

SCR - INFRASTRUCTURE BOARD

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON:

THURSDAY, 9 JANUARY 2020 AT 10.00 AM

11 BROAD STREET WEST, SHEFFIELD, S1 2BQ



Present:

Mark Lynam (Chair)
Owen Michaelson (Co-Chair)
Councillor Denise Lelliott
Richard Stubbs
Edward Highfield
Matt Gladstone

SCR Executive Team
Private Sector LEP Board Member
Rotherham MBC
Private Sector LEP Board Member
Sheffield City Council
Barnsley MBC

In Attendance:

Colin Blackburn	Assistant Director - Housing, Infrastructure and Planning	SCR Executive Team
Garreth Bruff	Senior Programme Manager	SCR Executive Team
James Mead		Environment Agency
Arnie Craven		Cadent
Nevil Muncaster		Yorkshire Water
Derek Fairbairn		Northern Powergrid
Anda Baumerte		Northern Powergrid
Craig Tyler (Minute Taker)		

Apologies:

Mayor Ros Jones CBE
Councillor Chris Furness

Doncaster MBC
Derbyshire Dales DC

1 Welcome and Apologies

Mark welcomed Members and officers to the meeting.

Apologies were noted as above.

2 Roundtable Discussion: Utility Providers

Mark welcomed the representatives of the region's utility providers to the meeting and invited all attendees to engage in a roundtable discussion on what issues the SCR, the Local Authorities and the utility providers could work together on now and in the future for the benefit of the Sheffield City Region's residents and businesses. This is especially where all parties have mutual ambitions around energy usage and commitments to address climate change.

Colleagues representing the utilities provided information in respect of their current activities within the SCR and future business plans.

It was suggested there may be various opportunities going forward to share more open data between partners, especially where it would be beneficial to use this data to sense-check that various plans are compatible.

Colleagues highlighted a number of examples in support of the benefits of partnership and collaborative working.

The meeting recognised that all partners have low and zero carbon future aspirations in the mid and longer term and considered how mutual ambitions might be best achieved through more co-ordinated engagement.

The meeting noted the Government's energy white paper is still awaited.

As well as generalised future energy usage matters, the meeting considered topics of specific relevance to South Yorkshire, particularly its ambition to be a potential world player in the hydrogen industry and low carbon sectors.

The meeting considered a number of specific matters relating to the various energy sources under consideration. Members discussed the need to map out an electric vehicle charging network for the SCR, and ML confirmed that the SCR was commissioning work to do this.

Consideration was given to the need for the SCR to offer more than standard forms of electrical power to act as an inward investment lever for potential new businesses that require such support. It was suggested this is an area the SCR may be well positioned to co-ordinate activity on, on behalf of the districts.

Regarding the SCR's flooding risks, it was suggested there is a potential £250m funding gap for remedial works and noted the Mayor and Leaders have requested a meeting with Government Ministers to discuss this matter. It was agreed that it would be beneficial for the SCR (and its utility partners) to speak with a 'single voice' wherever possible to better our chances of lobbying for further investment.

It was agreed we need to be clear on what the remit of the SCR is in terms of supporting the Local Authorities deliver their own ambitions and energy related programmes. It was agreed to make this a substantive discussion item at the next meeting.

Mark thanked the utility representatives for their attendance.

3 Declarations of Interest by individual Members in relation to any item of business on the agenda

None received.

4 Urgent items / Announcements

None.

5 **Public Questions of Key Decisions**

None received.

6 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed to be an accurate record and approved for signing by the representative of the Head of Paid Service.

7 **SCR Energy Strategy Revised Draft**

A report was received to present the revised draft SCR Energy Strategy, noting this takes into account the steer and comments received at past Infrastructure Board meetings.

Members were advised of what changes have been made to the narrative since the previous drafts, such as the removal of references to carbon sequestration and more realistic references to the likely impact of emerging technologies.

Cllr Lelliott noted concern that district officers haven't had the necessary opportunity to feedback comments on this revised draft and outlined some of the technical points officers still wish to raise. CB confirmed that discussions were ongoing with the RMBC officers to address the points of clarity.

It was queried whether the successful delivery of this Strategy, and its 12 point plan, would see the SCR achieve its zero carbon target, as set out at a recent meeting of the MCA through the declaration of a climate emergency. It was noted the MCA is due to receive a paper at its next meeting to set out a Framework of how it is intended to develop the necessary approaches and measures to address the Climate Change Emergency.

It was questioned whether the SCR has the necessary resources at its disposal to deliver the full ambition of the Strategy.

It was suggested the draft strategy is not compatible with other inclusive strategies which are being implemented to help low income households. However, it was noted this matter has been recognised and suggested there would be a 'just transition' implementation of the Energy Strategy to ensure low income families are not unnecessarily affected.

It was questioned why the draft doesn't provide comment on energy outage risks and mitigations.

It was suggested that presuming the draft Strategy is approved by the LEP Board and MCA; these questions will be unpacked and the question of 'how' the Strategy will be delivered considered in more detail, for consideration at future Board meetings.

Members expressed expectations that the Strategy would be well received by partner agencies keen to achieve mutual goals.

RESOLVED, that the Board notes the revised draft SCR Energy Strategy, including the energy options scenarios in the Policy Targets section and agrees for the draft SCR Energy Strategy be reported to both the LEP Board and MCA Board (subject to RMBCs points of clarification being incorporated).

8 Digital Infrastructure Strategy Update

A report was received to provide an update on the preparation of the Sheffield City Region Digital Infrastructure Strategy.

The report set out that the Strategy would focus on accelerating enhanced full fibre and 5G broadband across the region.

It was noted a brief to commission an external specialist has therefore been prepared to obtain an independent perspective and advice. Support for the scope of this commission was noted.

RESOLVED, that the Board notes the update and proposed commission for external support

9 Planning Productivity & Resource Review

A report was received to present the initial outcomes of planning reviews undertaken across five SCR districts.

The report set out proposals for further collective action in light of these reviews, with the aim of extending the work to create a more consistent approach on several issues, including supporting the development process, reflective of existing joint initiatives including the Duty to Co-operate and the Statement of Common Ground.

The benefits of more collaborative working, and what role the SCR Executive might play in facilitating joint ways of working that are capable of increasing planning productivity were considered.

Feedback was provided on the findings of the review undertaken with the support of the Planning Advisory Service. It was noted these are generally positive.

It was noted that in addition to individual improvement plans for each authority, five overarching project opportunities have been designed to improve performance collectively:

1. Standard planning forms – this would look to get planning paperwork (validation, pre-app, etc.) to be more similar across Planning Authorities.
2. Strategic Pre-app – this would look to deal with pre-application advice on the larger schemes in a more consistent way ensuring, for example, that all key agencies input at the same time.
3. Establish true cost model of planning – this would provide a better understanding on how much planning services cost and how much development and investment value they bring to the city region.

4. Streamlining conditions – this would look to reduce the number and type of planning conditions and make them more consistent.
5. Annual review and reflection –an annual improvement event to review progress, along with a further resource review as part of this.

It was noted each project has been assigned a lead Local Authority.

RESOLVED, that the Board:

1. Note the initial outcomes of the planning productivity and resource reviews, and the issues these have raised;
2. Note the next steps and support the work being developed by the Heads of Planning Group; and
3. Agree the role of lead local authorities for the next stages of work.

10 **Infrastructure Performance Dashboard**

The Dashboard was provided for information.

Cllr Lelliott queried some of the data presented and requested an opportunity for a further explanation.

Action: Karl to make arrangements for the further update.

11 **SCR Transport Board Agenda - 10th Jan 20**

Provided for information.

12 **Any Other Business**

No further matters raised.

In accordance with Combined Authority's Constitution/Terms of Reference for the Board, Board decisions need to be ratified by the Head of Paid Services (or their nominee) in consultation with the Chair of the Board. Accordingly, the undersigned has consulted with the Chair and hereby ratifies the decisions set out in the above minutes.

Signed

Name

Position

Date