

Berkshire Local Transport Body – Meeting held on Thursday, 20th July, 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
Peter Howe	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
Councillor Lee (item 5 only)	Wokingham Borough Council
Councillor Matloob	Slough Borough Council
Councillor Sleight (deputing for Councillor Lee for 1-4, 6-10)	Wokingham Borough Council

Also present:- Councillor Harrison

Apologies for Absence:- Ingrid Fernandes and Matthew Taylor

PART 1

1. Declarations of Interest

Item 5 – Financial Approval 2.13 Wokingham Thames Valley Park & Ride:
Charles Eales declared that he worked for Microsoft based at Thames Valley Park.

Item 5 – Financial Approval 2.13 Wokingham Thames Valley Park & Ride:
Councillor Sleight declared that he was representing Wokingham Borough Council, which was promoting the scheme.

2. Election of Chair 2017/18

Nominations were invited for the Chair of BLTB for the forthcoming municipal year.

Councillor Bicknell proposed himself and the nomination was seconded by Councillor Brunel-Walker.

Councillor Page was proposed by Councillor Matloob and seconded by Councillor Sleight.

The two nominations were put to the vote and Councillor Page was elected as Chair of BLTB by seven votes to two.

Resolved – That Councillor Page be elected as Chair of BLTB for the 2017/18 municipal year.

(Councillor Page in the Chair for the remainder of the meeting)

3. Election of Deputy Chair 2017/18

Nominations were invited for the Deputy Chair of BLTB for the forthcoming municipal year. It was confirmed that the Founding Document of the BLTB required that the Deputy Chair be from the Local Enterprise Partnership members.

Charles Eales was proposed by Peter Howe and seconded by Councillor Brunel-Walker.

There being no other nominations, Charles Eales was elected as Deputy Chair for the next year.

Resolved – That Charles Eales be elected as Deputy Chair of BLTB for the 2017/18 municipal year.

4. Minutes of the Meeting held on 17th March 2017

Resolved – That the minutes of the Berkshire Local Transport Body (BLTB) held on 17th March 2017 be approved as a correct record.

5. Financial Approval 2.13 Wokingham Thames Valley Park & Ride

The BLTB considered a report that recommended giving financial approval to scheme 2.13 Wokingham: Thames Valley Park & Ride.

Members were notified that a representation titled 'Alternative Summary Report: Thames Valley Park and Ride' had been received from a member of the public, Mr J Sharpe, the previous day. Paragraph 16 of the Founding Document stated that comments from interested parties or the public would be reported to the BLTB prior to financial approval being given. The representation had therefore been circulated to Members and further copies were tabled. In view of the length of the submission and timing of its availability, the Chair proposed, and it was agreed, that the meeting be adjourned to ensure all Members were able to read the submission.

(Councillor Lee joined the meeting)

(The meeting was adjourned at 4.06pm and re-convened at 4.17pm with all Members having confirmed that they had read the submission)

The key aspects of the scheme were reviewed. Programme entry status had been awarded in 2014 and regular updates had been provided to each meeting of the BLTB since. Planning approval had been given by Wokingham Borough Council following a full process. On the basis of the independent business case, the recommendation to BLTB was to give the scheme full financial approval of £2.9m over two years.

Officers responded in detail to the various points raised in Mr Sharpe's representations, which are summarised as follows:

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- The independence of the consultants reviewing the business case – it was confirmed that WYG were commissioned to provide an independent opinion of whether the full business case was compliant with current webTAG guidance and represented good value for money.
- The transparency of the process and publication of all relevant documents – the process as set out in the BLTB Founding Document had been adhered to; the representations had been reported to BLTB; and assurance had been provided that the scheme promoter had published all the documents supplied to WYG. TVB LEP procedures had been scrutinised and found to be fit for purpose and well implemented.
- A number of detailed issues were raised including the modelling, the basis of asset life calculations, land acquisition and operating costs, environmental considerations and the impact of the potential future introduction of technologies such as autonomous vehicles. The points were responded to in turn, and it was noted that the land acquisition cost was nil and operating costs would be carried by a private operator and therefore not included in benefit cost ratio (BCR) calculations.

The BLTB was advised that taking all of the points raised in the representation into account, that the recommendation to give full financial approval based on the independent assessment was sound.

Members had a wide ranging discussion about the Officers report, independent assessment and representations received. In response to a question, it was clarified that the decision for the BLTB was purely to consider whether the £2.9m allocated to the scheme be released if it was agreed that the business case represented good value for money using webTAG guidance. Questions were asked about the figures provided on forecast car park utilisation and revenue projections and these issues were explained. Members recognised the strategic importance of the scheme in tackling congestion and providing additional park and ride and other transport capacity in view of housing and economic growth. Promoting modal shift was therefore an important priority and it was considered that this and other related schemes were important components of a wider transport strategy. It was noted that the scheme had been assessed to have a high value for money ratio with a BCR of 3.23 on the core scenario.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the Chair proposed and Councillor Lee seconded the recommendation to give the scheme full financial approval on the terms set out in the report. This was agreed unanimously.

In view of the issues raised, the Chief Executive of Thames Valley Berkshire LEP gave Members a comprehensive summary of the audit and governance arrangements of TVP LEP and confirmed that its Assurance Framework was fully up to date and compliant with both guidance and best practice.

Resolved – That scheme 2.13 Wokingham: Thames Valley Park and Ride full financial approval in the sum of £2,000,000 in 2018/19 and £900,000 in 2019/20 on the terms of the funding agreement set out at paragraph 13 step 5 of the report.

(Councillor Lee left the meeting)

6. 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 and updated on the twenty-five approved schemes:

2.01 Newbury: Kings Road Link Road – update noted. Demolition was complete and site cleared.

2.02 Bracknell: Warfield Link Road – update noted. The scheme was complete but not yet fully opened.

2.03 Newbury: London Road Industrial Estate – update noted.

2.04.4: Wokingham: Arborfield Relief Road – update noted. The planning application had been submitted.

2.05 Newbury: Sandford Park – update noted. Planning permission had been agreed for the access road.

2.06 Reading: Green Park Railway Station – update noted. Design work was continuing.

2.07 Bracknell: Coral Reef Roundabout – project completed. Scheme completed and operating well.

2.08 Slough: Rapid Transit Phase 1 – update noted. Work was on site and progressing well.

2.09.1 Sustainable Transport NCN 422 – update noted. Work was on site and progressing well.

2.09.2 Sustainable Transport A4 Cycle Route with Bucks – update noted.

2.10 Slough: A332 Improvements – update noted. Work was due for completion.

2.11 and 2.12 Reading: South Reading MRT phases 1 and 2 – update noted. Work onsite and due to be completed in November.

2.13 Wokingham: Thames Valley Park & Ride (previously called 2.13 Reading: Eastern Park & Ride) – see minute 5.

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2.14 Reading: East Reading MRT Phase 1 and 2.25 Reading: East Reading MRT Phase 2 – update noted. The planning application had been submitted and business case was being refined.

2.15 Bracknell: Martins Heron Roundabout – update noted.

2.16 Maidenhead Station Access – update noted. The progress in bringing forward a scheme given the complexities of the site and property issues was noted. RBWM confirmed that they anticipated presenting a business case to BLTB for consideration in November 2017.

2.17 Slough: A355 Route – the scheme had been completed.

2.18 No scheme.

2.19 Bracknell: Town Centre Regeneration and Infrastructure Improvements – update noted. The scheme was almost complete and would fully open in September.

2.20 No scheme.

2.21 Slough: Langley Station Access Improvements – update noted. The scheme was on schedule with work due to start later in 2017.

2.22 Slough: Burnham Station Access Improvements – update noted. The scheme was on schedule.

2.23 Reading: South Reading MRT Phases 3 and 4 – update noted. Design work was continuing and business case due in November.

2.24 Newbury: Railway Station improvements – update noted. Work on the business case was progressing and would most likely be considered by BLTB in March 2018.

2.25 – see 2.14

2.26 Wokingham: Winnersh Relief Road (Phase 2) – update noted.

2.27 Maidenhead Town Centre: Missing Links – update noted.

2.28 Bracknell: A3095 Corridor Improvements – update noted. The business case was due in November.

Resolved – That the progress made on schemes previously given programme entry status be noted.

7. Response to Mayor of London's Draft Transport Strategy

A report was considered that sought approval of the formal response to the Mayor of London's draft Transport Strategy.

The draft strategy was particularly relevant to Thames Valley Berkshire in terms of its policies towards Heathrow expansion and proposals for transport links which crossed the boundary into Berkshire and wider South East area. The key aspects of the draft response were summarised which included emphasising the importance of improved surface access to Heathrow, including WRLtH based on 2 runway scenario, and Slough Mass Rapid Transit. The draft strategy contained some reference to the need for coordination of projects across the wider South East, however, the draft response suggested that the approach to partnership and cooperation be strengthened.

Members discussed the draft response including the vision, Mayor's responsibilities for certain national and regional rail services, southern rail access and need to ensure the specification of Crossrail rolling stock met the needs of suburban users not just those suitable for inner London services. At the conclusion of the discussion, Members agreed that the draft response be approved and submitted as part of the consultation.

Resolved – That the response to the Mayor of London's Draft Transport Strategy as at Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

8. Transport for the South East Progress Report

A report was considered that set out the progress that had been made by Transport for the South East, including decisions at its inaugural Shadow Board meeting on 26th June 2017.

The Shadow Board had been established with a view to it converting to a properly designated sub-national transport body in 2019. It was noted that amongst the decisions made at the inaugural meeting was that Councillor Page be appointed as Vice-Chair of Transport for the South East. The appointment was welcomed and was considered a positive statement about the involvement of both Berkshire and unitary authorities more generally on the Shadow Board. It was anticipated that there would be a call for funds in the autumn and an away day/vision session would take place in the meantime.

Members were invited to nominate a councillor representative to be the BLTB alternate member of the Shadow Board. Councillor Page nominated and Councillor Matloob seconded the nomination of Councillor Clifford. The nomination was accepted and agreed.

Resolved –

- (a) That the key decisions of the Shadow Board of Transport for the South East, including the appointment of Councillor Page as Vice-Chair, be noted.

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(b) That Councillor Clifford be nominated as the alternate representative should Councillor Page be unable to attend Shadow Board meetings of Transport for the South East.

(c) That further reports on the details of the governance, financing and proposed strategy for Transport for the South East be considered by BLTB in due course.

9. BLTB Forward Plan

The forward plan was considered which set out the pipeline of schemes anticipated to come to the LTB for funding approval in 2017/18. The dates of future meetings to March 2018 were confirmed and the programme for the rest of 2018/19 would be agreed and circulated.

Resolved – That the BLTB Forward Plan to be noted.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 16th November 2017 at 4.00pm at The Curve, William Street, Slough.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 4.00 pm and closed at 5.22 pm)