

Strategic Transport Forum

Friday 15th September 2017

At

Transport Systems Catapult, Milton Keynes

Present:	Cllr Heather Smith	Northamptonshire County Council (Chairman)
	Cllr Nigel Young	Central Bedfordshire Council
	Cllr Paul Castleman	Luton Borough Council
	Cllr Liz Gifford	Milton Keynes Council
	Cllr Ian Bates	Cambridgeshire County Council
	Mayor Dave Hodgson	Bedford Borough Council
	Hilary Chipping	South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership
	Andy Rhind	Department for Transport
	Simon Amor	Highways England
	Scott Meadley	Network Rail
	Phil Southall	Oxford Bus Company/Oxfordshire LEP
	Simon Mathieson	Arriva
	Andy Tatt	Peterborough City Council
	Nick Jones	Transport Systems Catapult
	Joan Hancox	Buckinghamshire County Council
	Martin Tugwell	Programme Director, Strategic Alliance
	Becca Dengler	Project Lead (Transport), Strategic Alliance
	Matt Stafford	Highways England (<i>part</i>)
	Rob Davenport	Jacobs (<i>part</i>)
	Steve Tomkins	Jacobs (<i>part</i>)

Minutes

		ACTION
1.	<p>WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS</p> <p>Chairman, Cllr Heather Smith, welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies received in advance were noted:</p> <p>Cllr Mark Shaw Buckinghamshire County Council Jeremy Long Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership</p> <p>Declarations of Interest: None were declared.</p>	
2.	<p>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING</p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting were discussed. Erica Blamire (Network Rail) requested minor amendments to the minutes, which were circulated to all in advance of the meeting. The minutes were agreed with those amendments.</p> <p>Cllr Heather Smith asked what progress had been made against the Delivery Partner</p>	APPROVED

	<p>actions from the previous meeting. Martin Tugwell noted that ongoing conversations with the Strategic Delivery Partners were positive and that further updates will be provided at future meetings as appropriate. It was noted that Volker Highways was now involved, but that discussions with Bedford Borough (whose service is provided in-house) are on-going.</p>	
<p>3.</p>	<p>OXFORD TO CAMBRIDGE EXPRESSWAY</p> <p>The project team (Highways England and consultant Jacobs) provided an overview of the project and set out in more detail the arrangements for engaging with local partners – these are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 'strategic stakeholder group' with England's Economic Heartland as a full member – with the group reporting to the overarching Project Committee. • An 'EEH and Local Authorities stakeholder reference group' on which representatives from local partners will sit – this will include both Elected Member and senior official representation. • Wider 'stakeholder reference groups' that will be open to all relevant interested parties across the study area. <p>Matt Stafford gave an overview of the work to date, noting that Jacobs have been appointed to progress the next stage of the Expressway work. Matt emphasised that their initial focus would be to work with local partners to ensure common understanding and agreement on the strategic objectives for the Expressway.</p> <p>Rob Davenport stated that the Expressway will enable a full link from the M4 to Cambridge in order to improve connectivity and support growth. Rob noted that it would be integrated with existing and future infrastructure and meet 'expressway' standards (including free-flow junctions etc.)</p> <p>Steve Tomkins highlighted that the Expressway project is not just about delivering a road, but about supporting transformational growth. Steve stated that there is a need to understand local intents from those involved/affected (via the stakeholder groups), whilst focussing on the vision and strategic objectives.</p> <p>Martin Tugwell referenced the paper before the Forum, noting that this had been shared beforehand with the Department for Transport (DfT) and the project team.</p> <p>Mayor Dave Hodgson asked whether the work programme included the Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet scheme. Matt Stafford responded that both are Highways England schemes and that the project team will be looking to integrate parts of all relevant schemes into the wider 'expressway' stakeholder engagement. Simon Amor highlighted that the Black Cat scheme is a commitment through the first Road Investment Strategy (RIS1).</p> <p>Cllr Ian Bates flagged that he was keen to see more detail for the Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet scheme (design and modelling work), noting that he would like the Greater Cambridge Partnership included within the discussion. Cllr Bates asked what progress is being made with A1 East of England study. Simon Amor stated that Highways England is still considering responses to the consultation however, it is intending to publish the scheme details this autumn. Simon noted that the A1 scheme is not as far advanced as the expressway, and that further work is required to develop the business case for any improvement.</p> <p>Cllr Nigel Young highlighted the need for improvements on the A1 corridor to tie in</p>	

<p>with the opportunities identified through the emerging Local Plan. He emphasised the importance of having clarity on the preferred routing as soon as possible in order to protect the land (as there are currently a number of housing proposals in the area). Andrew Davie and Cllr Liz Gifford supported the urgency of having clarity on preferred routes in order to assist with the preparation of Local Plans.</p> <p>Matt Stafford highlighted that the corridor is due to be identified the middle of next year, with work on establishing the exact route to follow. Matt noted that there will need to be trade-offs to enable maximum benefits.</p> <p>Martin Tugwell drew attention to section 4 of the covering paper, outlining strategic issues that the Transport Officer Support Group had identified as requiring further consideration. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of whether the 'expressway' investment is in a single or multiple routes between Oxford and Milton Keynes. • Development pressures/opportunities between Milton Keynes and Cambridge are such that the study must consider the need for further improvements to this section (notwithstanding the planned investment in the A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet improvement). • Consideration of the Forum's developing proposal for the Major Road Network. • Ensuring that (through the EWR Consortium) linkages are made between the 'expressway' and the development/delivery of East West Rail (both Western and Central Sections). • Ensuring that opportunities to improve north-south connectivity are also realised (to support economic growth across the whole of the Heartland area). 	<p>M Stafford</p>
<p>The project team will consider all of the points raised by the Forum.</p>	<p>M Stafford</p>
<p>The Forum AGREED:</p>	<p><i>APPROVED</i></p>
<p>a) To facilitate the establishment of an 'expressway stakeholder group' – membership to include representatives from local transport authorities, local planning authorities and local enterprise partnerships – to work with Highways England and the project team.</p>	<p>EEH Programme Team</p>
<p>b) To work with Highways England and the project team to arrive at a common understanding and agreement as to the strategic objectives that form the basis for the public sector making the investment.</p>	<p>EEH Programme Team</p>
<p>c) That the strategic issues set out in Section 4 need to be considered in more detail in arriving at a common understanding and agreement on the strategic objectives.</p>	<p>M Stafford</p>
<p>d) To support the need for a wider stakeholder reference group as part of the study process.</p>	<p>M Stafford</p>
<p>e) Continue to press Government on the national significance of prioritising funding to enable delivery of the 'expressway' as part Government's support for realising the 'once-in-a-generation' opportunity to improve connectivity in support of growth.</p>	<p>EEH Programme Team</p>
<p>The project team agreed to provide regular reports to the Forum.</p>	<p>M Stafford</p>

<p>4.</p>	<p>NATIONAL INVESTMENT PROGRAMMES – ROADS</p> <p>Martin Tugwell stated that the DfT and Highways England have asked the Forum (as the emerging Sub-national Transport Body) to identify its road investment priorities to feed into the development of RIS2. Martin then gave an overview of the covering paper, particularly drawing attention to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Forum’s approach should be shaped by three key principles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Ensuring that RIS1 commitments are delivered in full; b) Ensuring that investment priorities identified as a result of the strategic studies undertaken as part of RIS1 are programmed in RIS2 and taken forward into delivery; <i>and</i> c) Ensuring that any additional investment priorities are determined on a joint basis between Highways England and the Forum, using an agreed Major Road Network as the basis for identifying those priorities. • The DfT is having informal discussions with emerging Sub-national Transport Bodies (STB’s) in advance of the publication of the Department’s consultation on the Major Road Network proposal (due in the late autumn). The DfT’s consultation is anticipated to focus on the principles of the proposal, leaving it to the emerging STBs to develop detailed proposals. • As a further example of the strengthening working relationship between England’s Economic Heartland (as an emerging STB), the DfT and Highways England, the three partners have agreed to hold regular meetings at senior official level on a quarterly basis – what is referred to as ‘Highways Heartland’. This arrangement is similar to that established with Transport for the North and provides England’s Economic Heartland with the ability to ensure effective co-ordination of strategic activity across the Highways England investment programme, as well as early input into the development of new proposals. <p>Simon Amor assured that the RIS1 schemes are still committed in the Highways England programme.</p> <p>Cllr Nigel Young referred to the A1 East of England strategic study, highlighting that there is a large section of this route which is not to motorway standard, and asked for this to be noted within the Forum priorities and to be considered within the Expressway work. Cllr Young also stated that Central Bedfordshire supported proposals to improve connectivity from the A505 to the A1(M) by extending the A5-M1 and M1-A6 routes across to the A505, and requested that this also be included within the Forum priorities.</p> <p>Joan Hancox asked about the relationship between the M25 South West Quadrant Study and the Expressway work. Steve Tomkins highlighted that the stakeholder engagement work will include consideration of other local schemes and potential linkages (i.e. South West Quadrant, East West Rail, HS2 etc.)</p> <p>Bob Menzies gave an overview of the planned strategic study work within Cambridgeshire:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A14 – north of Cambridge (junctions) • M11 – junctions around Cambridge • M11 – potential extension (north of Cambridge to Wisbech) • A47 – upgrades 	
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	<p>The meeting AGREED the Forum's strategic road investment priorities (as set out in sections 4-7 of the covering paper: National Investment Programmes – Roads) with the addition of improvements to the A1(M) and A505 to A1(M).</p>	<p><i>APPROVED</i> EEH Programme Team</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>EAST MIDLANDS RAIL FRANCHISE</p> <p>Martin Tugwell noted that a key role for (emerging) STBs is providing strategic input into future rail franchises, and that the East Midlands franchise is the first opportunity for the Forum to do this. Martin then gave an overview of the meeting paper, particularly focussing on the key elements of the draft consultation response (based on initial discussions with Local Authorities affected and the wider Transport Officers Support Group).</p> <p>Martin Tugwell noted that he had attended the recent DfT stakeholder engagement event in Kettering, where many local issues and concerns were raised. The main points included: the lack of information contained within the consultation documents; the importance of services and infrastructure to support planned growth (particularly at Wellingborough); and the importance of connectivity at Kettering.</p> <p>Mayor Dave Hodgson noted that the issue is not just about connectivity, but speed of service (i.e. the proposal to reduce the speed of the Bedford to London service is a concern). Mayor Hodgson highlighted that the response needs to emphasise more the opportunities to link with East West Rail, and raised concern that East Midlands Councils had been heavily consulted without considering the wider stakeholders (leading to consultation proposals favouring London to East Midland links).</p> <p>Cllr Nigel Young supported the draft Forum response, particularly the additional services to Luton Parkway (due to huge investment in sustainable transport links and the Enterprise Zone). Cllr Young however requested the inclusion of a number of additional points to strengthen the response (summarised below):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strongly highlight the significant housing and economic growth over the coming decades, particularly where rail provision is part of the rationale for sites. • Emphasise the significance of the emerging Local Plans, highlighting how growth needs to be planned for over the franchise period (significant additional demand/pressure, particularly at Bedford, Flitwick and Luton). • With a £50m regeneration scheme proposed for Flitwick Station, request consideration for the inclusion of Flitwick as a stop on the proposed Corby – Bedford – Luton service in order to facilitate growth. • Highlight the need for improving station infrastructure to meet needs and improve the customer experience (i.e. ticket machines, disabled access, platform length etc.) • Consideration should be given to how the delivery of the wider East West Rail route might be incorporated (including the Bedford area), not just focussing on opportunities identified for the 'Eastern Section'. <p>All agreed for the above points to be included within the final Forum response.</p> <p>Cllr Liz Gifford highlighted the importance of all infrastructure schemes / rail franchises etc. being coordinated in order to fully support planned and future growth, and supported the Forum taking the leading role in this coordination. Laura Church concurred with this and suggested that a better relationship is required with the DfT (rail teams) and Network Rail in order to replicate the existing relationship</p>	

	<p>with DfT (road) and Highways England – which is working well. Martin Tugwell to consider and progress this with colleagues.</p> <p>Martin Tugwell suggested to incorporate the additional comments (above) into the draft response, plus any additional comments raised at the Bedford stakeholder engagement event (25th September). Martin committed to circulating a final draft for comments prior to submitting the formal response. All agreed to this approach.</p> <p>The Forum agreed that the lack of detail within the consultation materials published by the Department for Transport was of such concern that there was a case for calling for a second round of consultation.</p> <p>The meeting AGREED that:</p> <p>a) A revised draft response would be circulated to Forum members following the Bedford consultation engagement event.</p> <p>b) The response would include a call for a second round of consultation.</p> <p>In addition, the meeting AGREED to write to the Department for Transport and the National Infrastructure Commission setting out their deep concern regarding the difficulty of preparing draft Local Plans in the absence of clarity on the preferred routes for strategically significant infrastructure.</p>	<p>M Tugwell</p> <p><i>APPROVED</i></p> <p>B Dengler</p> <p><i>APPROVED</i></p> <p>M Tugwell</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>NATIONAL INVESTMENT PROGRAMMES - RAIL</p> <p>Martin Tugwell highlighted that as an emerging STB, England’s Economic Heartland has been asked to provide its initial advice on strategic priorities for consideration as part of the development of national investment priorities associated with the High Level Output Statement (HLOS). Martin gave an overview of the proposed strategic priorities.</p> <p>Cllr Nigel Young highlighted that there is a need for investment in improving facilities at rail stations to make them more attractive and help encourage use / interchange (i.e. Luton Rail Station has good bus links in place, but poor station facilities – i.e. ticketing). It was agreed that this point was of strategic significance.</p> <p>Cllr Ian Bates highlighted that rail issues for Cambridge related to north-south and east-west corridors. Cllr Bates also noted that there should be consideration for Stansted Airport.</p> <p>Martin Tugwell drew to the Forum’s attention the proposal to commission a short piece of technical advice which will consider whether the current rail passenger franchising map adequately supports the strategic objective of improved connectivity across the Heartland. Martin highlighted concern that the current approach to franchising is too heavily influenced by services to/from London. The Forum agreed to progress with the commission, Martin noted that the intention would be to bring the advice report to the Forum in January/February 2018.</p> <p>Martin Tugwell noted that there are proposals to hold an East West Rail All Party Parliamentary Group hosted event later in the autumn.</p> <p>The meeting AGREED:</p> <p>a) To seek the earliest possible announcement by Government in relation to funding for the delivery of the Western Section of East West Rail.</p> <p>b) That the outstanding strategic issues it wishes to have considered by</p>	<p>M Tugwell</p> <p><i>APPROVED</i></p> <p>EEH Programme Team</p> <p>EEH Programme</p>

	<p>a) Agreed the response to the Mayor of London’s Transport Strategy (appendix 1).</p> <p>b) Endorsed the initiative to work jointly with Transport for the South East in seeking an on-going Political engagement with the Mayor and Transport for London.</p> <p>Martin Tugwell confirmed that the Chairman of the Forum will write jointly with the Political lead for Transport for the South East, to the London Deputy Mayor (Transport) seeking a tri-partite meeting on strategic transport issues. This will help to ensure that the issues/comments raised within the consultation response can be taken forward.</p>	<p>EEH Programme Team</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>SUB-NATIONAL TRANSPORT BODY – MOVING FORWARD</p> <p>Martin Tugwell introduced the item by reminding the meeting that the Forum (at its meeting on 28th June) had agreed to adopt an incremental, two-step, approach to developing a proposal to establish a Sub-national Transport Body (STB). The Forum had also agreed to undertake an initial engagement with potential partners and interested stakeholders in order to gain their views on the approach and to start a discussion around what the proposal might consist of.</p> <p>The initial engagement work had subsequently taken place over the summer, highlighting the method and responses received (<i>see paper for details</i>). Martin recommended to the Forum that based on the discussions so far active conversations should be held with authorities across a wider area if it makes sense from a strategic transport perspective, noting the following as examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hertfordshire (linkage/importance of connections to Luton airport and London). • Swindon (supply chain from motor industry across). • Norfolk and Suffolk (links with East West Rail and strategic road connections, and links to ports). <p>CLlr Heather Smith asked whether the DfT would be more favourable of an STB covering a wider geographical area? Andy Rhind noted that Ministers are keen for STBs to be genuinely strategic in nature and therefore scale was likely to be important..</p> <p>CLlr Ian Bates suggested that discussions should be held with Sussex, Norfolk, and Essex, and that he would appreciate a view from the DfT as to their preferred approach to the STB coverage.</p> <p>Llewelyn Morgan suggested discussion with Swindon as Oxfordshire is currently working with them, and they are interested to work more closely with the Heartland.</p> <p>CLlr Nigel Young and Laura Church suggested that it would be important to engage with Hertfordshire from a strategic transport perspective.</p> <p>Hilary Chipping highlighted the need to ensure that Local Planning Authorities are involved in the work of the Forum and welcomed the approach to inviting representation from the new Growth Boards. Martin Tugwell highlighted that the Forum meetings are public and can therefore be attended by anyone. Martin also highlighted that there has been and will continue to be an open approach with the planning authorities.</p> <p>Phil Southall stated that he is pleased with the proposed approach for engaging with the public transport operators (i.e. via a Bus Operators Association), however he set</p>	

	<p>out that it would remain important that public transport operators were represented at the Forum. Martin Tugwell confirmed that the intention is that the Bus Operators Association (or alternative agreed group) would have representation on the Forum – similar to the Growth Boards.</p> <p>CLlr Liz Gifford suggested considering the geography of other current discussions/ projects (i.e. the Fast Growth Cities group – Cambridge, Oxford, Milton Keynes, Swindon and Norwich).</p> <p>The meeting AGREED the approach as proposed in the Sub-national Transport Body – Moving Forward paper, endorsing active conversations with local transport authorities in the wider area (as noted above) whilst ensuring that the Forum retains a size that is manageable and can continue to have a strong influence.</p> <p>The Forum agreed that the way forward would be for the core programme team, working with the Transport Officers Support Group, to review, revise and update the Terms of Reference for the Strategic Transport Forum (in parallel with discussions on wider cross corridor governance). Martin Tugwell noted that the revised set of Terms of Reference will be presented for consideration at the Forum’s December meeting.</p>	<p><i>APPROVED</i></p> <p>EEH Programme Team</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p><i>Three-year Business Plan</i></p> <p>Martin Tugwell highlighted that work to develop a three-year business plan was underway in partnership with the DfT, and that it will be presented to the December meeting for the Forum’s consideration.</p> <p><i>DfT Aviation Strategy – Consultation</i></p> <p>Martin Tugwell noted that the DfT is currently seeking views on the proposed approach for developing a new Aviation Strategy for the UK. Martin recommended that the Forum develop a response to this consultation, building on existing positions already agreed by the Forum and focusing on two key strands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Luton – as the key international gateway for Business Aviation, and importance of access into the Midlands, London and the wider Heartland. • Heathrow – as the UK’s largest global aviation gateway, and the importance of investment in access by non-car modes. <p>The meeting AGREED to develop a consultation response, to be signed off by the Chairman.</p>	<p><i>APPROVED</i></p> <p>EEH Programme Team</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p>DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS <i>(2018 meeting dates now confirmed and circulated)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15th December (11:00 – 13:00 @ Transport Systems Catapult) • 26th January (11:00 – 13:00 @ Transport Systems Catapult) • 16th March (11:00 – 13:00 @ Transport Systems Catapult) • 22nd June (11:00 – 13:00 @ Transport Systems Catapult) • 21st September (11:00 – 13:00 @ Transport Systems Catapult) • 7th December (11:00 – 13:00 @ Transport Systems Catapult) 	

Also in attendance:

Laura Church	Luton Borough Council
Keith Dove	Luton Borough Council
Tom Blackburne-Maze	Milton Keynes Council
Roy Boulton	Northamptonshire County Council
Andrew Davie	Central Bedfordshire Council
Stephen Mooring	Central Bedfordshire Council
Bob Menzies	Cambridgeshire County Council
Craig Austin	Bedford Borough Council
Llewelyn Morgan	Oxfordshire County Council
Adam King	Communications Manager, Strategic Alliance
Steve Kent	Project Lead (Delivery Partners), Strategic Alliance
Alan Francis	Milton Keynes Green Party - Public Transport

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