

**REPORT TO:** Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

**DATE:** 13th June 2012

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, Policy & Resources

**PORTFOLIO HOLDER:** Transportation

**SUBJECT:** Nominations of Members to the Halton Public Transport Advisory Panel – Municipal Year 2012/13

**WARDS:** Boroughwide.

## **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 2012/13, and report on the key issues discussed / raised by the Panel when it met during the Municipal Year 2011/12.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That**

- (1) the Chair of the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board, in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Transportation, nominates 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 2011/12, 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.

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 2011/12, is shown in Appendix 1

3.4 The Board is asked to support those nominations proposed by the Chair of the Environment and 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.

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 within the Borough. 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 the Halton Access Plan and Halton Local Transport Plan. 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 transport including public transport, walking and cycling 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 2011/12.**

#### **Meeting Held Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2011**

##### **1. Local Bus Service Changes**

The Panel received a report from the Principal Officer, Transport Co-ordination, advising them of the recent changes to local public transport services. This included a number of changes in both the commercially operated bus services and the contracted services operated on behalf of Halton Borough Council. He commented that the Arriva service 1 now terminated at Halton Lea South and Service 2 now terminated at Halton Lea North, both alterations would result in savings on the route.

##### **2. Passenger Transport Services**

The Panel received a report from the Lead Officer, Transport Co-ordination which provided an update of the passenger transport services which included a range of issues relating to Door to Door services provided in the Borough including passenger transport on behalf of Adults & Community and Children & Young People's Directorates, as well as various services provided by Halton Community Transport. He stated that recent contract tendering had taken place as a number of contracts had come up for renewal. It was noted that efficiency savings through tendering and improved scheduling of existing routes had resulted in an overall annual saving of £57,055. The total annual value of the 20 retendered contracts was £241,680. It was commented that transport providers had also received revised Conditions of Contract, which had come into effect on 1 January 2011. The assistant manager at Halton Community Transport provided members with an update in terms of passenger figures using services during the year to date.

##### **3. Public Transport Infrastructure**

The Principal Officer, Transport Co-ordination, presented a report to inform the panel of the improvements carried out to public transport infrastructure within the Borough. It was noted that this year a total of 15 new bus shelters would be installed at various locations in the Borough. Two new bus stops had also been commissioned in Wood Lane, Runcorn following requests from passengers. With regards to accessibility, currently 48.25% of the bus stops in the Borough had been upgraded to conform to DDA standard, which was a total of 300.

#### 4. Halton Hopper Tickets

The Board were presented with an update from the Lead Officer, Transport Co-ordination, on sales and development of Halton Hopper Tickets since August 2010. He commented that they had recently met with the key parties to the 'Halton Hopper Multi Operator Travel Card Ticket' to discuss increasing the current pricing of tickets, which had not increased for more than two years. Also, Halton Borough Council had so far funded all administration and ticket printing costs of the scheme, which now needed to be recuperated. These costs were presented to the operators for reimbursement.

#### 5. Neighbourhood Travel Links

The Panel received a report which provided an update on projects and developments with Neighbourhood Travel since August 2010. This included Links2Work, Cycling to Work Guarantee, Bikeability, Bike User Group (BUG), Staff Cycle Mileage, PoolBikes, Wheels for All and Scooter Commuter.

#### 6. Marketing and Publicity Update

The Principal Officer, Transport Co-ordination advised that there was a leaflet produced advertising the services available over the Christmas period. The regular bus timetable information leaflet was still being produced, as well as the travel guide and Halton maps. These were also made available at all Halton Direct Links (HDL's) and Community Centres in the Borough.

### **Meeting Held Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2012**

#### 1. Local Bus Service Changes

The Panel were informed of the recent changes to local public transport services. It was reported that the local bus network had recently seen a number of changes in both the commercially operated services and the contracted services operated on behalf of Halton Borough Council. Information was provided to the Panel on these changes, which had been effective since 30 October 2011.

Officers had received feedback recently from Halton OPEN (*Older Peoples' Empowerment Network*) who raised concerns on the safety of disabled people on buses and the fact that some drivers offered no help to these passengers during boarding and disembarkation. In

response Halton Transport and Arriva requested more information on the routes and times referred to, so that this could be looked into.

## 2. Local Bus Supported Service Consultation

The Principal Officer, Transport Co-ordination provided the Panel with a verbal update on the Local Bus Supported Service Consultation which closed early March 2012. An example of feedback from the consultation so far had included:

- People having to change their travel plans/routes;
- People having to change buses more frequently; and
- People having to walk greater distances to access public transport.

It was also reported that two petitions had been received relating to the cancellation of the 26 and 3A buses. Further information would be available at the next PTAP meeting.

## 3. Local Sustainable Transport Fund Bids

The panel were provided with an update on progress with the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) bid applications.

Further to the Department for Transport's (DfT) White Paper '*Creating Growth, Cutting Carbon – Making Sustainable Local Transport Happen*' and accompanying bidding guidance, two bids for funding had been made as follows:

- Halton's LSTF Application – valued at £4.4 million, with partner contributions approximately £8 million; and
- Mid-Mersey LSTF Application – valued at £3.1 million, with partner contributions approximately £5.7 million.

Halton's bid, named '*Routes to Prosperity*' had focussed mainly on sustainable travel to employment areas, which addressed the Government's transport priorities of economic growth and carbon reduction.

The bids were submitted by the deadline date of 24<sup>th</sup> February 2012, the outcome of the bids would be known by late May this year.

## 4. Update on other Funding Bids

The Panel were presented with a report which provided updates on two recent funding bids:

Better Bus Area Fund

This was a new £50 million fund providing grants of up to £5million to a minimum of 10 local authorities working in partnership with local bus operators. Its aim was to increase bus patronage in busy urban areas, create growth and cut carbon. Particular routes were identified in Halton to enhance however unfortunately Halton were unsuccessful in its bid for this fund. The successful bidders included large urban areas and conurbations, North West authorities included Blackpool, Greater Manchester and Merseyside.

### Green Bus Fund 3

Following the success of the first two competitions, a third round was being run in 2011-12 with a budget of £20 million, subject to receiving State aid approval from the European Commission. This Fund allowed bus companies and local authorities in England to compete for funds to help them buy new low carbon emission buses. As with the earlier round, the Fund's main purpose was to further support the wider roll out of low carbon emission buses across England. A number of North West authorities and bus operators were successful with their bids and Officers were happy to report that amongst the winners was Arriva North West who had been awarded 10 single deck gas buses which would be arriving soon. Arriva North West are based in Runcorn and hence these vehicles will be available for use in Halton.

#### 5. Passenger Transport Services

The Panel received an update from the Lead Officer, Transport Co-ordination on a range of issues relating to Passenger Transport Services provided, including passenger transport on behalf of Children and Enterprise and Communities Directorates, as well as specialised Door to Door services provided by Halton Community Transport.

It was reported that a number of improvement opportunities had been identified and plans were currently being developed to progress these as part of the efficiency saving targets. This included reviewing service delivery and related policies and procedures.

The General Manager of Halton Community Transport advised that following a recent marketing campaign, passenger figures had now picked up on specialised door-to-door services following a recent downturn in numbers.

#### 6. Neighbourhood Travel Links

The Principal Officer, Transport Co-ordination updated the Panel on the work carried out through the Neighbourhood Travel Team (NTT).

With regards to cycling this included: Cycle to Work Guarantee; Bikeability; Bike User Group (BUG); PoolBikes and Wheels for All. Scooter Commuter was still proving to be popular with 16 individuals

on the waiting list. Officers announced that funding had been found for 3 more bikes which would help alleviate the wait.

Green (Workplace) Travel Plans: NTT were working with property developer St Modwen in producing an area wide travel plan for The Hive in Widnes. A Travel Plan was also being finalised for Runcorn Railway Station in partnership with Virgin Trains. Talks were also taking place with Lloyds TSB in Runcorn with regards to developing a Green Travel Plan.

It was announced that the 13A evening service circular from Widnes Town Centre was being extended to include The Hive on a trial basis. This would operate every 20 minutes and run 7 days a week and it was hoped that the service would prove popular with people working in this area. It was noted that the last bus was scheduled to leave at 2345 hours, which would connect with the last buses from the Town Centre.

The Panel were also advised that the NTT had participated in recruitment events with *Jaguar/Land Rover*, *Tesco* and *Premier Inn*, where the team were invited to provide journey advice and promote travel options to prospective employees.