

## Isles of Scilly Link Project

### Minutes of the Route Partnership - Political Sub-Group Friday 18 September 2009, 1pm-3pm

Venue: St.Clare, Penzance – Committee Room 1

#### Attending:

##### Cornwall Councillors:

Graeme Hicks – Cabinet Member for Transport, Cornwall Council (Chairman)

Tamsin Williams – Penzance Central (including harbour)

Roger Harding – (part) Newlyn & Mousehole

##### Isles of Scilly Councillors:

Julia Day – Chairman & St.Mary's

Marian Bennett – Vice Chairman & Bryher

Dudley Mumford – Transport Cttee chairman & St.Mary's

Chris Thomas – St.Mary's

##### Officers:

Philip Hygate – RP Chairman, Chief Executive CIoS

Craig Dryden – Planning & Development, CIoS

Nigel Blackler – Head of Transportation, CC

Tim Wood – Project Director, CC

Nicola Yeates - Project Manager, CC (minutes)

1. **Apologies:** Sue Pass CC
2. **Visit** for internal viewing of the Penzance Trinity House depot.
3. **Minutes of 26 August 2009 meeting:**  
Councillor Roger Harding said it was the area adjacent to the beach that is used by swimmers (Tim Wood to liaise with Councillor Roger Harding on revised wording). Otherwise minutes accepted as a true record.
4. **CIoS Full Council meeting on 10 September, feedback:**  
Councillor Dudley Mumford reported that CIoS members voted unanimously in support of Battery Rocks (option A). Any increase in freight handling costs is over and above the already higher costs of goods on the Scilly (approximately 25% above mainland prices) and therefore they are not in support of option C.

Councillor Roger Harding said that some ask why Scilly should be a drain on Cornwall ? Philip Hygate responded saying that it is well documented that Scilly is a net contributor to the UK Treasury. He added that Falmouth has deep water facilities and would therefore offer a reduced project capital cost. RH recognised that the IoS economy is fragile and said that the extra freight handling costs identified could be compensated for by reduced interest payments on lower Council borrowing offered by option C.

Councillor Tamsin Williams asked if CIoS would support Option C if there were no net extra costs ? How much less expensive is Option C ? Nigel Blackler replied that it is

too early to confirm the full project costs of option C. Financial remodelling will then be required before Option C can be compared to Option A.

Councillor Dudley Mumford is concerned at potential for freight to be damaged between the out of town depot and the Penzance quay and how would special loads (bulky goods) be treated. Cllrs Julia Day and Marian Bennett supported DM's views and asked the Project Team to speak to islanders about the effect of option C on the supply chain (supplier – carrier – ship - island carrier – shop). Tim Wood requested a summary of islanders views be recorded and supplied. **Action: PH. Philip Hygate stated that the approach should be to maximise capital investment now because changes to UK and EU legislation cannot be predicted and should not be relied upon for future support.**

Councillor Chris Thomas suggested there would be issues for hauliers about splitting loads which would lead to making a manifest of goods to depot, separate manifest of goods direct to quay, responsibility for goods and damage, how many goods can go into depot and what would need to go direct to vessel.

Cllr MB asked if option C can be guaranteed for the future as a long term solution or if there is a risk that costs could increase? Tim Wood responded that CC are unable to have any control over freight and passenger charges as this must be left to market forces. This is no different to the current situation where the Isles of Scilly Steamship Company define the charges.

Cllr JD reiterated that CIoS are a member of the Route Partnership, have considered the Penzance options report and accepted the outcomes and backed option A. CIoS do not feel there is enough time to wait to see if option C works out as a credible' plan B'.

Cllr TW asked for examples of the additional costs on Scilly and where problems currently exist of damage to goods. Cllr JD **Action: PH to elaborate on Cllr JD's previous press statement which was not fully printed by *the Cornishman*.**

5. **CC Cabinet meeting on 16 September feedback:**

Nigel Blackler issued copies and talked through the presentation he had given to Cabinet which summarised key messages from the associated report. In particular:

- a. the tenders for the vessel build expire after 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2010. **PMN: Error in report, date should be 31 January 2010)**
- b. Penzance Harbour operational needs and issues raised during the consultation period on the original planning application and how these have been addressed in terms of modifications to the layout to create the current option A.
- c. Option C: quay extension and rock armour are still required but FoPH have requested no works to Battery Rocks. Capital savings by not building reclamation area to be invested in Trinity House and Longrock unit 18, modify both buildings to make them fit for purpose. Reduced CC borrowing likely to be required, lower charter fee likely due to increased operator liability, financial implications to be tested.
- d. CC are committed to the project for 25 years, design life of ship.

Craig Dryden asked if this is a number crunching exercise or does it address our overall project objectives. Tim Wood said the study would need to be wider than just the costs (eg health and safety, port security, passenger comfort etc).

6. **Route Partnership Update**

Philip Hygate said that in his opinion the political sub-group has added greatly to the project transparency and deliverability. This was supported by all. PH advised that tendering for the operator is well under way and final charter fee offers are expected on 20 October 2009. The Project Team has a lot of work to do now in progressing both option A and option C. DfT and RDA have been kept up to date with project progress and are still support the project.

7. **Project Update:**

Tim Wood said that there was nothing to add to PH's summary and invited questions. Cllr MB asked about off island luggage handling. TW said that he had responded to correspondence from Bryher Boats and that it will be considered in detail once the new operator has been appointed, probably in early February 2010, so that specifics can be discussed and actions attributed.

8. **General discussion and questions:**

It was noted that the Trinity House depot is a Grade 2 listed building with features that will restrict the extent of permitted alterations but it is a real asset as are its lighthouse artifacts. It was discussed that there ought to be many opportunities for reuse of this building through regeneration. If option A was chosen then this opportunity would remain.

Nigel Blackler asked that any issues CIOs have on freight handling are noted and forwarded to Tim Wood for inclusion in the current study.

9. **Date of Next Meeting :** Monday 19<sup>th</sup> October on St Mary's travelling by sea.

**PMN: date changed to 13 November, St.Mary's.**