

MINUTES of a meeting of the **PEAK PARK TRANSPORT FORUM** held at County Hall, Matlock on 1 September 2003

PRESENT

Barnsley MBC

Ms A Beddoes and Councillor T Bristowe

Derbyshire County Council

Councillors W Burrows, B Taylor, and Mrs J A Twigg, Mr J Seymour and M Smith

GMPTE/PTA

Councillor J P Brown, Mr P D Johnston

Kirklees MC

Mr M Padgett

North East Derbyshire District Council

Ms R Armstrong

Oldham MBC

Councillor J M T Sutcliffe, Mr G Willerton

Peak District National Park Authority

Ms A Ashe, Mr C Bell, Mr A Brown, Ms T Critchlow, Mr M Crompton, and Mr P Stubbs

SYPTA

Councillor B Mathers

Tameside MBC

Mr P Calverley and Councillor A Whitehead

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor H Gaddum (Borough of Macclesfield), Councillor R Oldham CBE (Tameside MBC), Mr J Prince (Staffordshire Moorlands DC)

13/03 **ELECTION OF CHAIR** **RESOLVED** that Councillor W Burrows be appointed Chair of the Forum.

(Councillor Burrows in the Chair)

14/03 **APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR RESOLVED** that Mr A Brown (Peak District National Park Authority) be appointed Vice Chair of the Forum.

15/03 **MINUTES RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Peak Park Transport Forum held on 3 February 2003 be received.

16/03 **MATTERS ARISING – (a) Highways Agency Proposals for Improvements to A57/628/616** (Minute No 5/03 refers) With regard to the recommendation that a meeting be sought with the Minister for Transport, it was suggested, and agreed, that the wording of the first bullet point be amended to read “the need for an integrated approach to the problems of the Woodhead route and associated roads, including the assessment of environmental impacts and appropriate mitigation, having regard to the requirements of Section 62 of the Environment Act 1995 and the status of the various designated protected areas affected by the proposals”.

(b) Quiet Lanes: Progress Report (Minute No 8/03 refers) It was noted that the proposed urgent meeting with the Countryside Agency had not taken place. However, the situation had been clarified, and it was reported that the Countryside Agency’s funding for SPITS was still valid, and would continue until 31 March 2004.

(c) Public Participation (Minute No 11/03 refers) It had been agreed at the last meeting that there would be a standing agenda item to allow the public to ask questions. However, due to the lack of publicity, this had not occurred. In order to ensure that this was not the case at the next meeting, it was agreed that the Peak District National Park Authority, as the lead authority, should be responsible for notifying the press of the meeting and the opportunity for public participation. The individual member authorities would then be responsible for notifying the public in their areas in their usual way.

17/03 **FINANCE AND STAFFING** Partners were informed of the likely changes to working arrangements due to the end of Countryside Agency funding from 1 March 2004. As a result of this, alternative funding was being sought. Alternative funding from the Countryside Agency, and other alternative sources, such as ERDF, was being investigated.

It was reported that expenditure was set to rise during 2003/04. Expenditure was forecast to be £125,500 and revenue £77,000 on top of the carry over from 2002/03. This would leave a predicted carry over into 2004/05 of £18,828.

Without any extra funding, and with current expenditure levels, SPITS expenditure would exceed income, resulting in a predicted carry forward from 2004/05 of £1,173 and a deficit in future years.

Partners were informed of the possible options to consider if extra funding was not secured by 1 March 2004. These included reducing the staffing to one part time project officer and one part time project assistant, or reducing staffing levels but by a lesser amount. The staffing reduction could be implemented from 1 March 2004, or could be delayed with a view to securing further funding. Another option could be to request increased contributions from SPITS partner organisations. Finally, ad hoc project funding could be considered that was dedicated to particular projects by particular partners.

Partners commented that it had been agreed at the last meeting that a Business Plan would be presented to the Forum. This had not been possible at this meeting, and it was therefore requested that this, along with a report on funding implications, be presented at the next meeting.

RESOLVED that (1) the PPTF notes the current financial situation of the SPITS project, paying attention to the fact that changes to the funding regime will be inevitable over the next year;

(2) each PPTF member authority should explore its views on various funding options;

(3) PPTF notes that the findings of the monitoring process and officer preferences will be presented to the next meeting of the Forum;

(4) the Forum approves expenditure forecast for 2003/04; and

(5) the Business Plan be presented to the next meeting of the Forum.

18/03 **A628 PROGRESS REPORT** The Forum was advised of the latest position regarding the Highways Agency's proposals for the Mottram-Hollingworth-Tintwistle by-pass, and the selective and limited improvements east of Tintwistle.

It was reported that the bypass plus restraint (only) had been incorporated into the Targeted Programme of Improvements on 1 April 2003. It was anticipated that the Highways Agency would be in a position to present a more detailed set of proposals for consideration by stakeholders shortly.

Representatives of the SPITS Officer Working Group had met with the Highways Agency in April to consider the next moves. The outcome of the discussion was a decision to re-run the Agency's traffic model to test the impact of imposing traffic restraint on other cross-Park roads. The results were expected shortly and would be reported to the next meeting of the Forum.

A contract for the by-pass plus restraint was currently being prepared, and was expected to be awarded in the winter. There were benefits of having the contractor on board during the preparation stages in terms of early delivery, cost and quality. It was noted that this did not pre-empt in any way the making of appropriate representations to, nor the outcome of, the public inquiry into the proposed scheme(s).

RESOLVED that the current state of progress in the development of proposals for the A628 be noted.

19/03 **EUROPEAN FUNDING BID - RURAL AND URBAN LINKAGES** Money from the European Regional Development Fund was being sought to further the aims of SPITS with a project called MoCo (Mobility and Communication). This involved implementation of measures to improve linkages between rural areas with conservation needs and neighbouring urban centres. This was a partnership between the South Pennine/Peak Park region and similar areas in Germany, Belgium and Scotland.

The proposed outputs of the project in the South Pennines Peak District Area were detailed, with the additions to the Greater Peak District Sustainable Transport Marketing Project and the Public Transport Infrastructure element of the Derbyshire Integrated Rural Transport Strategy.

With regard to financial considerations, the European Union would offer match funding of 50% of the value of any approved project. A project would have to meet the criteria of INTERREGIIB North West Europe to receive funding. Existing funding of SPITS projects would be used to match against the European funding, so no additional funding was necessary.

Money being used as match funding, however, included projects managed by other SPITS partners, and in order to benefit from these the necessary financial arrangements would need to be made, and this would involve the co-operation of SPITS partners.

It was reported that other sources of funding would be investigated, and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was a possible source to add to the non-European money.

RESOLVED that (1) the Forum gives support where necessary to contribute to the successful delivery of this project;

(2) all MEPs throughout the SPITS area be notified of the project;

(3) partners agree to the Joint Convention for working arrangements in the project to be signed;

(4) SPITS partners support the project with Letters of Intent; and

(5) a Steering/Working Group be established to assist the SPITS Project Officer in the delivery of the project by the next Officer Working Group.

20/03 **FREIGHT SUB-GROUP** It was reported that a different method of operating this Group would be commencing, due to poor attendance at the last few meetings.

It was proposed that the Group would no longer meet in the conventional sense, but operated via email. The intention was for the SPITS Project Officer to contact each member once a month by email to identify current initiatives, and circulate a note to all members. Significant issues would be reported to the main Officer Working Group, and extraordinary meetings of the Sub-Group would be arranged if necessary.

RESOLVED that the new working arrangements of the Freight Sub-Group be endorsed.

21/03 **MINISTERIAL VISIT** It had been agreed at the last meeting of the Forum that a meeting with transport ministers should be arranged in order to press the case for an integrated approach to transport in the SPITS area, particularly in light of progress on the Mottram-Tintwistle by-pass, the feasibility study into re-opening the Derby Manchester railway line, and the on-going negotiations with regard to franchising the rail services that affect the strategy area.

It was suggested that the recommendation arising from the last meeting of the Forum relating to the proposed meeting with the Minister for Transport (Minute No 5/03 refers) should be amended, and the first bullet point should read “a meeting be sought with the Minister for Transport to stress the need for an integrated approach to the problems of the Woodhead route and associated roads, including the assessment of environmental impacts and appropriate mitigation, having regard to the requirements of Section 62 of the Environment Act 1995 and the status of the various designated protected areas affected by the proposals.”

Nominations were sought for members to attend a meeting with the Secretary of State for Transport. It was agreed that the Chair and Vice Chair of the Peak Park Transport Forum should attend the meeting, and partners then agreed with the nominations of Councillor R Oldham CBE (Tameside MBC) and Councillor B Mathers (SYPTA).

RESOLVED that (1) officers seek to arrange a meeting at an appropriate time with the Secretary of State for Transport or an appropriate transport minister, to ask for continuing support for the South Pennines Integrated Transport Strategy;

(2) the delegation to meet the Minister consists of the Chair and Vice Chair of this Forum, plus two other members and the relevant officers; and

(3) the content of the meeting with the Minister be as described in the report.

22/03 **TRAFFIC RESTRAINT STUDY** At the previous meeting of the Forum, it was agreed that SPITS should commission a traffic restraint study. After the tender process, Faber Maunsell were appointed and a meeting had taken place between the consultants and the National Park Authority. A report would be presented to the Forum meeting in December on the progress of the first phase of the Study.

The Forum had a budget of £65,000 for this study, which included a contribution of £15,000 from the Department for Transport. The costs of any measures were currently unknown. They were expected to form part of the development of the various Local Transport Plans, which would be in draft form by mid 2004. The implementation of any measures would be dependent on the success of the Local Transport Plan bids for capital funding in the 2005 submissions.

It was not anticipated that there would be any expenditure above that budgeted. Any financial over-runs in excess of 5% would be reported to the Forum and specific authority sought before incurring the expenditure. Financial over-runs of less than 5% would be reported to the Chair and Vice Chair of the Forum, and it was suggested that they should have the authority to approve these.

RESOLVED that (1) members note the report and ask to be kept updated on the progress of the study;

(2) the Chair and Vice Chair of the Forum be delegated to approve any significant alterations to the study process, following advice from the Officer Working Group; and

(3) the Chair and Vice Chair be given the authority to approve minor financial over-runs (less than 5%), subject to funds being available in the SPITS budget.

23/03 **DERBY – MANCHESTER RAILWAY: FEASIBILITY STUDY OF RE-OPENING THE MATLOCK TO BUXTON/CHINLEY SECTION** It was reported that, since the last meeting of the Forum, much of the survey and technical work had been completed, as well as a major public consultation exercise. The results of the work that had been undertaken by the consultants were being drawn together to enable the consultants to make recommendations.

Partners were informed that the first stage of the feasibility study was almost complete, and the results would be made available shortly. The consultants would report on the viability of the project and make

recommendations on a preferred option. Further information would be made available for the next meeting of the Forum.

RESOLVED that (1) progress on the feasibility study be noted; and

(2) the Joint Advisory Committee and the Peak Park Transport Forum receive further reports as appropriate.

24/03 **QUIET LANES: PROGRESS REPORT** It was noted that, although expressions of interest had been received, progress with implementation was slow, largely due to Countryside Agency funding being suspended pending a review of schemes undertaken to date in other parts of the country. The results of this review were expected shortly.

Despite the suspension of funding, three developments were mentioned that had either taken place or were in hand:- Derbyshire County Council had introduced some Quiet Lanes in Youlgreave and proposals in other areas were being considered; Cheshire County Council was developing a Quiet Lane network around Sutton and Macclesfield Forest; and Staffordshire County Council was considering options that would extend links to the countryside from the urban areas.

RESOLVED that the current situation with regard to the introduction of Quiet Lane schemes be noted.

25/03 **REVITALISING COMMUNITIES ON MAIN ROADS** It was reported that this was an initiative being promoted by Transport 2000, which had invited local authorities to bid to become one of seven schemes in the UK which would focus on new ways of creating quality urban main roads.

A successful bid had been made for Bakewell to be included as a scheme to be supported by the project. The scheme would need co-operation of the County Council as Highway Authority, with other key organisations, such as the National Park Authority, Derbyshire Dales District Council, Bakewell Town Council, and the Peak Park Transport Forum. Consultation with these organisations had shown broad support for the proposal, and County Council officers were confident that the scheme would be introduced subject to available funding.

Partners were informed that, as part of the 2003/04 capital programme, £15,000 had been allocated for the development of a pedestrian quality network in Bakewell, and £10,000 had been allocated for the introduction of on-street parking controls on Matlock Street. In addition, further funding of up to £45,000 could be available for capital works on former trunk roads.

RESOLVED that the Forum notes the inclusion of Bakewell in the 'Revitalising Communities on Main Roads' initiative.

26/03 **RAIL FRANCHISING UPDATE** The Forum was advised of the current situation with regard to the TransPennine Express and Northern Rail franchises.

With regard to the TransPennine Express franchise, the Strategic Rail Authority had announced that FGK, a consortium of First Group plc and Keolis SA, had been selected as the preferred bidder. The new franchise was expected to commence early in 2004. It was noted that, recently, an order had been placed for 50 carriages.

With regard to the Northern Rail franchise, a 'Stakeholder Briefing' document had been issued, which advised that tenders had been invited from 5 pre-qualified bidders. Tenders were due to be submitted by 24 September, and the new franchise was expected to commence in Autumn 2004.

RESOLVED that (1) the current situation regarding the TransPennine Express and Northern Rail franchises be noted;

(2) representations being made by the Transpennine Rail Group with regard to the latter be endorsed; and

(3) on behalf of the Peak Park Transport Forum, similar representations concerning the Northern Rail franchise be made by the Project Officer in agreement with the Chair.

27/03 **PUBLIC TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP WORKING – UPDATE** Partners were updated on the progress on a range of partnership activities regarding public transport services and marketing. The issues raised were summer Sunday bus and train passenger survey and development of the Sunday Network; Derbyshire Integrated Rural Transport Scheme (DIRTS) Trans Peak Rural Bus Challenge improvements; and Greater Peak District Sustainable Transport Marketing Project.

Passenger surveys were being carried out during August and September on all Sunday bus services coming into the National Park and Derwent Valley. The survey was being funded by the two Authorities, the two corridor RTPs, South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive and the marketing project.

There were concerns that the current network was not sustainable because costs of bus contracts were currently rising at over 10% per year. It was suggested that a report be presented to the next meeting of the Forum giving a range of network options and the likely costs, so that the best overall joint strategy could be found.

In relation to the Derbyshire Integrated Rural Transport Scheme, confirmation had been received from central Government that the bid for money for DIRTS had been successful, and work had been underway to implement the proposals. An invitation to tender to operate the new Trans Peak services from

March 2004 was issued to interested bus companies in August, and four buses had been purchased to enhance the service.

At the last meeting, the Forum agreed to support the Greater Peak District Sustainable Transport Marketing Project, and contributions of £5,000 per year from each authority had been sought. The grant aid application to the Countryside Agency had been successful for two years for the employment of a project officer and associated core costs.

A further bid had been submitted to the Countryside Agency for marketing, which was dependent on match funding from partners. The Countryside Agency had stated that £30,000 per annum could be made available. The match funding could be broken down so that an annual contribution from partners would be Derbyshire County Council (£10,000), Peak District National Park Authority (£5,000), Peak Park Transport Forum (£5,000) and other transport authorities (up to £2,500 per authority to support specific initiatives).

RESOLVED that (1) officers continue to review the Summer Sunday bus services and report to the next Forum on the results of the survey, the proposed service changes and their financial implications;

(2) the Peak Park Transport Forum supports the continued development of the Greater Peak District Sustainable Transport Marketing Project and contributes £5,000 per annum to cover the employment of the project officer until March 2006; and

(3) the Peak Park Transport Forum provides match funding for the development and production of marketing products relating to the Greater Peak District Sustainable Transport Marketing Initiative in 2004/05 and 2005/06 as detailed in paragraph 3c of the report.