

Strategic Partnering Forum

Minutes of Meeting

31 March 2008

Meeting held at Conference Room 3, TT2 Offices

Present:

NAME	ROLE	ORGANISATION
Trevor Jackson (Chair) James Hudson Peter Hedley Tamsin Greulich	Managing Director Community Liaison Tunnel Manager Communications Manager	TT2
Paul Fenwick Richard Simpson	Project Director PR Advisor	TWPTA
Nicola Ashworth	Environmental Co-ordinator	Bouygues Travaux Publics / Parsons Brinkerhoff
Cllr Jim Allan Jeanette Hedley Jackie Palmer Claire Lancaster	Deputy Mayor Communications Planning Regeneration	North Tyneside Council
Cllr Tom Hanson Aileen Brewis John Edwards	NTC Board Communications Transport Futures	South Tyneside Council
Linda Whitworth Ian Hughes	East Howdon A Team Rosehill Residents	Local Residents (North)
Ken Tyrell	Jarrow Neighbourhood Management board	Local Residents (South)
Chris Grecco	Officer	Jarrow Neighbourhood Management Partnership
Rebekah Watson	Policy Advisor	North East Chamber of Commerce
Brian Reeve	Marine & Technical Director	Port of Tyne Authority
Michael Page Mark Wilson	LPT Team	Tyne & Wear Freight Partnership
John Hogger		Environment Agency
Stuart Smith	TT2 advisor	Woodholmes Group

Item	Actions
<p>1. Introductions Group introductions were facilitated by the Chair.</p>	
<p>2. Setting the Context</p> <p>The TWPTA set the historic context for the New Tyne Crossing project and the desire to ensure that good communications were integral to the project from the start. It was explained that throughout the bidding process the TWPTA had been very keen to ensure that all major stakeholders and communities would be engaged throughout the works, and the Strategic Partnering Forum was considered to be a fundamental means of achieving this.</p> <p>The TWPTA see the function of the Strategic Partnering Forum as providing an opportunity to consider the communications for the project more broadly than simply focusing on the details of daily construction activity. There will be another level of forum sitting below the Strategic Partnering Forum to engage local people, and these local forums will feed directly into this forum.</p> <p>TT2 commented that the aim of the Strategic forum is for communication to travel effectively between all the partners, whilst recognising the volume of meetings people are asked to attend. Hence the aim is to make these meetings effective rather than a burden.</p> <p>TT2 noted that membership of the Strategic Partnering Forum brings a certain privilege as attendees will be informed about aspects of the project before they are finalised or made public. This is considered very valuable to the project team, as it enables issues to be tested from a variety of stakeholder perspectives before being finalised, but it would be hoped that members of the forum respect the confidentiality of certain discussions. TT2 added that it is hoped the forum will also enable community representatives to draw attention to community sensitivities so that where possible they can be addressed before becoming bigger issues.</p>	
<p>3. Terms of Reference</p> <p>TT2 explained that the aim of the forum is to have the range of key stakeholders associated with the project represented, therefore enquiries will be made into why some organisations have not attended. It was agreed that the extent of membership at present provided a good range of interests and inputs, and that if other perspectives are required at later stages of the project, for example, from the utilities companies, invitations could be issued for one-off meetings.</p> <p>TT2 also noted that if some members feel that there are issues raised within the forum that they would like to explore in greater detail, topic-specific sub-groups could be established.</p>	

<p>A representative of South Tyneside Council suggested that the police should be invited to attend the forum meetings. TT2 explained that meetings are already held with the police and other emergency services, for example through the Tunnel Design and Safety group, and the aim is not to overburden them with meeting requests. TT2 is also working with police on both sides of the river to engage them in the development of site security issues.</p> <p>A representative of the North Local Partnering Forum suggested that Cllr Redfearn has been actively involved in their discussions about the tunnel on the north bank, and that she could be invited to attend the Strategic Partnering Forum meetings. TT2 noted that one councillor had been invited from each riparian authority, and that those councillors would disseminate information among their colleagues. It was suggested that a rotation system might be considered, but TT2 stressed that the aim had been to keep membership numbers manageable and hence some restrictions on the extent of membership had been imposed. A South Tyneside Council representative suggested that once fully established the local forums could decide who should represent their groups, and that such representation could be flexible to change.</p> <p>In terms of confidentiality, TT2 noted that it would be necessary to make it clear which aspects of information presented were confidential and which could be taken beyond the group.</p> <p>TT2 added that they do not wish discussions to be inhibited due to concerns about comments being made public, and hence suggested that reporting of the minutes should be non-attributable to individuals, or where requested by members, that comments should not be recorded in the minutes.</p>	
<p>4. Way Forward</p> <p>In terms of meeting frequency TT2 suggested a bi-monthly programme, which was accepted. A South Tyneside Council representative suggested that the venue could be alternated between North and South Tyneside, with meetings in South Tyneside held at Jarrow Town Hall. This was accepted.</p> <p>The minutes of each meeting will be drafted by TT2, and circulated to all attendees for agreement prior to publication. It was noted that the minutes will have to be made public by many of the organisations attending, and therefore they should be written in a way that is publicly acceptable. TT2 noted that the minutes will also be published on the new Tyne Crossing</p>	<p>JH / TG</p>

<p>website once approved (www.newtynecrossing.info).</p> <p>A South Tyneside Council representative noted that the South Local Partnering Forum meetings are also proposed to take place on a bi-monthly basis, meeting on alternate months to the Strategic Partnering Forum, adding that it was hoped that TT2 representatives would also attend the local forum meetings. This was agreed by TT2.</p> <p>A TWPTA representative asked who would be responsible for producing the Strategic Partnering Forum agenda. TT2 suggested that they would prepare an agenda, but that anyone wishing to contribute an agenda item for discussion should notify TT2 in advance of the meeting, or raise it during Any Other Business.</p> <p>It was agreed that TT2's Managing Director will continue to Chair the meetings, rather than introduce a rotating Chair for each meeting.</p>	
<p>5. Any Other Business</p> <p>a) Public Communications</p> <p>A member of the North Local Partnering Forum explained that local people would like to see this forum as an opportunity to have their voices heard by TT2 management. He explained that people are always hungry for news and information, and it is felt that the more information people are given, the easier the project will flow. He added that there is a general feeling on the North side of the river that people have not been informed about the project in the past.</p> <p>TT2 agreed entirely with the comments and confirmed that the aim is to give people as much information as possible.</p> <p>The community representative noted that TT2 will not be able to please all of the people all of the time, adding that if TT2 give as much early information to Willington Quay and Rose Hill Residents Association as possible, the community representatives will ensure the local communities are receiving the right message.</p> <p>Another member of the North Local Partnering Forum noted that, historically, communication with the Tyne Tunnel has been very good and felt that it is important to maintain this standard.</p> <p>A North Tyneside Council representative commented that the forum should have a 'no blame' culture, adding that the group should work hard not to make mistakes, but learn from them if they do happen.</p> <p>A South Tyneside Council representative added that the community representatives should feel they are in a position of privilege and also accountability.</p> <p>A representative of the Tyne & Wear Freight Partnership explained that they could cascade information onto their members through their website.</p>	

This will ensure people are informed, and will also ensure haulage workers are involved.

b) Wider Project Opportunities

A representative of North Tyneside Council commented that the potential benefits of the new tunnel should be felt as widely as possible. A TWPTA representative added that in order to maximise associated benefits One North East should be present at these meetings. TT2 explained that ONE had been invited to attend and would be invited to attend future meetings. TT2 added that it is essential that the broader opportunities of the project are looked at, quoting the need to address the traffic problems at the Silverlink/A19 junction, not just the tunnel congestion. It was noted that East Howdon are currently going through a regeneration programme, and have one year left on this.

c) Environmental Issues

A member of the contractor's project team suggested that the biggest mitigation the project can make is to inform people in advance of environmental works, so that they know what to expect.

A representative of the South Local Partnering Forum asked what plans there are to ease potential dust and noise problems associated with the construction works. The project team representative explained that the contractor is working closely with the riparian councils to identify which equipment will be used in each location. The noise outputs from each piece of machinery are calculated for each location in relation to the nearest 'sensitive receptors' (for example the nearest homes) and submitted for council approval. The contractor and the councils are constantly looking to mitigate against noise. Measures such as acoustic screens and use of different types of plant machinery in specific areas in order to minimise noise impacts, are being investigated.

The project team representative explained that dust will be mitigated against through measures such as hard surfacing the construction roads and installing wheel washers. Dust will be monitored throughout the project, and there is a complaints ranking procedure in place to deal with community issues surrounding this.

TT2 added that a Code of Construction Practice (CoCP) is in place, which sets out requirements that all subcontractors must adhere to. It includes details on working hours, site safety, and environmental management. Everyone going onto site must have been briefed on the CoCP, which is strictly monitored.

A member of the North Local Partnering Forum commented that the East Howdon landfill site has historically been subjected to illegal dumping. The

project team representative explained that they were aware of the history of the site, and that extensive ground investigations have been performed on the East Howdon landfill site. A full time member of staff is currently investigating the results of the ground investigation from the landfill to ensure that appropriate control measures are implemented.

d) Traffic Management

A North Local Partnering Forum representative noted that there are local concerns regarding the route from Hadrian Road into the new tunnel. Residents of Willington Quay area believed this was going to be an access route into the tunnels. However, they have now discovered that it is a bus route only. Local residents believe that taking this link out of public use will force tunnel traffic to seek quicker routes into the tunnel through Tyne View Road. This is a currently residential area. TT2 noted that traffic consultants will need to assess this situation.

e) Rats

A North Local Partnering Forum representative suggested that there have been an increased number of rats in the East Howdon area since the tree felling took place. TT2 noted that only one complaint had been received about that, and that pest control services were sent out immediately. A South Tyneside Council representative commented that there have been no complaints from residents in Jarrow, despite a larger area of trees being cleared there. A North Tyneside Council representative added that the council's pest control department have monitored a general overall increase in rats in the North Tyneside Borough, which could not be attributed to the tree clearance activity in East Howdon.

f) Local Employment

A South Tyneside Council representative asked what the situation with jobs for local people is. TT2 explained that all of the subcontractors are recruited as locally as possible, and are encouraged to employ local people. There are clauses in the sub-contractors contracts that specify this.

Another TT2 representative explained that in relation to employment, enterprise and local skills, TT2 are working closely with the contractor. TT2 has also met with the National Skills academy to discuss their input into the project from a training perspective, giving local people the abilities to perform on the project. A suppliers database has been established, which is updated as local suppliers provide their details. Requests have been made through community networks for businesses to get in touch.

TT2 has issued a Code of Local Employment Practice, which all sub-contractors will be asked to sign up to. TT2 are also working closely with the riparian councils' economic development units regarding local employment opportunities.

<p>A member of the North Local Partnering Forum noted that East Howdon is one of the most deprived wards in the Borough. They receive money from central government (through Neighbourhood Management) to assist with the problem of worklessness.</p> <p>TT2 acknowledged this issue and noted that they are working with Bouygues and the National Skills Council to identify opportunities to train local people to enable them to take advantage of the opportunities on site and to build skills that could take them to jobs further a field too.</p>	
<p>6. Date of next meeting</p> <p>The next meeting will be held at 2pm on Monday 2nd June at Jarrow Town Hall.</p>	