

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1st August 2007

OS/16. **BRIEFING NOTE – PUBLIC TRANSPORT MATTERS**

Under Minute No. OYS/4 of 27th June 2007, it was agreed to invite an Officer from Derbyshire County Council's Public Transportation Unit to brief Members on this matter. However, this had not been possible as the County Council was preparing for its own review, to be held later this year.

A report prepared by Council Officers was submitted to provide Members with background information and to enable consideration of the way forward with this project. An overview of public transport issues was circulated with the report, together with a scoping report produced by Staffordshire Moorlands District Council. The Committee was asked if it wished to contribute to Derbyshire County Council's review, in terms of issues and scope. It would also be good practice to consult with the Environmental and Development Services Committee, to see if it had any further issues to raise.

Officers confirmed that the Committee should consider appropriate issues to be included in the scope of this County Council review. It also needed to consider how it could contribute to this review process. The Chairman felt the County Council might need to examine the consultation aspects of the review. The majority of work was undertaken through the Citizens' Panel and it did not appear there was any public consultation. Officers suggested there might be a concern around how bus service alterations were communicated or consulted upon. There also seemed to be an issue on cross-boundary bus services and it might be appropriate to ask the County Council how this was being addressed. Reference was then made to the Community Car Scheme and in some cases, this Scheme was more expensive than using a taxi. It was questioned whether the County Council could look at solutions, possibly to provide a subsidy scheme for the use of taxis. Councillor Atkin demonstrated this point by reference to a specific example.

Members' views could be amalgamated together with any suggestions received from the Policy Committee, to form a response to this consultation exercise. The next meeting of the Environmental and Development Services Committee would be held on 23rd August 2007 and the consultation response would need to be submitted soon after that date.

Councillor Mrs. Hood referred to rail services passing through and stopping at the Willington Station. In particular, there had been a change in certain contracts and it might now be possible for further services to stop at this Station, as a high speed rail service had been withdrawn. The Chairman explained that 42 train services passed through this Station, but presently only 11 stopped at it. With the relocation of the Euro Hub to St. Pancras, there was a potential debate to encourage the use of this Station, rather than passengers travelling elsewhere to connect to the service. Related to this was a possible need for "park and ride" services at Willington.

Councillor Lane spoke about changes to the “Gold Card” scheme and the anticipation of direct Government funding. There was some uncertainty on when this change would take place and it was felt this should be fed in to the review process. Councillor Mrs. Plenderleith requested that the review also include providing bus services to the new Etwall Leisure Centre.

It was agreed to amalgamate Members’ comments and any received from the Environmental and Development Services Committee, to respond to Derbyshire County Council on the scope of this review. A further report would be submitted to the next Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting.