



Notice of meeting of

Traffic Congestion Ad-Hoc Scrutiny Committee

To: Councillors Merrett (Chair), Holvey, Hudson (Vice-Chair),
Moore, Morley, Pierce, Simpson-Laing

Mr Smith (Co-opted Non-Statutory Member)

Date: Tuesday, 16 October 2007

Time: 5.15 pm

Venue: The Guildhall, York

AGENDA

1. **Declarations of Interest**

At this point Members are asked to declare any personal or prejudicial interests they may have in the business on this agenda.

2. **Minutes** (Pages 3 - 8)

To consider the minutes of the meeting of this committee held on 4 September 2007.

Revised comments on these minutes will be distributed to Members prior to the meeting.

3. **Public Participation**

At this point in the meeting members of the public who have registered their wish to speak regarding an item on the agenda or an issue within the committee's remit can do so. Anyone who wishes to register or requires further information is requested to contact the Democracy Officer on the contact details listed at the foot of this agenda. The deadline for registering is Monday 15 October 2007 at 5 pm.

4. Interim Report (Pages 9 - 24)

Members considered a report which updated them on the work carried out for this scrutiny review.

5. Any other business which the Chair considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972

Democracy Officer:

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For more information about any of the following please contact the Democracy Officer responsible for servicing this meeting:

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- Business of the meeting
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Scrutiny Committees

The purpose of all scrutiny and ad-hoc scrutiny committees appointed by the Council is to:

- Monitor the performance and effectiveness of services;
- Review existing policies and assist in the development of new ones, as necessary; and
- Monitor best value continuous service improvement plans

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City of York Council

Committee Minutes

MEETING	TRAFFIC CONGESTION AD-HOC SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE	4 SEPTEMBER 2007
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS MERRETT (CHAIR), HUDSON (VICE-CHAIR), MOORE, MORLEY, PIERCE, SIMPSON-LAING AND SMITH (CO-OPTED NON-STATUTORY MEMBER) AND MR M SMITH (CO-OPTED NON-STATUTORY MEMBER)
IN ATTENDANCE	MATTHEW PAGE – INSTITUTE FOR TRANSPORT STUDIES, LEEDS

APOLOGIES	COUNCILLOR HOGG
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10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were invited to declare at this point in the meeting any personal or prejudicial interests they might have in the business on the agenda.

Councillor Merrett declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in agenda item 4 (Interim Report for Traffic Congestion Ad-Hoc Scrutiny Committee) as an honorary member of the Cyclists' Touring Club and a member of Cycling England.

11. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 17 July 2007 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

- i) The addition of the following bullet point under points raised by Members:
 - Impact of tour buses on congestion
- ii) The deletion of the word "bus" and its replacement with "road" in the example in the final sentence of the first paragraph on page 7.

12. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It was reported that there had been one registration to speak at the meeting from Councillor A D'Agorne.

Councillor D'Agorne referred to the information in Annex D particularly in relation to freight transshipment centres which he confirmed was fair but he stated that he felt the report did not go far enough in acknowledging other points.

He stated that the Local Transport Plans (LTP) included details of the Air Quality Management Area in the city centre, within which the annual average nitrogen dioxide levels had been exceeded at 5 locations and for which the target of reduction was by 2005. He also quoted from Annex I of the LTP on the Freight Strategy and to the proposal to establish Low Emission Zones, which aimed to cut polluting vehicles from certain area of the city. This had envisaged a 5-year action plan but he felt that this proposal did not go far enough. Reference was also made to Annex U of the LTP report, the Air Quality Action Plan, and the table relating to HGV emissions and their reduction with the use of transshipment centres. He also referred to the figures quoted in relation to HGV's having a disproportionate impact on air quality. In particular to the figures quoted of 11-18% from emissions on major roads from HGV's, which could be eliminated by transshipment sites thereby having a significant impact on air quality in the central area. He stated that a freight strategy did not appear to have a high priority in the report and he referred to the Freight Partnership formed in 2006, which could be engaged to assist with any works in this area.

He also raised points on the British Retail Consortium and delivery curfews, possible charging for out of town shopping centres and the need to consider economic factors in the longer term.

He stated that the scale of development now proposed in the area required a more radical approach.

New members questioned where they could view the findings referred to in the Local Transport Plan Reports. Officers confirmed that these were available on the Council's website.

13. INTERIM REPORT FOR TRAFFIC CONGESTION AD-HOC SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Members considered a report, which updated them on the work completed to date on the Traffic Congestion Scrutiny Review. This included information gathered on the following areas recommended for improvement:

- i. Accessibility to services, employment, education and health
- ii. Air Quality, in particular looking at the five hotspots identified in the LTP2
- iii. Alternative environmentally viable and financially practical methods of transport
- iv. CO² Emissions
- v. Journey times and reliability of public transport
- vi. Economic Performance
- vii. Quality of Life
- viii. Road Safety

At the last meeting consideration had been given to the City of York Council's view on journey times and reliability of public transport (Annex E) and further consideration of the remaining appendices A to D below had been deferred to this meeting.

Annex A – Programme for carrying out mapping works

Annex B – Evidence of the soft measures presently in place to encourage
a reduction in car travel in York

Annex C – Statistics showing vehicle fleet in use in York

Annex D – Paper on alternative environmentally viable and financially practical methods of transport

Members and Officers made the following comments in relation to the various annexes

Annex A – Programme for carrying out mapping works

Reference to staffing issues and training on 'Accession' and drawbacks to 'Accession' as it focussed mainly on public transport.

Considered that "Improved interchange points in the city centre" would improve access and questioned why the Scutiny Committee on 4 April 2007 had not considered this point as essential.

Officers view that there was a staffing resource problem in this area.

Annex B – Smarter Choices Actions

Officers confirmed that Smarter Choices were considered a powerful tool and that they would like to do far more work in this area. It was confirmed that there was no longer a budget for this work so they were no longer in a position to promote large campaigns.

Members confirmed that smart choice work appeared to be more effective than physical measures on their own.

There was a strong Officer view that Smarter Choice Actions were an important means of changing travel behaviour and achieving modal shift.

Annex C – Statistics showing vehicle fleet in use in York

Members questioned the information contained in this report and Officers confirmed that they would

- check the area covered by the figures provided,
- obtain national comparison figures
- provide details for the missing years
- provide Euro level information

Consideration of this Annex deferred for further consideration to the next meeting.

Annex D – Alternative environmentally viable and financially practical methods of transport

Members commented that this briefing note contained some controversial points which had been included to elicit discussion on traffic congestion and the alternative methods of transport. They stated that it should be made clear that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) information superseded some of the facts set out on page 29.

Members questioned the PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} limits and the implications for the City. Officers confirmed that the government objectives were 35 exceedences allowed per year for PM₁₀ but that this was likely to be reduced in the future. At present York had 10 to 15 exceedences of PM₁₀ but that PM_{2.5} was measured at a national level and not by Local Authorities at present. Officers confirmed that, if required, they could undertake a short term project at minimal cost to measure levels of PM_{2.5} in the city.

The Committee agreed that unless there were major changes in York that the levels of PM₁₀ were at an acceptable level.

Transshipment Centres

Members commented that major retailers, for example in Coney Street, which owned more than one store being able to take advantage of transshipment centres to contribute to reducing road congestion. They also questioned the effect of the growth of home deliveries and internet shopping on the road network.

Officers stated that the report could be more balanced but that was not to say that the Authority were not committed to investigating transshipment centres. Although these centres would be relatively easy to provide there were other issues to resolve other than air quality damage. They confirmed that as part of the LPT2 there was to be a major scheme bid to examine all traffic problems in the city however the real issues related to the impact of those solutions, which would require a government shift.

Members questioned the reference to “significant amount of evidence that transshipment centres were not self financing” Also questioned the environmental impact of transshipment centres and Officers confirmed that if these were sited in the correct place air quality would not be an issue.

Members stated that the management of deliveries would be a better option to alleviate large delivery vehicles causing congestion in the city centre and discharging fumes whilst queuing. Officers confirmed that Police had no authority over parking issues and that this was now the responsibility of the local authority as highway authority.

Draft recommendation that the provision of a transshipment centre was not a high priority but would not be dismissed and was worth examination in the future.

Public Transport

Mr Page reminded members that the information set out in the report covered a wide field and that there was significantly different information available in relation to some of the figures provided. He confirmed that

there was an enormous variation in emissions with different types of vehicles and that he disagreed with the statement that “ Buses in their present guise are thus clearly not any form of environmentally friendly transport.. “ as this depended on the numbers using the bus and how many car journeys had been displaced.

Members questioned the University of Tokyo data and if the figures referred to were European wide as this could have an impact as York had a higher standard for bus fleet emissions.

Members agreed that although buses were not the cleanest vehicles that continuing to try and keep fleets up to date, with low emissions and using optimum fuels was the best way forward.

Freight

Members referred to the multi drop approach which stated that there were three key impacts but they felt that there was also a fourth. This was the impact of empty vehicles returning to base following completion of their delivery.

Green Transport Fuels

Mr Page referred to tests on bio-diesel and stated that there was a significant amount of concern regarding this fuel. The increase in emissions was unknown and decisions were required on whether to save the planet or the local environment. He stated that there were transport solutions available now against those that could be available in the future.

Non powered solutions

The Chair circulated an article from Cycle Digest 2007 related to a study on Commuter Cycling and details of the mode share of cycling in other European countries. He stated that with the right policies and facilities there was significant potential for increasing cycling levels in York. To put the percentages in context Officers confirmed that the UK had a 1.5% share, York 13-15% and Cambridge 20% compared with The Netherlands at 27%.

Members made in following points in relation to non powered solutions and cycling

- Reference made to the use of cycling couriers in the city particularly those used by ANC.
- Cycling as a cultural choice (people not wanting to turn up for work wet)
- An examination was required on what the limitations in increasing cycling were.
- Was there a capacity in the network for the number of cyclists to increase?
- Important to make cycling more attractive.
- Because of severe traffic and parking problems in Cambridge there was a Regulation of the University, agreed with the City Council, that students were not allowed to keep a car or motorcycle in the city.

It was agreed to defer further consideration of the cycling issues to a future meeting.

Vehicle Group (a)

The Assistant Director of City Development and Transport stated that the vehicles included in this group, which included Conventional Light Railway or guided solutions, were he felt not appropriate for York which was a tight compact city. It was stated that this would not be a practical solution without a large subsidy. Officers referred to cultural and health and safety issues relating to sharing space which was a possible barrier.

Mr Page confirmed that the options varied in this group but that it would not be without large costs and the Chair confirmed that this would not be a practical option.

Members made the following points

- Way forward was the need to link demand management with environmental improvements.
- A major contributor to congestion was schools which drew their pupils from a wide area and it was felt that there was a need to examine the surrounding issues.
- Questioned the use of Park and Ride vehicles on bus routes 22 and 23 which at times were not fully utilised (other than during rush hour) when smaller powered vehicles could be used.

The Committee agreed that unfortunately they were only able to find local non powered solutions which narrowed the focus of the scrutiny. This included undertaking a more detailed examination of bus transport, investment in non powered solutions and from the demand management angle endeavouring to obtain government funding for the dualling of the outer ring road.

Members also referred to recruitment issues in the department and questioned whether there were sufficient staffing resources to carry out further investigative work. Officers stated that previously Consultants had been used for some of this work.

Members agreed that the opportunities were relatively limited and it was agreed to pursue with the Quality Bus Partnership the influencing of both freight and rail companies to use green transport fuels.

CLLR D MERRETT, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.00 pm and finished at 7.30 pm].



Traffic Congestion Ad-Hoc Scrutiny Committee

16 October 2007

Interim Report**Background**

1. In coming to a decision to review this topic, the Scrutiny Management Team recognised certain key objectives and the following remit was agreed:

Aim

To identify ways including Local Transport Plans 1 & 2 (LTP1 & LTP2) and other evidence, of reducing present levels of traffic congestion in York, and ways of minimising the impact of the forecast traffic increase.

Objectives

Having regard to the impact of traffic congestion (based on external evidence and those measures already implemented in LTP1 or proposed in LTP2), recommend and prioritise specific improvements to:

- i. Accessibility to services, employment, education and health
- ii. Air Quality, in particular looking at the five hotspots identified in the LTP2
- iii. Alternative environmentally viable and financially practical methods of transport
- iv. CO² Emissions
- v. Journey times and reliability of public transport
- vi. Economic Performance
- vii. Quality of Life
- viii. Road Safety

Information Gathered

2. At a meeting on 25 September 2007, Members considered a draft table containing the findings in relation to objectives (i)-(v). This table included:
 - the possible solutions identified by this committee in regard to the issues raised in relation to objectives (i)-(v);
 - the recognised impact of the suggested solutions;
 - draft recommendations
3. Having considered the content provided, Members agreed to provide further information for inclusion in the table shown at Annex A and an updated version of this will be circulated once Members have had the opportunity to respond.

4. At the meeting on 25 September, Members agreed to request an extension to the timeframe for this review in order that the following additional meetings can be held:

Suggested Meeting Dates	To consider papers on:
16 October 2007	Impediments to traffic flow
19 November 2007 at 6pm	Cycling and other alternative methods of public transport
12 December 2007 at 5pm	Ways of optimising the network
16 January 2008 at 5pm	Objectives (vi) Economic Performance & (vii) Quality of life
18 February 2008 at 6pm	Objective (vii) Road Safety
10 March 2008 at 5pm	Final draft report

Outstanding Issues

5. In order to allow officers sufficient time to produce the paper on 'Impediments to Traffic Flow', it has not been included as an annex to this report but will be circulated at the meeting.
6. In regard to objectives (vi) and (vii), Members have recognised that it will be necessary to commission some consultants to carry out the required research and a quote has for this now been provided – see Annex B.
7. Members have expressed an interest in attending the second annual Road User Charging Seminar on 10 October 2007. Due to the tight timescale for arranging attendance at this seminar, it is not clear at this stage whether any Members of this committee will be able to attend. However, if they do they will be asked to report back to the committee at this meeting.
8. It has also been suggested that residents be consulted on the draft recommendations arising from the findings of this Ad-hoc Scrutiny Committee, so that their views can be included in the final draft report. Members agreed to give this some more consideration later in the year.
9. Therefore, in order to finance the commissioning of consultants, attendance at the seminar and completion of a residents survey, it will be necessary to increase the scrutiny budget available for this review.

Options

8. Having regard to the aims and objectives of this topic remit, and having considered the information provided in this report and any Member feedback from the seminar, Members may wish to agree:
- any further information to be added to the table relating to key objectives (i) – (v) ;
 - how to proceed with the investigation of objectives (vi) & (vii) in light of the quote provided

- Whether a request for an increase in scrutiny budget be made to Scrutiny Management Committee to cover:
 - i) the cost of the use of Consultants
 - ii) attendance at the Seminar for up to two Members
 - iii) the costs of carrying out a survey of residents views

Corporate Priorities

9. It is recognised that any recommendations made as a result of this scrutiny review could contribute to Corporate Priority no 2 – To increase the use of public and other environmentally friendly modes of transport.

Implications

10. There are no known HR, Equalities, Legal, Crime and Disorder, or IT implications associated with this report, but there will be some financial implications associated with recommendation (iii). As yet the exact amount is unknown.

Recommendations

11. Members are asked to:
- i. Note all of the information provided, and agree any further information to be included in the table
 - ii. agree how to proceed with the investigation of objectives (vi) & (vii)
 - iii. agree whether to request an increase in scrutiny budget, and if so agree how much is required

Reason: To ensure full consideration of all the objectives

Contact Details

Author:

Melanie Carr
Scrutiny Officer
Scrutiny Services
Tel 01904 552063

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Colin Langley
Interim Head of Civic, Democratic & Legal Services

Interim Report Approved



Date 4 October 2007

Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers: Interim reports dated 4th & 25th September 2007

Annexes

- Annex A – Draft table of findings, identified solutions with impact evaluation, and draft recommendations
- Annex B – Quote for commissioning Consultants

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Table of Issues/Findings, Identified Solutions, Possible Impacts & Draft Recommendations

Objectives (i) - Accessibility to Services, Employment, Education & Health Services			
Issue/Findings	Identified Solutions	Possible Impacts	Draft Recommendations
Bus routes meant to be reviewed every five years (now due) but would benefit from more regular reviews to react to changes in the location of services, new businesses and housing developments, etc	Continued close working with the Quality Bus Partnership to encourage improvements in the bus service	Better bus service overall, with increased usage, but possible positive & negative effects in particular localities. Possible alterations in subsidy levels by CYC for socially necessary bus services in York.	
Extending the Park & Ride service would improve access to York Hospital outside of peak hours			
Gaps in bus services would be reduced if the number of buses in use during 'school run' times was increased	Continued close working with the Quality Bus Partnership to encourage improvements in the bus service	Better peak service but potentially substantial additional costs for extra vehicles, and demand for increased subsidy by CYC for the bus services in York.	
Improved safety measures for taxis eg CCTV in Cars would encourage greater use			
Need to publicise good practices by employers across the city i.e. Green Travel Plans	CYC to lead by example i.e. by implementing own Green Travel Plan	Influencing Council staff's travel to work mode, and public and employer attitudes to how the journey to work is undertaken, thereby spreading the benefit and achieving modal shift and reducing peak hours congestion.	
Sustainable Tourism – a tourist tax with monies collected being used in total to deal with accessibility issues			

Identifying under used bus services and implementing soft measures to encourage their use			
Improved interchange points are needed in the city centre			
Additional mapping work would be required over and above that which is already planned as part of LTP2 to show the positive effects on traffic congestion in York of the measures identified as a result of this review	Carry out additional mapping works	Clearer view of accessibility issues in the City, and better focus of future plans (bus services, cycle & walking routes, etc.) on where the most difference can be made. However any additional work would have an impact on staffing resources and other priorities.	

Objectives (ii) - Air Quality - in particular looking at the five hotspots identified in the LTP2			
Issue/Findings	Identified Solutions	Possible Impacts	Draft Recommendations
51-72% of emissions affecting air quality are from vehicles			
The number, type and age of vehicles on York roads is relevant to the levels of pollutants recorded			
There are five technical breach areas within York's city centre: Lawrence Street Fishergate Nunnery Lane Holgate Gillygate			
Fulford Main Street is one area of concern outside of the city centre			
Air Quality threats: Current and future car parking policies Ongoing large scale developments ex York Northwest Proposed changes to CYC staff travel incentives Workplace parking in private sector Climate change policies Changes to local bus fleet Lack of funding			
York has 10 to 15 exceedences of PM ₁₀ which is well below the government objective of 35 exceedences allowed per year	unless there are major changes in York the levels of PM ₁₀ are at an acceptable level and therefore there is no solution required	n/a	n/a

<p>PM_{2.5} are measured at a national level and not by Local Authorities at present, and therefore there is no record of the level of PM_{2.5} in York.</p>	<p>Officers confirmed that, if required, they could undertake a short term project at minimal cost to measure levels of PM_{2.5} in the city.</p>		
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Objective (iii) - Alternative Environmentally viable and financially practical methods of transport			
Issue/Findings	Identified Solutions	Possible Impacts	Draft Recommendations
Reducing the environmental impact of freight transport in the City.	Provision of a transshipment centre outside the City, thus transferring the environmental impact outside of the city centre where it may be of lesser concern.	Reduction in the number of large delivery vehicles to, from and in the city centre, reducing congestion and air pollution and improving the pedestrian area, but there is significant evidence that it would not be self financing and would require substantial local authority subsidy, and may meet resistance from businesses.	The introduction of a transshipment centre is not a priority at the moment, but is worth examination in the future and should not be dismissed
York has a high level of short commuting trips (56% were less than 5km in 2001)			
Cycling's share of the travel market in York has remained largely static in recent years	Additional soft measures should be introduced to encourage walking and cycling over and above those initiatives included in LTP2	Should achieve real modal shift and reduction in traffic congestion and air pollution. Impact on resources and budget and other priorities.	
Although buses are not the cleanest vehicles, continuing to try and keep fleets up to date, with low emissions and using optimum fuels is the best way forward	Continued close working with the Quality Bus Partnership to encourage improvements in the bus service	Increased subsidy by CYC for the bus services in York	

Objectives (iv) - CO² Emissions			
Issue/Findings	Identified Solutions	Possible Impacts	Draft Recommendations

Objectives (v) - Journey Times & Reliability of Public Transport			
Findings	Identified Solutions	Possible Impact	Draft Recommendations
Timetables need to more closely reflect actual journey times (particularly at peak times) in order to improve the public's perception of bus reliability			
Journey times are affected by delivery vehicles in the city centre			
Not all buses in York are BLISS enabled (cost of installing the BLISS system on a bus route is in the region of £10k)			
Changes to Park & Ride Services should be made clearer to the public			
Relative cheapness of the Park & Ride fares relative to local bus services creates a perverse incentive for local residents to drive to Park & Ride sites			
traffic flow is 8-10% lower during school holidays, making a significant difference to reliability			
There are still a number of buses in operation that are not DDA compliant			
Not all bus stops have timetables and shelters thus reducing the attractiveness of the bus package			

Dwell time, cross town ticketing issues, congestion and money in the capital programme all lead to bus service unreliability			
Identifying bottlenecks and re-locating bus stops would help to reduce congestion and improve bus reliability			

Objectives (vi) - Economic Performance			
Findings	Identified Solutions	Possible Impact	Draft Recommendations
Objectives (vii) - Quality of Life			
Findings	Identified Solutions	Possible Impact	Draft Recommendations
Objectives (viii) - Road Safety			
Findings	Identified Solutions	Possible Impact	Draft Recommendations

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**Quote for commissioning Consultants to investigate and report on objectives (vi)
Economic Performance & (vii) Quality of Life**

It is envisaged that the report would:

- Identify what research has been done into both economic and quality of life issues and their associated impacts
- Put into national / regional / local context
- Look into traffic speeds / flows from SATURN model and correlation with:
Areas of limiting long term illness
Areas of growth in employment
Air quality and noise data
Deprivation data
Accident data etc.
- Review in context of UTMC and BLISS data - assuming appropriate provision available
- Consider research in impacts on different people - other car drivers, local residents, cyclists, etc
- Potential to consult with trade / freight associations on how congestion is impacting on running / servicing their businesses
- Identify if congestion is having economic impacts on attractiveness of property rental - are particular pockets within the city harder to market?
- Apply value of time savings to time shown to be lost in SATURN model as compared to free flow speed and examine how considered in WebTAG and other economic impact methodologies
- Investigate severance issues
- Review all in context of LTP2 and how these issues may be addressed through measures on the ground
- What improvements / impacts would particular measures be expected to achieve?

Outputs would be a summary report plus graphics to present information pertinent to York. These graphics would highlight areas of congestion, low speeds, air quality etc. We would also produce a table of the key issues associated with congestion and the measures identified in LTP2 to address these (in terms of both policies and schemes) and the impacts that these could achieve.

It is proposed that Simon Pope undertake the majority of the work with assistance from Mustapha Ghali (to extract data from the Saturn model) and Paul Stephenson (an air/noise quality specialist). The cost of their time would be as follows:

Simon Pope - 70hrs @ £33.95/hr = £2376.50

Mustapha Ghali - 15hrs @ £67.03 = £1005.45

Paul Stephenson - 8hrs @ £38.92 = £311.36

TOTAL = £3693.31

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