

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON:

THURSDAY, 25 JULY 2024 AT 2.00 PM

SOUTH YORKSHIRE MCA, 11 BROAD STREET WEST,
SHEFFIELD, S1 2BQ



Present:

Councillor Tim Huggan
Councillor Joshua Bacon
Councillor Jane Kidd
Councillor Hannah Kitching
Councillor Laura Moynahan
Councillor Brian Steele
Councillor Mick Stowe

Sheffield City Council
Rotherham MBC
City of Doncaster Council
Barnsley MBC
Sheffield City Council
Rotherham MBC
Barnsley MBC

In Attendance:

Clare Monaghan	Executive Director of Policy and Strategic Development	SYMCA Executive Team
Andy Gates	Director of Development, Collaboration and Culture	SYMCA Executive Team
Steve Davenport	Director of Law and Governance	SYMCA Executive Team
Laurie Thomas	Director of Programme Delivery	SYMCA Executive Team
Gareth Sutton	Executive Director of Resources & Investment	SYMCA Executive Team
Sarah Pugh	Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager and Scrutiny Officer	SYMCA Executive Team
Mayor Oliver Coppard		South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority
Marcus O'Callaghan (Minute taker)		

Apologies:

Councillor Douglas Johnson	Sheffield City Council
Councillor Zahira Naz	Sheffield City Council
Councillor Andrea Robinson	City of Doncaster Council

134 Welcome and Apologies

The Director of Legal and Governance, in the Chair, welcomed the Committee and apologies were noted as above.

135 **Nomination of Chair and Vice Chair**

It was noted that the Chair must be from a different political party to that of The Mayor.

Cllr Huggan was nominated and appointed as Chair.

Cllrs Johnson and Steele were nominated for Vice Chair. Cllr Steele was appointed following a show of hands

(the meeting and webcast were paused whilst The Chair and Vice-Chair took their new seats).

136 **Urgent Items/Announcements**

(Webcast resumed).

Cllr Huggan took over as Chair.

None.

137 **Items to be Considered in the Absence of Public and Press**

None.

138 **Declarations of Interest by any Members**

None.

139 **Reports from and Questions by Members**

None.

140 **Questions from Members of the Public**

A question had been received from a member of the public, as follows:

“The SYMCA's interests in the Transport Ground at Meadowhead roundabout have not been publicised, and decisions relating to the ownership / transfer of the land are not readily available to the public.

Given the substantial and controversial planning application now in progress relating to the site, (how) has the committee satisfied itself that standards for transparency, governance and scrutiny have been met in:

- *the ongoing management and maintenance of the land, its buildings and green space value, as an asset and amenity under public ownership?*
- *the transfer, leasing and subsequent planning process relating to this site, and its protection as an asset and amenity under public ownership?*
- *the planning and consultation of transport investments (including on the A61 corridor) which the SYMCA presides over, and the impact of*

increased demand that this proposal would bring? (*approx 300,000 journeys per year including over 80,000 peak journeys, and regional and national travel)”*

The Chair responded that the Scrutiny Committee’s role was to hold the Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) to account and to ensure all decision making processes are transparent, inclusive, and fair.

It was noted that:

- The MCA was the current landowner of this site, and it is currently leased, and no decision has been made on the disposal of the site.
- Any decision would need to be made by the MCA Board which involves the Mayor and Leaders of all four Local Authorities.
- MCA Board decisions may also be looked at by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

141 **Minutes of the Meeting Held on 14th March**

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on the 14th of March 2024 be approved as an accurate account.

142 **Matters Arising and Review of Action Log**

Updates to the Action Log were noted.

Members discussed actions relating to the following issues, and noted their inclusion in the draft Committee Work Plan for 2024/25:

- The Safe Place to Sleep Programme,
- South Yorkshire Airport City,
- Community Transport, as part of overall transport strategies and Bus Reform work.

ACTION: Democratic Services to send Local Nature Recovery Strategy Advisory Panel membership to new members of The Committee.

A discussion was held on Community Transport, and how it could be used more effectively. It was noted that:

- The MCA is aware of ongoing issues and whether community transport assets could be used more effectively across Authorities.
- Community Transport is coordinated by Sheffield Community Transport and part funded by the MCA.
- Service Level Agreements are agreed on an annual basis, though members discussed whether 3-yearly would be more appropriate.

Members raised the possibility of a consultation of users to gather their experiences of using community transport, noting the potential consultation on Bus Franchising, if approved.

ACTION: Democratic Services to re-circulate previous briefing on community transport.

RESOLVED: that the Review of the Action Log be noted.

143 **Review of latest Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

the Forward Plan of Key Decisions at the time of publishing was presented.

RESOLVED: that the latest Forward Plan of Key Decisions be noted.

144 **MCA Investments and Assurance Framework**

An introduction to MCA Investments and Assurance Framework was presented.

An example Business Case relating to a Rotherham Company called Grimm & Co was shared with The Committee. This scheme was identified by Government assessors as an example of providing good social value in MCA investments.

The following variables were discussed relating to individual business cases:

- The MCA policy environment, including the Strategic Economic Plan which focuses on making South Yorkshire a Stronger, Greener and Fairer place to live and work.
- Government conditions and rules regarding funding.

The Government requires that the MCA maintains an Assurance Framework which sets out how it makes investment decisions and applies Treasury Guidance ('The Green Book'). This Framework sets out that all project applications go through a number of assessments: financial, commercial, strategic, management and, social value.

Where social value is present but there is no or little monetary value, further assessment is undertaken to allocate qualitative scores to those schemes. These may cover values such as enhancing the image and reputation of a place, increasing community cohesion, alleviating social problems, later financial impacts, and enhancing quality of life in local communities. Projects are monitored to ensure objectives are met and agreed outputs are achieved and when a scheme ends, an evaluation is completed.

Members noted an example of a Barnsley training and development scheme, 'Rocket Science' which used feelings and thoughts of users of the scheme as a measure of its success.

The Committee recognised that only seeking financial gains may mean that some important schemes may be missed, and they welcomed social value being considered for schemes alongside financial value.

Members queried the resourcing for business case assessments, how long it can take a scheme to progress to approval, and whether many schemes fail.

A response was given that to address these issues and to work more closely with scheme developers, the following had been undertaken:

- A Programme Management Office had been created,
- The Assurance Framework had been reviewed recently,
- A Project Feasibility Fund had been made available to support scheme developers.

(Director of Development, Collaboration & Culture entered the meeting.)

(The Director of Programme Delivery left the meeting.)

RESOLVED: That the attached appendix be noted.

145 **General Election and Emerging MCA Priorities**

An update on the General Election and Emerging MCA Priorities was presented. It noted that:

- UK Mayors were invited to Cabinet to begin work between the Government, Mayors and MCAs and develop working relationships.
- The English Devolution Bill would provide more development and powers to MCAs, for example on health duties and planning.
- All Combined Authorities would be expected to produce a Growth Plan.
- Government had committed to public service reform, and MCAs would be expected to play a key role in this.

A discussion was held on the process of bid submission for Government funding and whether this would be addressed. A response was given that there is a commitment from Government to enact “single settlements”, but that it was unlikely that bidding rounds would be eliminated completely.

Questions were raised regarding changes to MCA planning powers. A response was given that it was unlikely that planning powers would be taken away from a Local Authorities, but that new obligations around spatial planning might be introduced.

Members discussed the importance of improving infrastructure around new housing developments, such as bus routes, in order to support community cohesion.

Members queried the Mayor’s letter to the Prime Minister. **ACTION: Democratic Services to facilitate the Prime Minister’s response to Mayor’s letter to be circulated to the Committee if possible.**

The Chair welcomed further reports to the Committee on developments in new Government policy.

(The Director of Development, Collaboration and Culture left the meeting).

RESOLVED: That the attached appendix be noted.

146 **2024/25 Work Programme**

The Chair thanked all members who attended a work planning workshop in June and presented the Draft Work Plan for 2024/25 for approval. It was noted that the Work Plan is an evolving document where Committee members can take forward issues. The Chair explained that some issues would only require a single instance of discussion, and that some issues would be ongoing pieces of work.

Members noted that new responsibilities may be devolved to the Mayor and MCA and asked that the MCA is prepared for additional scrutiny on this.

ACTION: Democratic Services to relay updates on bus service changes before the next Committee meeting.

Members requested that Skills provision also be added to the workplan.

ACTION: Democratic Services.

RESOLVED: That the Committee

- 1) Approved the 2024/25 Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme
- 2) Engage with future scoping required alongside the MCA Executive Team to refine and plan for delivery of the Work Programme.

147

Mayoral Introduction and Manifesto

(The Mayor and the Executive Director for Policy and Strategic Development entered the meeting.)

The Chair welcomed The Mayor to the meeting and sought questions from members.

Members enquired about The Mayor's pledge on cancer detection and asked how he planned to influence this. The Mayor responded that South Yorkshire has some of the highest cancer rates in the UK, and that there can be many challenges and delays for patients. In his role as Chair of the Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) Board, he maintains links across systems and services. He noted that exploration of different ways of diagnosing cancer can be carried out as well as looking at data to identify where certain communities can be supported with further engagement.

Members queried the Pathways to Work scheme and asked how the Mayor would influence employers to take on people with health conditions and disabilities. The Mayor responded that there were various providers supporting with getting individuals back into work, and a roundtable had been held with employers and business representatives to identify possibilities and lessons learned.

Members asked about The Mayor's pledge on how money confiscated from criminals and community payback schemes would be used to clean up streets and how much would this be. The Mayor responded that it is not possible to predict an exact figure, but that an estimated £1m would allow for a team to be hired to clean up the worst cases of graffiti and fly tipping in South Yorkshire.

ACTION: The Mayor will provide further detail on this pledge when information is available.

Questions were raised regarding the trial of free travel for young people in South Yorkshire, what the age cap would be and when trials would take place. The Mayor responded that there is no age cap as of yet and that there was no immediate timetable as discussions would be needed with partners and stakeholders.

Members enquired as to whether discrimination against older people will be removed with franchising. Concern was expressed that the current senior bus pass for cannot be used after 11pm. The Mayor noted that he could not make a commitment to changing this, but that it could be examined as part of Bus Reform work.

Members queried the pledge on a single point of entry for skills and employment in South Yorkshire. Members showed concern that regional commissioning had been planned but believed that some services should be focussed locally. The Mayor responded that this was not the intention for this pledge but he did wish to remove that complexity of accessing support. Concerns remained around commissioning being undertaken regionally and members asked for clarity.

ACTION: The Mayor will write to members around the operation of this scheme.

Members asked if pledges in the manifesto would be put into a workplan with timescales. A response was given that the MCA was working through the thirty pledges as well as the ongoing workstreams, and statutory responsibilities. These would be prioritised and presented to the Mayor and Leaders in the Autumn.

Members asked how The Mayor has found the increased workload and how the appointment of a Deputy Mayor was progressing. The Mayor explained that the staff from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner have joined the organisation and have taken on a lot of the workload and that their joining of the organisation should be completed in the Autumn. A Police and Crime plan was being developed and must be completed within the first year of office. The Mayor had spent time understanding policing and crime functions, including visiting the Call Handling Centre and speaking with the Child Sexual Exploitation Team. However, he noted that greater resources and capacity were needed from the Government to meet these responsibilities.

Members queried the Mayor's views were on scrutiny and pre-scrutiny of MCA Board decisions. The Mayor responded that he welcomes scrutiny, accountability, and transparency so that the public can see that MCA decisions are made in public interest. A further question was asked on the role of Portfolio Holders, and **the Mayor agreed to raise the possibility of new accountability and scrutiny measures with Leaders. ACTION: The Mayor.**

I, the undersigned, confirm that this is a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Signed _____

Name _____

Position _____

Date _____