



PRCC.53 14/15
Prosperous Communities Committee
24 March 2015

B

Subject: Establishment of A West Lindsey Rail Improvement Group

Report by:

Chief Operating Officer

Contact Officer:

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Purpose / Summary:

To allow the Committee to consider the options around the establishment of a West Lindsey Rail Improvement Group as proposed in the motion submitted to and considered by the Council meeting on 10 November 2014

RECOMMENDATION(S):

1) That the Committee considers the options around the establishment of a West Lindsey Rail Improvement Group.

IMPLICATIONS

Legal: None arising from this report, however depending upon the type of partnership established the legal issues will have to be kept under review.

Financial None **FIN REF 146/15** (other than officer time to support the meeting and the costs of venues should the need for a venue other than the Guildhall be needed)

Staffing : None arising from this report

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights : None arising from this report.

Risk Assessment : None arising from this report

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities : None arising from this report

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:
Notice of motion submitted to Council on 10 November by Councillors Summers (attached as appendix)

Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

Yes **No**

Key Decision:

Yes **No**

1. Background

- 1.1 At a meeting of the full Council on 10 November 2014 Councillor Summers presented a motion proposing that a working group be established to build a case for the improvement of rail links through West Lindsey.

The Motion and Resolution is set out below: -

“Chairman.

On Friday 10th of October 2014 I attended an East Midlands rail summit at Loughborough accompanied by Councillor Lewis Strange. In excess of 100 delegates from the East Midlands were addressed by ELEVEN speakers. It was a full and very interesting day. The speakers were:

The Right Honourable Nicky Morgan MP

Anna Walker office of rail regulation

Phil Verster network rail

David Horne East Midlands trains

John Smith GB Railfreight

Alison Munro HS2limited

Councillor Jon Collins chair of East Midlands HS2 programme board

Lilian Greenwood MP shadow rail minister Bridget Roundswell Volterra

Ltd George Cowcher Derbyshire Notts and Leicestershire chamber of

commerce Michelle Craven-Faulkner Derby and Derbyshire rail Forum.

The main driver for the summit was HS2. But it very soon became apparent there would be fringe benefits for places like Gainsborough and Lincoln.

Lincoln city is a city destined for growth, you can see it happening right before your eyes. Growth is inevitable once the economy begins to move forward and this is where we as the local authority must influence how and where expansion occurs.

With that growth will come increased pressures on accessibility mainly highways.

Unless we shape the future.

I put some questions to the panel following presentations and during our lunch break Phil Verster of network rail approached me to say, "if you require rail improvements for the future you must begin lobbying now".

Mr Chairman it is obvious to me we have a number of areas in which we could lobby.

The A158 coming in from the coast via Horncastle and Wragby through Langworth is an extremely busy route in a morning and evening. A station at Langworth would enable commuters to park their cars at Langworth and ride on to Lincoln Central Station reducing the amount of congestion for the city. Another potential stop would be in the region of Fiskerton/Cherry Willingham. This Feeder Line comes all the way from Grimsby through Market Rasen These facilities would need to be DDA compliant for obvious reasons.

Serious consideration should also be given to the rail link between Lincoln and Finningly airport via Saxilby and Gainsborough. It was also noted how one speaker made a joke of Gainsborough Central Station pointing out the coach service arrived one minute after the train had left.

Mr Chairman.

I propose this Council forms a working group to build a case of justification for rail improvements through West Lindsey. This working group will work collaboratively with Lincoln City Council, Lincolnshire County Council and Bassetlaw District Council to formulate a representation to The HS2 program board, network rail, East Midlands trains and the Minister for rail.

I so move”

JJ Summers

The Leader of the Opposition expressed his support for the motion and this was echoed by other Members. It was agreed that more support was needed generally for rural public transport and a strategic view was required with everyone on board from neighbouring authorities. An individual’s name was also suggested as being a key group member.

It was proposed, seconded and voted upon that the matter be referred to the Prosperous Communities Committee.

RESOLVED that the content of the motion be referred to the Prosperous Communities Committee for detailed investigation and the establishment of a working group.

1.2 The motion was accepted by the Council and resolved *“that the content of the motion be referred to the Prosperous Communities Committee for detailed investigation and the establishment of a working group”*.

1.3 Whilst the motion is relatively straightforward there are a number of options available to this Committee around how it takes the resolution forward:

1. Establish a working group to investigation the issues set out in the motion supported by officers
2. Link the work around the rail links proposed in the motion to the wider work around rural transport and take it forward by that means
3. Refer the motion back to Council stating that the resources are not available to undertake this work at the present time.

1.4 Option 1.

Advantages:

Would start to tackle the issue immediately and be able to potentially influence the work going on around HS2 and other rail improvements taking place nationally. It would also raise the profile of rail transport in the District.

Disadvantages

Would need resourcing as an independent group which might be difficult at this time. Would run the risk of operating separately from other corporate priority work around rural transport which is in the process of being commissioned.

1.5 Option 2.

Advantages

Is capable of taking the issue forward relatively quickly and to integrate with the investigation around rural transport in general. Will ensure that more efficient use of made of resources by only having one initiative on transport going forward at this time.

Disadvantages

Could see the rail part of the work subsumed into a more general investigation into rural transport and so limit the ability of the work to influence rail improvements in the District. As a more broadly based piece of work could take longer to complete than a single piece of work concentrating on rail alone.

1.6 Option 3.

Advantages

Would not impose a strain on existing and infinite resources. Would allow focus on existing corporate priorities.

Disadvantages

The specific issue around rail links in West Lindsey would not be addressed. The opportunity to influence national rail providers (Train Operating Companies, Network Rail and the Government) would be lost.

2. Recommended Option

2.1 Rural transport is a corporate priority for the Council and rail links should be an integral part of that work given that we have a variety of lines and a variety of stations serving the District.

2.2 In view of this it is Option 2 is recommended to the Committee.