

By: Overview, Scrutiny and Localism Manager

To: Environment and Regeneration Policy Overview Committee
6 November 2008

Subject: **SELECT COMMITTEES - UPDATE**

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report updates Members on the Select Committees on Passenger Rail Services in Kent and Flood Risk.

Select Committee on Passenger Rail Services in Kent

1. (1) At the last meeting of the POC the Committee noted the establishment of Select Committee to look at the issue of Domestic Rail Services. The establishment of this Select Committee was agreed by the Policy Overview Co-ordinating Committee at its on 10 September meeting.

(2) The Select Committee commenced its work on 2 September. The Chairman of the Select Committee is Miss S J Carey, other members being Mr T Birkett, Mr A Chell, Mr D Daley, Mr R Parker, Mr Richard Parry and Mrs Elizabeth Tweed. Mr K Bamber of Medway Council was a co-opted Member of the Committee.

(3) The aim of the Committee was to identify the best rail passenger services solution for Kent, both in terms of:-

- The immediate benefits of the solution in terms of journey times and improved services to London and around Kent ; and
- The long term benefits of the solution in terms of the regeneration of Kent and the impacts on the wider rail network and transport in the County.

(4) This involved investigating the following:-

- Current proposals of the franchise holders, Southeastern, for services from December 2009 and proposed fare levels;
- Forecasted effects of these proposals and whether they are robust - including whether rising general fare levels and additional premium fares on CTRL DS will prove to be a deterrent to travel by rail;
- The effects the proposed services will have on the regeneration of Growth Areas and the coastal towns;
- The case for new parkway stations at Minster and Westenhanger;

- The likelihood of rail heading to certain stations with significantly improved services and likely effects;
- Access to stations forecast to attract significant rises in passenger volumes;

(5) The Committee received both oral and written evidence from a wide range of witnesses. Witnesses included professionals dealing with rail and public transport issues and from the tourism and property industries.

(6) The report is currently going through its signing off process prior to being submitted to Cabinet on 1 December 2008.

Reconvened Select Committee: Flood Risk

2. This Select Committee is being reconvened in November/December 2008 to receive a report on progress with the recommendations one year after the Select Committee's report was submitted to Cabinet. The Minutes of this meeting will be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of the Policy Overview Committee.

Recommendations

3. The Committee is asked to:-
- (a) note the work of the Select Committee for Future Rail Services; and
 - (b) note the update on the Reconvened Select Committee for Flood Risk.

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Background Information: *Nil*