

MINUTES of a meeting of the **PEAK PARK TRANSPORT FORUM** held at County Hall, Matlock on 26 April 2004

PRESENT

Councillor W Burrows (Derbyshire County Council)
(In the Chair)

Barnsley MBC

A Chymera

Derbyshire County Council

Councillors I J Brentnall, B C Lucas, and D B Taylor, and Messrs J Seymour and M Smith

East Midlands Regional Assembly

Mr D Hern

GMPTE/PTA

Messrs P Brown and P Johnston

Highways Agency

Mr R Smith

Kirklees MC

Mr W M Padgett

Macclesfield BC

Ms J Palmer

Mott MacDonald

Messrs I Peacock and J Ryde

Oldham MBC

Councillor J Sutcliffe and Mr G Willerton

Peak District National Park Authority

Ms A Ashe, Messrs A Brown, J Dixon and P Stubbs and Councillor Mrs B Wilson

SPITS

Mr C Bell

Stockport MBC

Mr D Smith

SYPTA

Councillor B Mathers

Tameside MBC

Councillor S R Oldham and Messrs P Calverley and M Thompson

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor T Bristowe (Barnsley MBC), Councillor H Gaddum (Macclesfield Borough Council), Ms D Griffiths and Ms C Jenkins (Countryside Agency)

1/04 **MINUTES RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Peak Park Transport Forum held on 15 December 2003 be received.

2/04 **MATTERS ARISING** – (a) **Ministerial Visit** (Minute No 29/03(b) refers) It was reported that a letter had been received from the Minister's Office, stating that a meeting could take place as soon as the report on the Matlock to Buxton scheme was complete.

(b) **Derby-Manchester Railway: Feasibility Study of Re-opening the Matlock to Buxton/Chinley Section** (Minute No 29/03(c) refers) It was reported that there had been a further delay with the completion of the report, and it was now anticipated that this would be released in the next couple of months.

(c) **Finance and Staffing Arrangements** (Minute No 32/03 refers) It was noted that funding from some partners had been received. It was stated that all other partners would need to give their contributions before the next meeting of the Forum.

(d) **European Funding Bid Rural and Urban Linkages** (Minute No 35/03) It was reported that the MoCo bid had been submitted, and a response was now awaited.

3/04 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** – (a) **Brian Butler, The Longendale Siege Committee** Brian Butler presented the views of the Longendale Siege Committee on the proposed Mottram-Hollingworth-Tintwistle bypass. This Committee was a pro-bypass group, and its aim was to put pressure on the Government to remove the excess traffic from the villages on the A628.

He stated that there was 90% support for the bypass from village residents, as the rise in traffic had led to a demise in the local communities. Mr Butler emphasised a bypass as the only viable option to improve the situation, and he hoped that this would occur in the near future.

4/04 **TRANSLINK PROPOSAL** The Forum received a presentation from Julian Newton, of Translink, on the developments of Translink's proposal for a rolling highway since his presentation at the last meeting of the Forum.

He began by stating the advantages of having a rolling highway, the main one being the reduction in costs. Other benefits included a reduction in traffic on the A628 by 26%, a reduction in Pennine journey time, a competitive tariff, a suitable rest period for HGV drivers, fewer transport risks, and a reduction in pollution. Discussions had taken place with a variety of hauliers and Government bodies, and there had been many expressions of interest in the proposal.

Mr Newton alluded to the Faber Maunsell study that had been undertaken on the feasibility of a rolling highway. He argued that in this study, the HGV costs were not representative of the routes that would be taken, there had been no consultation with hauliers, and the proposed journey times did not reflect congestion or the working time directive.

Mr Newton believed that there was a strong business case for his proposal, and he demonstrated the revenue that would be produced – a turnover of £31.6m. He also anticipated that an SLM grant would be available to help start the proposal, and this would pay for the infrastructure and rolling stock.

The Forum also received a presentation from Jonathan James of Faber Maunsell, who had been asked to undertake a study to see whether Translink's proposal was viable. He stated that there were benefits to the proposal and initial diagrams showed that the scheme could work. However, there would need to be good road access to the network, and also available land. There would also need to be a modification of the existing passenger line, creating a new single track formation, and excavation in the tunnel. The proposal would also require the total capture of the HGVs on the A628.

Mr James referred to the cost of the proposal, and stated that £76m would cover the infrastructure costs, but this would not include the buying of the tunnel and surrounding land. It would be necessary to raise around £135m for the purchasing of the stock. He generally felt that there was too big a gulf in the operating costs of the rolling highway and the road. There were grants available, but the opportunity of securing one was very poor.

Mr James highlighted other potential problems that could arise from the proposal. The impact on the infrastructure would be big and could lead to an amendment of the surrounding cycle routes. The addressable market was

detailed, and it was felt that potentially, 50% of the HGV market on the A628 could be addressed, which would represent 7% of the traffic.

The consultants had spoken to freight operators, and it was reported that the majority had little interest in the proposal, and others would be unable to use the rolling highway due to the size or load of their vehicles. HGVs could be encouraged to use a rolling highway, but it was felt that this would encourage them to use other unsuitable roads, which was contrary to SPITS objectives.

In conclusion, Mr James stated that the principle was attractive, and was physically feasible, but there would be little saving in journey times, a low addressable market, high costs, no easily obtainable funding, a substantial impact, little advantage to the villages and could not replace the bypass.

RESOLVED that (1) the Peak Park Transport Forum receives and notes the consultants' presentation; and

(2) in the light of members' views at this meeting, the Officer Working Group prepares a report for the July meeting of the Forum.

5/04 **SPITS TRAFFIC RESTRAINT STUDY** The Forum received a presentation from Peter Jackson of Faber Maunsell, who had been commissioned to undertake the Traffic Restraint Study. There were essentially two parts to the study – to restrain traffic from sensitive peak district areas and the proposals for selective improvements. For the first part, it was the intention to identify a package of measures for LTPs and to restrain long distance cross pennine traffic.

The main recommendations arising out of the study were detailed. These were a combination of route specific measures and those encompassing the wider area. The route specific measures were designed to characterise each route, and would focus on reducing speed and enhancing safety. The area wide measures were proposals for strategic signing, road user charging and overweight restrictions, all of which would require more feasibility work.

With regard to strategic signing, it would be the intention to sign HGVs away from the SPITS area, and encourage them to use roads in the periphery, or only sign local areas.

It was hoped that road user charging would discourage long distance pennine traffic without affecting tourists. It would be possible to charge only those who were travelling all the way through the SPITS area, which would generate revenue. It was felt that the weighting restrictions would be impractical by themselves, but could compliment the road user charging. All these ideas would be investigated further.

It was expected that the route specific measures could be implemented fairly quickly in the next LTP period, which would be 2006-2011. In this period

the area wide measures could be further investigated, and implemented in the subsequent LTP period.

The cost of the route specific measures would be around £2m, and the study into the area wide measures would cost approximately £200,000. It was unknown how much the area wide measures would cost to implement.

Although the Forum were in general agreement with the results of the study, there were a few concerns, and these would be looked into.

RESOLVED that (1) the Peak Park Transport Forum receives and notes the consultants' presentation on the SPITS Traffic Restraint Study; and

(2) the Officer Working Group brings a report on the findings to a further meeting of the Forum.

6/04 **PEAK PARK TRANSPORT FORUM PARTICIPATION WORKSHOP MAY 2002** The Forum was informed of the outcome of the Participation Workshop, which had been held on 2 May 2002. The aim of the workshop had been to review the Action Plan and come to a consensus about where it needed to be changed; and to respond to questions relating to the way ahead for SPITS. A wide variety of views were expressed, and these were detailed.

A way forward for updating the Action Plan was agreed at the meeting of the Forum in December, and there was no proposal to change that resolution.

RESOLVED that (1) the report be noted; and

(2) no update of the business plan is necessary following this participation.

7/04 **FINANCE AND STAFFING** It was reported that, as a result of the extension of the contract for the SPITS Project Officer and the revised contribution from members, SPITS was running at a slight deficit, and extra funding or reduced costs would be needed.

A major recent expense had been the SPITS Traffic Restraint budget. This however came within its budget of £65,000 at a cost of £57,135. In addition, a secondary minor roads study was being proposed at a cost of £7,000 and would be covered by Countryside Agency funding. Other minor expenditure was estimated at £6,940.

In relation to income, to March 2004, SPITS partner income was £39,200, and Countryside Agency funding was estimated to be £27,000. It was thought that £33,310 would be available as a carry forward to 2004/05.

It was anticipated that SPITS was currently on target to be fundable for a further two years in its current set up.

RESOLVED that the financial situation be noted and that the Project Officer should continue to keep the Forum informed of developments every six months and report any financial irregularities as they arise.

8/04 **STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION WORKSHOP** In order to update the SPITS Business Plan, further consultation was proposed via a Stakeholder Participation Workshop. This would co-ordinate with the Local Transport Plan process. The Agricultural Business Centre in Bakewell had been booked to hold the Workshop on Friday 17 September 2004.

RESOLVED that the proposed Participation Workshop should go ahead.

9/04 **MOTTRAM-HOLLINGWORTH-TINTWISTLE BYPASS AND ASSOCIATED WORKS** The Forum was given a progress report on the A57/A628/A616(T) Mottram Hollingworth and Tintwistle Bypass Scheme.

At the last meeting of the Forum, the CPRE raised the issue of environmental and economic appraisal of the business plan. As a result, the environmental assessment procedure was checked to ensure it met current requirements.

A stakeholder meeting had taken place on 11 December 2003, where a revised arrangement for Traffic Restraint proposals was proposed by the Highways Agency. These were detailed, along with proposals for other measures.

It was reported that the SPITS Project Officer had received a letter from the Highways Agency on 2 April 2004 stating that Draft Orders were programmed to be published in Spring 2005 and would commence 2006/07.

RESOLVED that developments be noted giving due consideration to the implications for the development of SPITS, and for consideration at the future Stakeholder Participation Workshop.

10/04 **A628/A616(T) SELECTED AND LIMITED SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS** Members were told of the progress of the A628/A616(T) Selected and Limited Safety Improvements (SLSI).

At a meeting with the Highways Agency in December 2003, stakeholders were consulted on the nature of the SLSI. As well as the proposed 'Off-line' measures, 'In-line' improvements were also discussed. Cost assessments revealed that 'In-line' improvements were cheaper to implement (less than £1m) but could develop a predicted annual rate of return on revenue between 20% and 500%. 'Off-line' improvements, however, cost unto £40m and the return on investment was only likely to be 1-13%.

RESOLVED that the developments be noted, particularly in light of the future Participation Workshop.

11/04 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING** The next meeting of the Peak Park Transport Forum was to be held on Monday, 12 July 2004 at 2.00pm in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Matlock.