

Minutes

EXTERNAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

14 July 2010

Meeting held at Committee Room 6 - Civic Centre,
High Street, Uxbridge UB8 1UW



HILLINGDON
LONDON

	<p>Committee Members Present: Councillors Mary O'Connor (Chairman), Councillor Michael White (Vice-Chairman), Phoday Jarjussey, Judy Kelly and Peter Kemp</p> <p>Witnesses Present: Acting Chief Inspector Shakil Qasim – Safer Neighbourhoods Team, Metropolitan Police Service Inspector Steve Beattie – Safer Transport Team, Metropolitan Police Service Inspector Peter Miller – Officer in Charge, British Transport Police Kevin Dulling – Transport for London (TfL) Sharon Shepherd – Transport for London (TfL)</p> <p>Others present: Councillor Wayne Bridges Malcolm Ellis, Standards Committee Vice-Chairman</p> <p>LBH Officers Present: Ed Shaylor, Bob Castelijn and Nikki Stubbs</p>	
8.	<p>EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (<i>Agenda Item 5</i>)</p> <p>RESOLVED: That all items be considered in public.</p>	Action by
9.	<p>SAFER TRANSPORT (<i>Agenda Item 6</i>)</p> <p>The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting. Consideration was given to the issue of safer transport in the Borough.</p> <p>Members were advised by Mr Bob Castelijn, the Council's Transport and Aviation Team Manager, that Hillingdon's Local Implementation Plan (LIP) for transport was being prepared in accordance with guidelines. The Hillingdon LIP set out the Council's transport projects, proposals and programmes through to 2011. It also set out how the Council proposed to implement the Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS) and provided details on projects, proposals and programmes. The LIP's transport proposals focussed on eight priority areas and included timelines, funding information and monitoring to ensure the successful implementation of the initiatives.</p> <p>Mr Castelijn stated that the Council had been working with schools in the Borough to develop School Travel Plans (STP) and there were now only two schools in the Borough that did not have one. The improvements that schools had suggested in their STPs had been collated, costed and included in the Hillingdon LIP. The STPs also</p>	Action by

gave Transport for London (TfL) an indication of whether or not there were enough buses on the different school routes.

The STPs were a voluntary arrangement with the schools so, if parents or pupils didn't follow the recommended route home, there was nothing that could be done. However, if parents were parking illegally, this was something that could be dealt with by the Council's parking enforcement team.

Work was underway to look at the North/South bus provision in the Borough. As the provision of additional routes would be costly, it was important to ensure that the potential demand was assessed. Proposals were still at the conception stage and being explored with TfL.

It was generally accepted that Hillingdon had a very large carbon footprint being an outer-London borough but work was underway to establish the exact level. New software was being developed to measure the Council's carbon footprint and it was anticipated that this would be incorporated into current systems by 2011.

Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT)

There were 22 Safer Neighbourhood Teams in Hillingdon – one in each Ward. Acting Chief Inspector Shakil Qasim, from the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), advised that the SNT had been working increasingly closely with the community to encourage engagement. Work was underway to double the number of Special Constables (currently 66) and volunteers by 2013, and increase the number of police cadets. Furthermore, it was anticipated that Special Constables would be deployed on buses in the next year or so.

Given the current economic climate, and the MPSs reduced budget, work was underway to look at how the SNTs could work more effectively. To this end, consideration was being given to aligning all MPS departments, for example, coordinating the hours worked by the CID and SNT teams.

Safer Transport Team (STT)

The STT covered overland areas: buses, bus shelters and bus routes as well as the routes in between. Inspector Steve Beattie, from the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), advised that the STT (which was 90% funded by TfL) met regularly with TfL to look at issues that needed to be addressed. Current priorities for the Hillingdon STT included:

- anti-social behaviour (ASB) and criminal damage on the U4 bus route around Bourne Avenue;
- ASB, criminal damage and serious violent offences on the route and bus stops on Uxbridge Road, primarily between Point West and The Ossie Garvin roundabout;
- ASB, criminal damage and theft/forgery on the 140 bus route – a working group had been set up to specifically look at this issue; and
- ASB at the end of the school day on the buses and transport interchange within the area covered by the Hayes Hub Team.

It was noted that bus crime across London was at its lowest level for six years and was 8% lower than it had been in 2008/2009, despite an increase in the passenger numbers. There had been a 37% decrease in bus vandalism in London, a 10% decrease in violent offences against a person and an 8% reduction in robberies. In Hillingdon, there had been a 5.6% reduction in bus crimes in the last year (down from 644 offences to 608 offences).

Members were advised that the STT had worked with the local bus garage manager to arrange for a U4 bus to be scheduled for part of the route. Plain clothed police officers were then put on the bus to detect crime. This arrangement had taken place on two occasions over the last couple of months and had proved very successful, resulting in an arrest for criminal damage to a bus shelter. This arrangement was also proving to be a deterrent to criminals and would be continued. It was noted that the arrangement had been publicised in newsletters and had been adopted by other bus companies.

There had been some concerns about safety on the U7 bus route. The STT had arranged a Transport User Group meeting to discuss the problems and had invited those residents that had expressed concern. All of these invitees had declined to attend the meeting as the problems had actually been resolved.

TfL's behaviour code outlined what level of behaviour was expected on the buses and the circumstances under which the free travel concession could be removed. The STT had visited Year 6 pupils in 22 schools in the Borough to assist with the applications for free travel cards (Zip cards); the young people had signed the behaviour code as an integral part of this process.

The STT was liaising with local schools on troubled bus routes in Hillingdon. Early intervention letters were sent to the parents of young people that were misbehaving on the buses and reminded them of the behaviour code. Repeat offences could result in the young person's Zip card being withdrawn. TfL had permanently removed more than 5,000 cards from young people since the scheme was introduced in June 2008 with many more being removed temporarily and then reinstated when the young person shown a willingness to work with TfL to get it back. It was important to remember that the vast majority of children were well behaved and that it was only a small minority that were behaving badly on the buses.

PCSOs had been assigned to each of the schools in the Borough to work with them on reducing ASB. As well as sending out early intervention letters to the parents of those young people that had behaved badly, meetings could be set up with the parents to show them the CCTV footage of their child's behaviour on the bus. This procedure had proven to be effective since its introduction three months ago and there had not yet been any repeat offences. Penalties for a re-offence could include withdrawing the young person's Zip card, or implementing an anti-social behaviour contract or anti-social behaviour order (ASBO).

The improved partnership working between the British Transport Police (BTP) and the STT had contributed to the decrease in crime around Hayes and Harlington. The STT also worked very closely with the Council's ASB officer and the Early Intervention Panel.

The STT had conducted a survey at the beginning of July 2010 and the results were being analysed. A further survey would be undertaken approximately six weeks after the first to gauge how public perception had changed with regard to fear of crime. The STT also regularly met with bus drivers listen to their concerns and address any issues that had arisen.

STT worked closely with Operation Bus Tag, which was funded by TfL and tackled criminal damage and anti-social behaviour on London buses using CCTV. The Operation was set up in November 2004 to combat the increasing trend of criminal damage on buses which increased the fear of crime on public transport. Since its inception, Operation Bus Tag had made over 3,000 arrests for on-bus criminal damage and further arrests for offences such as graffiti, seat and window damage, window etching and arson. Many of these arrests had resulted in a conviction and low re-offending rates.

It was noted that ASB was predominant between 3pm and 5pm on school days. The deputy head teacher at Douay Martyr had been particularly helpful in taking steps to hold those students that had behaved badly to account. Additional buses were scheduled for those routes where ASB had arisen to alleviate the problem of overcrowding. All STTs were deployed during these times to patrol buses, bus stations, key bus stops and transport interchanges. The STT was also in the process of training three PCSOs to work alongside TfL's Safety and Citizenship Team.

Transport for London (TfL)

Mr Kevin Dulling, from Transport for London, advised that there was currently no approved data sharing protocol between TfL and London Borough of Hillingdon. The Safer Hillingdon Partnership's protocol had been forwarded and was being reviewed by TfL's solicitors. Mr Dulling would investigate the reasons for the hold up.

Kevin Dulling

Mr Dulling confirmed that, although TfL's budget had been cut by 50%, there were no indications that TfL funding for the STT would stop. There had been a reorganisation at TfL which meant that Hillingdon would no longer be considered a priority area as the work that had been undertaken had been very successful in reducing the fear of crime. As the changes had also meant that Mr Dulling's role would now be inward facing, a Borough Liaison Team representative would attend future Committee meetings and refer issues back to TfL. However, Mr Dulling advised that it was unlikely that there would be any dramatic changes in the service provision in Hillingdon.

The minutes of the External Services Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 23 September 2009 stated that Mr Kevin Dulling would report back to the Committee on progress regarding the application for a grant from the Community Safety and Enforcement Directorate at TfL for financial

assistance with PCSOs. Mr Dulling had planned to work with the STT Sergeant but she had since moved on and no further action had been taken.

A number of safety improvements had been agreed by TfL at the subway site in Carlyon Road. Mr Dulling advised that, although a number of improvements had already been implemented, and more minor improvements were planned, TfL would not be installing the CCTV system that it had originally agreed as the budget was not available. Mr Shaylor advised that the Council would continue to try to influence TfL on this decision. It was believed that TfL's long term plan would be to move away from subways entirely and move towards providing street level crossings.

Ed Shaylor

It was noted that a small number of children living in Harvey Road on the South side of the A40 attended Bourne Primary School on the North side of the A40. As there was no pedestrian crossing, parents were having to drive their children to school every day. Ward Councillors had been requesting the installation of a pedestrian crossing for at least four years but to no avail. The Committee was advised that the installation of a crossing (such as a zebra crossing or footbridge) would depend, in part, on the traffic flows. It was noted that the Council would need to make a formal request – this could be progressed by Mr Castelijjn speaking to PC Neil Corfield at the Metropolitan Police's Traffic Management Team.

Bob Castelijjn

Councillor O'Connor, on behalf of the Committee, thanked Mr Dulling for the support that he had given the Council, and particularly this Committee, over the last seven years.

British Transport Police (BTP)

The BTP, whose customers included station staff, train drivers and passengers, had undertaken a survey. The results had shown that passengers were more reassured now.

It was noted that Hillingdon had 11 underground stations. Between 1 January 2010 and 30 June 2010, there had been 75 offences committed at Uxbridge station; the second most offences during that period had been committed at Hillingdon station with the third most at Northwood.

Although the fleet of BTP vehicles had been reduced as a result of budget restrictions, this had meant that BTP officers were regularly travelling on the trains (and sometimes in with the driver).

The number of reported robberies had reduced and one of BTP's ten priorities was to increase the number of ASB detections by 20%. This was linked to the reduction in the fear of crime. Knife arches had been used on numerous occasions in the stations. Knife crime was being targeted through Operation Portcullis, in conjunction with the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), between 18 July 2010 and 30 July 2010.

Further joint work had been undertaken with the MPS in schools.

	<p>There had been a number of dangerous incidents where stones had been thrown at the trains, particularly in Northwood and Northwood Hills. The BTP and MPS were visiting schools with the MPS helicopter as a preventative measure to raise awareness of just how dangerous this was.</p> <p>It was noted that the BTP was being more proactive and held regular monthly meetings with the public, station staff and station managers to exchange views on the situation with regard to crime. These meetings were well publicised on the website.</p> <p>With regard to passengers on public transport putting their feet on the seats, Members were advised that a byelaw covered this on the trains and underground as unacceptable behaviour. Although no byelaw currently existed to cover the matter on buses, one was in the process of being drafted. Inspector Miller suggested that the new byelaw for buses include provision for the perpetrator to be issued with a fixed penalty notice - this was not an option under the byelaw that covered trains and the underground.</p> <p>Members agreed that the Ward Panel meetings were a useful tool to engage with the public. It was important to proactively engage and increase the number of residents joining the Panels. Acting Chief Inspector Qasim advised that the MPS had tried a number of different ways to engage with the public with varying degrees of success.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the report and presentations be noted.</p>	
10.	<p>MINUTES OF THE MEETING - 9 JUNE 2010 (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 June 2010 be agreed as a correct record.</p>	Action by
11.	<p>MINUTES OF THE MEETING - 16 JUNE 2010 (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2010 be agreed as a correct record.</p>	Action by
12.	<p>WORK PROGRAMME (<i>Agenda Item 7</i>)</p> <p><u>11 January 2011</u> It was agreed that the meeting scheduled for 11 January 2011 would be used to talk to GPs about the proposals contained within the Health White Paper published on 12 July 2010. Invitees would potentially include Dr Mitch Garsin (Chairman of Hillingdon LMC), Dr Tony Grewal (Medical Director of the Londonwide LMCs), the Chairman of Practice-Based Commissioning and some GPs.</p> <p><u>Health Inequalities Working Group</u> It was agreed that the Working Group would hold four meetings: three witness sessions and a fourth meeting to review the draft final report before it went to the External Services Scrutiny Committee meeting for approval on 28 October 2010. These meeting dates would be arranged with the Working Group Members. The final report would</p>	Action by

	<p>then be sent to Cabinet on 18 November 2010.</p> <p>Dr Ellis Friedman (Joint Director of Public Health) and Dr Tony Grewal would be invited to attend all of the Working Group meetings. The Democratic Services Manager would contact the Directors of Adult Social Care, Health & Housing and Education & Children's Services to identify which officers would be best placed to attend the meetings.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the Health White Paper be emailed to all Members of the Committee; 2. the Democratic Services Manager contact the Members of the Health Inequalities Working Group to arrange four meeting dates; 3. the Democratic Services Manager contact the Directors of Adult Social Care, Health & Housing and Education & Children's Services to identify which officers would be best placed to attend the Working Group meetings; and 4. the Work Programme be agreed subject to the above amendments. 	<p>Nikki Stubbs</p> <p>Nikki Stubbs</p> <p>Nikki Stubbs</p>
<p>The meeting, which commenced at 6.00 pm, closed at 8.05 pm.</p>		

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Nikki Stubbs on 01895 250472. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.

This page is intentionally left blank