

MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 10 March 2016 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Alan Hall (Chair), Gareth Siddorn (Vice-Chair), Chris Barnham, Andre Bourne, Suzannah Clarke, Liam Curran, Brenda Dacres, Colin Elliott, Maja Hilton, Mark Ingleby, Roy Kennedy, Jim Mallory, David Michael, Jamie Milne, John Muldoon, Olurotimi Ogunbadewa, Crada Onuegbu, Jacq Paschoud, John Paschoud, Joan Reid, Alan Till, Paul Upex and James-J Walsh.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Obajimi Adefiranye, Abdeslam Amrani, Paul Bell, Peter Bernards, David Britton, Bill Brown, John Coughlin, Amanda De Ryk, Carl Handley, Simon Hooks, Ami Ibitson, Stella Jeffrey, Liz Johnston-Franklin, Alicia Kennedy, Helen Klier, Hilary Moore, Pauline Morrison, Pat Raven, Jonathan Slater, Luke Sorba, Eva Stamirowski and Susan Wise.

ALSO PRESENT: Timothy Andrew (Interim Overview and Scrutiny Manager), Robyn Fairman (Head of Strategy), Simon Moss (Policy and Development Manager, Transport), Freddie Murray (SGM Asset Strategy and Technical Support), Barrie Neal (Head of Corporate Policy and Governance), Jonathan Roberts (JRC) and Brell Wilson (Researcher) (Centre for London).

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2016

Resolved: that the minutes of the meeting on 25 January be agreed as an accurate record.

2. Declarations of interest

Councillor John Muldoon declared a personal interest in relation to item four as a member of the Labour transport group.

Councillor James Walsh declared a personal interest in relation to item four as the founder of the *Bakerloo line extension.com*.

3. Mayoral responses on devolution and on the London Fire Brigade

3.1 Robyn Fairman (Head of Strategy) responded to questions about the Committee's referral on Devolution. The following key points were noted:

- There had been a long history of partnership working between London boroughs. What was being offered at present was Devolution to the Greater London Authority as part of the discussion about the London Proposition.
- Members were concerned about the seeming lack of public engagement in the proposals for devolution.
- Members were also concerned that there was a 'democratic deficit' in the discussions.
- From a scrutiny perspective, the Committee was interested to understand further how the proposals might be reviewed and decision makers held to account.

Resolved: that the response to the Committee's referrals on the London Fire Brigade and on Devolution be noted.

4. The Future of South London's Suburban Railways

4.1 Brell Wilson (Researcher, Centre for London) and Jonathan Roberts (Jonathan Roberts Consulting) gave a presentation to the Committee (attached to the minutes) setting out the key elements of the paper on 'turning South London Orange'. The presentation highlighted the key challenges and potential opportunities for transport capacity, future planning and development of capacity in Lewisham and South East London.

4.2 Brell Wilson (Researcher, Centre for London) and Jonathan Roberts (Jonathan Roberts Consulting) responded to questions from the Committee. In the discussion that followed, the following key points were noted:

- The Committee agreed that the Bakerloo Line is a good scheme but acknowledged identifying funds was a difficult task.
- It would be difficult to replicate the formula for developer contributions that had been used to fund the extension of the Northern Line to Battersea. As part of the Nine Elms enterprise zone agreement, the Treasury had agreed to give up business rates in the area for 25 years.
- The developments at Nine Elms also had very high residential and commercial values that were different from those in Lewisham.
- There were concerns about the operation of the Thameslink and Southern franchise. The Mayor of London's office would be looking at which franchises might be taken over by Transport for London (TfL).
- Members felt that all improvements by TfL should be subject to public consultation.
- There were ongoing issues with the service at the stations on the so-called 'Catford/Bellingham loop' line. It was likely that figures for ridership were being undercounted by around 20-50% in official figures. Having reliable numbers on which to base discussions would be an important starting point for any change in services on the loop.
- Improvements to stations tended to generate further pressure on services.
- One of the difficulties of making major improvements on busy lines was the disruption caused by having to close stations during the work.
- There were not particularly strong arguments to develop a second Brighton Mainline. Capacity through Gatwick was not likely to be an issue because demand for services from the airport was more evenly spread outside of peak times.
- Lewisham might want to position itself to make the best use of any possible future link between Croydon and Canary Wharf.
- Further engagement with the public might help the Council to develop its corporate response to the issues raised and act as the start of a broader public campaign.

4.3 The Committee agreed to share its views with Mayor and Cabinet, as follows:

- 4.4 The Committee welcomes the detailed work carried out to develop the proposals in *Turning South London Orange*. The Committee also notes the publication that same day of two significant reports from the National Infrastructure Commission on the strategic case for additional large-scale transport in London and the south east¹.
- 4.5 Most significantly, the Committee recognises the specific opportunities for Lewisham including the potential for:
- additional services on the Hayes Line creating a 10 minute Overground service
 - additional services between Lewisham and Victoria
 - a new interchange at Brockley Station between the East London Line and services between Lewisham and Victoria
- 4.6 At the same time, TfL and DfT have launched a joint prospectus, which responds to such demands from boroughs. The prospectus outlines a new approach to rail passenger services in London and the south east, and is seen to pave the way for a wider rollout of London Overground services.
- 4.7 It is envisaged that new Overground routes will be planned as part of the re-franchising of existing routes and services. The first opportunity is therefore likely to be with the re-franchising of the south eastern network in 2018.
- 4.8 The Committee believes that further engagement with the public and key stakeholders will be necessary to develop future proposals and plans for improving the rail network in order to best serve the interests of south east London in the face of the huge and growing demands on the current south east London rail infrastructure.
- 4.9 The Committee recommends that Mayor and Cabinet engage with officers to advance a proactive corporate approach to the future of south London's rail services and that this should give particular consideration to the issues identified in *Turning South London Orange* and other key strategic documents such as those reported by National Infrastructure Commission.
- 4.10 The Committee recommends that the Council should develop plans to address those key points raised with the Committee by the Centre for London, which include:
- a clear statement of the needs and priorities of the Lewisham area
 - the feasibility of items identified in the *Turning South London Orange* report and in TfLs proposals
 - consultation by the rail industry with stakeholders and identification of all relevant projects
 - the optimal time window for project delivery needs to be identified and progressed

¹ [Transport for a World City](http://tinyurl.com/je87su3) and [Review of the Case for Large Scale Transport Investment in London](http://tinyurl.com/je87su3) available at: <http://tinyurl.com/je87su3>

- consideration of the options for establishing a joint programme to implant the Lewisham area as a strategic planning priority for future south central and south eastern rail investment projects

4.11 The Committee also recommends that the Council takes a proactive position on the future of rail services on the Thameslink route (through Catford and Bellingham) and ensures that the running of at least four trains an hour forms part of the negotiations (with TfL or others) for the future franchise of the line beyond 2020.

Resolved: That the Committee's views be referred to Mayor and Cabinet.

5. Referrals to Mayor and Cabinet

Resolved: that the Committee's views under item four be referred to Mayor and Cabinet.

The meeting ended at 9.00 pm

Chair:

Date:
