

**To listen to an audio recording of the Part I section of this meeting,  
go to:**

[http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/%20meetings\\_audio\\_recordings\\_september2015.htm](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/%20meetings_audio_recordings_september2015.htm)

HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
PANEL

**14 SEPTEMBER 2015**

PRESENT: Councillors: Hari Sharma (Vice-Chairman), Maureen Hunt, Paul Lion and Nicola Pryer

Officers: Wendy Binmore, Mark Lampard and Ben Smith.

**PART I**

11/15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Malcolm Beer, Marius Gilmore and Jesse Grey.

12/15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

**Cllr Sharma** – Declared an interest as he worked for First Group as a professional driver and concessionary buss fares were mentioned in the report.

13/15 MINUTES

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 20 July 2015 be approved**

14/15 BUDGET SAVINGS 2016-17

The Finance Partner - Operations and the Head of Highways & Transport introduced the report to Members and confirmed it was to be discussed at Cabinet on 24 September 2015 after it had been discussed at overview and scrutiny panels. Members were invited to comment on the paper; the comments included:

- Cllr Sharma had concerns regarding the removal of concessionary passes. He said £40k was a small saving to make on a service that affected a large proportion of elderly residents. It would mean elderly or disabled residents not being able to make early morning hospital appointments. It would also mean the bus that arrives after 9.30am would be very busy as more people would wait to travel at off peak times.
- More publicity was required for elderly people being able to use vouchers for travel. They help fill in a gap between services so residents can get around. This needs to be advertised more widely to make people aware of it.
- Cllr Hunt was worried that to save money in Operations, redundancies would have to be made. She wanted assurances that jobs would be saved where possible.

- Cllr Hunt said she had a problem with buses in Knowl Hill on the A4 as their route was very long and scenic through Oldfield, Bray and Bracknell Forest. It was a very long journey for anyone trying to get back to Knowl Hill. She had asked the bus officer to look into it and find out how many school children used the bus service. The bus travelled its current route to enable school children to get to and from school.

The Finance Partner - Operations confirmed that he would feedback the comment regarding concessionary bus fares to Adult Services as that element was within their budget. He confirmed he would feedback information to Members.

The Finance Partner - Operations confirmed that a paper on streetlighting savings was approved by Cabinet in August 2015, and it mostly related to utility savings – the replacing of all lanterns with LED lights as they use significantly less electricity. The electricity and maintenance revenue budget on streetlighting is approximately £600,000, so by replacing the lanterns with LED bulbs would achieve a large saving.

Regarding line 21 and 22 of the report under the heading Operations, The Head of Highways & Transport confirmed that instead of taking historic budget spend, the team had looked at what was required and then worked out budget savings available.

The Head of Highways & Transport confirmed that he was projecting an increase in income from the New Roads and Street Works Act from 2016/17 because utility companies would pay for permits for the roads they needed to use; therefore, renting the space on the road up front. If they over-ran, the borough could impose penalties. The approach had been researched in other boroughs, and had proved successful.

With regards to line 11 of the Operations section, the Finance Partner Operations confirmed the procurement of a new residual waste disposal contract had been a significant exercise. The savings planned arise from a lower disposal rate per tonne using 'Energy from Waste' (EfW) instead of putting it into landfill, as in the current contract. The new contract would start in November 2015.

In response to comments regarding the restructuring of Operations, the Head of Highways & Transport confirmed that redundancies could be one of the ways of reducing costs. But it could equally be done by not filling vacancies. If teams were more efficient and due to technological improvements, it may not be necessary to refill vacancies. He could not confirm there would be no redundancies. The Finance Partner -Operations commented that Simon Fletcher, Strategic Director of Operations had been direct in saying that the council faced certain budget constraints, and savings were essential. The Head of Highways & Transport stated that in Operations, there was the expectation that the department would meet savings targets and Councillor Rayner was keen to keep enough staff to effectively deliver services.

15/15 MEETING

The meeting, which began at 6.30pm, ended at 7.40pm.

Chairman .....

Date .....