

**MINUTES** of a meeting of the **PEAK PARK TRANSPORT FORUM** held on 24 April 2006 at County Hall, Matlock

**PRESENT**

Councillor B C Lucas (in the Chair)

**Barnsley MBC**

A Chymera

**Cheshire County Council**

J Gray and S Roberts

**Derbyshire County Council**

Councillors C Cutting, I Ratcliffe, D B Taylor, and Mrs J A Twigg, and J Seymour

**GMPTA**

A Whitehead

**High Peak Borough Council**

A Wells

**Highways Agency**

S Greenhalgh, J Greillor, L McAully, S Rea, and M Staniland

**Peak District National Park Authority**

A Ashe, Councillor T Critchlow, P M Crompton, E Davies, and Councillor Mrs B J Wilson

**SPITS**

C Bell

**Tameside MBC**

P Calverley and Councillor S R Oldham

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor T Bristowe (Barnsley MBC), C Lowther, Councillor Sanderson (PTA), Councillor J M T Sutcliffe (Oldham MBC), and G Willerton (Oldham MBC).

Declarations of Interest were made as follows:-

Councillors I Ratcliffe and Mrs J A Twigg – Personal interests as members of the Peak District National Park Authority

Councillors Mrs B J Wilson – Personal interest as a member of Derbyshire County Council

**1/06** **MINUTES RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Peak Park Transport Forum held on 28 November 2005 be received, subject to the following amendments:-

- (i) K Sanderson to be listed as a representative for SYPTA, not Barnsley MBC;
- (ii) (Minute No 19/05 refers) that A Ashe declared a personal interest as a member of the Sustainable Development Fund **Panel**.

**2/06** **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – (a) Ms A Robinson (Friends of the Peak District)** Anne Robinson referred to the Transport Innovation Fund, and the aspirations to reduce traffic in the Peak District National Park. She raised concern that, as the County Council bid for Government support to study options for managing the demand for travel in and around the Peak District National Park had been unsuccessful, the scheme would be abandoned. Due to the large amount of traffic congestion in and around the conurbation, Ms Robinson argued that there should be a study.

In response, it was stated that the idea of introducing demand management measures had not been abandoned, but it was not possible to take it forward at present. A written response would be sent to Ms Robinson.

**(b) Mr Spinks (WAIT (Woodhead Against Increased Traffic))**, Mr Spinks represented WAIT, a local campaign group representing the interests of those potentially affected on by the scheme on the eastern side of the Pennines. A letter had been submitted detailing the objections relating to the way the Highways Authority had sought to promote the scheme. A number of issues were raised:-

- there had been no consultation with those who would be affected
- there was no inclusion of cost in the plan
- the traffic restraint measures would not work as they would be ineffective for long distance traffic
- the approach to the scheme had been sub-standard
- there was a lack of recognition for safety measures

- the overall environmental impact on the Peak District National Park

Mr Spinks asked that the Peak Park Transport Forum withdraw its support for the scheme, and that a study be undertaken by the Department for Transport. A number of fundamental questions needed to be answered, and it was agreed that these would be responded to by letter.

**3/06**                    **A57/628(T) MOTTRAM-TINTWISTLE BYPASS AND A628/616(T) ROUTE RESTRAINT MEASURES, DRAFT ORDERS RESPONSE** Draft Orders had been published on 31 January 2006, and responses were required by 5 May 2006. The Orders would then be the subject of a Public Inquiry commencing in October 2006.

There were a number of differing viewpoints on the proposed scheme from partners of the Forum, and it was not clear how these could form a single Forum response. Other than restating the SPITS Business Plan, which represented the agreed position of the Forum, a joint response from the Forum was not considered to be practical.

It was proposed that, for the purposes of the Public Inquiry, the position of the Forum be stated through submission of its Business Plan, and that the Highways Agency be informed that no further detailed response would be made on the scheme proposals.

**RESOLVED** that (1) the SPITS Business Plan be submitted for deposit at the Public Inquiry into the A57/628(T) Mottram-Tintwistle Bypass and A628/616(T) Route Restraint Measures, representing the agreed strategic position of the Forum; and

(2) the Highways Agency be informed that the Forum will make no further comments on the scheme.

**4/06**                    **THE FINANCE AND STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS YEAR 2006/07** A proposed financial forecast had previously been presented to the Forum at its meeting in November 2005, along with a plan of action for 2006/07 and beyond.

**RESOLVED** that (1) the annual payment per share rises from £1,600 to £1,700 per share per year; and

(2) the Forum approves the financial arrangements as laid out in the financial forecast.

**5/06**                    **FORMATION OF THE SPITS PUBLIC TRANSPORT GROUP** There had been, for some time, increasing pressure to maintain the

existing approach to rural public transport provision, due to increasing costs and lowering support budgets and patronage. There was concern that further strain on resources would lead to services being withdrawn.

It was felt that a new approach was needed to public transport in the peak district and surrounding area, and it was considered that a strategic approach was required to steer developments in the medium to long term.

An inaugural meeting of the SPITS Public Transport Group had taken place, and this had established a partnership structure within the SPITS framework to address the issue. At the next meeting of the Group, a paper would be presented which would set out the development of services.

**RESOLVED** that the Forum notes and endorses the development.

**6/06**                    **TRANSPORT INNOVATION FUND** At its meeting in November 2005, the Forum was informed that a bid to the Government for support from the Transport Innovation Fund (TIF) to study the options for managing the demand for travel in and around the Peak District National Park had been unsuccessful.

In its response to the County Council, the Department for Transport had raised concern about the lack of clarity in the forms of demand management proposed, and by the apparent lack of buy-in from the other highway authorities. The Secretary of State had invited the County Council to consider a further bid in 2006, and also indicated that the Government would expect a joint bid from an area such as a National Park.

Discussions had taken place with the Peak District National Park Authority and highway authorities involved in SPITS to consider the feasibility of a joint bid. There had been revised Government guidance indicating that bids should demonstrate a change in current approaches to demand management.

There was currently no consensus amongst SPITS highway authorities that proposals involving radical demand management measures were appropriate. The National Park Authority hoped to study the feasibility of an 'environmental levy', and the County Council was willing to consider this alongside other demand management options. The County Council, however, held the view that area-wide charging was unlikely to be feasible, and there had been no 'in principle' support from SPITS highway authorities. There was, therefore, no prospect of a joint proposal, and the County Council had informed the Government office accordingly.

**RESOLVED** that developments be noted.

**7/06**                    **PEAK CONNECTIONS** Peak Connections had been successful in delivering benefits to the promotion of public transport in the Peak District visitor area. It had been funded by a number of organisations, but the host authority for the project and major supporter had been Derbyshire County Council.

In terms of the wider financial priorities of the County Council, it was reported that it would be unable to fund Peak Connections beyond 30 June 2006. There were ongoing discussions with all partners to find the most appropriate way to continue publicising and marketing public transport.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

**8/06**                    **VILLAGE ACCESSIBILITY HUBS PROJECT – PROGRESS** Since support had been given to the Village Accessibility Hubs Project and East Midlands Tourism Bids for Marketing and Public Realm infrastructure, and approval had been given for up to £10,000 for the development of a Hubs project, a number of developments had taken place:-

- Moors for the Future had agreed to work with the Village Accessibility Hubs project, and a financial contribution had been earmarked;
- The Village Accessibility Hubs project was working more closely with the East Midlands Tourism Public Realm Bid to enable match funding;
- Publicity was expected to take place to make businesses and organisations that might benefit from participating as hub locations aware of the project.

**RESOLVED** that developments be noted.

**9/06**                    **PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY STRATEGIC SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT GROUP (STIG)** The Strategic Sustainable Transport Group had been developed from the Best Value Review to consider the Authority's role in transport. Approval for the Group had been given by the National Park Authority's Business Management Team, and its inaugural meeting had been in March 2006. Membership of the Group was detailed.

The aim of the Group was to undertake a strategic assessment of how the National Park Authority supported sustainable transport services, and to propose suitable ways forward so that all sectors of the Authority could work towards achieving the same outcomes and the proposals complimented the work of all external partners.

The Group was expected to focus upon four key areas of work:-

- Traffic management schemes

- Accessibility, including a car parking strategy for the National Park
- Environmental levy
- Marketing and publicity of sustainable access

Further information was given as to how the four key areas would be developed.

**RESOLVED** that members of the SPITS Officer Working Group note the new Peak District National Park Authority's Strategic Sustainable Transport Group and where possible support its attempts to produce policies and delivery mechanisms to address sustainable transport issues.

**10/06**                    **DATE OF NEXT MEETING** **RESOLVED** that the next meeting of the Forum be held on 25 September 2006.