

Scrutiny Review Sustainable Transport Panel Meeting 12th January 2010 : Draft Minutes

Present: Cllrs Beacham, Mallett and Santry & Weber

Also in attendance: Cllr Haley, Chris Barker, Tim Bellenger, Richard Bourn, Martin Bradford, Paul Bumpstead, Adam Coffman, Andy Cunningham, Mel Davies, Quentin Given, Joan Hancox, Lauritz Hansen-Bay, Tony Hopkins, Pete McAskie, Mhairi McGhee, Pamela Moffatt, Michael Poteliakhoff, David Rennie & Sue Penny.

1. Apologies for absence

1.1 None.

2. Declarations of interest

2.1 It was noted that Cllr Mallett was a member of the London Cycling Campaign and Cllr Beacham worked for Transport for London. Neither member felt that these declared interests would be prejudicial to the review.

3. Late items of urgent business

3.1 None received.

4. Haringey Disability Forum

4.1 Pamela Moffatt made a submission to the panel on the issues that older and disabled people may face in accessing transport in Haringey. The panel noted that a report has been produced by Age Concern London highlighting the issues that older people face in using transport services in the capital. This report would be circulated at the next meeting (attached).

4.2 The panel heard that older people are the largest group of bus service users in London and are dependent on the bus network to access a wide range of public and community services. It was noted however that there are a number of pressing issues which older people face in accessing the bus network:

- There are widespread personal concerns in accessing/ using bus stops (e.g. inadequate lighting)
- Timetables are too tight which means that buses are frequently rushing to maintain schedules which can cause problems for older people (i.e. getting on and off the bus, quick stops).

4.3 It was noted that there are a range of transport services available to older and disabled people in the borough, though these were not without their problems: Dial-a-Ride (unreliable), Taxicard (expensive) and Patient Transport (too restrictive). It was also noted Haringey Community Transport Service was a relatively new service and although there were good examples of its use, there was a perception that this was not being used to optimum levels.

- 4.4 A number of priorities were set before the panel in developing transport options for older and disabled people. These can be summarised as:
- More integration of existing transport providers (i.e. door to door, health and community services). The panel may wish to look at the integration achieved in Bexley/ Bromley.
 - Freedom passes are very important to the mobility of older people and this service should continue to be fully funded.
 - Taxicard needs to be improved by increasing the scope (i.e. how far you can travel) and decreasing the cost of this service.
 - Car clubs should be developed which are accessible for older and disabled people.

5. Friends of the Earth

- 5.1 Quentin Given provided a written submission to the panel on behalf of Tottenham & Wood Green branch of Friends of the Earth. The following is a summary of the main points from this presentation and subsequent panel discussion.
- 5.2 The panel heard that shorter car journeys under 25miles contributed to the bulk of emissions in the UK, and at a national level this is where action to promote more sustainable alternatives should be focused. More locally, in London, the bulk of car emissions arise from much shorter journeys and sustainable transport campaigner's efforts should be focussed reducing these trips and promoting low-carbon alternatives.
- 5.3 The panel heard that the Council should take the lead in developing a range of hard measures to encourage the use of more sustainable methods of transport including Controlled Parking Zones (CPZ), speed restrictions and traffic calming measures. These were all within the jurisdiction of the local authority.

Parking

- 5.4 It was noted that the detail of local authorities parking policies are fundamental to achieving a reduction in private car usage (and reducing emissions and associated pollution). Installing CPZ's have been shown to drastically reduce incoming traffic and encourage the use of other more sustainable forms of transport. Similarly, charging for parking at private non-residential properties (i.e. business car parking) should also be considered as part of this policy. It was important to build cross party and community support for the extension of CPZ's.
- 5.5 It was highlighted to the panel that there were some areas where parking controls had affected local businesses, in particular, the recent introduction of pay and display parking in an area of West Green ward was noted to have had this effect. Members of the panel indicated that they were aware of this situation and reform was under consideration. The panel also heard that there had been some parking development successes, such as through the stop and shop scheme and the introduction of business loading bays.

- 5.6 The panel heard evidence that as a priority, that the council should install CPZs around all mainline and tube stations in the borough to help prevent commuter traffic driving in to the borough and accessing the transport network here. It was contended that this is a major cause of traffic congestion within the borough. In response, the panel heard that a number of consultations for CPZ had been conducted on or near stations, some of which had been rejected by local residents.

Agreed: that further work be carried out to establish if the introduction of CPZ has lead to a reduction in car parking permits.

20 mph Zones

- 5.7 Another important consideration for local authorities was speed policy. It was suggested to the panel that there should be a 20mph default limit across the borough. This is essential to create a cultural change of road usage, to make them safer, more accessible and more attractive to other less polluting forms of transport and to pedestrians alike.
- 5.8. There was some considerable discussion at the panel meeting of the merits of introducing a borough wide 20mph zone. At present the policy of the authority is to ensure that there are adequate enforcement procedures in place before implementing borough wide speed limits. It was noted however that there are already eighteen 20mph zones already in the borough and work has already begun in ensuring that enforcement officers have speed guns to help enforcement.
- 5.9 The panel heard that there had been some qualified success with the development of 20mph zones in Portsmouth. The establishment of a city wide 20mph zone without the use of hard enforcement measure had only achieved a 1mph reduction in average speeds throughout the city.
- 5.10 It was suggested to the panel that if the council was considering enforcement issues for 20mph zones, then it would make sense for the police to also consider other lower level traffic enforcements such as cars blocking pavements, or access or junction.

Freight

- 5.11 The panel also heard that there should be further encouragement of green alternatives to moving freight within and across the borough. It was noted that electric vehicles are ideal for local delivery services and that these should be encouraged where possible. It was suggested that the council and its partners should take a lead in ensuring that green technology was used in its fleet vehicles.
- 5.12 It was also noted that further use could be made of the borough's waterways to help transport local freight. The panel heard that the borough is working hard to maintain a local wharf and were removing local waste by the local water way (River Lea).

Leading by example

- 5.13 The panel heard that the council should also lead by example in developing the sustainable transport agenda by encouraging staff to use more sustainable methods of transport to get to work and in the course of their daily business. It was important for the council to set the agenda and to establish that it was possible to have a rich fulfilling life without owning and driving a car.
- 5.14 The panel noted that the council had a staff travel plan, had a pool of 20 bikes, 2 pool electric cars and introduced a £200 annual fee for staff car parking permit. It was also noted that there had been a reduction of 5% in the proportion of staff travelling to work by car since the introduction of the staff travel plan. It was not clear however, what proportion of council employees currently use a private care to get to work.

Agreed: (1) that the transport service provide further information on the staff travel plan, in particular what proportion of staff drive to work (2) car pool usage and bike pool usage.

Essential car user

- 5.15 The panel heard that there were parking problems for carers of elderly and disabled people in the borough. There were numerous instances of where carers were receiving parking tickets for just popping in to look after vulnerable Haringey residents. The panel heard that LB Barnet have a dedicated badge for carers which allows them to park without worry when caring for local residents. A care-worker also present, reported that it would be useful to have a generic parking badge for families that care for elderly or disabled relatives.

Agreed: that the transport service would look in to parking permit provision for carers.

- 5.16 It was noted that Haringey Council operates the Companion Badge, which is a type of parking permit for disabled people. It is designed to provide eligible residents with protection against people who steal Blue Badges displayed in vehicles. It was not clear if this can be used generically for carers or needs to be used for specific vehicles.

Agreed: that the transport service to clarify the eligibility and use of companion badges in Haringey.

- 5.17 The panel noted that there had been abuse of the essential car user's permit which had precipitated the council to examine eligibility and costs associated with granting these permits. As a result of actions taken by the borough, there had been a significant reduction in the number of people who were able to use the essential car user's permit. This was verified by a care-worker present, who indicated that there had been a significant reduction in essential car users permits, these could now only be used if transferring equipment and not for everyday appointments.

Agreed: that the transport service to provide data on the reduction of essential car user permit and conduct a review of the impact of changes to the essential car user permit.

Corridor Traffic

- 5.18 The panel noted that the borough experienced high levels of corridor traffic (such as the A10) which it may be difficult for Haringey to tackle as an individual borough. The panel heard that a lot of unnecessary freight and private car journeys were being undertaken unnecessarily which needed to be addressed. It was acknowledged however, that traffic reduction on key radial routes in and out of central London need to be tackled on a pan-London basis.

Localisation

- 5.19 The panel heard that localisation of the economy was central to developing sustainable transport in Haringey. There was too much emphasis in using private cars to access goods and services and in providing access to cars that use local shopping facilities. It was suggested that strong local sustainable shopping facilities should be a key priority for the council, which should prioritise access by sustainable transport. This would be beneficial to all stakeholders; more attractive to local shoppers, more people shopping locally is better for business and less pollution/ emissions.

Electric/ hybrid Cars

- 5.20 The panel heard that there was further potential to develop electric and hybrid cars in the borough, particularly in local business fleets. The panel heard that the London Plan provides further impetus to developing a network of charging points across London through the London boroughs. There were problems in rolling out charging points however, as there were considerable costs associated with the maintenance of charging points.

Car Clubs

- 5.21 The panel heard that car clubs has been a very successful development over the past year in Haringey where 14 bays (for 27 cars) had been installed. It was noted that additional investment was planned in the forthcoming financial year which would see 66 vehicles available from 48 locations. The focus for future development was to increase local membership, develop access and consult on further new bays (the latter having already entered the planning system).

6.0 Campaign for Better Transport

- 6.1 Richard Bourn, London Coordinator for the Campaign for Better Transport (CBT) made a brief presentation to the panel on the work of this organisation, its commentary on the Mayor's Transport Strategy and priorities for Haringey in developing sustainable transport. The following is a summary of this presentation and the subsequent panel discussion.

- 6.2 The panel noted that the Mayors transport strategy supported a polycentric model of 200 local town centres across London, to encourage more

sustainable communities. This was welcomed by the CBT, but added that these local town centres need to be accompanied by higher density residential developments to further minimise the need to travel.

6.3 CBT felt however, that there was not enough measures in the Transport strategy to curb car usage, indeed there were measures which may be interpreted as encouraging further car usage. These included: traffic smoothing policy, relaxing parking standards, relaxing environmental concerns for new roads, deleting the western extension of the congestion charge zone. Furthermore, public transport, and in particular bus usage had been made more expensive.

6.4 A number of priorities were outlined to the panel in considering improvements to sustainable transport provision in Haringey, these included:

- 60% of all trips in Haringey are less than 5km, this should be the focus of modal shift initiatives.
- Reduce the need to travel through: developing high density accommodation adjacent to town centres, home-working, tele-conferencing.
- Reassess local parking policy – ensure that sustainable transport provision figures in planning guidance and that approval of further parking is carefully considered.
- Preserve the economic vitality of local areas to ensure that they remain attractive to local people.
- Promote alternatives to the car: conduct walking audits to remove street obstacles, re-allocation of street space to cyclists and pedestrians, cycle training
- Improvement of the public realm – will benefit everyone but encourage more people to walk and cycle.
- Removal of gyratory and one way systems to help improve road permeability to bicycles and pedestrians.
- Smarter travel measures – education, travel awareness, travel information.
- Develop and extend bus priority schemes – hours of operation consistent.
- Ensure that stations have travel plans.

7.0 London Travelwatch

7.1 Tim Bellenger from London Travelwatch provided the panel with a short presentation about the work of the organisation in representing passengers issues to transport providers. The following provides a summary of the main points from this presentation and subsequent panel discussion.

7.2 Four priorities were outlined to Haringey which should guide and inform the development of sustainable transport policies in Haringey. These were described below:

1. The development and extension of the bus network: the bus network carries twice as many passengers as the tube and Haringey residents use the bus network in far greater numbers than other transport modes.

Further more, the bus network is crucial in supporting the mobility of lower incomes groups and socially disadvantaged groups.

2. Although electrification of Barking – Gospel Oak overland rail line is a priority for freight travel between Felixstowe (port), no agreement has been reached between DfT, Network Rail and TfL. The borough should campaign and lobby for the electrification of the line as this will help improve orbital passenger travel across the borough.
3. Travel plans should be developed for all main line and underground stations, in particular, CPZ should be developed around stations and access by bicycle and foot should be prioritised.
4. It was also recommended that all boroughs should have consistent parking restrictions policies (timing during the day and across the week) to ensure that there is smooth flow of buses and other transport.

7.3 The panel heard that London Travelwatch undertake outreach work in London boroughs through a mobile unit. It was noted that at a recent excursion to Croydon, staff had conducted over 2000 travel surveys with local residents (to promote public transport options). It was suggested that the mobile unit be invited to Haringey (Wood Green).

Agreed: that the sustainable transport service invite the London Travelwatch mobile unit be invited to Haringey.

7.4 The panel heard that the current configuration of bus lane operation in Haringey (and elsewhere probably) was confusing for local residents and road users. There was too much variation around the time of operation during the day and from weekdays to weekends. Greater consistency in the operation of bus lanes should be developed i.e. default of Monday through to Sunday and 24hour. The panel noted that this system works well in Brighton & Hove.

Agreed: the panel may wish to consider further recommendations in this area, particularly around processes to harmonise the operation of bus lanes.

8.0 Sustainable Haringey/ Living Streets/ Haringey Cycling Campaign

8.1 The panel heard that action to develop transport options in Haringey was guided by a number of key drivers:

- Reducing carbon emissions: transport emissions were continuing to rise.
- Increasing safety on the roads; although road accidents had improved, traffic volumes and speeds still presented genuine safety concerns to other road users and pedestrians
- Improving access to transport for all:

8.2 The panel heard that encouraging modal shift from private car use to other more sustainable forms of transport should be priority for the council. A range of methods and processes were outlined to the panel as to how the locality

can discourage private car use (e.g. traffic calming) and encourage walking, cycling and public transport use.

- 8.3 It was highlighted to the panel, that all journeys start and finish on foot and this is where greater attention needs to be paid: improving the walking environment, improving footways and identifying and eliminating threats or obstacles to pedestrians (i.e. poor lighting or excessive street furniture).
- 8.4 A short paper was also tabled at the meeting (Drive to Excess) which explained how traffic levels impacted on the social and community networks. It was noted that heavy traffic (20k vehicles per day) reduced social and community networks (paper attached). In this context, it was felt that traffic calming measures could help foster community spirit and cohesion.
- 8.5 It was also felt that there needed to be more places where both pedestrians and cyclist could safely cross busy roads and junctions or navigate their way through road network (i.e. alterations to the Tottenham gyratory). There was also further debate about the installation of staggered crossings at large road junctions and whether these were practical and pedestrian friendly (being boxed in the middle of the road). The alternative, of a single crossing, could cause traffic build up (according to TfL).
- 8.6 Haringey Council's application to become a biking borough was applauded within the deposition and it was hoped that this would bring about a cultural change in bike usage in the borough. It was noted that there had been an increase in cycling in Haringey, which has been mainly in line with London as a whole, but there was scope to do more: speed reduction, reallocation of road space, traffic calming and improving road maintenance (potholes).
- 8.7 It was however noted that there was often friction between cyclists and pedestrians and that in some cases pedestrians were genuinely concerned (i.e. pavement riding, red light breach). It was suggested to the panel that there is a programme of cycle signage installation, training and education which underscored the principle of always giving way to pedestrians (locally or more regionally). It was also suggested that some level of enforcement may be necessary – again, undertaken locally or regionally).
- 8.8 The panel heard that there were significant developments in reducing traffic congestion caused by road works in the borough. Haringey had signed up to the new road permit scheme, which became effective on the 11th January 2010, which in effect is a charging scheme for utilities to dig up the highway. It was also noted that there would be agreed standards of repair which would be assessed, and utilities would also be liable for repairs up to 2 years later.

9.0 Psychological Traffic Calming (David Rennie)

- 9.1 A local resident, David Rennie, gave a presentation to the panel on psychological traffic calming. This presentation outlined how the use of strategic tree planting can be helpful to tool in reducing traffic speed. A

number of slides were shown to the panel which demonstrated how this process worked (attached).

- 9.2 The most important aspect of planting is that the trees must be tall and evergreen so that drivers cannot see ahead through the road. This has the psychological effect of reducing vehicle speed and calming traffic volumes. Planting on the road also leaves the pavements free of obstruction whilst still maintaining pleasant environment created by the trees. It was also noted that this was a very cheap and effective form of traffic calming.
- 9.3 It was noted that trees do not have to be placed directly in to the ground but can be placed in planters in the road – and this will have the same effect. It was suggested that adult trees, although more expensive, would work better as these would provide sufficient cover for the street. The panel noted that there a pilot was already underway (Crescent Road, N17) where this same system was being trialled.
- 9.4 The panel felt that this scheme might be ideal for use within the Making the Difference scheme (localised funding through Area Assemblies). Known speeding hot spots could be used to inform this process. It was noted that there was money available in the locality for tree planting (in general budget and through the Mayors tree planting scheme) which may be used for this purpose. The service would report back on what funds were available.

Agreed: the service to report back on what moneys might be available to support this development.

10. Date of next meeting

- 10.1 January 21st 2010.