

Home to School Transport - Policy Panel

Date: **23 January 2020**

Time: **9.30am**

Venue **Hanover Room - Brighthelm Community Centre**

Members: **Councillors:** Clare, Hills, Mears, O'Quinn, Wares and Wilkinson

Contact: **Mark Wall**
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AGENDA

PART ONE

Page

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

2 SCOPE OF THE POLICY PANEL

5 - 10

- (1) Overview of agreed scope of the Member PolicyPanel
- (2) Minutes of the Scoping meeting held in December 2019

3 UPDATE ON THE INDEPENDENT REVIEW

4 DISCUSSION ON ANY CURRENT ISSUES

Please note:

If anyone would like to make a written submission to the panel to inform this agenda item about a current issue relating to Home to School Transport please provide a brief written submission to:

carolyn.bristow@brighton-hove.gov.uk by 22nd January 2020. Please see further clarification on this below.

Please note that the panel meetings will be open to members of the public to observe and full minutes will be recorded and published. If you wish to share your submission to the panel in confidence, please contact Carolyn Bristow on the details above so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

The panel are inviting written submissions (of not more than one side of A4) on the following areas of current issues:

- Impact on children and families at the present time
 - Impact on schools at the present time
 - Training and health and safety issues relating to operators (vehicles, drivers and vehicle passenger assistants)
 - Route allocations and how these are determined
- Impact on the budget for home to school transport

5 AGREEMENT ON FUTURE MEETING DATES AND AGENDA

6 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

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Infra-red hearing aids are available for use during the meeting. If you require any further information or assistance, please contact the receptionist on arrival.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For further details and general enquiries about this meeting contact , (01273 291006, email mark.wall@brighton-hove.gov.uk) or email democratic.services@brighton-hove.gov.uk

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Date of Publication – 16 January 2020

Action notes from the HTST Member Policy Panel 18 December 2019Present:

Members: Cllrs Mears, Wares, Hills, Clare, O'Quinn and Wilkinson

Officers: Georgina Clarke-Green, Natasha Watson, Giles Rossington and Carolyn Bristow

Item	Discussion and agreed actions
Procedural business	<p>No apologies were noted. Cllr O'Quinn was now a permanent replacement for Cllr Hill.</p> <p>Declarations of interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Cllr O'Quinn – On the Management Committee for the Central Hub. Chair of Licencing Committee. ➤ Cllr Wilkinson – works in the charity sector in a SEND role ➤ Cllr Hills is a governor at Queens Park School ➤ Cllr Wares is an Associate Member to the Board of Governors at Patcham High School <p>Cllr Wares and Mears raised objection to the meeting being conducted in private. It was acknowledged that the meeting was being held in private due it being the scoping meeting to agree how the Panel would be conducted going forward , and the potential need within those discussions to consider commercially sensitive information which had to remain confidential . Natasha indicated that members would need to take legal advice about the need for future meetings to be held in private if members wished to discuss personal or commercial information as part of the remit of the panel.</p> <p>In relation to the independent review, Cllr Wares and Mears raised concern that officers had issued the documents relating to the award of the contract for the Administration's Independent Review to the Leader's group and others but not to any of the members of the scrutiny panel.</p>
Appointment of chair	Cllr Mears nominated Cllr Clare as chair, seconded by Cllr Wares. The panel agreed and Cllr Clare was appointed as chair.
Terms of reference	The terms of reference, as agreed at CYPS committee 05 December 2019, were agreed and adopted by the Member Policy Panel
Scope of the panel	<p>1) <u>The scope of the Panel's review</u></p> <p>There was a discussion around whether this was a policy panel or a scrutiny panel. Since 2015 the city council no longer operates a scrutiny system, with the exception of running a Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) which is required by law. In consequence, it is not possible for the Council to establish scrutiny panels for areas of work not within the remit of the HOSC. Policy Committees can, however, set up 'policy panels' to examine issues in depth and make recommendations to their parent committee.</p>

	<p>This is the fourth such panel established since 2015</p> <p>The Members, via a roundtable discussion, all stated their views on what the scope issues the panel needed to consider should be.</p> <p>Cllrs Mears and Wares provided a list of issues they wanted the Panel to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Procurement of service (main contract and supplementary work) ○ Use of urgency powers ○ Current status with Edge Public Solutions Limited ○ Thinking and logic around route allocation ○ Pre-commencement checks on H&S, vehicles, training, DBS, insurance, payments ○ Alternatives to work with other LAs or maintaining previous arrangements ○ Route returns by operators ○ Impact on schools (loss of teaching time and cost) ○ Impact on children and families ○ Validity of statements in Councillor briefings ○ Current allocation of transport eligibility ○ Impact on budget and where all costs are being allocated ○ In-house resource to manage new service <p>Some of these fell within the scope of the independent review due to commence in January. They considered these should also be considered by the Panel prior to the outcome of the review. Other members considered that these issues should be considered informed by the outcome of the review and further evidence taken only if needed to avoid replicating the review. The conservative members indicated they were unwilling to engage with the Panel on this basis and left the meeting.</p> <p>The remaining Panel members agreed that the conservative group remain invited to future meetings and were welcome to reinstate their position at any point.</p> <p>The Panel agreed they all supported this process being transparent and open.</p> <p>The Member Policy Panel agreed the following methodology:</p> <p>The panel should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Meet on a monthly basis until the report from the Independent Review is available for consideration by the Panel . At that point a further scoping meeting will be held and a new meeting schedule will be agreed. 2) Hold all meetings in public, with provision for Part 2 items
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	<p>where necessary at all times</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Have a regular invite list of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A representative from the Parent and Carers Council (PACC) • A senior representative from each maintained special school Brighton and Hove • Parent Governor representatives from the Children, Young People and Skills Committee • Vehicle operators 4) Have a regular item on each of its meetings to discuss whether there are any current and ongoing issues. Officers, and the panel should be able to bring any current issues of concern in this item. 5) Members of the public and stakeholders would be invited to give comment or provide written submissions on the issues the Panel was focusing on in each meeting. 6) The Panel may make urgent recommendations to officers outside of the formal reporting process to committee, if matters come to their attention that need more urgent attention. <p>The panel considered the issues the Panel will consider to fulfil the TOR, and the timetable required to consider them most effectively.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Member Policy Panel considered the following areas as potential current issues and that the meetings in January and February 2020 would cover these matters, and invite stakeholders (families via PaCC, operators and schools) to make written (and then in person at the meeting(s) if they want to) comments on those issues to the panel. The Panel felt it was advisable to offer stakeholders 5 mins each to speak at the meetings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Impact on children and families at the present time - Impact on schools at the present time - Training and health and safety issues relating to operators (vehicles, drivers and vehicle passenger assistants) - Route allocations and how these are determined - Impact on year end budget – this will require an officer report <p>It was agreed that other issues would be more effectively considered after the completion of the Independent Review, so that members could be informed by the review.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Member Policy Panel would therefore consider the following matters, once the review for the Independent Review was available for examination:.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Procurement of services - Use of urgency powers - Alternatives to work with other LAs
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Routes that were returned by operators - Issues relating to Edge - In-House resource to manage the issue <p>It was agreed that members wished to consider the review report. This would entail:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Inviting people with evidence to give and interviewees to submit representations on the contents of the review b. Reviewing any missed information the panel feels were not considered in the review c. Producing recommendations to the Children, Young People and Skills Committee d. The Independent Review, once considered by the Policy Panel, should then be reported to Children, Young People and Skills Committee. The ambition is to report back to the June 2020 Committee meeting. <p>2) <u>The Independent Review</u></p> <p>Georgina provided an update in that a review team had been selected and their contracts were being prepared and sent to them by the end of this week for their signature. The intention is that they do pre-onsite preparation 13th Jan – 24th Jan. They will then conduct their on-site work (including 40 hours of interviews, discussions etc) 28th, 29th and 30th January 2020. The draft report will be shared with the Members Policy Panel by the end of Feb for their consideration. The intention is that the final report will be shared at committee alongside the Member Policy Panel recommendations.</p> <p>The Panel agreed that if anyone had information which was relevant to the review they should be encouraged to share it with the reviewers, including the members who had departed the meeting. The need for this can be signposted at the January meeting.</p> <p>3) <u>Schedule of Meetings (Public and Private)</u></p> <p>It was agreed that the future main meetings would be held in public, plus the stakeholders as listed in the agreed methodology above (point 3) to receive direct invites.</p> <p>It was agreed there should be a meeting of the Panel in January and the agenda is likely to cover the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sharing of the agreed scope of the Member Policy Panel - Discussion on the current issues. - Ind review – a reminder of where we are at / signposting to it. <p>It was agreed there should be a meeting of the Panel in February and the agenda is likely to cover the following.</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussion on the current issues. - Session on how other areas manage home to school transport arrangements – this requires an officer paper <p>Once the Independent Review report is available for consideration the Panel will hold a further private meeting, with a legal officer present, to plan the scope of the remainder of the work of the Panel. At that point a future meeting schedule to be agreed – all of which will be held in public.</p> <p>A decision will need to be taken nearer the time on how the recommendation drafting meeting should be held.</p> <p>4) <u>Report to the CYP&S Committee 2 March (deadline 20.02.20).</u></p> <p>The Panel had already agreed earlier that their ambition is to report back to the June 2020 CYPS Committee.</p>
Any other business	<p>The Panel agreed that Members should not send subs but instead all efforts need to be made to attend all meetings. It was agreed that, should an absence be necessary, the Panel would still meet but it would be at the Chair's discretion as to whether the meeting should go ahead.</p> <p>It was agreed that all communications about the scope and work of the Panel should either go through the Chair or agreed by her. It was agreed that Members of the Panel would not approach the media independently on Panel matters. The Green Group have a press release ready to go on this, and Cllr Clare also agreed to make contact with the Corporate Communications team to get a corporate message out.</p> <p>It was agreed that Giles would approach Democratic Services on whether they can provide some support to this panel, to allow papers to be published on their online system, and also to explore whether the public meetings could be webcast.</p>

