

**SOUTH EAST ENGLAND REGIONAL ASSEMBLY
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the Meeting on 13 June 2005

Present:

Members

Cllr Keith Mitchell (Chairman)
Kevin Baylis
Cllr Ian Beardsmore
Cllr Paul Clokie
Cllr Christine Field
Cllr Moira Gibson
Cllr Jonathan Glen
Cllr Brian Gurden
Sharon Hedges
Ian Hepburn
Cllr Alex Hollingsworth
Alan Hopkins
Jeremy Leggett
Tim Lockwood
Cllr Dr Royce Longton (Vice Chair)
Cllr Alan Lovell
Tony Reid
Cllr Rodney Royston

Colin Byrne, GOSE

Officers

Paul Bevan, Chief Executive
Mike Gwilliam
(Director of Planning & Transport)
Ray Bowers (Head of Spatial Planning)
Martin Tugwell
(Head of Regional Transport Planning)
Carol Hodson, Director of Resources
Heather Bolton (Head of Communications)
David Payne
John Pounder
Nick Woolfenden
Jo Cleasby

In Attendance

Sue Archer, APSU
Edward Dawson, SEFS
Paul Hudson
Chris Kenneford, Buckinghamshire CC
Paul Treadgold, East Sussex CC
Cllr Don Phillips, Chiltern DC
Craig Ibbetson
Barry Deller, ACTVAR
Chris Lawrence-Pietroni, SECL
Alistair Fulton, ERM
Derek Waller
Chris Turrell, BFBC
Jason Stratton, Thames Water
Tim Greenwood, Terence O'Rourke
Paul Geehan, District Councils
Carol Castle, Chiltern DCI
Phil Brown, Savills
G Ferguson, Waverly BC
Tim Watton, Cherwell DC
Antony Payne, Hants CC
Peter Hardy, South Bucks DC
S Mendis, GOSE
S Aylton, JSPU
K Miller

Ian Walker, Ox CC
H Hunt

S Brown, Woolf Bond Planning
Les Andrews, Surrey CC
Gareth Capner, Barton Willmore
Andrew Whittaker, HBF
Kate Burton, OPT
A Smith, Miller H

1. Apologies and Substitutions

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Douglas Horner, Graham Mabbutt and Douglas Murdoch. The following substitutions were declared: Chris Turrell for Mary Ballin and Roger House for Douglas Horner.

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 March 2005.

2.1 The Minutes were AGREED and signed by the Chairman.

3. Matters Arising Not Elsewhere on the Agenda

3.1 Ian Hepburn reminded the Director that a Members working group needs to be established in order to consider the 2005 Monitoring Report. It was envisaged that the group would meet in the October.

4. Consultation Responses

4.1 The Committee considered the material outlining the responses received on the South East Plan. This included the summary report of the third wave of the MORI survey, an analysis by Ubiquis of the key issues identified in the individual responses and an analysis of the responses received to the "Your Shout" leaflet.

4.2 Responding to comments from a number of members the Director of Planning and Transport agreed that the comment within paragraph 10.7 of the report prepared by Ubiquis would create an unbalanced view and it was AGREED to remove the second sentence.

4.3 Ian Hepburn and Jonathan Glen raised a concern that the a number of the statements within the Ubiquis report did not quantify the scale of the comment being reported. The Director advised that the objective of the report was to summarise the key issues and to give a general sense of the tone of the responses. The Director invited members of the Committee to identify specific points in the Ubiquis report on which they wanted further clarification. It was, however, agreed that there was little point in modifying the consultants independent report.

4.4 The Committee AGREED to the following recommendations:

- i) That Members consider the range of responses received and review the changes and improvements which should be made to the Consultative draft of the South East Plan.
- ii) That the Committee notes the findings of three recent polls of public opinion and takes these findings into account in reaching a conclusion on recommendations to be made to the Assembly Plenary meeting
- iii) That the Committee consider the written responses received and determine how they are to address these in the revised Draft South East Plan.
- iv) That the Committee consider the key issues and determine how they should be addressed in the revised Draft South East Plan.

4.5 The Director introduced an additional paper, Agenda Item 4g Supplementary Report – Green Belt, that had been circulated at the start of the meeting.

The Director noted that respondents' views on the need for a review of some aspects of the green belt designation had been more varied than may have been expected, with some respondents opposed to a review and others supporting a review. It was noted that the paper should include a reference to the fact that Oxfordshire County Council had expressed a view against the need for a strategic policy on green belt review, while Oxford City supported a review.

- 4.6 The Chairman expressed the view that there was sufficient scope within the current planning documents to enable local scale reviews of the green belt to take place. The Committee were reminded by Colin Byrne of GOSE that the Inspector's Report into the Oxfordshire Structure Plan had specifically identified the need for a strategic review of the green belt to be set out within the South East Plan.

5. Sustainability Appraisal

- 5.1 The Head of Regional Transport Planning drew to the attention of the Committee the key sustainability issues that needed to be taken into consideration in determining the recommendations from the meeting to the Assembly Plenary. In particular he drew attention to the need for the final Sustainability Appraisal Report to include an audit trail that recorded how the Assembly had taken the available information into consideration in its decisions. A second draft of the Sustainability Appraisal Report would be published for the Assembly Plenary

- 5.2 The members stressed the importance of considering not only water supply but also the handling of waste water as a key sustainability issue. The Head of Regional Transport Planning confirmed that the principal authorities would be expected to take into consideration not only the regionally significance sustainability issues but also those identified as being of sub-regional significance. He also outlined the audit process that will be used to check the consistency of the work undertaken at the sub-regional level.

- 5.3 The Committee agreed that an expansion of Para 3.1 is required to highlight the need to manage waste water.

- 5.4 **The Committee AGREED to note the contents of the report, subject to paragraph 5.3.**

6. 6a: Evidence Base

- 6.1 The Head of Spatial Planning introduced the paper, noting in the process that Anglia Polytechnic University had been commissioned to undertake a discrete piece of work on projections and the employment forecasts that was separate and in addition to the original work undertaken for the Assembly by Experian. Drawing on these results of this work he was confident that the forecasts used by the Assembly were robust and represented the best available information. He emphasised that ongoing work with the Environment Agency and the water supply industry suggested that it would

be possible to manage the issue of water supply, but that their clear advice was that there were very difficult waste water quality issues at Basingstoke, which might well tender further strategic scale development very difficult. Further detailed studies were however underway and might change the picture.

- 6.2 Brian Gurden expressed concern over Basingstoke being singled out as the only location where constraints in the management of waste water might preclude further growth. The Director of Planning and Transport emphasised the importance of the evidential base but acknowledged that the issue related to growth over and above that currently identified.
- 6.3 Responding to questions the Head of Spatial Planning emphasised the more recent work had highlighted the extent to which forecasts are considered to be uncertainties in the longer-term that are beyond the control of the planning system.
- 6.4 Sharon Hedges highlighted that the evidence regarding homelessness is that there is a backlog and an urgent need to address this in the first 10 years of the Plan. Alex Hollingsworth emphasised the fact that the Assembly's commitment to addressing the backlog meant that there would need to be a higher average level of growth in the first ten years of the Plan.
- 6.5 Keith House voiced his concerns that the analysis set out in the paper sought to justify a particular figure. He emphasised the most important thing was to focus on the desired outcome – improved quality of life.
- 6.6 Responding to questions the Head of Spatial Planning emphasised that overall GVA per annum for the region is the appropriate measure for monitoring economic growth. He also emphasised that GVA growth is not an input into the Experian model, rather it is an output.
- 6.7 The Committee AGREED to the following recommendation; That the Committee notes the report and takes the recent work on projections and forecasts into account in determining the scales of growth to be planned for in the region**

6b: Transport Trends

- 6.8 The Head of Regional Transport Planning summarised the key messages from the analysis of the data from the National Travel Survey and the output from the Assembly's Strategic Transport Model. He emphasised the need to avoid focusing on anecdotal comments on the transport problem, and instead focus on the importance of using the evidence that travel patterns are changing as the basis for moving forward. Notwithstanding the considerable investment in transport investment ongoing, there remained a prima facie case for continued and substantial investment in the region's transport system. He also emphasised that a significant issue remained the need to address the question of revenue investment.

6.9 In the ensuing discussion some members expressed their concern that caution needed to be exercised in interpreting the data. The experience of individuals was that conditions on the transport system were getting worse and that by implication higher levels of growth are likely to give rise to additional pressures on the system. The Head of Regional Transport Planning however emphasised that journeys to work accounted for only 15% of the total number of trips and that the evidence from the analysis set out in the paper showed that travel patterns were changing in a positive way overall. The relevant contribution of new development, at any of the levels of growth in the consultation draft, was small in comparison to overall traffic growth and congestion issues.

6.10 The Committee noted the contents of this report.

6c: Key Recent Research

6.11 The Director of Planning and Transport highlighted the extensive range of technical work either completed or underway. He emphasised that the work was necessary to provide the technical underpinning of the South East Plan and to provide the evidential backcloth for the forthcoming Examination in Public. This was the most extensive programme of research ever undertaken for a strategic plan and Members were asked to take it into account in their decisions.

6.12 The Committee was not asked to formally endorse any of the outcomes or recommendations of individual pieces of research.

6.13 It was AGREED by the Committee to note the research evidence in reaching their decisions on the South East Plan.

7. Proposed Revisions to the South East Plan

7.1 The Director of Planning and Transport summarised the proposed revisions to the Consultation Draft Plan, that were recommended in the light of the reports on agenda items 4 to 6.

7.2 Members of the Committee considered in turn a number of amendments to the proposed revisions. These are set out in detail in the accompanying annex to these minutes.

7.3 Subject to these revisions the Committee agreed the proposed revisions.

8. Infrastructure and Implementation

8.1 The Committee AGREED to defer consideration of the report on Infrastructure until the meeting scheduled for 23 June 2005.

8.2 The Committee AGREED to endorse the proposed changes to the Implementation Plan.

9. BAA Gatwick Masterplan

9.1 The Director explained the context for the Gatwick Masterplan consultation and that two further consultations will follow on Heathrow and Southampton.

9.2 Keith House suggested that there was a need to take an overview of all these masterplans for individual major airports. Whilst it was necessary to consider the contents of the Gatwick Masterplan at this committee in order to submit a response within the timetable available, it was accepted that if possible the opportunity should be taken to consider the remaining masterplans in the broader planning context. An overview report would therefore be brought to the Committee in the Autumn.

9.3 **The following recommendations were AGREED by the Committee:**

- i) The Assembly restates its opposition to the development of a second runway and additional terminal at Gatwick Airport and emphasises that more recent work has identified that the potential impact of such an expansion would be worse than that set out in the Aviation White Paper;**
- ii) States that it considers it unacceptable for the contents of the Masterplan to be finalised until such time as the Assembly is afforded the opportunity to comment on the conclusions of work commissioned to examine the surface access implications of the expansion set out under Development Scenario 2;**
- iii) Emphasises the importance of working with the Assembly to identify any additional surface access requirements over and above existing commitments set out in the Surface Access Strategy arising from Development Scenario 1 at the earliest possible opportunity.**

10. Items for Information

10.1 **The Committee noted the contents of agenda items 10a, 10b and 10c.**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 16:15

**South East England Regional Assembly
June 2005**