

**AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET**

**Name of Committee** Warwick Area Committee

**Date of Committee** 12th September 2006

**Report Title** Bus Rapid Transit Projects “Sprint” - Outcome of Public Consultation and Next Steps

**Summary** A public consultation exercise on the proposals for the Bus Rapid Transit "Sprint" scheme in Kenilworth has taken place. This report outlines the results of the public consultation and recommends the next steps that should be taken.

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**Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework?** Yes/No

**Background Papers** None

**CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:-** *Details to be specified*

- Other Committees  Warwick Area Committee – 16th May 2006.
- Local Member(s)  Councillor A Cockburn  
(With brief comments, if appropriate) Councillor D Shilton  
Councillor J Whitehouse – comments incorporated.
- Other Elected Members  Councillor Mrs S Boad – for information.
- Cabinet Member  Councillor M Heatley – for information.  
(Reports to The Cabinet, to be cleared with appropriate Cabinet Member)
- Chief Executive  .....
- Legal  I Marriott – agreed.
- Finance  .....

- Other Chief Officers  .....
- District Councils
- Health Authority  .....
- Police  .....
- Other Bodies/Individuals  .....

**FINAL DECISION**                      **YES/NO**      *(If 'No' complete Suggested Next Steps)*

**SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS :**

*Details to be specified*

- Further consideration by this Committee  .....
- To Council  .....
- To Cabinet  Report to Cabinet - date to be agreed.
- To an O & S Committee  .....
- To an Area Committee  .....
- Further Consultation  .....

## Warwick Area Committee – 12th September 2006

### Bus Rapid Transit Projects “Sprint” - Outcome of Public Consultation and Next Steps

#### Report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Economy

##### Recommendation

That Area Committee:-

1. Notes the results of the Bus Rapid Transit “Sprint” public consultation exercise outlined in paragraph 2.1.
2. Recommends that the “Sprint” route across the green belt between the University of Warwick and Kenilworth is not pursued as per the outcome of the public consultation.
3. Requests officers to report on the costs and benefits of extending the “Sprint” service to Leamington Spa and/or Warwick should the funding bid being made by Coventry City Council for the remainder of “Sprint” be successful.

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) has been developed as a part solution to meet public transport demand in the Leamington Spa - Coventry - Nuneaton corridor. The BRT proposal for the corridor has been branded as “Sprint”.
- 1.2 The “Sprint” scheme was planned to provide a dedicated high quality bus service from Nuneaton and Bedworth to Coventry City Centre, Warwick University and Kenilworth.
- 1.3 At the Area Committee meeting on 16th May 2006 it was resolved that the Area Committee supported the principle of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and a public consultation on a specific proposal for “Sprint”. The Area Committee expressed its concern over possible use of green belt land north of Kenilworth and requested consideration of an extension of the proposals to cover Leamington Spa and Warwick.
- 1.4 The public consultation exercise took place during July. The consultation included a public exhibition in Kenilworth on 6th July between 11am and 8pm

and similar exhibitions at other key centres on the proposed route. The public were also invited to comment by telephone and e-mail.

- 1.5 A similar report is being considered by Nuneaton and Bedworth Area Committee in respect of consultation outcomes and the future of the “Sprint” proposals in Nuneaton and Bedworth.

## **2. Outcome of Public Consultation**

2.1 The key findings of the public consultation are:-

- (i) 486 people responded to the consultation, of these 65% supported the principle of the scheme.
- (ii) Of respondents (115 in total) from Kenilworth postcodes 71% objected to the route across the green belt and 57% objected to the presence of “Sprint” in Kenilworth.
- (iii) Of the responses from Kenilworth postcodes 15 expressed support for the work Warwickshire County Council (WCC) is undertaking to promote the opening of Kenilworth rail station.
- (iv) Kenilworth Town Council has expressed reservations about the practicality of “Sprint” in Kenilworth town centre due the size of the vehicles and the proposed locations for BRT stops and is opposed to the route of BRT across green belt land.
- (v) 81 of the 486 responses answered a question asking for wider comments by requesting that “Sprint” be extended to other destinations. Leamington Spa was considered to be a valid alternative to Kenilworth by 29 of these respondents.

2.2 The consultation results show that “Sprint” is unlikely to receive a strong degree of public support in Kenilworth despite the relatively small sample of the population that responded to the consultation.

2.3 In the light of the public response in Kenilworth to the “Sprint” proposal and in particular the strong opposition to the planned use of green belt land it is recommended that no further work be undertaken on the “Sprint” route across the green belt.

## **3. Next Steps**

- 3.1. If a decision is taken by the County Council not to support the “Sprint” route across the Green Belt, Coventry City Council are likely to proceed with a bid submission to DfT with their scheme terminating at the University. It will not be possible to develop an alternative route south of the University in time for that to be submitted with Coventry’s main bid. However, if Coventry City Council are successful with their bid it may be possible for the County Council to promote subsequently an extension to Warwick and/or Leamington (via Kenilworth if that were supported)

- 3.2 The exact route between the University and Leamington Spa/Warwick would need to be determined and consulted on, as would the amount of "Sprint" priority routes that could be provided to allow an attractive alternative to private cars.
- 3.3 An initial examination by officers of current public transport journeys between Leamington Spa and the University suggests that an extension of "Sprint" linking the University to Leamington Spa/Warwick would benefit a considerable number of journeys, be capable of serving the Stoneleigh National Agricultural Centre development area and allow the Warwick and Leamington Spa areas to benefit fully from the high quality of "Sprint".
- 3.3 A proposed extension to Leamington Spa/Warwick avoiding the Green Belt would require improvements to be made at Gibbet Hill crossroads. However, these improvements will be required even without an extension of Sprint due to the expansion of the University.
- 3.4 Coventry City Council are seeking to submit a funding bid for the core section of "Sprint" to Central Government by December 2006 with approval possible by late 2007. Thus, late 2007 would be the appropriate time to start detailed planning and development work for a proposed extension.

#### **4. Conclusions**

- 4.1 It is recommended that "Sprint" is not routed across the green belt between the University of Warwick and Kenilworth as per the outcome of the public consultation.
- 4.2 It is recommended that a detailed examination of the implications and costs of extending the "Sprint" service to Leamington Spa and/or Warwick be undertaken should the funding bid being made by Coventry City Council for the core element of "Sprint" be successful.

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28th August 2006