

Environment & Ecology Forum

Minutes

Date of Meeting : Wednesday, 13 July 2016

Present :	Richard Trelfa (Chair)	Gloucester Civic Trust
	Andrew Harley (Vice Chair)	Gloucester City Homes Tenants Forum
	Meyrick Brentnall (Sec)	Gloucester City Council – Neighbourhood Manager
	Cllr David Brown	Gloucester City Council
	Cllr Isabel Brazil	Gloucester City Council
	Alan Bently	Gloucestershire County Council
	Claire Mitchell	Vision 21
	Ellie Smith	Furniture Recycling Project
	Gerard Lenagan	Resident
	Pam Jones	Friends of Alney Island
	Barry Leach	City Centre Resident
	Ray Pass	Stagecoach West
	Mark Holden	Stagecoach West
Apologies :	Richard Graham	Gloucestershire County Council
	Catherine Cole	Gloucestershire County Council
	Cllr Jim Porter	Gloucester City Council

1. Opening the meeting, and due to the new financial year, MB asked all present for a proposal for Chairman and Vice Chairman, that if all in agreement, and subject to acceptance from both parties, the previous years Chair (RT) and Vice Chair (AH) were proposed, seconded and duly elected.
2. RT thanked all present and opened the meeting with the first point on the agenda, the minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday, 3 March 2016, and Matters arising.
3. Matters Arising – Information Exchange

Following concerns aired at the previous meeting regarding the Gloucester Air Quality Report (AQR) and the feeling of the forum that Gloucester was failing national standards, MB referring to the AQR and specific area proposals :

- Barton Street Proposal for barriers
- Prior Road Proposal for barriers
- St Oswalds Road Proposal for planting

MB further confirmed the AQR was not forgotten about, there were proposals for match funding between Gloucester City Council and Gloucestershire County Council.

BL asked if the AQR was particular to the city or the county, and, as there were similar issues experienced in other towns and cities, were the appointed consultants sharing information. MB believed there was a sharing process. When asked about exemplar authorities MB suggested that Eastbourne was an example of an authority that had prioritized air quality issues.

AH felt the reasons for poor air quality was a highways issue, and therefore not the responsibility of the city, furthermore AH felt that Priory Road and St Oswalds Road were a priority, as Barton Street was coming down, however air quality was not just a Gloucester problem, but an issue throughout the country.

RT thanked all for their contribution and looked forward to receiving more feedback and updates at future meetings

4. RT invited AB to give the forum an update on the progress of new bus station construction.

AB advised the forum that contractors for the construction had now been appointed, in addition there would be highways work commencing at the end of the year, as there were new road layouts planned.

There were also links between the railway and bus stations that were, inclusive of car parking facilities and entrances from Great Western Road, reducing the necessity to use the underpass, in addition there were plans to address the overall look of the railway station façade that would match in with the bus station, in addition to providing additional parking.

Discussion was underway regarding a pedestrian footbridge crossing over Bruton Way, with an estimated cost in the region of £5 million.

5. RT invited RP from Stagecoach West to present to the forum an update on Green initiatives that were presently on-going within Stagecoach Group throughout the UK.

RP informed all present that the information he was about to discuss was always accessible online at www.stagecoach.com/sustainability

During RP's presentation, he covered new initiatives presently either on trial or now in service with Stagecoach bus and rail operations :

- Stagecoach Gas Buses
- Powering buses from waste
- Cleaner engine technology (Buses & Trains) – Euro 6 emission standards
- Energy efficient facilities – Vickers intelligent energy solutions
- Sustainable biofuel – Provided from sustainable sources
- Fuel additives (Envirox) – 5% fuel reduction and associated emissions

- Fuel efficient driving – Eco-Driver programme (GreenRoad 360 system)
- Reverse vending recycling – Discounted bus tickets in return for used cans and bottles
- Real nappy eco-partnership – Free bust travel for using real nappies
- Train regenerative braking – returns electricity to the third rail system
- Rail smartcard technology – Reduces need for paper/plastic seasonal tickets
- Online loyalty programme (Ice) – Rewards customers using sustainable products
- Bus Smartcard technology – Uses government approved ITSO technology
- Tap and go bus travel – Contactless bankcard travel
- Wi-fi technology – Attracting customers to use public transport services
- Rail cycle integration – Encouraging passengers to cycle combining bike and train
- Best fare finder – Cheapest available fares on over 450 train journeys
- Rail track listening device – Helping improve safety on South West Trains

Following the key points as detailed above, RP was proud to advise the forum that Stagecoach Group was awarded the 2015 prestigious Carbon Trust Standard for its efforts in helping tackle climate change.

Following the presentation RP took questions from the forum :

AH had concerns that vehicles were idling excessively on Oxford Street, especially those coming off duty in the early and late evening, in addition to emission issues this also created a lot of noise pollution for the residents. RP asked MH to monitor and report back to the next meeting.

AH asked if the vehicles on the continent were subject to the same environmental requirements, which RP stated that they were.

RP was questioned of the carriage of cycles, where RP responded by informing the forum, that at present there were certain stipulations enforced, such as folding bicycles, as our vehicles were not geared up for full sized bikes, as this created health and safety issues, especially in the light of wheelchair and pushchair users.

AH stated in Canada they hung their bicycles on a rack on the front of the bus.

RT asked if Stagecoach received any EU subsidies, a question that at present RP was unable to answer, however would enquire and report back to the next meeting. * subsequent to the meeting RP has confirmed that Stagecoach are not in receipt of EU funding.

RP was asked when the Gloucester railway line would be fully electrified, RP was unable to clarify any rail electrification questions, however MB would ask if there was anyone from GWR that could attend the next meeting. AH felt that electrification was coming, but not for a long time.

RP was available following the meeting if anyone had any further questions, where he would do his best to answer, however if unable to would report back at the next meeting.

RT thanked RP for his presentation

6. RT invited Alan Bently – Integrated Transport Manager, Gloucestershire County Council to present to the forum on Gloucestershire’s passenger transport network.

AB gave a detailed analysis of the public transport budget, detailing where monies were spent, as follows :

• Concessionary Fares	74%	£6.7 million
• Local Bus Subsidy	16%	£1.2 million
• Community Transport	8%	£700, 000
• Park & Ride	2%	£180,000

88% of bus services are not funded by the council!

The main priorities of the council in giving access to essential services, are as follows :

- Education
- Employment
- Food Shopping
- Health Services

In 2015 survey carried out with bus users regarding likes / dislikes – Over 3,200 responses received, as a result a decision was made to change some of the bus services.

Approximately 20% of funded services run above the subsidy level – Therefore we need to make sure subsidised bus service :

- Go where people need them
- Don’t duplicate bus services without subsidy
- Are busy enough to be sustainable in the future
- Carry as many school children as possible

£700,000 is spent each year supporting dial-a-ride, voluntary car and community based transport schemes.

What can we do better :

- Target funds to user needs
- Better support community based initiatives, i.e.; care share schemes
- Better integration with health and social care transport

£6.7 million or 70% of transport spending is on concessionary travel for older and disabled people, with most of the rules set by government. Some enhancements are funded locally.

Some concessionary enhancements are funded locally :

- Allowing people in rural areas to use buses before 09.30
- Allowing concessionary card holders to use Park & Ride at a reduced charge of £1.00
- Allowing free transport to companions of people unable to travel alone
- Allowing people to travel to and from Wales on direct buses

In line with consultation responses, modest charges will be introduced at Park & Ride car parks to help cover cost of maintaining sites

Many bus changes likely to come into effect from 4 September 2016

Stagecoach making network wide changes south of Gloucester effective from 4 September 2016, inclusive of new links to Hunts Grove, and a better service to Waterwells.

All town and parish councils will be informed in good time regarding all changes to public transport, all other changes will be phased in, area by area.

Any further questions or queries can be made to Alan Bently directly by e-mail on alan.bently@gloucestershire.gov.uk

RT thanked AB for his in depth presentation on public transport within the county

7. Any Other Business (AOB)

BL read a statement regarding 20 mph zones within the city centre, requesting an update at the next forum

MB stated he would contact both Gloucestershire Highways and GWR to see if they would attend the next meeting.

8. RT closed the meeting, thanking all present for their attendance and input, advising the date of the next meeting to be confirmed, but probably to be arranged for October.

MB proposed that for the future one meeting per school term time, which in effect equated to three meetings a year, and Stagecoach would now undertake the secretarial role of co-ordinating the minute taking, on completion would then forward to MB for distribution.