

SCRUTINY REVIEW PANEL 4 – TRANSPORT

MINUTES

Thursday 1st March 2018

PRESENT: Councillors: Kamaljit Kaur Nagpal (Chair), Tej Bagha, Gary Busuttil, Joanna Dabrowska (Vice-Chair), Kamaljit Dhindsa, Kieron Gavan, Abdullah Gulaid, *Anthony Kelly* (Substitute for Gurmit Mann), *Swaran Padda* (Substitute for Ciaran McCartan), Aysha Raza, Alex Stafford, Lauren Wall and Ray Wall

Ealing Officers Present:

Cath Attlee	- Head of Integrated Strategic Commissioning
Harjeet Bains	- Scrutiny Review Officer
Chris Cole	- Transport Projects and Policy Manager
Russell Roberts	- Principal Transport Planner
Lee Teasdale	- Democratic Services Officer

External Attendees:

Mark Hart	- Community Partnerships Specialist (West), Transport for London
Chris Joyce	- Head of Surface Access Expansion Programme, Heathrow Airport
Anna Whitty	- Chief Executive, Ealing Community Transport

1. Apologies for Absence
(Agenda Item 1)

Councillor Swaran Padda substituted for Councillor Ciaran McCartan and Councillor Anthony Kelly substituted for Councillor Gurmit Mann.

Due to inclement weather, further members of the Panel and invitees were unable to attend the hearing:

Panel Members:

Councillor Alex Stafford
Councillor Gary Busuttil

Co-opted Member:

John Gashion – The Panel were advised that Mr Gashion had submitted comments on Agenda Items 6 & 7 – these were affixed to the Panel briefing note.

Education Co-optees:

Vinita Sighat
Syed Zaidi

Ealing Officers:

Surinder Jassal – VCS and Physical Disabilities Commissioner (Item 6)

Invitees:

Lizzy Bovill – Programme Director, NHS West London CCG (Item 5)
Josh Dennis – Ealing Centre for Independent Living (Item 6)
Sally O’Conner – Mobility Group, Ealing Centre for Independent Living (Item 6)

Katie Peploe – Co-ordinator, Ealing Shopmobility (Item 6)
Tessa Sandall – Managing Director, Ealing CCG (Item 5)
Wendy Starkie – Chair, Ealing Centre of Independent Living (Item 6)

2. Declarations of Interest

(Agenda Item 2)

In relation to Agenda Item 6, it was noted that Ealing Community Transport (ECT) presently held contracts commissioned through Ealing Council.

Councillor Kelly advised in relation to item 6 that he worked for ECT.

Councillor Dabrowska advised in relation to item 7, that she previously worked for Heathrow Airport holdings (previously BAA) and other airline companies and still had pension schemes in place.

Councillor Gavan stated that he held an indirect interest in Item 7, as he worked for NATS Holdings, which had Heathrow as its largest client.

Councillor Bagha stated in relation to Item 7, that he used to work at Heathrow Airport and still had relatives who worked there.

3. Matters to be Considered in Private

(Agenda Item 3)

There were none.

4. Minutes (03.10.17)

(Agenda Item 4)

The Panel considered the minutes of the meeting which had taken place on 6 December 2017.

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of 6 December 2017 be agreed as a true and correct record.

5. NHS Transport Available for Ealing Residents

(Agenda Item 5)

As referenced in Item 1 – due to adverse weather on the date of the meeting, apologies had been tendered by the representatives of Ealing Clinical Commissioning Group who were due to present the item. The Panel therefore agreed to defer the item until the next meeting.

Resolved: That the item be deferred to the Panel meeting of 19 April 2018.

6. Draft Travel Support Strategy

(Agenda Item 6)

The Chair invited Cath Attlee (Head of Integrated Commissioning) to introduce an item which sought the suggestions of the Panel in regards to the Council's Draft Travel Support Strategy.

The Head of Integrated Commissioning advised that she had hoped to bring three witnesses to the Panel who could provide insight into their experience of travel support in the borough, however due to adverse weather they had been unable to attend. It was suggested that they could be invited to give evidence at the next meeting of the Panel.

Travel Support Strategy

It was advised that a working group had been established in 2017 and had been made up of officers from Adults' Services, Children's Services, Transport Services and representatives from the voluntary sector to bring their insight forward to contribute to the development of the strategy. This formed part of the wider programme of 'Better Lives' and 'Brighter Futures' which were cornerstones of Future Ealing.

The vision of the strategy was to enable people with mobility needs to travel as independently as possible, with choices in how and when they wished to travel. To support people to travel independently, giving people the life skills and confidence to use public transport. Finally, it would aim to provide the right support to travel when it was needed, with information and advice on a range of options.

It was advised that the Council had a duty to facilitate access to travel for people with mobility issues; and to ensure that children with special educational needs who were eligible for travel assistance were supported to travel to and from school without any additional cost to the family.

This was all taking place within an extremely challenging financial context. In 2016/2017 the Council had spent £6.3m on transport and travel support. Central government reductions in local government funding had led to increased pressure upon voluntary sector budgets for travel training and buddies. The Strategy aimed to inform future spending priorities, making the case for continued investment in support for independent travel.

Ealing Community Transport (ECT)

The Chair then invited Anna Whitty, Chief Executive of Ealing Community Transport (ECT) to make a presentation to the Panel advising them of the support offered by the service.

ECT was a charity and social enterprise that created social value through its charitable activities; it delivered high quality, safe, accessible and affordable community transport services that positively benefitted communities and enabled disabled, isolated and lonely people to remain independent and mobile.

It was stated that there was often confusion around what exactly community transport represented, as the concept of commissioned transport could appear complicated. There was often a presumption that because 'community' was in the name that ECT was a body of the Council.

It was considered very important to bring absolute clarity to the term Community Transport. When the term "community transport" was googled, a list of charities

providing community transport services was brought up. However, if “definition of community transport” was googled – the following was highlighted “Community Transport generally means transport which is designed, specified and developed by the communities it services, and which is provided on a not-for-profit basis in direct response to the identified needs of those communities.” Which Ms Whitty saw along the lines of “for the community by the community”.

The Scottish parliament had defined Community Transport as “Community transport services are locally owned and managed organisations, often relying on volunteers, who provide transport options to people who cannot access regular public transport services, whether due to age or disability or to those living in areas not served by public transport.” It was emphasised that these terms and clarity around them was imperative.

Loneliness and isolation in the community were increasingly prevalent and had many serious effects including direct impacts on personal wellbeing and indirect impacts upon public services. These impacts resulted in increased numbers of A&E visits, more GP house calls, higher rates of hospital admissions, increased needs for home care and day care, plus earlier admittances into residential or nursing care. It was estimated that due to these factors, the cost of loneliness in Ealing each year was anywhere between £4.6 and £10.4 million pounds.

Community transport removed barriers to the provision of door to door accessible and cost effective transport. It allowed for opportunities otherwise denied to people, such as shopping trips, visits with friends and opportunities to connect with community groups, all of which presented opportunities for the improvement of physical and mental wellbeing.

80% of ECT’s passengers stated that they would find it significantly harder or impossible to go out without their services, and 97% of passengers said that the service made them feel better. Research indicated that community transport in Ealing could save the Council anywhere between £1.4 and £4.1 million per year, which at the higher end would alone represent 11% of Ealing’s budget gap for the financial year of 2018/2019.

It was advised that the Chair and Vice-Chair had undertaken a site visit with ECT and they had been given the chance to meet some of the service users who had been referenced in case studies included within the agenda papers – they got the chance to understand how much of a difference the services offered by ECT could make to a person’s week.

The Chair agreed that the visit had been enlightening. How the ECT would help people with their shopping and take them to their door. The service users were helped in a way that a regular taxi would not have offered.

Questions

The Chair thanked those present for their presentations and invited Panel Members to comment and ask questions.

Councillor Joanna Dabrowska thanked Anna Whitty for opening up the invite for a site visit. She then made reference to ECT being a subset of the whole ‘offer’. How

many people did ECT transport each year? On a basis of individuals transported and trips made? And how much did the Council do similarly to this, and how many did they help? Also; how many people was it felt could not be reached, and the scale of this?

It was considered that the amount of people reached was just the “tip of the iceberg”. In the ECT report 15,000 individuals were referenced and rapid increases were being seen in the 90+ age group – as the post-war generation were going to be the heathiest generation ever. The local problem would grow and cases of dementia would grow. Dementia Concern helped people to live well with dementia, and door to door transport formed part of that. Shortening the ill health stage is where money could be saved – and transport played a part in this. It also played an important role for carers, as it gave them a few hours to look after themselves.

With regards to the Council’s offer, statistics around usage were not available to hand but would be fed back. The Council did commission various bits of support, such as travel buddies, travel training and dial-a-ride services.

Councillor Gavan stated that a compelling case was made for need – and that this need was growing. There was a need to look more broadly for transport solutions, as the Council needed to save money. There was a need to ‘up the game’ in terms of signposting. Councillor Gavan felt there was lots of aspirational talk but nothing gave him the confidence that actions would meet the aspirations in place.

The Head of Integrated Commissioning stated that the aims of the strategy were modest given the context the public sector found itself in. The theme was about working better within the resources that were already available. The areas of work to be covered were:

- Ensuring good access to information and advice on all forms of mobility support, including links to Transport for London accessible transport
- Ensuring personal travel planning is included for those eligible for support from adults social care or children’s services
- Commissioning a range of services to meet people’s needs for travel support, including travel training, buddies, accessible transport

Councillor Gavan asked for more detail on what was being done to achieve this? What were the deliverables?

As part of Better Lives, the Adults’ Services transformation programme, social workers were receiving additional training in strength based assessment, including assessment of mobility needs; they were being provided with better information on what travel support is available so they can signpost or refer people as appropriate. The Council was also making sure of appropriate links with Transport for London to ensure the public is aware of the improvements in accessibility which have been made in recent years. Work was also taking place to recommission the information and advice service which received many queries about accessing blue badges, freedom passes, taxicard and other travel support. The officer explained that the approach being taken was about small incremental elements than any big gestures, though points about needing to see an action plan were appreciated.

Councillor Raza stated that for many people ECT was absolutely the only way for them to get out and about. Was there something councillors could take away and help in signposting the services better, so that those who may have fallen through the cracks would know about the services available?

It was advised that a new ECT leaflet had been prepared and a box of these would be delivered to the Scrutiny Review Officer to distribute to councillors. It was felt that when recommendations came from councillors or GPs they tended to carry 'more weight'.

Councillor Gulaid asked how Ealing compared with other boroughs. Was it felt that the borough did anything specifically better or worse than others?

It was advised that ECT was one of the best known and biggest community transport services in the country. It was stated that some might argue that the service was too big. But Ealing had a notably high population within a small overall area. ECT had worked hard on formulating a good relationship with the local authority, and thankfully Ealing Council saw the benefit of having ECT in the borough.

Councillor Gulaid then enquired whether ECT could be considered to have a service monopoly within the borough.

It was advised that it could be viewed that way but fostering competition was probably somewhat counterproductive within the context. There were plenty of commercial operators around who wanted to charge the Council as much as possible and operate the cheapest possible service in which corners were cut to satisfy shareholders. If people did not think the service was good they would not use ECT.

The Head of Integrated Commissioning stated that she had commissioned transport services in several boroughs and it was always challenging. Many commercial providers tried to offer services but quickly fell apart, as sustaining a high quality individualised service was difficult. Therefore, the Council was delighted that it had ECT operating in the borough.

Councillor Ray Wall spoke about financial figures. He noted a figure of £6.3m being spent on transport. This was quite a large sum given the reductions being seen in other areas. What was the previous budget and what would it be going forward? Was the budget always fully spent?

It was advised that the figures were a combination of adults' services and children's services budgets. The figure was what had been 'spent' rather than what was available. The vast bulk had been spent on children with special needs going to school.

Councillor Ray Wall asked if the strategy would broach the need to reduce costs where possible, and whether there was a budget overspend at present.

It was stated that the number of individuals who needed support had been rising – particularly children with need, officers were looking at ways in which the services could enable teenagers with special needs to become less reliant upon taxi services, allowing them more independence. It was appreciated that such initiatives might not be possible for older people. The Head of Integrated Commissioning stated that she

would provide the detailed figures on spending and numbers of users to give the figures context.

Councillor Joanna Dabrowska stated that the strategy was missing a demand-led approach rather than the provision-led focus of present. How would the Council meet the demand need? And what was being done to identify the demand?

It was advised that there had been consultations around what service users may need going forwards. It was known who was likely to be, and who was currently, eligible for mobility services in the young. For older people, it was more difficult. Though research work took place through GPs and primary care.

The Chair then thanked all present for their contributions and drew the item to a close.

Resolved: That

- (i) the report on the Draft Ealing Travel Support Strategy be received by the Panel;
- (ii) the submission highlighting the work of Ealing Community Transport be received by the Panel;
- (iii) statistics around the usage of transport services offered through the Council be fed back to the Panel by the Head of Integrated Commissioning;
- (iv) a box of the new Ealing Community Transport leaflets be delivered to the Scrutiny Review Officer for distribution to Members; and
- (v) detailed figures around budget spend on transport services be fed back to the Panel by the Head of Integrated Commissioning.

7. Heathrow Access and Night Public Transport Connectivity in the Borough (Agenda Item 7)

The Chair invited Russell Roberts (Principal Transport Planner) to introduce an item considering the connectivity to Heathrow Airport from various parts of the borough and the night public transport (tube, rail and bus services) connectivity within the borough.

Heathrow Access

Heathrow Airport had the highest number of passengers of any airport in Europe and the second highest in the world with 77.989 million passengers in 2017. Over 73,000 employees worked on the site and nearly 6,000 of these lived in the borough of Ealing. The Airport also operated as a large hub for surface transport containing railway, underground and bus stations at the terminals.

Connections directly to Heathrow Airport from the borough of Ealing could currently be found through the Heathrow Connect rail service, the Piccadilly Underground Line and the 105, 140 and 482 bus routes. December 2018 would see the commencement of Crossrail services through the borough from London Paddington.

Expansion proposals were still ongoing in regards to a third runway at Heathrow Airport. As part of the proposals, there had been a commitment to no net increase in road traffic, a 55% public transport mode share by passengers and a 50% cut in staff car trips, all by 2040.

Ealing Council's position was that the expansion was only acceptable with adequate mitigation for the local community. These measures would have to tackle the significant road congestion and resulting air pollution by providing vastly improved alternatives such as significantly more and better public transport and safe cycling facilities for airport workers particularly those living nearby in areas such as Southall.

Heathrow Airport Ltd was holding a public consultation which was open until 28 March 2018 and officers would produce a Council response co-ordinated with neighbouring boroughs.

The Chair then invited Chris Joyce (Head of Surface Access Expansion Programme, Heathrow Airport) to make a presentation around the development of the surface access strategy in relation to Heathrow expansion proposals.

He provided further information on the intentions around cutting colleague car trips and increasing the percentage share of trips to the Airport through public transport means. The surface access strategic priorities were to:

- Make public transport the preferred choice for more passengers
- Offer sustainable and affordable alternatives for colleagues
- Facilitate more efficient and responsible use of the road network
- Connect all of the UK to growth through better surface access
- Ensure that local communities benefit from the surface access strategy

To aid in meeting these strategic priorities – eight areas of priority had been highlighted for key initiatives. These were:

- **Putting Heathrow at the heart of the rail network** – improving rail access to Heathrow to encourage more passengers to travel by train and increase sustainable travel.
- **Strengthening the coach hub at Heathrow** – improving coach and bus access to Heathrow and improving frequencies.
- **Investing in local transport solutions** – supporting and providing incentives for colleagues who want to cycle or walk to the airport.
- **Building on our successful commuter programme** – optimising and monitoring parking facilities to reward environment-friendly drivers and progressively reduce the number of parking spaces available for colleagues.
- **A public transport focussed masterplan** – Improving on-campus transport facilities to encourage the use of public transport and provide an easy passenger experience.
- **Making public transport easier for users** – Developing tools which increase the reliability of travel by public transport and allowing stress-free access.
- **A resilient and reliable road network for all** – investing in the local road network to improve the experience of driving near the airport.

- **Enabling more efficient and responsible use of vehicles** – implementing innovative initiatives to optimise road usage around the airport, minimising the number of passengers, colleagues and freight vehicles driving around Heathrow.

Questions

The Chair expressed thanks for the presentations and invited Panel Members to comment and ask questions.

Councillor Gavan expressed concern that the Uxbridge Road could still not be crossed north to south or vice-versa on a bus. If a resident was based at the northern end of the Uxbridge Road they would have to go to Ealing Broadway and then back again to access Heathrow via bus. The network had effectively cut off the north and the south of the borough from each other in regards to Heathrow access.

Chris Joyce explained that the purpose of the consultation was to address issues such as this. Heathrow did invest a lot of funding each year into local public transport provision, given the number of people in the borough who worked at the airport. Officers sought to understand the local gaps in provision so that they could help people who used the services every day.

Mark Hart (Community Partnerships Specialist (West), Transport for London) advised that TfL was consulting on changes to 20 bus routes presently – this included the 278 route and possibilities around it crossing from north to south. There had been a good response to the consultation so far.

Councillor Bagha expressed concern about the expense of parking at the airport, particularly for those only looking to ‘drop-off’ people.

Chris Joyce explained that Heathrow had very much embraced a public transport first approach. Officers were looking at the ways in which Heathrow charged for private transport and was considering options around the introduction of emissions charges and trip generation. This could have a particular impact upon fleet vehicles and private coaches.

Councillor Raza spoke about flight transfers between Heathrow and Gatwick Airports. Was there a plan in place for connectivity between the two airports?

Chris Joyce explained that due to different characteristics, there was a relatively limited amount of transfers seen between the two airports and that the 50-seat hourly coach service adequately met current demand. Therefore, with that in mind there would not be a huge amount of investment into connectivity between the two locations. The opening of Crossrail would enable some quicker routes but there would not be a strong enough case for a dedicated line between the two.

With regards to Heathrow Airport, Mark Hart (Community Partnerships Specialist (West), TfL) advised that 39% of people using the Airport currently used public transport to get in and out, and this was expected to increase with the introduction of Crossrail. TfL and, by extension, the London Mayor’s Office, currently opposed the proposals for Heathrow expansion as they stood. There were concerns about the environment and the sheer size of the expansion. There was still a lot of work to be

done before TfL and the London Mayor's Office would be satisfied with the proposals.

Night Connectivity

Russell Roberts then introduced the section of the report considering night connectivity in the borough.

In terms of public transport there were presently night services available on Great Western Railway (via an hourly service from Paddington to Reading throughout the night), London Underground (Piccadilly and Central lines on a Friday and Saturday night) and London Buses (via 13 bus routes that operated 24 hours a day within the borough), in addition to taxi provision.

Whilst the main public corridors in the borough were well served by night services, fewer were available in the north and west of the borough.

Crime levels were low on Night Tube services, but relative to the number of passengers there were occasional spikes, as one or two crimes could cause significant variances. British Transport Police still had dedicated resources in place for Night Tube services.

TfL were not currently planning more Night Tube services as fare revenue was flagging and the level of service provided had to be balanced against the forecast demand plus the cost of provision and funding resources available.

Mark Hart (Community Partnerships Specialist (West), TfL) advised that TfL had employed 100 additional officers when the Night Tube was introduced and these were still operational. The Night Overground had been running for almost ten weeks and had almost zero reports of incidents in that time.

Questions

Councillor Padda made reference to connectivity on the 120 route, which currently went north to south from Northolt to Hounslow East.

Mark Hart advised that proposals were being considered around changes to the 120 service. This would result in an increased frequency of every 7-8 mins during the morning peak and 11-12 mins at all other times. There were currently no proposals regarding a night service on the route.

Councillor Padda asked whether a consultation could take place to consider a night service for the route. Mark Hart stated he would check into this and feedback.

Councillor Gavan stated that it was important that the Piccadilly Line was not effectively 'abandoned' once the Elizabeth Line was in place. He queried whether the Elizabeth Line would actually offer anything the borough did not already have.

Chris Cole (Transport Projects and Policy Manager) stated that the increased frequency offered by the Elizabeth Line would be a bonus. It had also been confirmed that people would be able to use the Freedom Pass and Oyster Cards on the Line without having to pay a surcharge.

Mark Hart assured Panel Members that lots of works and investments were still going into the Piccadilly Line. The introduction of the Elizabeth Line would not result in the neglect of any of the existing stock.

Councillor Raza suggested that the 92 Bus Route should be rethought as a possibility for a night bus route, due to large developments taking place around the former Glaxo site and linking the borough with Sudbury Hill.

Mark Hart advised that the 92 Route did not form any part of current consultations but he would take back the points on the Route to TfL.

Mark Hart reminded the Panel that TfL has a number of financial challenges ahead as Underground and bus passengers were falling, because of changes to the economy and that journeys generally were getting longer on buses. With such financial constraints, officers had to look towards possible savings and efficiencies.

Councillor Joanna Dabrowska stated that the lack of diagonal routes in Ealing were the biggest concerns for residents. She stated that she would also expect the within-London use of public transport to Heathrow to be at around 80%. Were statistics available on this?

Chris Cole advised that Heathrow themselves may hold such statistics and he would look into it.

Mark Hart stated that it would be interesting to see if the TfL and Heathrow numbers matched and correlated, to hopefully show that all were “singing from the same hymn sheet”.

The Chair enquired as to how successful the “hopper fares” had been in getting people onto buses.

Mark Hart advised that he had not seen the data yet, though there was a general consensus that the option had been popular. He stated that he would feed back once the data was available.

Resolved: That

- (i) the report considering the connectivity to Heathrow Airport from various parts of the borough and the night public transport connectivity within the borough be received;
- (ii) the presentation on developments around the surface access strategy for Heathrow expansion plans be received;
- (iii) the verbal report from Transport for London on night connectivity in the borough be noted;
- (iv) Transport for London be asked to feedback on possibilities around consulting on a night service for the 120 Bus Route;

- (v) the Transport Projects and Policy Manager be asked to contact Heathrow Airport and feed back on their statistics around public transport usage to the Airport from “within London”; and
- (vi) Transport for London be asked to feed back figures related to the success of the bus ‘Hopper Fares’ once available.

8. Panel Operations
(Agenda Item 8)

The Scrutiny Review Officer confirmed that a visit to view the Royal Borough of Greenwich’s ‘The GATEway autonomous vehicle trial’ had been arranged for the afternoon of Wednesday 14 March 2018. She asked that Panel Members let her know as soon as possible if they would be available to attend.

Resolved: – That the updated work programme be received.

9. Date of Next Meeting
(Agenda Item 9)

The final meeting of the Panel was due to take place on Thursday 19 April 2018.

Councillor Kamaljit Kaur Nagpal, Chair.

The meeting ended at 9.10pm.