

SCR - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON:

THURSDAY, 17 OCTOBER 2019 AT 1.00 PM

SHEFFIELD CITY REGION, 11 BROAD STREET WEST,
SHEFFIELD, S1 2BQ



Present:

Councillor Chris Furness (Chair)	Derbyshire Dales DC
Councillor Allan Jones (Vice-Chair)	Doncaster MBC
Councillor Penny Baker	Sheffield City Council
Councillor Dawn Dale	Sheffield City Council
Councillor Ken Richardson	Barnsley MBC
Councillor Peter Rippon	Sheffield City Council
Councillor John Shephard	Bassetlaw DC
Councillor Brian Steele	Rotherham MBC
Dr Dave Smith	SCR Executive Team
Steve Davenport	SCR Executive Team
Christine Marriott	SCR Executive Team

Officers in Attendance:

Dr Ruth Adams	Deputy Chief Executive	SCR Executive Team
Noel O'Neill	Chief Finance Officer/S73 Officer	Sheffield City Region
Mike Thomas	Senior Finance Manager	SCR Executive Team
Craig Tyler		South Yorkshire Joint Authorities Governance Unit
Stephen Edwards	Executive Director	SYPTTE
Mark Lynam	Director of Programme Commissioning	SCR Executive Team
Stephen Batey	Head of Mayor's Office	SCR Mayor's Office

Apologies:

Councillor Jeff Ennis	Barnsley MBC
Councillor Austen White	Doncaster MBC

1 Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair

The meeting was opened by the Monitoring Officer who advised Members the meeting was not quorate.

It was agreed to appoint a Chair for this meeting only and transact the business as presented noting there were no explicit decisions to be taken.

Nominations were sought for the position of Chair.

Cllr Furness was nominated and seconded by Cllrs Steele and Richardson and accepted the nomination. It was agreed to defer the appointment of the Vice Chair to the next meeting.

RESOLVED, that the Committee:

1. Appoint Cllr Chris Furness as Chair for the meeting today.
2. Defer appointment of Chair for the 2019/20 municipal year until the next quorate meeting.

3. Defer the decision to appoint a Vice Chair to the next meeting.

2 Welcome and Apologies

Members' apologies were noted as above.

The Chair welcomed Noel O'Neil (SCR Interim Group Finance Manager) to the meeting and the member of the public present.

3 Voting Rights for Non-Constituent Members

It was agreed there were no agenda items for which the non-Constituent Members should not have full voting rights.

4 Urgent Items/Announcements

None.

5 Items to be Considered in the Absence of Public and Press

None.

6 Declarations of Interest by any Members

None.

7 Reports from and Questions by Members

None.

8 Questions from Members of the Public

None.

9 Minutes of the Previous Meeting Held on 18 July 2019

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the meeting held on 18th July are agreed to be an accurate record.

10 **Matters Arising**

None.

11 **SCR MCA/LEP Revenue Budget Review**

A report was received to provide a briefing for Members on the MCA/LEP revenue budget setting process and how decisions are made regarding the allocation of each budget.

It was reported the annual Revenue Budget sets out the budget proposals for the Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) for a one-year period and noted that for the purposes of the presented report, the Revenue Budget refers to the budget covering the core operational budget for the MCA and LEP, and also any multi-year revenue programmes for which the MCA is the accountable body.

Members were reminded the MCA's Financial Regulations set out the roles and responsibilities of the Authority, the Head of Paid Service and the Finance Director in relation to the annual Revenue Budget and that it is the Finance Director who is responsible for preparing detailed proposals for the annual Revenue Budget for the coming year in conjunction with the Head of Paid Service.

It was noted the draft 2020/21 MCA/LEP Revenue Budget report will be presented through the next MCA/LEP meeting cycle. This will be informed by the Leaders' direction to identify where further savings in the budget can be made.

Cllr Richardson noted the report only focusses on the budget setting process itself and not the 'actuals' of what the 2020/21 budget will be spent on, and asked where the aforementioned reductions might be made.

In response, M Thomas noted that in preparing to meet the challenge of setting a balanced revenue budget for 2020/21, the MCA and LEP needed to prepare to accommodate a £2m income reduction in year whilst ensuring the 3 core business objectives were still delivered. It was noted this is due to two risks which may be realised in 2020/21; the Mayoral Capacity Fund which has a £2m allocation for 2018 to 2020 (notionally £1m per year) with no certainty for future allocations, and a reduction in Enterprise Zone Business Rates of £1m due to Chesterfield BC withdrawing its membership of the SCR LEP with effect from April 2020.

It was proposed this is achievable and would be realised through a review of reserves, a detailed review of staffing costs, a vacancy management programme and additional commercial income from the SCR's holdings

It was noted the recent 2020/21 budget setting workshop was unfortunately poorly attended by Scrutiny Committee Members. Consideration was given to whether this should be reconvened and what measures might be put in place to increase Member attendance at any future undertaking. It was agreed efforts should be put in place to try and reconvene the workshop, potentially utilising one of the informal pre-determined Scrutiny Committee dates.

Action: Christine to check Members availability for a reconvened Members' budget setting workshop.

RESOLVED, that Members note the process by which the 2020/21 MCA/LEP revenue budget will be set.

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SCR Bus Review/Transport

A report was received to provide an update on a number of bus review and transport related matters. This included progress made with the consultation process, an update on activity being undertaken to improve bus services and connectivity in Barnsley (as referred to by BMBC's own Scrutiny Committee Members), an overview of SCR Transport Investment and performance measures and an overview of activities to support alternatives to the car around schools.

Regarding the bus review, Members were reminded this undertaking seeks to garner opinion in relation to the challenges presented by the current system of public transport provision and what might be done to stem the decline in public transport patronage.

It was reported a common theme of the responses received to date have referenced a lack of service reliability as a significant issue for public transport.

Officers were reminded that at the last meeting, the Mayor agreed the Scrutiny Committee would be appropriately involved with the development of the Bus Review (and also the Local Industrial Strategy) and that it was noted arrangements would be put in place to provide OSC Members with an enhanced role in support of the Bus Review with Councillors Dale, Ennis and Furness registered their interest in being involved with this enhanced role.

Action: Mark to clarify the position with the Bus Review team and confirm how the OSC members will be engaged with the review process.

Regarding timescales, it was noted Clive Betts is due to meet the SCR Mayor during November to present his draft findings ahead of the provision of the final report in the New Year. This will then be subject to consideration by Leaders and the outcomes will ultimately inform actions contained within the Transport Strategy Implementation Plan.

It was suggested Clive Betts might be invited to attend a future meeting of the SCR Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Members raised additional challenges that the public transport offer needs to address including congestion, the quality and complexity of ticketing and the cancellations of what may already be infrequent services.

It was noted the survey has been predominantly conducted online but has also been extensively promoted on buses and additional attempts made to engage other harder to reach groups.

Cllr Steele asked what powers the Mayor has to actually change public transport. It was noted these are contained within the 2017 Bus Services Act which gives elected Mayors the powers to implement bus franchising in their area (akin to the system operated by Transport for London). Members discussed the likely complexities of any public transport re-regulation exercise.

Members also considered the wider climate change policy context and the role future iterations of public transport will need to play to help meet transport emission caps and targets.

The membership of the Bus Review Panel was confirmed as Clive Betts MP (Chair), Kristine Beuret OBE (Director of Social Research Associates (SRA)), Stephen Joseph OBE (former CEO of Campaign for Better Transport), Peter Kennan (Chair of Sheffield Chamber of Commerce and Industry Transport Forum and Local Enterprise Partnership Board member), Martin Mayer (Secretary, Sheffield TUC, UNITE the UNION and retired bus driver), Lily Currie (BSC Environmental Science Student) and Dawn Badminton-Capps (Director, England for Bus Users).

Members discussed the common potential outcomes of the actions arising from the Bus Review, and those of other environmental and active travel (walking and cycling) objectives (a healthier population, better air quality etc.).

Cllr Jones highlighted the realities of what might happen if the commercial operators are forced to accept any changes to current governance and service determination practices, noting the local authorities can't continue to subsidise non-profitable services to the level the public want.

Cllr Jones commented on the inclusion in the report of information specific to Barnsley.

It was noted this wasn't intended to exclude references to the other 3 South Yorkshire boroughs but was rather in response to a specific request from the Barnsley MBC Scrutiny Committee to address the quality of services in Barnsley. It was clarified this matter is separate to the Bus Review which is South Yorkshire wide.

It was noted it is still to be seen whether the Bus Review's findings will be to recommend the instigation of any of the powers contained within the 2017 Bus Services Act.

Cllr Jones asked if the SCR could run bus services under its General Power of Competence. It was noted the General Power of Competence (as prescribed by the 2011 Localism Act) affords the local authorities the power (in England) to do "anything that individuals generally may do" but does not apply where there is specific legislation which prohibits it, such as the running of commercial bus services. The Monitoring Officer provided a further explanation of the rules under which Community Transport operators operate and why paying a tender to an organisation to run a tendered service (by that a commercial operator (or to a Community Transport operator where no commercial service exists)) differs from directly running a bus service.

Cllr Baker emphasised the importance of the word 'service' and questioned the commercial operators understanding of this term.

Cllr Steele asked that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be afforded the opportunity to review the findings of the Bus Review before they are reported to the Mayor.

Action: S Davenport to address the sequencing of this request with the Bus Review Panel.

RESOLVED, that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

1. Notes the contents of the report

Agrees to consider the final findings and recommendations of the Bus Review ahead of these being reported to the Mayor in early 2020

13 **Scrutiny Work Programme 2019/20**

The 2019/20 Scrutiny Committee work programme was tabled for information.

Members were asked to note the referral from the SCR MCA requesting the Scrutiny Committee leads on making meetings more accessible to the receipt of public feedback. Members were advised feedback forms were now being made available for members of the public attending SCR meetings to facilitate the capture of the public's thoughts on how meetings are being conducted.

It was noted online feedback forms are also to be made available on the SCR website via a web form.

It was agreed that public feedback would be reported back to the OSC after 6 months.

Cllr Jones invited officers to also consider contributing ideas for the work programme, particularly areas where it is considered the Scrutiny Committee Members might be well placed to provide assistance with.

It was noted Members would shortly be provided with a copy of the updated SCR Forward Plan of Key Decisions.

14 **Post Meeting - Informal Meeting Review**

Members gave further informal consideration to the work of the Committee.

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

Signed

Name

Position

Date