

MCA - TRANSPORT AND THE ENVIRONMENT BOARD

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON:

THURSDAY, 10 FEBRUARY 2022 AT 10.00 AM

VIRTUAL MEETING



Present:

Councillor Chris Read (Co-Chair)	Rotherham MBC
Peter Kennan (Co-Chair)	Private Sector LEP Board Member
Stephen Edwards	South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive
Martin Swales	South Yorkshire MCA
Mayor Ros Jones CBE (Reserve)	Doncaster MBC

In Attendance:

Steve Davenport	Principal Solicitor & Monitoring Officer	South Yorkshire MCA/South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive
Joe Gardner	Programme & Performance Manager	South Yorkshire MCA
Sue Sykes	Assistant Director - Programme and Performance Unit	South Yorkshire MCA
Charli Taylor	Head of Controls	South Yorkshire MCA
Alex Linton	LTP Programme Manager	Local Transport Plan
Chloe Shepherd	Senior Programme Manager	South Yorkshire MCA
Pat Beijer	Business Development Director	South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive
Tim Taylor	Director of Public Transport Operations	South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive
Tom Finnegan-Smith (LA Chief Executive)		Sheffield City Council
Melanie Bray (Minute Taker)		

Apologies:

Councillor Dominic Beck	Rotherham MBC
Councillor Chris Lamb	Barnsley MBC
Councillor Douglas Johnson	Sheffield City Council
Sarah Norman	Barnsley MBC

1 Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

It was noted that this meeting was not quorate.

Apologies for absence were noted as above.

2 **Declarations of Interest by individual Members in relation to any item of business on the agenda.**

Members declared interests in relation to agenda item 6 entitled 'CRSTS Update Report'.

3 **Urgent items / Announcements**

None.

4 **Public Questions of Key Decisions**

None.

5 **Minutes of the last meeting**

Following the last Board meeting, the Business Advisory Group slides had been circulated onto the Members.

Members noted that it had not been possible to provide an update at today's meeting in relation to the Integrated Rail Plan and associated issues. Members were referred to the ongoing discussions on the matter. Given the recent outcome, M Swales would organise an internal workshop with a view to ascertaining how to take forward the work for South Yorkshire that was associated with the Integrated Rail Plan. The internal workshop would consider a range of asks without losing any of the ambition, and to ascertain how to progress matters forward in representation to maintain and push the case. A discussion would be held with the TEB, Leaders and Chief Executives at the local authorities regarding those ambitions to ensure that matters were still reconciled around the key issues. Mayor Jones CBE and M Swales would attend the East Coast Mainline Leaders' Meeting w/c 14 February 2022.

M Swales referred to the recent meetings that had been held in relation to the work with West Yorkshire, with a view to pushing the work that was required around the connectivity between Leeds and Sheffield and how to implement a governance mechanism. The Mayors had written to the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State ahead of the Convention of the North Meeting, to raise the points from across the North of Tyne and Wear through to Manchester and West Yorkshire. It was hoped to provide the Board with further progress in due course.

P Kennan referred to a recent article that had been written by the Editor of the Rail Magazine, which referred to the remarkable consensus of emerging opposition to the Integrated Rail Plan not least across the north of England, where politicians, media and sub-national transport bodies were speaking with one voice in a way that had never been observed before. The 16 northern Chambers of Commerce were coming together (including Doncaster, Barnsley, Rotherham and Sheffield) regarding the Transport for the North on the response to the IRP for consistent messaging for business. He expressed concern at the current pace, and he hoped that the business input would provide an opportunity to feed in all of the issues.

M Swales commented that the formalising of any legal direction had not yet been determined.

The GB Rail Headquarters bid was now up and running and a steering group was in place. There was good support from SYMCA which was being led by DMBC, and many private sectors were involved. P Kennan was releasing social media information with a view to raising awareness of the bids, to be created by 16 March 2022. He considered that 95% of the public would not have any knowledge of the SEP etc. He suggested that members of the public should be reminded of the famous connections to Doncaster i.e. Sir Nigel Gresley CBE, the Flying Scotsman train, the Mallard train, the Harry Potter film which was linked with the Kings Cross to Doncaster Great Northern Railway and the Thomas the Tank Engine children's cartoon.

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2022 be agreed as a true record.

6 **CRSTS Update Report**

A report was presented which provided an update on the status of the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) and the submission of the Programme Business Case to the Department for Transport (DfT).

The Board was reminded that the Government Spending Review included announcements regarding a number of transport funding streams for SYMCA, including the CRSTS provisional award of £570m for the five-year settlement period April 2022 to March 2027.

A Linton referred to the workshop that had been held on 14 December 2021 with senior representatives of the SYMCA, the DfT and HM Treasury regarding the content of the programme, to which positive feedback had been received. The programme level business case had been submitted to the DfT during week ending 28 January 2022, seeking £570m based upon the indicative allocation received from the DfT and included the £90m from the initial programme as either pipeline activities or potential over programming. Regular weekly contact had been maintained with the DfT throughout the period, and regular feedback had included a review on the draft business case. It was envisaged that the DfT would make their recommendations to the Ministers shortly, to enable a formal funding announcement to be made during March 2022.

RESOLVED – That the Board noted the work undertaken to complete the business case submission to DfT.

7 **Programme Approvals**

J Gardner presented a report which requested full approval of two schemes subject to the conditions set out in the Assurance Summaries; approval to release development costs for one project and approval of one project change request. The report also requested delegated authority to enter into necessary legal agreements for the schemes. The report noted the decision of the SYMCA Board to progress one scheme to full approval.

RESOLVED:-

Please note due to the Board being non quorate, these decisions will be ratified at the next Transport and Environment Board.

That the Board considered and approved:-

- i) Progression of 'O48 SCC Nether Edge and Crookes Active Neighbourhood' to full approval and award of £0.59m grant from Active Travel Fund 2/Gainshare (ATF2/Gainshare) to Sheffield City Council (SCC) subject to the conditions set out in the Assurance Summary attached at Appendix A1 to the report.
- ii) Progression of 'G11 The Whins/Cinder Bridge Rd/Greasborough Lane Junction Improvement' to full approval and award of £0.77m from Getting Building Fund (GBF) subject to the conditions set out in the Assurance Summary attached at Appendix A2 to the report.
- iii) Release of development cost funding of £.026m for 'O50 Sheaf Valley' from ATF2/Gainshare to SCC in line with the details attached at Appendix B to the report.
- iv) Project change request as detailed in Appendix C to the report.
- v) Delegated authority be given to the Head of Paid Service in consultation with the Section 73 and Monitoring Officer to enter into legal agreements for the schemes covered at 1 – 4 above.

That the Board noted:-

SYMCA Board has approved the progression of 'T11 Barnsley – Doncaster Quality Bus Corridor (BRT)' Outline Business Case OBC to FBC for Transforming Cities Fund (TCF2) to BMBC subject to the conditions set out in the Assurance Summary attached at Appendix D to the report.

8

Transport Programme Performance Report

S Sykes presented a report which provided the latest performance information on Transport and Environment capital programmes being delivered on behalf of the SYMCA. The report was intended to support oversight and scrutiny.

The Board noted that the SYMCA currently had 54 projects which fell within the remit of the Transport Skills and Environment Board. The schemes were resourced from various funding streams with an aggregate value of £235.47m.

The expenditure baseline for 2021/22 had initially been set at £102.64m with the latest forecasts suggesting outturn expenditure of £40.27m, which was a decrease in the last quarter of £10m. This would generate a material underspend of £62.37m (60.7%).

Members were referred to the Getting Building Fund (GBF) and the Transforming Cities Fund 2 (TCF2) which were both currently experiencing slippage. There was a requirement for the GBF funding to be spent by 31 March 2022, however following consultation with the Government, it had been agreed to enable freedom of flexibilities to ensure that the region did not lose the funding. In relation to TCF2, monthly reviews were undertaken with the partners, but slippage within the projects continued to be encountered due to various issues. Work was underway with the partners in order to mitigate the risks, which included a new programme management system to be rolled out from 1 April 2022, to be accessed by all partners. Work continued with the local authority partners in order to align the processes, which would take some considerable time.

The Board would continue to be updated on the position.

RESOLVED – That the Board considered the performance information provided to identify future performance deep-dives or significant areas of risk.

9

Bus Enhanced Partnership Governance Arrangements

A report was submitted in relation to the Bus Enhanced Partnership governance arrangements. In 2020, the DfT had issued the National Bus Strategy guidance, which set out the requirement for MCAs and LAs to develop ambitious service improvement plans and enter statutory delivery arrangements, to access transformational funding for buses. In response, the SYMCA had submitted a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) to the Government on 29 October 2021 and had begun the process of entering an Enhanced Partnership. Part of the process included establishing an Enhanced Partnership Board which would oversee the delivery of the Enhanced Partnership work programme.

Members were referred to the governance arrangements for the Enhanced Partnership which would consist of an Enhanced Partnership Board and an Enhanced Partnership Forum. There was a requirement for the Enhanced Partnership Board to be agreed by April 2022, with a view to highlighting arrangements to include the structure principles and terms of reference within the report to be presented to the SYMCA Meeting on 21 March 2022.

P Kennan expressed concern as to where the business voice on such boards as the Enhanced Partnership Board would fit into the structure of the SYMCA. He queried whether there was a place on the Enhanced Partnership Board for business representatives or whether the soundings from business which would be fed into the board.

In response, M Swales commented that the business representation was embodied in the SYMCA governance in a variety of different ways. Views would continue to be expressed through the TEB and the board, which would be fed into the Enhanced Partnership Board by the TEB representatives.

Frequent engagement was made with the wider business group regarding the decisions that were associated with the future of public transport.

Members noted that further development of the Enhanced Partnership Forum was awaited.

P Kennan considered that it would be helpful for the chair of the Enhanced Partnership Board to attend future TEB meetings for challenge on all topical issues. He suggested that the TEB could provide assistance to the Enhanced Partnership Forum, and he highlighted that this would operate in parallel with TFN's establishment of a citizens' panel for transport generally. He suggested that a conversation should be had with I Murray to ascertain how this would look given the technology that was available.

In response to P Kennan's suggestion for the chair of the Enhanced Partnership Board to attend future TEB meetings, M Swales commented that the likelihood would be that the Mayor or Mayor's representative would become the Chair of the Enhanced Partnership Board, who already had accountability to the governance structures within the SYMCA. Therefore, he did not consider that there was a need to formally build in for the Chair of the Enhanced Partnership Board to report back into the TEB, but that periodic updates would be provided to the TEB.

RESOLVED – That the Board considered the contents of the report.

10 **Options to Support the Delivery of the Region's BSIP**

A report was presented which provided an update on the process to formally assess bus franchising as an option to deliver the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). At the SYMCA meeting held on 24 January 2022, it had been recommended that the Constituent Local Authorities considered the matter ahead of an additional SYMCA meeting in early March 2022, to determine whether to issue the notice of intention to prepare an assessment of a proposed franchising scheme, in accordance with S.123C of the Transport Act 2000.

Members noted that the development of the business case could take up to 12 months, and that it would have to meet the DfT criteria. Once the business case was endorsed by the SYMCA, further work would be undertaken in terms of public consultation before a formal franchising scheme could commence. It was anticipated that the implementation would take a number of years.

RESOLVED – That the Board noted the content of the report ahead of an additional SYMCA meeting in early March 2022, when the SYMCA would determine whether to issue the notice of intention to prepare an assessment of a proposed franchising scheme in accordance with S.123C of the Transport Act 2000.

11 **Bus Operations Update (verbal)**

T Taylor referred to the bus patronage across the bus network since Christmas 2021 and October – November 2021, which had been in line with the ambitions and expectations with a 70% - 80% rate of total bus patronage. A significant dent in terms of demand of the bus network had been encountered following the emergence of the Omicron variant of COVID-19 and the reintroduction of

Plan B, together with the Stagecoach bus issues that had been encountered during December 2021 – January 2022. Growth in bus patronage was now starting to be observed, however the expectation of reaching 80% by the end of the financial year was off the mark.

The Board was referred to the significant uncertainties around the continuation of funding from Central Government. DfT's bus recovery plan was scheduled to conclude on 5 April 2022, which was subject to a potential extension. The bus operators were focused upon the 5 April 2022 and the issues that would be caused within the commercial environment. Negotiations were underway with the bus operators regarding their commercial reductions, to look to extend the period in which the network would continue and to reach a network post the funding period. It was hoped that the DfT would provide some funding, and for the change to take effect from September 2022. Fare increases had been observed across all operators of between 5% – 7%, to come in with effect from the beginning of March 2022 for Travel Master, Stagecoach Bus and First Bus.

Members noted the attempts that had been made nationally to gain interest from the press in terms of the fare increases. The process in resolving the issue within South Yorkshire was commercially sensitive. Mayor Jarvis MBE along with other Mayors, had recently written to the Chancellor on the matter. Mayor Jarvis MBE had also recently written to First Bus and Stagecoach Bus in relation to the discussions with the local MD's and the budget constraints from their respective groups.

RESOLVED – That the Board noted the verbal update.

12 **Any Other Business**

Members agreed that a provisional Board meeting would be arranged to be held during mid-March 2022.

ACTION:- M Swales/C Shepherd

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