

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY STEERING GROUP (RTSSG)
MINUTES OF THE 26th MEETING
TUESDAY 13 OCTOBER 2010, 10.00AM - Room 601c, Clarence Court

Present:

Geoff Allister	Chief Executive, Roads Service – Joint Chairperson
Doreen Brown	Deputy Secretary, Regional Planning and Transportation – Joint Chairperson
Tom Clarke	Planning Service (Department of the Environment)
Catherine Mason	Group Chief Executive, NITHC Translink
Philip O’Neill	Chief Operating Officer, Translink
Mike Thompson	Director, Regional Planning & Transportation
Brian White	Director, Ports and Public Transport
Tom Reid	Director, Transportation Policy Division

In attendance:

Frank Clegg	Translink
Graeme Beckett	Rapid Transit Division
Tom McCourt	Roads Service
Gregor Kerr	RTSSG Secretariat

Apologies

Ciarán de Búrca,	Rapid Transit Division
Ciaran Doran,	Public Transport Performance Division
Jim Aiken,	NITHCo
Andrew Murray,	Roads Service

ACTION

1. Apologies and Changes

Apologies were as noted

Following internal changes in DRD, Bob Cairns and John Irvine from Roads Service would no longer be attending RTSSG. Bob and John’s valuable contribution was noted. John would also no longer co-chair the Sub- Regional Partnership Board nor attend the Public Transport Partnership Board. Philip O’Neill asked that John’s contribution to the work of the PTPB be noted.

Tom Reid, Director of the newly formed Transportation Policy Division, was welcomed to the Group.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting of were agreed.

3. Matters Arising not covered in Agenda

Finance – a watching brief will be kept over the funding available for transportation. It was noted that re-prioritisation may be required as the financial position becomes clearer.

**On-going
for all
members.**

4. Public Transport Partnership Board Update

i. Park and Ride

It was noted that Park & Ride was an important element of public transport provision and that Park & Ride sites at rail stations were over-subscribed. Concerns were expressed that capital funding pressures may result in delays to the Park & Ride programme.

Geoff Allister said that work on the Cairnshill Park & Ride had started and should be completed in the current financial year. Brian White said that the Department could go to tender very quickly. Doreen Brown said that the affordability of a dedicated Park & Ride service would have to be considered as future spending cuts were implemented across the Department.

ii. Quality Bus Corridors

Philip O'Neill reported that good progress was being made on the Saintfield Road / Ormeau areas in advance of the Cairnshill Park & Ride. .

The QBC programme would now focus on routes into the city centre where benefits could be achieved for several services from schemes.

Having received a report prepared by the Queen's University of Belfast, the QBC working group would be considering various strategies to reduce dwell times at stops.

iii. City Centre Change

The agreed measures put in place for the Streets Ahead programme were working well, although the use of the city centre by general traffic remained an issue.

Doreen Brown advised that she and Brian White had meet with the Department for Social Development to discuss the impact of Streets Ahead on Public Transport. DSD had offered to provide funding towards the costs of re-routing services during the implementation of the scheme. Catherine Mason thanked Brian White and Trevor Robinson for their work in this regard.

iv. Enforcement of Unauthorised Car-Parking

Tom Clarke clarified that retrospective planning applications for car parks usually resulted from enforcement action by Planning Service.

v. Moving Traffic Offences

Geoff Allister informed the Group that funding pressures had forced the Roads Service Board to suspend work on the decriminalisation of moving traffic offences.

Catherine Mason and Graeme Beckett said that lack of enforcement could reduce the benefits of QBCs and Rapid Transit. Brian White added that safety improvements would only be realised if traffic flows were as predicted.

Geoff Allister reminded the Group that the Police Service for Northern Ireland currently had responsibility for enforcing moving traffic offences and that DRD had responsibility for parking offences.

vi. Taxsmart

Catherine Mason said that the introduction of the Taxsmart ticketing product would be delayed until February 2010. Belfast City Council needed to make some amendments to their processes to resolve issues with Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs.

5. Park & Ride Strategic Review Group

Paper RTSSG 26/02 was noted and agreed.

Doreen Brown said that Tom Reid would chair the Park & Ride Strategic Review Group. The Group would consider Park & Ride provision across the Region and would engage with other Departments and groupings as the need arose.

6. Other RTS Issues

i. Accessible Transport Strategy

Mike Thompson informed the Group that the consultation period on the ATS Action Plan 2009-2012 had now closed. 37 responses had been received. The ATS team met with the Regional Development Committee on 7 October to discuss the Action Plan and would also take account of their input. Amendments to the Action Plan resulting from the consultation process would be discussed with the relevant stakeholders before the finalised plan was submitted to the Minister for his consideration.

It was anticipated that, subject to Executive process, a finalised Action Plan 2009-2012 would be published by the end of December 2009.

ii. Rapid Transit

Graeme Beckett said the team had discussed the interim Rapid Transit Bill with the Regional Development Committee in September. A time table had been prepared to take the Bill to the Assembly by June 2010.

It was agreed that a position paper on Rapid Transit outlining what has been completed to date and the project plan going forward would be prepared and submitted to the Group

**Ciarán de
Búrca**

iii. RTS Review

Mike Thompson said that the Review had been approved by the Executive in July. The Minister made a Statement in the Assembly on 14 September

announcing the Review. The Discussion Paper had been provided to key stakeholders and was also available through the Department's website. Comments were invited by 18 December.

It was anticipated that a draft Revised Regional Transportation Strategy would be published before the summer 2010 recess with a final document published by the end of 2010. The timing remained subject to the political process.

The Review team will continue to meet with key stakeholders as a draft Revised Strategy is prepared.

7. AOB

8. Date for next meeting

12 January 2010 at 2.00

Gregor Kerr
Secretary RTSSG
Regional Planning and Transportation Division

October 2009