



Report of City Development

Scrutiny Board (City & Regional Partnerships)

Date: 7th January 2010

Subject: Transport Governance: Leeds City Region and West Yorkshire

Electoral Wards Affected:

ALL

No

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Executive Summary

1.0 Purpose of the report

1.1 To provide an update on Transport Governance work that has occurred since the last meeting.

2.0 Recent progress

2.1 Following the “stock-take” and discussion around a number of key questions at the last meeting the Project Director and colleagues from Metro and Leeds Secretariat have continued to progress elements of the 2 workstreams.

3.0 Leeds City Region Partnership

3.1 The need for there to be a degree of delegation from the Leaders’ Board (and other bodies) to the Leeds City Region Transport Panel to increase the capacity and to strengthen the role of the Panel has not been disputed.

3.2 Accordingly, a revised set of Terms of Reference has been drafted for consideration and comment. This is attached as Appendix A.

Further discussion and legal work around these revised draft terms of reference needs to be undertaken. This will follow discussions at the meeting.

4 West Yorkshire ITA

- 4.1 Atkins have previously advised that due to the nature and complexity of the statutory and Parliamentary processes involved it could take up to 2 years before any reforms could be implemented, on a formal basis. This would push back any reform to 2012, even 2013. The need to make changes to over 200 pieces of legislation have been advised.
- 4.2 Inevitably, there would be considerable costs associated with involving legal and parliamentary advisers in steering the new legislation through the relevant processes. A figure of £300K has previously been mentioned as an estimate for this work.
- 4.3 At recent meetings with representatives from DfT (John Dowie and Will Walker), the above has been challenged.
- 4.4 DfT representatives are looking into whether or not such large scale legislative change is required and whether DfT legal advisers would be available to promote any proposals that come forward.
- 4.5 A response is currently awaited.
- 4.6 Atkins also made a strong recommendation that the new WYITA needed to be more strategic in its modus operandi and recommended the number of WYITA Members should be reduced, from the current number of 22 to 10. The proposal was that the 10 would comprise relevant Cabinet / Executive Members from each of the 5 authorities responsible for Highways & Transportation. A change from 22 to 10 would require a change in legislation.
- 4.7 Members of this Group will be aware that there was consistent opposition to this proposal from existing Members of the WYPTA.
- 4.8 The ITA instead supported an alternative proposal which maintained a larger West Yorkshire ITA membership but with an Executive formed from within that membership. The ITA argument was that this combination of approaches facilitated in the wider ITA, appropriate representation of both population and political mix, whilst an Executive Board of say eight in number could deliver efficient decision making and achieve political balance.
- 4.9 The full ITA would have a role in relation to scrutiny, audit and governance.
- 5.0 Since the October meeting, the Director General has taken forward proposals that will see interim arrangements establish an eight member Executive Board. It is proposed that this take place with effect from 1 January 2010. A copy of the report is attached at Appendix B. The intention is that these measures will bring about stronger governance arrangements to provide clear strategic transport direction which will not in any way prohibit a future submission of a formal governance scheme.

6.0 Next Steps – Work Programme

- 6.1 A more detailed work programme around Transport Governance issues has yet to be developed because we are awaiting feedback from DfT on the processes that would need to be followed and whether or not they have any resources to assist.

7. Recommendation

- 7.1 The Scrutiny Committee is requested to comment on the various issues raised.