

MCA - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON:

WEDNESDAY, 23 MARCH 2022 AT 10.00 AM

11 BROAD STREET WEST, SHEFFIELD, S1 2BQ



Present:

Councillor Martin Smith (Chair)	Sheffield City Council
Councillor Jeff Ennis	Barnsley MBC
Councillor Dianne Hurst	Sheffield City Council
Councillor Bryan Lodge	Sheffield City Council
Councillor Jo Newing	Barnsley MBC
Councillor Martin Smith (Chair)	Sheffield City Council
Councillor Barry Johnson (Reserve)	Doncaster MBC

In Attendance:

Dr Dave Smith	Chief Executive / Head of Paid Service	SYMCA Executive Team
Steve Davenport	Principal Solicitor & Monitoring Officer	SYMCA Executive Team
Christine Marriott	Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager	SYMCA Executive Team
Colin Blackburn	Assistant Director - Housing, Infrastructure and Planning	SYMCA Executive Team
Becky Guthrie	Senior Programme Manager	SYMCA Executive Team
Mayor Dan Jarvis MBE	South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority	

Gillian Richards (Minute Taker)

Apologies:

Councillor Thomas Collingham	Rotherham MBC
Councillor Austen White	Doncaster MBC
Councillor Ken Wyatt	Rotherham MBC
Dr Ruth Adams	SYMCA Executive Team

13 Welcome and Apologies

S Davenport welcomed everyone to the meeting.

As the Chair, Cllr Ross, was attending the meeting virtually due to illness, it was noted that he would not be able to chair the meeting. Cllr Smith was nominated and seconded to chair the meeting and took the Chair.

Cllr Jones also attended the meeting virtually. S Davenport reported that as the Scrutiny Committee is as Statutory Committee, virtual attendees did not count towards quorum and could not vote on any decisions/recommendations. As there were only five committee members present in the room, the meeting was not quorate; however, as there were no executive decisions to be made the meeting could go ahead if Members agreed. Members so agreed.

Apologies were noted as above.

As Mayor Jarvis had a busy schedule it was agreed that the Mayoral Scrutiny agenda item be taken as the next item.

14 **Urgent Items/Announcements**

None.

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

None.

16 **Declarations of Interest by any Members**

None.

17 **Reports from and Questions by Members**

None.

18 **Questions from Members of the Public**

None.

19 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting Held on 20 January 2022**

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2022 be agreed as a true record.

20 **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising. It was confirmed that C Marriott would update the Action Plan to remove the actions that had been discharged.

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

The Forward Plan of Key Decisions was considered.

There were no questions from members.

22 **Mayoral Scrutiny - Verbal**

Mayor Jarvis joined the meeting on Microsoft Teams from Parliament. He began by saying that it had been a privilege to serve as Mayor, he was proud of what he had achieved and grateful for all the support he had received.

Achievements during his time as Mayor included:

- Completion of the Devolution deal.
- Working together as a region whilst still recognising the individual authorities.

- South Yorkshire was now a trusted partner and valued by national government and elsewhere.
- Strategic planning, positive action and funding.
- The agreement of clear priorities and put in place strong plans to give strategic direction to the region. These included:
 - A Strategic Economic Plan
 - A Covid Recovery Plan
 - A Bus Service Improvement Plan
 - A Transport Strategy
 - A Skills and Education Strategy
 - An Energy Strategy
 - A Flood Prevention Strategy
- The development of an Enhanced Partnership with the Bus Operators.
- A 2040 Net Zero target.
- An emphasis on Active Travel, appointing Dame Sarah Storey as the Active Travel Commissioner.
- Achieving significant funding for the region.

Mayor Jarvis recognised that there were still challenges ahead with the post-Covid economy and the cost-of-living crisis. It would be vital to secure more and better jobs for the area and attract new companies. Bus, tram and public transport in general would be very challenging. These would be priorities for the new Mayor, along with securing further funding.

Despite all this, he was immensely proud of what had been achieved together and there had been a definite change of mood in the region and a feeling of growth and productivity.

Mayor Jarvis raised the issue of MCA staff. The staff worked very hard and did an excellent job, but the SYMCA had the smallest number of staff of any Combined Authority and this needed addressing. The new Mayor would need to look closely how to increase capacity while remaining efficient and lean.

His advice to the new Mayor would be to build on what had been achieved and to work with the Leaders and not against them.

When asked if he had any regrets Mayor Jarvis replied that he had been the only Metro Mayor that had taken office without a devolution deal in place and it had taken half his term of office to achieve the deal with the legal agreement being signed in July 2020. It was a regret that more could have been achieved if the Deal was in place earlier.

Mayor Jarvis reiterated his thanks to all officers for their hard work over the last four years for which he was immensely grateful. He would do all he could in his role as MP for Barnsley Central to support the new Mayor and the SYMCA.

Cllr Ennis commented that the Mayor had listed what he thought was an incredible record of achievements in such a short space of time. There had been some opinion that Parliamentary and constituency duties plus Mayoral duties would be too much, but he felt that Mayor Jarvis had pulled it off and left a base for the new Mayor to hit the ground running.

Mayor Jarvis agreed that his decision to stand for Mayor whilst remaining an MP had been controversial. It had been immensely hard work, but he felt it had been the right decision. He had worked hard to bring people together across all parties and felt this had been successful, he had also done all he could to ensure that South Yorkshire's voice was heard in Parliament and would continue to do so along with the other South Yorkshire MPs.

Cllr Ross commented that the Committee had taken the view that, in the long-term, franchising may provide a better bus service for South Yorkshire and asked the Mayor whether he felt the Enhanced Partnership was the end product or a steppingstone to full franchising.

The Mayor replied that it would be a matter of "wait and see" if additional government funding would be available, and recognised that the situation was frustrating.

There had been no choice other than the Enhanced Partnership route, and this was the only way to draw down the emergency bus funding from the government.

It was hoped that the Enhanced Partnership would provide short to medium-term improvements, but this would again be dependent on the funding available.

The new Mayor would need to progress the work around the appraisal and consideration of franchising, but this would not be possible without significant resource from national government.

Cllr Ross thanked Mayor Jarvis for his responsiveness to requests from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, his co-operation had been much appreciated.

The Mayor replied that he had valued the advice and contributions from the Committee; he had learned a lot about local government during his time as mayor. He wished members all the best for the future.

Cllr Ennis suggested that the Committee should send a letter of thanks to Mayor Jarvis. This was agreed.

Action: Letter of thanks to be sent to Mayor Jarvis on behalf of the Committee.

23

Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure

A report was submitted which provided an update on progress in developing the South Yorkshire Electric Vehicle Chargepoint Programme in response to matter raised by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Committee was reminded that the MCA was successful in securing £1.85m from the government's Get Building Fund for the purchase and installation of electric vehicle charging points (EVCP) and associated infrastructure across South Yorkshire.

The MCA had worked in partnership with the four South Yorkshire Local Authorities and the South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive to develop an initial programme focused on public car parks.

Following the development and funding approval of the business case by the MCA, an open procurement process was undertaken, and it was hoped to appoint a preferred single supplier shortly.

The procurement of a single supplier was providing a single consistent product and operational and maintenance approach across the region's MCA/SYPTE and local authority car parks; this had enabled the programme to benefit from economies of scale.

An initial list of priority public car parks had been agreed. It was noted that the initial funding could provide up to 140 EVCP devices, providing up to 280 EVCP connections. The contract would allow the programme to be scaled-up should further funding become available.

In addition to the £1.85m of funding secured by the MCA for the initial phase of the programme, some additional funding (to be confirmed) was being proposed by the Transport Operations Team to increase outputs on some car parks. Local authorities were also considering whether further funding could be available to support the provision of additional charge points on some of their car parks in the first phase.

It was noted that the government was expected to publish its Electricity Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy in summer 2022 and was likely to be accompanied by additional funding, although no further information on the funding stream was available at the moment.

DfT data showed that South Yorkshire's EVCP provision was lagging behind the national average, although in terms of neighbouring MCA areas, South Yorkshire measured higher per capita than Greater Manchester and was comparable to West Yorkshire. As at October 2021 South Yorkshire had 21 charge points per 100,000 population against a national average of 39.

A graph within the report showed that investment in EVCP's in South Yorkshire had grown consistently over time but had not kept pace with the national average which meant that the gap was growing.

The EVCP programme would address this in the short-term but further investment would be required to significantly close the EVCP infrastructure gap in relation to the England average.

The Committee discussed logistical issues, such as homes with no off-street parking, noting that further technological developments would be needed in this area.

The role of the private sector was also discussed, for example supermarkets and fuel companies and it was recognised that this would be linked to demand. The Committee felt that it would be helpful if the government were to provide

incentives for drivers to purchase electric vehicles as at present the vehicles were very expensive.

It was noted that the power to the EVCPs would be provided by the National Grid, the Committee discussed the possibility of using green energy to provide power in the future.

RESOLVED – That the Committee:

- i) Note the existing Electric Vehicle Chargepoint infrastructure provision in South Yorkshire.
- ii) Note the progress in developing and delivering the South Yorkshire Electric Vehicle Chargepoint Programme to enhance provision on South Yorkshire.

24 **Brownfield Housing Fund**

A report was considered which provided an update on delivering the MCA Brownfield Housing Programme in response to matter raised by the Committee.

Members were informed that the government had awarded the MCA Brownfield Housing Funding (BHF) of £40.34m (capital) and £0.84m (revenue) in June 2020 with the aim of creating 2,500 to 3,500 new homes by bringing brownfield land forward for development.

Also, as part of the levelling-up agenda, the government had recently announced that the MCS would be receiving a further £13.45m BHF funding.

The BHF could be used to fund a range of interventions to enable the development of housing on brownfield land which would otherwise not happen. The MCA Executive team had been working with the four Local Authorities to identify and develop a pipeline of BHF schemes. Initially local authorities were invited to put forward proposals for key priority brownfield sites in their districts. These were a combination of council-led schemes, Joint Ventures and private sector developments.

The pipeline was divided into three initial phases based on deliverability (set out at Appendix A). It was noted that the majority of the business cases for phase 1 and 2 schemes had been developed and would have been given funding approval by the MCA by the end of March 2022 – a few schemes were already in delivery.

Members noted that there had been a number of challenges in developing the programme which were detailed within the report.

The Committee was informed that the total capital funding of £53.79m was required to be spent by 31 March 2025. It was noted that government did set an initial expenditure target to be met by March 2022 of £22m. Financial reporting throughout the year had shown that this target would not be met, which was due to issues set out in paragraph 2.3.6 of the report. Those issues affecting programme delivery were expected to continue, at least over the next

12 months, which could in turn impact on the ability to meet the expenditure targets by 31 March 2025.

Government officials had been kept apprised of the issue and it was not expected that any funding received to date was at risk of clawback.

It was noted that the MCA Housing and Infrastructure Board was overseeing the development and delivery of the programme and would continue to be responsible for the remaining three years of the programme.

RESOLVED – That the Committee note the progress on delivery of the MCA Brownfield Housing Fund Programme.

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

Signed

Name

Position

Date