



Minutes of a Special meeting of the Scrutiny Commission held at County Hall, Glenfield on Wednesday, 03 October 2001.

PRESENT

Mr. N. J. Brown CC (in the Chair)

Mr. D. C. Bill CC  
Mr. P. D. Boulton TD, CC  
Mr. B. Chapman AE, CC  
Mr. P. A. Hyde CC  
Mr. Mike Jones CC  
Mr. J. B. Rhodes CC  
Mr. C. A. Stanley CC

Mrs. V. P. Bill CC  
Mrs. R. Cammille CC  
Mr. S. J. Galton CC  
Mr. D. Jennings CC  
Mr. P. C. Osborne CC  
Mr. N. J. Rushton CC

21. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Commission held on 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2001 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

22. Urgent Items

There were no urgent items for consideration.

23. Declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in respect of items on the agenda

There were no declarations of interest.

24. Declarations of the Party Whip

There were no declarations made under Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16.

25. Presentation of Petitions under Standing Order 36

The Chief Executive reported that there were no petitions to be presented.

26. Best Value Review of Public Transport Support - Presentation of Key Findings and Implications

The Commission considered a report previously submitted to the Cabinet which set out the findings of the Best Value Review Panel established to consider the County Council's Public Transport Services. A copy of the report is filed with these minutes.

The Commission also considered a paper setting out the decisions from the

Planning and Environment Scrutiny Committee meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> September, when this matter was considered. A copy is filed with these minutes.

The Chairman reminded the Commission that it had previously received a presentation from Mr. J. Holden, Public Transport Co-ordinator, Planning and Transportation Department, on the key findings and implications arising from the Review.

The Commission expressed its concern and disappointment at the failure of the Planning and Environment Committee to offer any comments on the Panel report.

In response to questions by members the Commission was advised as follows:

- i) the Cabinet at its meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> October, would consider comments arising from the current consultation exercise prior to coming to a view on the Panel's findings. There would be a further opportunity for the Scrutiny Commission to consider the Cabinet's response prior to the matter being referred to the County Council for consideration;
- ii) the scope of the Review Panel excluded consideration of Park and Ride schemes. Such schemes were developed and reviewed as part of the Local Transport Plan process. However, in planning and developing bus routes existing or planned Park and Ride schemes would be taken into account;
- iii) concerns about the current tendering system and increasing costs were recognised but at this stage due to the legislative framework it was not possible to move away from competitive tendering of bus routes. However, the inclusion of a Quality Contract clause in the Transport Act might offer some opportunity if the Government decided to allow the County Council to be more proactive in developing quality contracts;
- iv) the proposed consultation with rural areas regarding alternative Community Transport Services would take into consideration the views of the 'community' expressed through the consultation exercises such as village appraisals;
- v) the issue of closer working with the Leicester City and District Council's would be addressed through the Quality Bus Partnerships programme;
- vi) the Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DLTR) was currently undertaking three Multi-Modal Studies in the East Midlands. The DLTR would formally consult local authorities towards the end of the year when a preferred strategy had been developed;
- vii) the scope of the Panel's terms of reference, covering as they did support for existing bus and rail services, excluded consideration of the Ivanhoe Stage 2 Line.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Cabinet be advised that the Commission

- (a) supports the two key public transport objectives;
- (b) supports the recommendations/conclusions of the Best Value Review Panel report subject to the following comments:
  - i) a draft implementation plan should be prepared and provided to the Scrutiny arm for consideration and comment prior to the recommendations on the Panel's report being put to the County Council;
  - ii) the implementation of the proposals should be subject to the development of effective alternative community transport services to rural areas not served by the proposed hourly service. The Commission is of the view that for each 'community' there should be agreed arrangements for a minimum level of service/funding, the level to be determined following thorough consultation with the community and should closely match the needs identified;
  - iii) implementation of the proposals should be subject to ensuring effective links and interchange arrangements with the hourly service routes. Where, appropriate, this should be done following the introduction and assessment of pilot projects;
  - iv) services to out of county towns/centres should be of equal quality to those to county towns/centres and the implementation plan should include a commitment to working with adjoining Councils to achieve this;
  - v) the issue of quality and reliability of services, particularly in relation to night and weekend service, should be reflected as a priority in the implementation plan;
  - vi) the potential opportunities of utilising excess and 'off-peak' capacity in the in-house County Council fleet (particularly Social Services and Education) and voluntary sector fleets should be further explored and any proposals arising therefrom should be reported to the Commission for consideration.

27. Date of Next Meeting

**RESOLVED:**

That the next meeting of the Commission be held at 3.00 p.m. on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> October, 2001.

10.30 a.m. – 12.30 a.m.  
3<sup>rd</sup> October, 2001

CHAIRMAN

