

West London Economic Prosperity Board

Thursday 21 June 2018 at 10am

Minutes

PRESENT:

Councillors: Bell (Chair, London Borough of Ealing), Sharma (London Borough of Brent), Henson (London Borough of Harrow), Rajawat (London Borough of Hounslow), Fennimore (London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham)

ALSO PRESENT: John Hooton (Chief Executive Barnet), Amar Dave (Strategic Director Regeneration and Environment – Brent), Tony Clements (Executive Director Regeneration and Housing -Ealing), Paul Najsarek (Chief Executive – Ealing), Keith Fraser and Linda Zimmerman (Democratic Services – Ealing), David McNulty (Hammersmith and Fulham), Tom Whiting (Interim Chief Executive – Harrow), Paul Walker (Corporate Director Community – Harrow), Mary Harpley (Chief Executive – Hounslow), Bernadette Marjoram, Tim McCormick, Rachel Ormerod and Luke Ward (West London Alliance)

Presentations by Chris Porter (TfL), Katharine Glass and Bonnie Stephensmith (White Label) and Professor Tony Travers

John Cox, a member of the public addressed the Board in relation to agenda item 6 – WLO Update.

Also in attendance – Andrew Dakers – West London Business.

1. Apologies for Absence and Welcome

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Cornelius (Barnet), Councillor Butt (Brent) and Councillor Cowan (Hammersmith and Fulham).

Councillor Bell opened the meeting and thanked Councillor Butt for chairing this meeting during the last municipal year and also Councillor Shah for her previous contributions. Councillor Bell welcomed Councillor Henson as the new Leader of Harrow Council, and Bernadette Marjoram as the new Interim Director of West London Alliance.

2. Urgent Matters

There were none.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were none.

4. Minutes

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of the West London Economic Prosperity Board held on 21 February 2018 be agreed and signed as a true and correct record.

5. West London Orbital (WLO) Update and Next Steps

Mr Cox, member of the public, addressed the Board regarding the WLO. He was concerned that longer platforms at Brent Cross had not been considered and this led to concern about sustainability insofar as the platforms should be capable of taking other trains and therefore needed to be longer. There was a potential for train lines connecting in the future for example from Heathrow. Mr Cox also felt that any decision to terminate

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trains at Isleworth would be wrong and that if trains continued on to Twickenham this would allow more radial trains through from Feltham and Teddington etc. Mr Cox felt that the plan was short termism.

The Chair thanked Mr Cox for his helpful contribution.

John Hooton (Barnet Council) informed the meeting that there were a number of technical constraints surrounding the stations at Cricklewood and Brent Cross. John Hooton agreed to provide an update report to the next meeting of the Board.

Chris Porter (TfL) gave a presentation on the WLO railway scheme. There was an indication that the area served by stations would run between Hounslow and Cricklewood/Brent Cross. TfL was aware of the need for more homes and more jobs and it was envisaged that the WLO would link into the Elizabeth, Jubilee and District Lines. There was a wide-ranging consensus of support from the public and politicians.

Regarding delivery, the Governance and Railway Investment Projects (GRIP) was at stage 1 with three emerging strands: rail, regeneration, and funding (estimated to be between £200m to £300m) – funding opportunities were being sought. The West London Economic Prosperity Board, TfL, West London Alliance and Network Rail were all working closely together to deliver the scheme.

The Presentation set out the key risks, what councils are doing now and what needed to be done. Members could contact Chris Porter if they had further questions.

Members noted the risk outlined in the report about competing rail initiatives and asked what the level of this risk was. Mr Porter explained that there were competing challenges for money and TfL were prioritising to make sure this scheme would be the best value for London with the benefit of it running on an existing rail corridor. This case would be set out and articulated to City Hall. It was noted that other items on this agenda such as business rates, reflected some of the complementary measures being put in place to support this scheme.

Members requested that Heidi Alexander, Deputy Mayor for Transport, be invited to the next meeting of the Board as a guest speaker.

Members asked about the fares structure and whether this would be a challenge. Chris Porter explained that the approach would be to base the fare structure on the London over-ground model and also consider the fairness to passengers. The cost and recovery implications would be considered nearer the time. There would be an argument for making the fares cheaper as the WLO would affect journeys across all of London by reducing the numbers on some other lines.

Interconnectivity was discussed and Chris Porter suggested that additional interchanges would encourage more people to use these lines. This would be looked at further into the project. He did not see any case for reducing other services as the WLO would help relieve pressure on several other lines and that the WLO would complement existing services.

Members asked whether the Department for Transport and the Government were receptive of this scheme and Chris Porter confirmed that the DfT were supportive and he had spoken to other government departments. Luke Ward (West London Alliance) added that it was important for Network Rail to be involved and noted that they had been involved

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since the beginning, at the scoping stage. There was potential to access ministers through this Board and to gain an understanding of when decisions would be made.

Resolved

That the Board:

- i) notes that the work of the Committee to establish the West London Orbital line as a priority for London has, to date, been successful, with the scheme embedded within the final Mayor's Transport Strategy.
- ii) notes the timeline and approach set out in sections 2 and 3 of this report
- iii) notes that John Hooton (Barnet Council) would provide an update on the stations at Brent Cross/ Cricklewood at the next meeting.
- iv) agrees to invite Heidi Alexander, Deputy Mayor for Transport, to a future meeting of the WLEPB.

6. Presentation by Professor Tony Travers

Professor Tony Travers from the London School of Economics, was welcomed to the meeting and gave an interesting and informative presentation on the West London and London Economy.

Officers asked about the link between public services in London and investment. Professor Travers noted the Fair Funding review but also stated that as grants had reduced, money might be taken from one authority to another, if there was any left for redistribution. If the fair funding formula worked then some boroughs would expect to receive less funding than previously.

Investing in economic growth in London would depend on the strength of the case put forward. Professor Travers felt that there were limitless opportunities in London for growth. He recommended keeping the fair funding argument separate from investment.

Officers noted that Manchester had indicated that they would invest in Health and Social Care. Professor Travers felt that this was an elegant argument and Manchester were correct to raise it; there was slightly more health devolution in Manchester. However, Professor Travers thought that arguing to the Treasury or Transport Department that investing in social benefits was less powerful than the economic arguments.

The impact of significant on-line retail and robotics was raised. Professor Travers agreed that these do lead to change but not to the end of employment, but to a different type of employment. There would be fewer shops but still a need for retail offers such as coffee shops and leisure spending; new jobs emerge but it was hard to know what these would be. The challenge for public policy was the failure to train people, whose jobs disappear, to fit into new roles.

Members asked whether the structures in West London were suitable to support a sub-regional identity, as has been done in East London over the last 20 years, and the benefits associated with that. Professor Travers felt that London was good at the networking effect and that there could be a sub identity of West London; outer West London boroughs had the opportunity to build on their identity through maps and ease of travel etc.

Members asked how councils could invest in the skills and productivity of people who had lost their jobs and how an investment pool could be used. Professor Travers felt that London was very good at generating new businesses. The challenge was for London Boroughs to provide an easier business environment.

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Over the years, Councils have faced significant challenges with low paid workers and higher housing costs. Members asked whether there had been any work projecting people moving out of London and the impact of this. Professor Travers noted the reduction in central government funding of councils and the reduction in council's spending power. Councils had made use of funding such as new home bonus and section 106 monies. Tower Hamlets, in particular, had developed these. The perception was that London is rich and this was a powerful image although in fact the median income in London, once travel and high housing costs are taken into account was below that of most of the UK. London also had the largest concentration of children and older people living in poverty and this needed to be conveyed to Whitehall through lobbying.

The chair thanked Professor Tony Travers for his enlightening and helpful presentation.

7. Local Government Finance Devolution

Resolved

That the Board:

- i) notes the issues raised by Professor Travers in minute 6 above in relation to financial devolution and economic growth, and:
- ii) notes the specific area of "training residents to work in new and automated industries" arising from the discussion that they would like to be given further consideration for future work.

8. Fiscal Devolution – Strategic Investment Pool Briefing

Paul Najsarek (Chief Executive, Ealing Council) introduced this report mentioning that colleagues had seen this bid before and there would be further dialogue going forward.

Members agreed the recommendations in the report.

Resolved

That the Board:

- i) notes the joint bids submitted by West London Boroughs to the SIP bidding process that is being coordinated by London Councils, and the timeline between now and expected award in bids in October 2018.
- ii) agrees to delegate to the WLA Leaders Board the development of a joint response to the consultation on SIP allocations that is expected to be run by London Councils between 31 July and 14 September 2018 (see table on page 2 of the report), to ensure that all West London boroughs have maximum chance of securing SIP funding.

9. Inward Investment and Small Business Trade

Katharine Glass and Bonnie Stephenson (White Label Creative) gave a presentation on Capital West. They had been working hard to establish the identity of Capital West London and how to use this to create identity and meaningful growth across the region.

The vision statement of Capital West is "Connect – Invest- Trade" Connect - this was a unique programme across 7 boroughs, cross party, cross borough, joining together; Invest - attracting investment and retaining businesses; Trade – considering economic growth and how this can be achieved.

Resolved

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- i) notes the presentation by the Director of White Label Creative, and requests further information on the monitoring of outputs and the tracking of contacts with boroughs through the system.
- ii) notes that members are invited to the Growth Summit on 30 October 2018 at the Drum in Wembley
- iii) requests that a report on progress be considered at the next meeting and 6 monthly there-after.
- iv) thanks Katharine Glass and Bonnie Stephenson for their informative presentation.

10. Housing Need Targets and The London Plan

Rachel Ormerod, West London Alliance, introduced this report and informed the Board that the proposed housing target from the Mayor had more than doubled and this was an area of concern. More housing was needed to address the overall London housing need. The latest population figures indicated that the population continued to rise but not as quickly as previously considered. The Government was due to issue new figures on households in September 2018 and this would inform the number of new units required and would feed into the Greater London Authority (GLA).

The Board noted that the GLA considered all single persons in shared accommodation as needing one bedroom flats but felt that this was not wholly accurate and the experience showed that there was more need for 2 or more bedroomed flats. Members agreed that one bedroomed units might be appropriate for preventing rough sleeping but families wait a long time for suitable properties which are genuinely affordable. Members felt that many people choose to live in shared accommodation and asked what the GLA's response was to this. The Board was informed that the GLA suggested that there were many people in shared accommodation who wanted their own accommodation and suggested that allocations policies be changed. However, there was an acute need for 2 and 3 bedroomed properties. The Board asked West London Local Authorities to engage with the GLA and respond tactfully.

Resolved:

That the Board:

- i) notes the analysis suggesting GLA assessed need is too high.
- ii) requests that officers engage tactfully and constructively with the GLA to ensure that the final targets set are more in line with the projected household type trends, and that any new figures released by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) are taken into account.

11. Economic Prosperity Board Work Programme 2018

Resolved:

That the Board:

- i) notes the West London Economic Prosperity Board (WLEPB) work programme
- ii) requests that the following be added to the work programme:
 - a) Employment and Skills Task Force
 - b) Heathrow airport matters

12. Date of Next Meeting

Resolved:

That the next meeting of the West London Economic Prosperity Board will be held on 19 September 2018 at 10am in Westminster University Boardroom, 309 Regent Street, London W1B 2HW

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Councillor Julian Bell, Chair (London Borough of Ealing)

Date

The meeting concluded at 12.10pm.

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