

**MINUTES:** of the meeting of the

**TRANSPORTATION SELECT COMMITTEE**

held at 10.30am on Thursday 16 June 2005 at County Hall, Kingston-upon-Thames

**Members:**

- \* Mr Ian R Lake (Chairman)
- \* Mr David Harmer (Vice-Chairman)
- \* Mr Timothy Ashton
- \* Mr Mike Bennison
- \* Mr John Doran
- \* Mr David Goodwin
- \* Mr Simon Harding
- \* Mr David Hodge
- \* Mr David Ivison
- \* Mrs Jan Mason
- \* Mr Roy Taylor

**Ex officio Members:**

- Mr David Davis (Chairman of the Council)
- \* Mrs Angela Fraser (Vice-Chairman of the Council)

**Also present:**

- \* Mrs Helyn Clack – Executive Member for Transport

\* = present

**Transportation Officers Present:**

Mr Steve Lee – Head of Transportation  
Mr Mick Avery – Assistant Head of Transportation  
Mr Steve Child – Assistant Head of Transportation

**PART 1**

**IN PUBLIC**

**33/05 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]**

Apologies were received from David Davis.

**34/05 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 7 APRIL 2005 [Item 2]**

Confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

**35/05 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS [Item 3]**

Mr Doran declared that he is a non Executive Director of the Highways Agency.

**36/05 PROCEDURAL MATTERS [Item 4]**

There were no procedural matters.

**37/05 RESPONSE BY THE EXECUTIVE TO ISSUES REFERRED BY THE SELECT COMMITTEE [Item 5]**

No issues had been referred since the last meeting.

**38/05 APPOINTMENT OF TASK GROUPS [Item 6]**

Members were asked to inform the Chairman of two choices of Task Group they would be interested in joining and the Chairman would then allocate Members.

**39/05 SURREY HIGHWAYS PARTNERSHIP [Item 7]**

Steve Child, Assistant Head of Transportation gave a brief presentation outlining the progress made during the past year and proposals for further improvements to address some of the concerns that had been raised by Members. These included: increased site supervision by the contractors; improved response time for complaints (all complaints to be answered within 20 days and acknowledged within 5); better communications particularly with Members and Local Committees; better financial information and improved estimating of schemes.

The Committee were then able to ask questions of the following witnesses who had been invited to attend as they represented both of the contractors the east and west of the county and urban/rural areas:

Will Ward – Local Transportation Director, Runnymede  
Roger Archer-Reeves – Local Transportation Director, Mole Valley  
Chris Smith – Local Transportation Director, Elmbridge  
Keith Scott & George Kovacs – Contract & Performance Managers  
David Tong – Contract Manager, Carillion plc  
Jerry Pert – Contract Manager, Ringway

Mrs Fraser and Mr Neighbour also spoke on behalf of their Local Committees.

The Committee received a number of positive comments on the high quality of the major works carried out by both contractors. It therefore focussed on routine maintenance and smaller projects that appeared to be the areas of major concern across the County.

Community gangs were highlighted as a particular area of concern in some areas where they did not appear to be providing value for money. It was noted that the contract management team (CMT) were looking at the performance of all gangs across the County to compare the number and types of job carried out and to focus on those gangs which did not appear to be performing as well. The CMT will also look at adding incentives for those that perform well and penalising those that don't. The Head of Transportation offered to provide any members writing to him with concerns on specific projects in their area with a detailed response on the issues. It was noted that there is insufficient budget available to do all the work that is required and this year has seen a 9% decrease in Government funding.

It was apparent that there are a number of areas where the contract is operating better as a result of local decisions and the Committee was keen to see these examples of 'Best Practice' extended across the County and maintained, particularly with the forthcoming restructuring of the Transportation Service.

The Committee welcomed the proposed changes to respond to concerns and agreed that these should be monitored by the Committee's SHiP Task Group. The Task Group will also be asked to review the Improvement Action Plan with a view to simplifying it to focus on key areas and identify clear measures of success.

The Committee was very concerned that data was not available for some of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and that in some areas there appeared to be significant underperformance and a lack of clarity. The Head of Transportation indicated that where zero had been entered this was due to changes in the way in which data was captured during the year and the figures therefore represented the worst case scenario. The Task Group will, therefore be asked to review the KPIs and look at ways in which detailed monitoring of certain parts of the contract can be strengthened.

Communication with Local Committees was considered to be a key area of improvement and the Committee considered that each Local Committee should discuss how this could best be achieved, possibly by the nomination of a member from each Committee to act as a liaison point with the contractor. It was also suggested that a representative from the constructor could attend Local Committee meetings twice a year linked to a report on their performance management.

The cost to the public of installing crossovers which must be done by the local constructor was also highlighted as an issue important to Surrey residents and the Committee requested that a full report on this matter should be made to a future meeting. The Committee also requested a report setting out options to be considered if there are not significant improvements in the coming year.

**Recommended:** to the Executive:

- (a) that based on the KPI data collected, audited and reviewed against the contract requirements that both Carillion and Ringway be awarded a 1 year extension to the current order term;
- (b) that steps should be taken immediately to ensure that a more robust reporting and financial monitoring process are put in place;
- (c) that Local Committees be invited to discuss ways in which communications with the constructors may be improved.

[The report from the Committee to the Executive is attached at Annexe 1]

**40/05 FORWARD PLAN [Item 8]**

Noted.

**41/05 DATE OF NEXT MEETING [Item 9]**

Thursday 28 July at 10.30.

Noted that the meeting scheduled for 29 September will now take place on Thursday 6 October.

[Meeting Ended: 3.55 pm]

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Chairman

## Annexe 1

**TRANSPORTATION SELECT COMMITTEE****Item under consideration: SURREY HIGHWAYS PARTNERSHIP****Date Considered: 16 June 2005****Background:**

1. The Transportation Select Committee has reviewed the operation of the Surrey Highways Partnership that came into operation on 28 April 2003. The Committee sought comments from all Members of Local Committees prior to the May elections and from all County Councillors following the elections. A total of 24 responses were received and analysed to identify the key themes. The Committee also received reports on the progress with the Improvement Plan, which was drawn up following a review after the first year of operation of the contract, and on the contract performance against Key Performance Indicators.
2. The Committee invited representatives from both constructors, Ringway and Carillion, the County Council's contract management team and Local Transportation Managers to attend the meeting as witnesses. Two Local Committee Chairmen also addressed the Committee.
3. The Committee received a number of positive comments on the high quality of the major works carried out by both contractors. It therefore focussed on routine maintenance and smaller projects that appeared to be the areas of major concern across the County.
4. It was apparent that there are a number of areas where the contract is operating better as a result of local decisions and the Committee was keen to see these examples of 'Best Practice' extended across the County and maintained, particularly with the forthcoming restructuring of the Highways Service.
5. The Committee was informed of a number of changes which were in the process of being introduced including: increased site supervision by the contractors; improved response time for complaints; better communications particularly with Members and Local Committees; better financial information and improved estimating of schemes. They welcomed these changes which will be monitored by the Committee's Task Group. The Task Group will also be asked to review the Improvement Action Plan with a view to simplifying it to focus on key areas and identify clear measures of success.
6. The Committee was very concerned that data was not available for some of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and that in some areas there was significant underperformance and a lack of clarity. The Task Group will, therefore be asked to review the KPIs and look at ways in which detailed monitoring of certain parts of the contract can be strengthened.

7. Communication with Local Committees was considered to be a key area of improvement and the Committee would like to recommend that each Local Committee should discuss how this could best be achieved, possibly by the nomination of a member from each Committee to act as a liaison point with the contractor. It was also suggested that a representative from the constructor could attend Local Committee meetings twice a year linked to a report on their performance management.
8. The cost to the public of installing crossovers was also highlighted as an issue and the Committee has requested a full report on this matter for a future meeting. The Committee has also requested a report setting out options to be considered if there are not significant improvements in the coming year.

**Recommendation:**

The Select Committee recommends to the Executive:

- (a) that based on the KPI data collected, audited and reviewed against the contract requirements that both Carillion and Ringway be awarded a 1 year extension to the current order term;
- (b) that steps should be taken immediately to ensure that a more robust reporting and financial monitoring process are put in place;
- (c) that Local Committees be invited to discuss ways in which communications with the constructors may be improved.