

REPORT TO: Environment & Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 12th June 2013

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Policy & Resources

PORTFOLIO: Transportation

SUBJECT: Nominations of Members to the Halton Public Transport Advisory Panel – Municipal Year 2013/14.

WARDS: Borough wide.

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the Report is to seek nominations of Members to sit on the Council's Public Transport Advisory Panel for the Municipal Year 2013/14, and report on the key issues discussed / raised by the Panel when it met during the Municipal Year 2012/13.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- 1) The Chair of the Environment & Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board, in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Transportation, nominate a Chair and three Members to the Public Transport Advisory Panel and for the Member nominated as the Chair to agree such deputies, as may be required from time to time;**
- 2) the Board endorse the nominations; and**
- 3) the key issues discussed by the Panel during the Municipal Year 2012/13, as set out in Appendix One of the Report, are noted.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 At the start of each Municipal Year, it is necessary to nominate a Chair and three other Members to attend meetings of the Halton Public Transport Advisory Panel. The Members nominated for 2012/13 were Councillors Gerrard (Chair), Morley, J. Stockton, J. Bradshaw and Woolfall.

3.2 The purpose of the Halton Public Transport Advisory Panel is to:-

- Monitor the performance of the public transport network within the Borough to ensure it meets the mobility needs of local communities;

- To make recommendations to the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board on future developments and improvements to the conventional local public transport network; and
- To review and comment on the effectiveness of the Council's public transport priorities.

3.3 A summary of the key issues discussed at the Halton Public Transport Advisory Panel, during 2012/13, is shown in Appendix one

3.4 The Board is asked to support those nominations proposed by the Chair of the Environment & Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board, in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Transportation, which will be announced at the meeting.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

It is widely recognised that good quality and affordable public transport services can help to improve access to key facilities for children and young people within the Borough. A key role of the Halton Public Transport Advisory Panel is to review progress and comment on emerging initiatives and issues.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

Halton Borough Council and its partners continue to provide a wide range of accessible and affordable public transport services within the Borough aimed at improving access to key employment, learning and training facilities. These are reported at meetings of the Halton Public Transport Advisory Panel.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

Improving access to health care facilities is acknowledged as a key priority in Halton. Progress on achieving these improvements are reported and discussed at the Halton Public Transport Advisory Panel.

6.4 A Safer Halton

No direct implications.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

Improving access to key regeneration areas by sustainable forms of public transport, is widely acknowledged as playing a key role in sustainable regeneration and urban renewal. The Halton Public

Transport Advisory Panel plays a key role in discussing and shaping the future direction of those initiatives associated with public transport within Halton.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 There are no risks associated with the report.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Good quality and affordable public transport services can play a key role in ensuring all sections of the community can access a wide range of facilities.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

9.1 There are no background documents under the meaning of this Act.

Appendix One

Summary of the key Issues discussed at the Halton Public Transport Advisory Panel – Municipal Year 2012/13.

PTA28 LOCAL SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT FUND BID

The Panel was advised that on 13 July 2012 the Department for Transport (DfT) announced that the Mid-Mersey bid was to be supported and a formal offer of funding, totalling £3.1m was sent to St Helens as lead Authority. The bid contained four main elements with a number of schemes within each element:

1. Cross boundary access to employment support;
2. Cross boundary active travel within Mid Mersey sub region;
3. Cross boundary sustainable development support;
4. Promotion and materials.

It was commented that officers were currently working with colleagues in St Helens and Warrington Councils to set detailed project plans for individual elements.

It is anticipated that the bus element of the bid would commence from the first week of New Year with the relevant marketing material available from late December 2012.

PTA29 PASSENGER TRANSPORT SERVICES

The Panel were updated on the passenger transport services provided on behalf of Children and Enterprise, and Communities Directorates, as well as specialised Door to Door services provided by Halton Community Transport.

Vulnerable Children and Adults Transport

- A number of improvement opportunities had been identified and plans currently being developed to progress these.
- A £200k saving had been made on the previous financial year and a further efficiency saving of a similar amount was required for the current year.
- In-house fleet optimisation, re-tendering, re-planning of services and reviewing passenger charges would be implemented on Vulnerable Adults transport services to achieve savings.

- On children's transport, the optimisation of SEN transport runs provided on in house fleets, re-tendering, rescheduling of services and issuing more cost effective travel passes would be implemented to achieve savings.

In-house Fleet Vehicle Advertising

Businesses and organisations would now be able to advertise on available space on the Council's fleet of in-house passenger minibuses, thus generating an income for the Council. Staff would ensure that clients' provided advertising material that was appropriate for this medium.

Replacement Vehicle Communications Equipment

The in-house fleet of minibuses and cars had now been fitted with new replacement vehicle communications/tracking devices to enable improved operational performance.

Travel Training

Independent Travel Training (ITT) is continuing with a high number of SEN children using the service. Savings to date were noted to be in excess of £1.1m. Two recent scenarios were provided in the report, giving examples of how the scheme is benefitting the people who use it and how the savings are being made by those people who were not using specialised transport.

Transport Tendering

A number of transport services had been advertised (taxi, minibus and large coach contracts) and were to commence from September 2012 for a period of 3-4 years. It was noted that early indications had shown that 'like for like' contacts had reduced in cost by 12.6%.

Accessible Transport Services

Duncan Prince, General Manager of Halton Community Transport, addressed the Panel. He advised that they were experiencing difficulties lately with the increasing number of clients who were using very large scooters on their transport. It was noted that approximately 30% of their Client's had a disability and a large number of these were obese, thus requiring more robust scooters to move around. Problems were then experienced when transport was requested by these clients who found they could not access vehicles using the standard ramp. He stated that only two vehicles were equipped to cope with such large scooters. These concerns were noted by the Panel.

He further announced that the Daresbury Primary School service was popular with clients and running full twice daily. Following the updates, the following points were noted:

For conventional bus services:

- Operators would be advised of the comments made regarding the lack of heating on some buses;
- The ITT training for individuals to independently use public transport was delivered in-house by one staff member;
- With regards to pushchairs, it was commented that the gangway on buses should be clear and as long as this was the case, it was at the driver's discretion as to how many folded pushchairs could safely be carried.

PTA30 NEIGHBOURHOOD TRAVEL LINKS

The Panel was presented with a report which informed them of the work carried out by the Neighbourhood Travel Team since the last meeting in March 2012 and included information relating to:

- Cycling (Cycle to Work Guarantee, Bikeability, PoolBikes and Wheels for all);
- Job Centre Plus initiatives;
- Scooter Commuter;
- Green Travel Plans; and
- The Car Share System