

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY STEERING GROUP (RTSSG)

MINUTES OF THE 21st MEETING

Thursday 19 June 10.00AM - Room 605, Clarence Court.

Present:

Mr Geoff Allister	Chief Executive, Roads Service – Joint Chairperson
Mrs Doreen Brown	Deputy Secretary, Regional Planning and Transportation – Joint Chairperson
Mrs Catherine Mason	Group Chief Executive Translink / NITHCo
Mr Philip O'Neill	Translink
Mr Jim Aiken	Director of Corporate Affairs, Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company (NITHCo)
Mr Brian White	Director of Ports and Public Transport
Dr Andrew Murray	Director of Network Services, Roads Service
Mr Mike Thompson	Director, Regional Planning and Transportation Division

In attendance:

Mr John Irvine	Roads Service
Mr Kevin Monaghan	Roads Service
Mr Gregor Kerr	Regional Planning & Transportation - Secretary

ACTION

1. Apologies

Mr Tom McCourt, Mr Frank Clegg, Mr Jim Thompson, Mr Bob Cairns and Mr Ken Hutton.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the twentieth RTSSG meeting of 5 February were agreed.

3. Matters Arising not covered in Agenda

Terms of Reference for a project to consider retaining the Sprucefield / Blacks Road Park and Ride were submitted to RTSSG Chairs and agreed.

4. BMTP

i. Public Transport Partnership Board Update

Mr O'Neill and Mr Monaghan reported on the 2 papers, RTSSG 21/01 and RTSSG 21/02.

Sprucefield Park and Ride

Mr Monaghan reported that an appraisal report for the corridor was expected by the end of June.

It was noted that the current lease for the Sprucefield Park and Ride site would end in 2009. It was agreed by all that a Park and Ride service should be retained and that, should the land-owner not wish to renew the lease, alternatives should be considered.

City Centre

Mr O'Neill reported that the Department for Social Development was moving ahead rapidly on the Streets Ahead project and that the timing of the phasing sought by DSD did not necessarily match the Department's timetable. The potential disbenefits to public transport users, including potential rapid transit users and retailers, of a disjointed programme were discussed, as was the need to consider how best to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities in the city centre. It was agreed that a meeting should be sought between Mrs Brown and David Ferguson, Deputy Secretary, Urban Regeneration and Community Development Group – DSD.

**Mrs Brown
Secretariat**

Mr Allister highlighted the fact that there was no budgetary cover for the Southern Section of the City Centre Ring ("Bankmore Link") and that funding would depend on future Spending Reviews post 2010. Consideration would have to be given on how to manage the proposed City Centre changes without the Southern Section.

**Mr McCourt /
Mr Monaghan**

QBC Programme

Progress in implementing the QBC programme was noted. It was agreed that some of the traffic lights for progress on the summary sheet should be altered.

**Mr O'Neill / Mr
Monaghan**

The question of key outcomes for QBCs was considered. Two main measures could be bus patronage and bus speed. While patronage on the QBCs was rising, the bus speed was falling. It was noted that the increased patronage had led to increased dwell times at stops, despite a move from 60% cash ticket sales in 2002 to 40% now, and that this, along with congestion, may be one of the factors contributing to a decreased bus speed.

Discussions were continuing with the Police Service on the decriminalisation of moving traffic offences.

Mr Irvine

The Newtownards Road QBC study report will be presented to the next meeting.

Mr Irvine

It was noted that Northern Ireland Audit Office made informal enquiries about the QBC programme. Given the disparate elements required for delivery of QBCs, it was agreed that those involved would discuss the matter to ensure consistency of approach when meeting with the NIAO.

**Mr O'Neill
Mr Monaghan
Mr White**

Park and Ride

The importance of effective enforcement of car parks which do not have planning permission was discussed.

Cairnshill Park and Ride

Mr White confirmed that the Department had advertised for expressions of interest for the operation of a Park and Ride bus service.

5. Other RTS Issues

i. RTS Review

Mr Kerr updated the group on the RTS Review.

An Issues Paper was being prepared. It was agreed that the paper would be circulated electronically for comment with a view to obtaining RTSSG approval by email. Mr Kerr would have bilateral meetings as required to discuss the paper. Once approved, the draft Issues Paper would then be submitted to the Minister and the Regional Development Committee for their comment before publication.

**Mr Thompson
Mr Kerr**

ii. Rapid Transit Feasibility Study

Mr Kerr reported that the Strategic Outline Case (SOC) was with the Minister. The Minister had requested that officials meet with key stakeholders to discover their views on the SOC. These meetings were almost complete and a summary of the findings was being prepared for the Minister. The SOC had also been debated in the Assembly.

The Minister will now make a decision on the future of Rapid Transit which he will take to the Executive.

iii. Sub-Regional Transport Partnership Board

Mr Irvine presented the SRTPB report RTSSG 21/03.

Concerns over funding were noted. PPTD will re-bid for route-subsidy funding, highlighting the risk to the transport plans.

Mr White

7. AOB

8. Dates for next meetings

The following dates were agreed:

- 9 September at 2.00pm; and
- 9 December at 2.00pm.

**Gregor Kerr
Secretary RTSSG**

Regional Planning and Transportation Division