- SBC held a housing stock of 6,000 properties, of which 4,000 had one bedroom.
- Families with children at university were in a position where the child was classified as habitually resident but then became non-dependent.
- Rent arrears were presently being reduced; in the future, Universal Credit could be a factor, with SBC to appoint a strategic lead to assist with registering.
- Discretionary housing payments did not just apply to the Spare Room Subsidy; the expenditure (£400,000) had reduced in the last year.
- Applicants for the incentive scheme would be rejected if their arrears were in excess of £1,000. This had not yet happened.
- Elderly residents were in a more complex position given a number of factors (e.g. family connections to the property in question, tenancy arrangements).

Resolved:

- a) That the cost / benefit analysis of the cash incentive for tenants be undertaken.
- b) That the results of this analysis be circulated to members.

63. Sub-letting fraud amnesty - to follow

This item was deferred to the next meeting of the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel.

Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel - 30.03.15

64. Forward work programme

The work programme was noted.

Resolved: that an item on parking wardens and their geographical spread be placed on the future work programme.

65. Attendance record

The attendance record was noted.

66. Date of Next Meeting - 29th June 2015

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.45 pm and closed at 8.28 pm)

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SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Neighbourhood & Community Services Scrutiny Panel **Date:** 29 June 2015

CONTACT OFFICER: Neil Aves
Assistant Director Housing & Environment
(For all Enquiries) (01753) 875527

WARD(S): all

PART I**FOR INFORMATION****SUBLETTING FRAUD AMNESTY**1. **Purpose of Report**

This report is brought to Panel to update on the issue of illegal subletting of council homes and for information regarding the Fraud Amnesty which occurred in March of 2015.

2. **Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action**

The Committee is requested to note the report

3. **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

The quality of and access to housing is a key priority for the council. Slough's five year plan.

Although the council has access to some 6,300 tenanted units and approximately 4,000 homes managed by housing associations in practice only about 500 void (empty) units are available for re-allocation each year. As a result it is essential that we make best use of the housing stock we do have by ensuring it is tenanted by households who have been assessed as having a housing need

3a. **Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**3b. **Five Year Plan Outcomes**

The amnesty is contributing to the outcome of ensuring there are more homes in the borough, with quality improving across all tenures to support our ambition for Slough

It also contributes to ensuring the Council's income and the value of its assets will be maximised

4. **Other Implications**(a) **Financial**

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report but the cost of a homeless household in temporary accommodation has been estimated as £18,000 per year. The recovery of properties therefore has a direct financial link to the cost of temporary accommodation.

The costs involved with having a Subletting Amnesty were minimal. The printing of posters was £70 and radio and press coverage was at no cost.

(b) Risk Management

As an information report there are no risks associated with this issue.

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

As part of the amnesty the public were advised that no prosecutions would be levied at those who submitted keys during the amnesty.

Equalities Impact Assessment

The Council has a public sector duty under the Equalities Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and to promote equality of opportunity to all persons and to those who share a protected characteristic under the legislation.

5. Supporting Information

Subletting Fraud Amnesty

- 5.1 The background to having an amnesty in relation to sub letting was to have another tool in dealing with the wide and complex issue of subletting Council properties.
- 5.2 The Audit Commission estimate that approximately 5% of social housing is illegally sublet and in the case of Slough, a borough with a duty to assist homeless individuals, they estimate that the cost of not having a property available through subletting is between £18 and £20 thousand pounds per year in providing temporary accommodation.
- 5.3 In 2012 Slough Borough Council introduced the role of Housing Fraud Investigator to deal specifically with this issue. The following year legislation was passed making the subletting of social housing a specific criminal offence which was a considerable aid in dealing with subletting and also recognition of the scale of the problem.
- 5.4 A variety of measures have been employed to detect subletting (e.g. articles in the local press, obtaining referrals from staff and contractors) which has led to over 30 properties being recovered so far with a saving to the Council of over £600,000
- 5.5 It was decided to offer an amnesty regarding subletting in March of this year for a variety of reasons. Other local authorities had done so with varying degrees of success. Our research showed that some tenants were subletting and being pressurised by family members. The amnesty gave them an opportunity for a way

out. Others had not realised the seriousness of subletting and again it gave them an opportunity to walk away.

- 5.6 The amnesty was publicised widely across Slough through all forms of media and conventional ways (e.g. Posters in all blocks of flats and in public venues, radio publicity).
 - 5.7 Although no keys were submitted during the course of the amnesty, in the 6 weeks following the amnesty 5 properties were recovered.
 - 5.8 In two of the instances there is no doubt that the publicity regarding the amnesty and raising the profile of subletting to the public led to information that enabled the recovery of the properties.
 - 5.9 The Subletting Amnesty needs to be regarded as an additional tool in dealing with the fraud and we are currently planning a further, second stage campaign to encourage the public to report subletting that they have witnessed. This has proven successful in other areas of the country and will be reinforced by a 'zero tolerance' message from the council given that any perpetrators have now had the benefit of the amnesty but declined to take advantage of it. .
 - 5.10 We may run occasional, future amnesties because the whole trend is about raising the public awareness of subletting by as many means as possible. If we do so, we will however promote and advertise it for at least a full month before the amnesty begins in order to allow the subletting household to find somewhere else to live and thereby avoid becoming a homelessness burden to the council. In the meantime the Fraud Officer will continue to work closely with Neighbourhood housing staff with the expectation that further properties will be recovered to add to the growing list of successes to date.
6. **Comments of Other Committees** - None
 7. **Background Papers** - None

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SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Neighbourhood and Community Services Scrutiny Panel

DATE: 29th June 2015

CONTACT OFFICER: Rudo Beremauro and Darren Gotch Assistant Engineers,
Regeneration Housing and Resources

(For all Enquiries) (01753) 875634

WARD(S): *Colnbrook with Poyle*

PART I

FOR INFORMATION

A4 Brands Hill

1. **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of the report is to provide an update to the NCS Scrutiny Panel following the February meeting.

2. **Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action**

The Committee is requested to note the progress the council is making on the service improvements associated with the No 78 service to Heathrow as a result of the Better Area Bus Fund.

3. **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

3a. **Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

Priorities:

- Health: Providing transport facilities that ensure residents can access the health services they need.
- Economy and Skills – Continue to provide residents with access to essential services by improving connections and journey times between work, home, leisure, school and making alternatives to the car more attractive.
- Regeneration and Environment; Improving facilities and access to bus services to increase the use of sustainable form of transport.
- Housing: Improved public transport links to the area, with quicker journey times for the bus routes serving the area and giving greater choices for residents as to where they can live and access work facilities.
- Safer Communities: Reduced traffic congestion at the location to improve the environment for residents at the location. This should make a place where people feel safe to live and visit.

Cross-Cutting themes:

Improving the image of the town: By enhancing the sustainable transport links to Heathrow Airport and beyond, with the reduction in journey times of local bus services.

3b. Five Year Plan Outcomes

- Slough will be the premier location in the south east for businesses of all sizes to locate, start, grow, and stay. By improving access to Heathrow Airport from Slough Trading Estate through alternative forms of sustainable transport in this instance buses, with the journey times reduced to appeal to more commuters.

4. Other Implications

(a) Financial

The better area bus project was entirely supported from funds allocated by the Dept. for Transport as part of a national scheme and this amounts to £1.415m of ring-fenced capital.

There are no further financial implications.

(b) Risk Management

There are no reported risks associated with the recommendations stipulated in section 2.

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no Human Rights Act Implications associated with the recommendations of this report.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

There is no requirement for an EIA as this report is to provide members on an update on current services and projects within the passenger transport section.

5. Supporting Information

- 5.1 Following the implementation of the Better Bus Fund scheme in Brands Hill, a number of complaints were received. The scheme introduced two eastbound lanes including the closure of the bus lay-bys on both the east and westbound carriageway. As a result the parish council asked for changes to be made to reduce the delays that they felt were being caused as a result of scheme. The issues were also raised at NCS Scrutiny earlier this year; below are the responses to assist members in understanding the progress made to date.
- 5.2 Are we too willing to fill-in bus lay byes? What do the main 2 bus operators say on this issue? (First Bus and London buses)

Bus companies were consulted before the scheme was implemented and no objections were received from them. *Please see attached supporting letters from Bus companies.*

The scheme follows both national and local transport policies and directly serves to implement elements of Slough Borough Council's Local Transport Plan 3 with regard to access to transport services. It also contributes to community cohesion by improving journey time and reliability of bus journeys in Slough for journeys to work, home and school.

5.3 Should the project have started without putting parking restrictions in place?

Historically there have not been any parking issues on the site therefore there was no reason for this to be raised prior to the introduction of the scheme. However, once the scheme was implemented it was obvious that there was an issue and the required works to introduce the waiting and loading restriction were undertaken. The public consultation for the parking restriction has taken place without any objections being received.

The double yellow lines have now been implemented at the location with a programme of enforcement starting around the 18th May 2015.

5.4 Are 3 lane roads safe if there is no solid white line to separate traffic from head on collisions?

A single solid white line is not used to separate opposing traffic, double white lines maybe used to prevent overtaking on roads with very limited visibility to oncoming traffic or on three lane hills. Neither which is the case here. The appropriate marking for this road will be a standard centre longitudinal line to highlight the lines dividing the opposing traffic streams. Vehicular Traffic on roads with a speed limit of 40mph or less should not cross or straddle the line unless it is safe to do so. (Traffic Signs and Regulations and General Directions 2002).

5.5 Was citing bus stops opposite each other an error that should have been identified at the design stage?

The design of the scheme did not move the location of the bus stops as they have always been opposite each other, however they were situated in lay-bys. Following concerns after the implementation and the delays that were resulting from this alteration, a new location was identified. The Council is currently waiting for TfL to carry out the permanent works. However, we are currently trialling the location of the new bus stop to see the impact on the network after concerns raised by local residents. To date the trial and impact has allowed vehicles to safely overtake the bus and has reduced the delays.

Following the successful trial the bus stop has been relocated with the appropriate road markings.

5.6 Why, once alternatives to the safety audit recommendations were decided upon, did the changes take so long to implement?

The reason for the delays to the works is due to the Council having to wait for third parties to carry out the works. We have been in contact several times with TfL to

try and ask for the works to be carried out sooner but due to their work schedule we are still waiting for the works to be undertaken.

6. **Comments of Other Committees**

Please refer to the O&S Panel recommendations in December 2012

7. **Conclusion**

Members are requested to note that progress is being made on service provision through the supported bus subsidies and improvements to bus service journey times through the investment of the Better Area Bus Fund.

8. **Appendices Attached**

'A' - Consultation document and letters of support

'B' - Overview and Scrutiny Committee Report 4-12-12

9. **Background Papers**

None

Supporting Letters

Transport for London



Mr Joe Carter
Head of Transport
Slough Borough Council
St Martins Place
51 Bath Road
Slough
SL1 3UF

21 February 2012

Dear Mr Carter

Slough Borough Council – DfT Better Area Bus Fund Bid

I am writing in support of your bid to the DfT Better Area Bus Fund to implement a number of measures to improve bus punctuality along the A355 Farnham Road and A4 London Road corridors. This will bring significant benefits to a number of bus services operating across the Slough / London border, which provide links between Slough and the Heathrow area.

Usage on route 81 (Slough – Heathrow North – Hounslow), which is provided by Transport for London has seen significant growth of around 20% over the past 5 years. Plans are already in place to increase the Sunday daytime frequency from every 20 minutes to every 15 minutes in April 2012 (where usage has increased by 74% on this day over the past five years), to be followed by the introduction of brand new double deck buses later in the summer.

The proposals to provide a bus lane on the eastbound approach to Blandford Road South, to update the control at three key junctions on the A4 London Road and to incorporate bus priority, and to widen the A4 between M4 Junction 5 and the Brands Hill junction to provide 2 lanes eastbound will be of particular benefit to passengers using route 81, by speeding up journey times and improving reliability.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'P Bradley'.

Peter Bradley
Head of Consultation Delivery
STEngagement@tfl.gov.uk
Surface Transport
Transport for London

Consultation Delivery
Surface Planning
Transport for London

11th Floor, Zone G8
Palestra
197 Blackfriars Road
London SE1 8NJ

Peter.Bradley@tfl.gov.uk

020 3054 0133

MAYOR OF LONDON

Heathrow Airport Limited

The Compass Centre,
Nelson Road, Hounslow,
Middlesex TW6 2GW

T: +44 (0)844 335 1801
W: heathrow.com

Registered in England No: 1991017
Registered Office: The Compass Centre, Nelson Road,
Hounslow, Middlesex TW6 2GW

Date: 07 February 2012

Tel: 07818 014853

Email: theo_panayi@baa.com

Joe Carter,
Head of Transport,
Slough Borough Council,
St Martins Place,
51 Bath Road,
Slough,
SL1 3UF.

Dear Joe,

Re: Slough Borough Council - Better Area Bus Fund

I am writing to support the above bid for the Department of Transport Better Area Bus Fund.

The proposed enhancements will continue to support Heathrow's Surface Access Strategy in its target to increase public transport mode share and reduce car borne journeys to and from the airport. In the last 10 years, bus use at Heathrow has increased significantly with over 15% of both passengers and airport workers using bus services.

The reduction in delays to buses serving Heathrow will also help deliver improvements to local air quality and to reduce emissions around the airport and will support the airports Air Quality Strategy.

As part of our continued commitment to improving bus services serving the airport Heathrow Airport Limited will work with both the local authorities and the operator to ensure these proposed enhancements are sustainable after the initial DfT funding period has ended.

I therefore welcome this bid and look forward to a positive outcome

Yours sincerely



Theo Panayi
Sustainable Transport Manager
Surface Access Team
Technical Standards & Assurance

Tel: 0208 541 9375



Mr Joe Carter
Head of Transport
Slough Borough Council
St Martins Place
51 Bath Road
Slough
SL1 3UF

Surrey County Council
Room 340
County Hall
Kingston upon Thames
KT1 2DY

23 February 2012

Dear Joe

Better Bus Area Fund Bid

Surrey County Council is delighted to support Slough Borough Council's bid to the Department for Transport's Better Bus Area Fund to make improvements to bus priority on the Route 78. These improvements will benefit one of the "7-series" routes operated by First and provide links to Heathrow Airport.

First interchanges vehicles between the various 7-series routes. Improvements to punctuality on any one of these routes will help ensure that other 7-series routes operate reliably as vehicles are deployed on different routes. In Surrey, this means we will benefit on the Route 71, which connects Egham and Staines to Slough, and Heathrow.

We enjoy close working links through the Runnymede Quality Bus Partnership in which Surrey County Council and Slough Borough Council are key players along with First and Heathrow Airport Limited. We expect that this good working relationship will continue and be expanded if we are both successful in our Better Bus Area Fund bids.

Slough Borough Council's bid to the Better Bus Area Fund complements our own bid. Both seek to deliver quicker and more reliable journeys, creating conditions where bus market share to Heathrow Airport can grow further, for both work and leisure journeys. We look forward to a productive working relationship in the delivery of both these bids.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Iain Reeve".

Iain Reeve
Assistant Director, Strategy, Transport and Planning

5th February 2012

Joe Carter
Head of Transport
Slough Borough Council
St Martins Place
51 Bath Road
Slough
SL1 3UF



Coldborough House
Market Street
Bracknell
Berkshire RG12 1JA
Tel: 01344 782200
Fax: 01344 868332

Dear Joe

Better Bus Area Fund Bid

First is delighted to offer its support towards a Better Bus Area Bid for the Slough area.

Our bus network in Slough has become an important part of First's portfolio of operations. Investment in new vehicles and improved services has been possible through close partnership working, and some clever service adjustments have helped maximise the benefits for residents and workers.

Unfortunately traffic congestion in the area can be very unpredictable and delays due to motorway closures or road works is becoming more frequent. Additional vehicles and increased journey times have enabled services to cope on most days, but customers experience slower, more arduous journeys and fares have increased to cope with the higher operating costs.

One of the worst affected services is route 78 (Britwell – Heathrow T5). Timetabled journey times in the peaks have increased by almost 50 per cent in the last ten years, and recovery time at the end of the route has also gone up. The morning peak running time from Britwell to Langley (Trelawney Avenue) has increased from 33 minutes to 48 minutes, and in the other direction from 33 minutes to 43 minutes (not including the saving made by a more direct route in this direction that was introduced in 2010 to save time). However, punctuality still does not always meet the required standards. Additionally, customers need to consult the timetable due to the lack of memorable times, compared with the regular clock-face departures throughout the day previously advertised along the same route in 2002.

First has plans to add another vehicle to the schedule for route 78 in order to provide even more running time and recovery time between the peaks. However, this additional resource could be much better utilised by increasing frequencies at peak times. To do this we would need consistently quicker journeys (at least 5 minutes in each direction) through greater priority at traffic light junctions and along roads where congestion is most disruptive.



ATOC



First Eelink Buses Limited
Registered in England number 2173403
Moorhall House, Paddington Station, London W2 1TY

Introducing bus priority along the 78 route would also assist several other bus services that serve the same roads, including bus routes operated by Arriva and RATP Dev (on behalf of Transport for London).

Quicker journey times throughout the day would make buses more attractive and provide customers with a viable alternative to driving. Better fuel consumption would reduce our operating costs and additional passengers travelling with us would result in less pressure to increase fares.

An improved peak-time frequency would mean mileage operated on route 78 would increase by 46.8 miles per day (Monday to Friday). Other routes may also benefit from the ability to redeploy resource and increase mileage.

This is a great opportunity to reverse the process of increasing journey times due to the worsening traffic conditions regularly being encountered. Punctuality and frequency are two factors that new customers expect when considering bus travel, and by improving the performance of the bus network First can consider additional services and/or fare reductions to encourage further growth in patronage.

We look forward to working with Slough Borough Council to identify various improvements along the 78 route which will help cut bus journey times and reduce car dependency.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Matthew Wool', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Matthew Wool
Revenue & Marketing Manager

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SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

DATE: 4th December 2012

CONTACT OFFICER: Savio DeCruz – Team Leader Network Management and Matt Gamble Passenger Transport Officer
(For all Enquiries) (01753) 875640

WARD(S): All

PART I

FOR COMMENT AND CONSIDERATION

BETTER AREA BUS FUND

1. **Purpose of Report**

To provide an update on the £1.4m Better Area Bus Fund allocation and how it is being spent and an update for members on the current tendered bus services.

2. **Recommendation**

The Committee is requested to note and comment on the progress the council is making on the service improvements associated with the No 78 service to Heathrow and to note the council's position on the existing tendered bus services.

3. **Community Strategy Priorities**

- Economy and skills – Providing better access to Heathrow and jobs for Slough residents
- Health and wellbeing – Enabling all residents especially the vulnerable in Slough to have access to facilities in and around the town.
- Housing – Giving greater choices for residents as to where they can live and access work and/or facilities.
- Regeneration and environment – Improving the environment by providing better services to encourage local residents to use the bus rather than the private car.
- Safer communities – Regular services including evening provisions which will enable the more vulnerable from society to have freedom to travel in a secure environment.

4. **Other Implications**

(a) **Financial**

The better area bus project, is entirely supported from funds allocated by the Dept. for Transport as part of a national scheme and this amounts to £1.415m of ring-fenced capital.

The council currently contributes approximately £391K/annum to supported bus services in the town with additional funding of £201K being also allocated to specific routes via S.106 contributions.

There are no further financial implications.

Risk Management

There are no reported risks associated with the recommendations stipulated in section 2.

(b) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no Human Rights Act Implications associated with the recommendations of this report.

Equalities Impact Assessment

There is no requirement for an EIA as this report is to provide members on an update on current services and projects within the passenger transport section.

5. Supporting Information

5.1 Better Area Bus

Route 78 currently suffers from the effects of unpredictable traffic congestion. This manifests itself in a need to schedule buses to accommodate the effects of longer and less reliable journey times at peak, and even at times poor punctuality. The target for the Better Bus Area Fund bid is to improve journey time in each direction during peak periods. First in Berkshire, who operate this route have undertaken to keep the same number of buses on the route, but to use the saving in journey time to make the service more regular at peak. It is predicted that these improvements in regularity, punctuality and journey time will in turn attract more people to use the bus service instead of cars.

5.2 Summary of the Measures

The measures being implemented are designed to reduce delays primarily on route 78(between Britwell and Heathrow), but will benefit other bus routes both within Slough and between Slough, Heathrow Airport and High Wycombe. They will benefit not just services provided by First in Berkshire but also by Transport for London and Arriva the Shires who also operate services along this corridor. Many measures will also benefit general traffic and these consist of the following:

- Bus priority measures on congested approaches to key junctions on the A355 and A4 including bus lanes;
- Widening to 2 lanes eastbound the section of the A4 between M4 Junction 5 and Brands Hill (this can be accommodated within existing highway boundaries);
- Building on the success of Split cycle offset optimisation technique (SCOOT) traffic signal control on the A4 Bath Road by introducing SCOOT on the A355 Farnham Road with signalised bus priority;
- Updating key signalised junctions on the A4 London Road and in Langley;
- Infilling specific bus stop laybys on roads with a speed limit of 30 mph or less; and
- Some general bus stop improvements such real time (budget permitting)

5.3 Status of projects

These schemes are at various stages of preparation and officers envisage a phased implementation through to March 2014 to make the best use of available resource.

5.4 Supported Bus Services

Slough Borough Council's Local Transport Plan 3 Supplementary Document: Public Transport Strategy (November 2011) sets out the Council's powers and statutory responsibilities in an environment where most bus services are provided on a commercial basis. It describes the coverage that bus services provide in Slough and analyses the opportunities and constraints to further improving bus services. It puts forward a virtuous scenario in which faster, more frequent and more punctual bus journeys attract more passengers from car and help to reduce congestion on Slough's highway network while contributing to the town's economic prosperity.

5.5 Patronage

Overall patronage on bus services has been growing. In 2004/5 3,941,000 passenger journeys per year started on buses in Slough. By 2011/12, this had grown 32% to 5,217,000.

5.6 Subsidy

Slough Borough Council currently provides subsidy on certain routes or services to:

- Maintain some services where accessibility would otherwise be judged to be unacceptable. In practice there are at present 2 areas – Goldsworthy Way, and The Rochfords;
- Maintain a level of service provision during evenings and Sundays at times when these services carry insufficient passengers to be profitable. This constitutes the vast majority of Slough Borough Council's spend on supported bus services. A review conducted in 2008, in which passengers were interviewed, found that these were heavily used by workers;
- A service procured by Bracknell Forest Borough Council that provides a good level of access between Britwell and Wexham Park Hospital as part of a longer route (Route 53).
- We also currently procure a service using 'section 106' developer funding from Eton College (routes 3 and 4 between Slough and Cippenham Green).

5.7 These routes have been tendered for, and are on a 3 year, annually renewable contract. The contracts are in their second year. Given the extensive changes to the network this year, including the Heart of Slough and Chalvey regeneration projects, we do not intend to retender these contracts until the end of 2013.

5.8 Heathrow Airport

Slough Borough Council has agreed a framework with First in Berkshire, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and Heathrow Airport Ltd (HAL) with respect to First's bus routes serving the Airport, starting in 2011/12. This aims to keep the total payments to First (concessions and supported services) from all three bodies constant in cash terms through to 2014/15. With an increasing contribution from HAL, this means that the support provided both by Slough Borough Council and RBWM reduces. If current trends continue, contract payments on Heathrow services can be expected to fall to zero by 2014/2015.

5.9 Plans for the future

We will consider how the 'non-Heathrow' services can be secured whilst maintaining the current benefits (including timetable publicity and common ticketing) that arise from their current operation by First.

Members may wish to note that all bus operators currently receive Bus Service Operators' Grant (BSOG). This is a partial rebate of duty paid on fuel.

Government intends to cease paying BSOG to operators for services procured by local transport authorities. Instead these funds will be paid directly to the local transport authority concerned. Government intends to do this from October 2013. This means that the cost of bus service contracts are likely to increase, while there is currently no clarity as to whether government funding to local authorities will increase in real terms.

6. **Comments of Other Committees**

No comments to be added.

7. **Conclusion**

Members are requested to note that progress is being made on service provision through the supported bus subsidies and improvements to bus service journey times through the investment of the Better Area Bus Fund.

8. **Background Papers**

'1' Better Area Bus Fund Bid

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Neighbourhood and Community Services Scrutiny Panel Committee

DATE: 29th June 2015

CONTACT OFFICER: Darren Gotch, Acting Assistant Engineer, Regeneration, Housing and Resources

(For all enquiries) (01753) 477359

WARD(S): All

PORTFOLIO: Cllr Sohail Munawar (Commissioner for Social and Economic Inclusion.)

PART I**FOR COMMENT & CONSIDERATION****REAL TIME PASSENGER INFORMATION SERVICE FOR BUSES****1 Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to members from the meeting in December 2014. The report will provide the current detection rate for the Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) system in Slough.

2 Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

That the Committee note the progress made since RTPI was implemented in 2011 and the progress made since the last NCS Scrutiny Panel meeting.

3 The Sustainable Community Strategy, the JSNA and the Corporate Plan

Priority – Regeneration and Environment

The Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) roll-out across the borough is an integral element for improving the local economy and environment by making bus travel a more attractive mode of transport. By encouraging commuters in Slough to travel by bus instead of car, it will lead to a healthier and more accessible Slough through reduced congestion and carbon emissions.

4 Other Implications**(a) Financial**

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

(b) Risk Management

Risk	Mitigating action	Opportunities
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None	None	There are no risks, threats or opportunities arising from the report.
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(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no legal or Human Rights Act implications relating to the content of this report.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

There is no identified need for the completion of EIA relating to this report.

5 **Supporting Information**

What have the detection rate been for the past 4 weeks.

The detection rate for the previous weeks is as follows:

Week No.	Detection Rate (from total journeys)
Week 8	67%
Week 9	68%
Week 10	69%
Week 11	68%

These figures also include the period of transfer over to the five new vehicles added to the fleet. Therefore the detection figures are lower due to the removal of the equipment from the older vehicles. During the transition there have been issues with the detection of the vehicles whilst the works were carried out.

Officers are actively working with First and JMW to increase the detection as close as possible to 100%. The planned change of software to improve detection has been delayed until the end of July. It is anticipated this will make a significant improvement to detection.

Progress on route 81 and any other routes to be enabled

Slough Borough Council's Transport team are in the process of finalising the SIRI link feed with Bucks County Council and Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead that will enable us to detect the services that operate through Slough. We have established a connection and are now refining the data for this to then be displayed on the RTPi system.

Once this link has been completed there are plans to include the TfL 81 bus service which will provide us with full coverage.

New issues since Cabinet

There have been no new issues, however there are still on-going problems such as access to vehicles and when equipment is available to the engineer. These

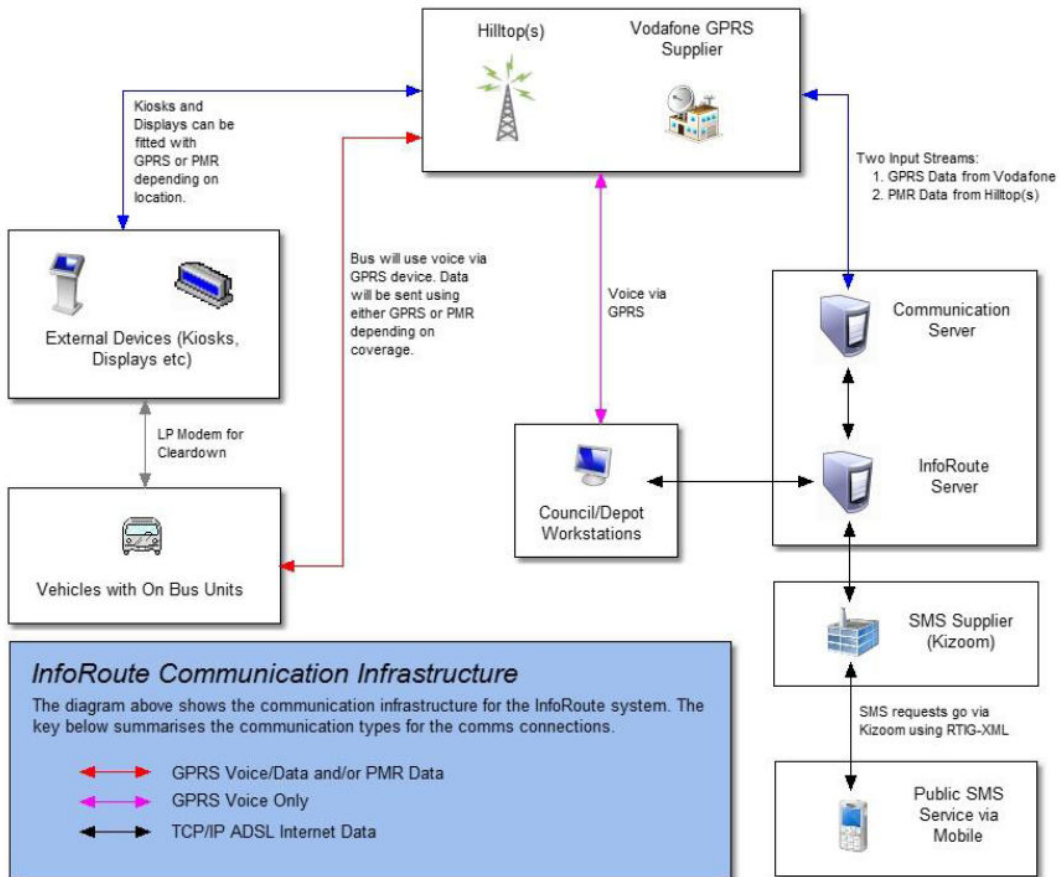
problems have been raised and escalated through the supplier JMW and First to ensure these issues are dealt with promptly.

6 **Conclusion**

That progress has been made since last December and that further changes will improve the service over the coming months.

7 **Background Papers**

None.



SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Neighbourhoods & Community Services Scrutiny Panel

DATE: 29th June 2015

CONTACT OFFICER: Dave Gordon – Scrutiny Officer
(For all Enquiries) (01753) 875411

WARDS: All

PART I

TO NOTE

**NEIGHBOURHOODS & COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL
 2015/16 WORK PROGRAMME**

1. **Purpose of Report**

1.1 For the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel (NCS Scrutiny Panel) to discuss its current work programme.

2. **Recommendations/Proposed Action**

2.1 That the Panel note the current work programme for the 2015/16 municipal year.

3. **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Corporate Plan**

3.1 The Council's decision-making and the effective scrutiny of it underpins the delivery of all the Joint Slough Wellbeing Strategy priorities. The NCS Scrutiny Panel, along with the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and other Scrutiny Panels combine to meet the local authority's statutory requirement to provide public transparency and accountability, ensuring the best outcomes for the residents of Slough.

3.2 The work of the NCS Scrutiny Panel also reflects the priorities of the Five Year Plan, in particular the following:

- There will more homes in the borough, with quality improving across all tenures to support our ambition for Slough
- Slough will be one of the safest places in the Thames Valley

3.3 In particular, the NCS Scrutiny Panel specifically takes responsibility for ensuring transparency and accountability for Council services relating to housing, regeneration and environment, and safer communities.

4. **Supporting Information**

- 4.1 The current work programme is based on the discussions of the NCS Scrutiny Panel at previous meetings, looking at requests for consideration of issues from officers and issues that have been brought to the attention of Members outside of the Panel's meetings.
- 4.2 The work programme is a flexible document which will be continually open to review throughout the municipal year.

5. **Conclusion**

- 5.1 This report is intended to provide the NCS Scrutiny Panel with the opportunity to review its upcoming work programme and make any amendments it feels are required.

6. **Appendices Attached**

A - Work Programme for 2015/16 Municipal Year

7. **Background Papers**

None.

NEIGHBOURHOOD AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL
WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16

Meeting Date
Monday 29 June 2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sub-letting fraud amnesty• A4 Brands Hill
Thursday 3 September 2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Update on Neighbourhood Services littering, fly tipping and enviro-crime pilot project• Update on Real Time Passenger Information – Cabinet member• Domestic abuse and VMAP pilot findings – may have to move to October given pilot timeframe• Bulky waste collection service review
Thursday 28 October 2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Road Safety Strategy• Waste strategy and scorecard• Waste disposal strategy• Traffic wardens geographical spread – for information
Thursday 6 January 2016

Meeting Date
Tuesday 23 February 2016
Crime and Disorder Committee
Tuesday 29 March 2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Environmental Services contract; procurement and commissioning

Currently Un-programmed:

- SSE contract – waiting for engineers
- Concessionary bus passes
- Parking facilities – disabled and elderly residents