

**Hoyland Milton & Rockingham Joint Ward Alliance
Notes of meeting held Tuesday, 1st October, 2013.
The Hoyland Centre**

Present: Cllrs Stowe, Andrews, Shepherd, Dures & Franklin, Joan Whittaker, Andy Hodgkinson, Albert Bishop, Janet Cartwright, Ian Warhurst, June Walker, Rachael Blake, Community & Stakeholder Manager for HS2 Ltd and David Ewing (HS2 representatives)

Kate Faulkes (Area Council Manager) Amanda Bradshaw & Fiona O'Brien (Locality Support Officers)

Apologies: Cllr. Lamb, Margaret Hague, Rob Farmer, Dave Graham, Ann Edgar, Neil Spencer, Fiona Tennyson, Tanya Dickinson

Cllr Shepherd chaired the meeting.

1. Welcomes and introductions

Fiona and Amanda were welcomed to the meeting,. as were the representatives of HS2.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting held on 20th August.

3. Presentation on behalf of HS2 High Speed Rail

Rachael explained that she and David covered the Yorkshire area for HS2 and their job is to make sure that residents and resident organisations know the facts concerning HS2 and find out how they can get involved in the consultation process for HS2. A brief overview was given in terms of how and why HS2 was proposed. It was about six years ago when Network Rail were asked to produce a report about the capacity issues that were happening, mainly on the West Coast Mainline, but were starting to be seen on the East Coast Mainline and other networks as well. They predicted that if something was not done by the middle 2020's, the West Coast Mainline would be at capacity and, therefore, would stop working.

Other things were looked at, such as longer platforms, longer trains, building a new line, but it was suggested that while they would bring benefits, they would not solve the capacity problem. Building a new line, in terms of disruption, would probably be as disruptive as building a high speed train and, more importantly, a new line would not bring the benefits that a high speed train would bring.

The reason they were asked to do that report was because of the huge increase in long distance train journeys being made, with the figures for about 54M in 1994 to 125M in 2011/2012, so obviously the way people were using transport throughout the country is completely changing. In terms of how that is impacting at the moment, there are huge problems with overcrowding and, on average, about 3,000 are standing on journeys into Leeds. In terms of where Britain is in Europe, in terms of high speed rail, at the moment we have 67 miles, which is in the form of High Speed 1, Eurostar or Channel Tunnel as people know it Turkey actually has 1,500 miles of line, so it is seen that in terms of Europe and the world, we do actually lag behind our partners.

To explain some other facts about HS2 and how much it costs. There is an awful lot in the papers about the costs spiralling out of control. The cost of the whole network, which is phase 1 and phase 2, is still £42.6 billion. The reason that was increased over the last few months is to do with the contingency which the Treasury said had to be put in. In terms of how much phase 2 costs, which are the Birmingham/Leeds and Birmingham/Manchester sections, that is £21.2 billion. In terms of how the network operates, the idea is that there will be phase 1, and that will link London and the HS1 (Eurostar) to the West Midlands and beyond. When it gets to Birmingham it will be extended further north creating a Y shaped network to Manchester and Leeds. There was initially confusion that it actually connected Manchester and Leeds, but this is incorrect.

The western leg will have two stations, Manchester Airport and Manchester Piccadilly and the eastern leg will serve stations in the East Midlands (Totton) which is a new station between Derby and Nottingham, South Yorkshire with a proposed station at Meadowhall and then finishing off in Leeds at a new station south of the existing railway station. There is also a connection to the East Coast Mainline and the moment the proposal is that it goes north of Garforth through Church Fenton and connects to the East Coast Mainline there.

In terms of the benefits that HS2 will bring, it is about providing the capacity that we are not going to have on the rail lines in the future. There will be up to 18 trains per hour in each direction but in terms of this leg, we are looking at up to 3 trains per hour. It will bring redevelopment and there will be regeneration opportunities and conservative estimates are saying that will support about 100,000 jobs. It will bring huge reductions in journey times. In terms of how long it takes to get from London to Meadowhall it will be 69 minutes which is considerably shorter than it is now and from London to Leeds it will be 82 minutes rather than the 2 hours and 12 minutes which it is now. One of the really important things is that it will bring greater connectivity between the Midlands and the North and will actually connect 18 cities by way of connections available at the stations designated for HS2.

At the moment we are in a consultation period which started on 17th July and goes on to the end of January 2014. We then have a 9/10 month gap, when the Secretary of State makes a decision about the preferred line of route. An environmental study will then have to be carried out before the Bill goes to Parliament, It is now planned to start building in this area until 2022 with a view to it opening in 2033. The length of construction time in a given area is expected to be 2-3 years at a maximum.

There then followed a question and answer session.

Cllr. Franklin pointed out that the first tunnel would be under Hoyland Common and bearing in mind the problem of subsidence through coal mining, there should be an information event for those residents. The Chair made a formal request that a meeting should be held in the vicinity of Hoyland Common and offered to find a venue suitable.

The question was asked as to how much more the project is likely to cost. The meeting was informed that they were working within the budget and it was expected that they would not need the contingency.

Andy Hodgkinson asked how is it going to impact our pockets. For instance, is it going to make train journeys cheaper? He stated that as a normal person he could not afford to

travel to London, even on a weekly basis. He also stated that what is going to be important to people around here is the disruption which will be caused by the tunnelling going ahead. We have already gone through years of disruption with coal mining – is this going to cause more damage to their properties. He did not think people were going to be so bothered about a reduction in journey times and freeing up capacity. Things like that are not important to normal people – they are going to want to know what is going to happen to them and how it benefits them, if there are benefits for them.

Cllr. Andrews stated that the big problem is that once you get to Meadowhall, how do you get from Meadowhall to Barnsley. The biggest problem getting from Meadowhall to Barnsley is Meadowhall Junction. It is that trains cannot get through it now. He considered the Government would be better off spending £10M on that and giving us trains from Sheffield to Leeds that stopped at Barnsley.

Rachael Blake responded by saying that discussions they have been having with the local authority is in terms of how the current infrastructure could improve to enable the best use to be made of HS2.

Cllr. Shepherd thanked the representatives from HS2 and drew this section of the meeting to a close.

4. Discussion on Ward Plan

The document in front of the meeting lists out all the priorities that came out of the last two meetings and we agreed to go out to consultation and see what people thought of them, on the grounds that:

- a) We probably had too many projects to do all at once, and
- b) We needed to go out and find out what the wider community thought.

Because time was short we have done two consultation sessions, both of which were really well used. Consultations were held in Hoyland Town Centre and Elsecar Park.

KF shared with the meeting the most highly prioritised. She said that she had been pleasantly surprised by the willingness of the public to respond to the consultation and Cllr. Stowe told the meeting that he had been told by a visitor from Wales that he had been impressed by the fact that members of the public were being asked what they wanted.

5. Discussion on potential projects to address priorities

KF thanked Cllr. Dures and Joan Whittaker who sat with her for a very productive meeting, the result of which is the Draft Ward Plan. All the items that scored highly on the consultation have appeared under three major headings. It was pointed out that this draft was produced prior to the consultation and the items under the three headings are now shown in any order of priority. The meeting felt that this could be misconstrued by the public who will read it as being that the first item is the most important. JW asked if it could not be marked on the Plan that the items are in no order of priority.

Cllr. Stowe informed the meeting that the results of the consultation are not the only statistics that we were working with. There are other surveys, such as borough-wide mapping, there are statutory duties that have to be carried out, which go into the forward

plan. We have budget responsibilities, devolved budgets for community involvement that feed into the bigger picture and so if we are in a position, as at a meeting he attended this morning, where we have information coming through about government policy that will put pressure on workforce, on welfare benefits and debt advice, Citizen's Advice Bureaux and others. A lot of the people who we need to consult are the harder to reach groups, so when we are setting priorities we need to ensure that the information that we can get can be disseminated down to people in need.

KF then introduced a working document, giving short, medium and long term goals, which is for the use of this committee.

After considerable discussion as to the priorities, it was agreed that the working group should carry this document and the Ward Plan forward and report back at the next Ward Alliance meeting.

7. Berneslai Homes Devolved Steering Group budget

KF informed the meeting that Dave Graham could not attend tonight, but at a meeting, which Joan Whittaker also attended, he said that he had quite an extensive (£37,000) budget, but some had already been allocated and that they were struggling with the remainder. The problem would appear to be that it has two eligibility criteria in that it has to be land owned by Berneslai Homes and for the benefit of Berneslai Homes tenants.

It was requested that we obtain a map showing land that Berneslai Homes have responsibility.

6. Date and time of next meeting

Tuesday 21st November 2013 at 5pm at the Hoyland Centre (Community Rooms 1, 2 & 3)

7. Future meeting dates

All meetings to be held at **5pm** at the **Hoyland Centre** unless stated otherwise

Thursday 16th January 2014 and Tuesday 18th March 2013