

Strategic Transport Forum

Friday 26th January 2018

At

Transport Systems Catapult, Milton Keynes

Present:	Cllr Heather Smith	Northamptonshire County Council (Chairman)
	Cllr Mark Shaw	Buckinghamshire County Council
	Cllr Yvonne Constance	Oxfordshire County Council
	Cllr Nigel Young	Central Bedfordshire Council
	Mayor Dave Hodgson	Bedford Borough Council
	Cllr Paul Castleman	Luton Borough Council
	Cllr James Mills	Oxfordshire Growth Board
	Graham Botham	Network Rail
	Ian Parsons	Highways England
	Simon Amor	Highways England
	Hilary Chipping	SEMLEP
	Phil Southall	OxLEP
	Richard Harrington	Bucks TV LEP
	John Seddon	Swindon Borough Council
	Graham Hughes	Cambridgeshire County Council
	Ruth Harper	Department for Transport
	Martin Tugwell	Strategic Alliance
	Stephen Moody	Strategic Alliance
	Adam King	Strategic Alliance
	Neil Poulton	WSP (agenda item 3)
	Ian Shepperd	WSP (agenda item 3)

Also Attending:

John Disley	Oxfordshire County Council
Roy Boulton	Northamptonshire County Council
Joan Hancox	Buckinghamshire County Council
Keith Dove	Luton Borough Council
Colin Thomas	CPRE Corridor Representative
Suzi Green	Bidwells
Alan Francis	Milton Keynes Green Party

Minutes

		ACTION
1.	<p>WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS</p> <p>Cllr Smith welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>The meeting agreed to the meeting being recorded, in order to assist in the</p>	

	<p>preparation of the minutes. Cllr Smith asked the secretariat to explore options for making the meetings accessible – possibly via webcasting. Mayor Dave requested that costs be explored and reported back to the Forum before taking a decision.</p> <p>Action: secretariat to explore costs and report back to next Forum</p> <p>Apologies: received in advance were noted:</p> <p>Cllr Ian Bates Cambridgeshire County Council Steve Kent Strategic Alliance</p> <p>Declarations of Interest: None were declared.</p>	
<p>2.</p>	<p>NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING</p> <p>Cllr Smith asked whether there were comments on the minutes from previous meeting. The following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add Cllr Paul Castleman to the list of apologies. • The Expressway Project Team has been meeting with partners, but if anyone has not set this up let us know and we can facilitate. • Forum members reiterated their desire to ensure MHCLG representation at the Strategic Transport Forum meetings. DfT to look into this further and advise. • Martin Tugwell reported that he had received a copy of the joint letter from MHCLG/DfT setting out Government’s proposal as to how it is taking forward work following on from the NIC final report. • Work on developing the Business Plan was on-going, as were discussions with DfT regarding future funding: Martin Tugwell advised that he was optimistic regarding future funding. • Work was on-going to identify appropriate representatives from the bus and rail operators: work was also on-going to establish the wider stakeholder reference group. 	<p style="text-align: right;"><i>Ruth Harper</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Programme Team</i></p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>TRANSPORT STRATEGY EVIDENCE BASE</p> <p>Hilary Chipping gave some words of introduction to the evidence base and ProjectView system. The current commission is now reaching the end of stages 1 and 2: copies of the final reports will be available shortly and the databank/ProjectView will available to partners by mid-February.</p> <p>Neil Poulton gave the Forum an overview of how ProjectView enables the user to interrogate the databank. Ian Shepperd gave a demo of the system and explained that no specific software is needed because this is a web based tool. ProjectView requires password access: all local authority and local enterprise partnerships across the Heartland area will be able to request access to the database/ProjectView.</p> <p>Cllr Heather Smith thanked WSP for their work and the presentation, and invited questions/ comments from the Forum. The following were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martin Tugwell highlighted that the databank/ProjectView is the first of the three components that’ll form the evidence base: the database (which illustrates the here and now), a datahub (options being explored by the Innovation Working Group), and a scenario policy modelling tool (work on which is about to be commissioned). 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Constance raised a series of points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How interactive will the tool be? • In terms of the scenario policy modelling, when will this be available? • How does new information get input to the tool? • Where and who puts new information in? Is this via the steering group? • How does someone get traction for new ideas on improving or amending the tools? • Martin Tugwell recognised that additional data needs to be added and could be added. There is potential to include databases that other sectors use e.g. business databases. The steering group will continue to keep the data updated, as well as acting as a focus for collating new ideas and filtering requests for access to the database. The core data held in the database will be updated every 12 months. It was anticipated that a proof of concept for the policy modelling tool will be available in the next three to four months. • Cllr Nigel Young asked whether the tools will allow the impact of new development on roads to be understood. Neil Poulton clarified that the ProjectView tool is focused on the more strategic roads – i.e. Highways England Strategic Road Network and the more significant local transport authority owned roads (building on the Rees Jeffreys work). The projections of housing and traffic growth currently in the tool are TEMPro, information from local plans, and Highways England’s SERTEM model to 2031. There is the ability to add other strategic model information into the tool. Martin Tugwell highlighted that when commissioning the policy modelling tool, the ambition was to collate information held within local transport authority owned models. 	
<p>4.</p>	<p>EAST WEST RAIL</p> <p>Martin Tugwell noted that East West Railway Company would be in attendance at the next Forum meeting. In the meantime he provided an overview of the scheme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Western section: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third round of consultation on Western Section ends 9th February. • Delivery partners are working towards a submission of Transport and Works Act submission in Spring 2018. There will be an opportunity for the Forum to formally consider the Transport and Works Act submission once it has been submitted. • Whilst the Transport and Works Act is the main mechanism for approvals, there are local consents also required. The Planning Ahead Working Group continues to act as a mechanism for collaborative working between Network Rail (and its partners) and local authorities. • There are a number of issues that will need to be addressed in the medium/ longer term: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities in the Oxford area where Oxford is becoming a hub in its own right, and there are opportunities to run East-West Rail trains through to Didcot for interchange with the Great Western Main Line. • A longer term solution is needed at the London Road Level Crossing in Bicester. Cllr Yvonne Constance thanked Martin Tugwell for highlighting this and giving it prominence. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need to ensure that opportunities for the route to accommodate additional freight services are not precluded in the short term: the Forum was reminded that the London Mayor’s draft Transport Strategy promoted the transfer of through freight movements off London infrastructure and onto surrounding routes. • Improved north-south connectivity along the corridor from Claydon Junction to London (Old Oak Common and Park Royal) via Aylesbury and Princes Risborough is a strategic priority for the medium/long term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central section: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work continues to develop a proposal for the preferred corridor: the ambition is to have a preferred route identified around the turn of the year. • It was noted that arrangements are being put in place to ensure coordination between Highways England (Expressway), East-West Rail, and EEH (Connectivity Study). • Eastern section <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Eastern Section is seen as an integral element of the overall project by the local authorities. • The objectives for this section are outlined on the East West Rail website – the work commissioned by the EWR Consortium has demonstrated that this is about more than just servicing local areas, but also about serving longer distance inter-regional journeys across the Heartland: it is also about connections to seaports and airports, as well as supporting ambitions for economic growth. • Emphasis on the need to work all way from the West to East, and closely with Norfolk and Suffolk. <p>Martin Tugwell noted that East West Rail Company has a direct line of reporting to the Secretary of State. Through the EWR Consortium we need to develop the working relationship with the Company moving forward.</p>	<p><i>Programme Team</i></p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>NATIONAL INVESTMENT PROGRAMMES – RAIL</p> <p>5(a) Strategic Vision for Rail</p> <p>Martin Tugwell highlighted the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-Christmas 2017 the Secretary of State published his Strategic Vision for rail. • There are cross boundary discussions between ourselves and representatives from the GLA and TfL. • Consideration of rail capacity – both infrastructure and services – needs to be built into the transport strategy. • There remains a need to tackle the issue that rail services continue to be dominated by movements into and out of London; EWR starts to improve east-west connectivity but it is just a start. • Core programme team is developing the brief for a piece of work to explore whether the current rail franchise map is fit for purpose going forward. <p>Cllr Nigel Young commented that whilst there is a need to cover the strategic issues, there are localised issues around station access for those with disabilities. Cllr</p>	<p><i>Programme Team</i></p>

<p>Heather Smith echoed this and said that the issue exists across the region. Ruth Harper said that the DfT are looking at this but she would take this back for further discussions with colleagues.</p> <p>5(b) Great Western Franchise</p> <p>Martin Tugwell said that there is an opportunity to shape this franchise as it is closer to the start of the process. The consultation response is required in early February. Overall the strategic objectives look broadly ok, but there is a need to emphasis access to stations and the importance of user requirements in this response.</p> <p>There are references to Western Rail Link to Heathrow, East West Rail, and interface with HS2 at Old Oak Common. It is suggested that the role of Oxford as a rail hub and capacity on the Didcot to Oxford section of the network are also included in our response.</p> <p>The consultation document raises the question as to whether the geographical scope of the franchise needs to be reviewed moving forward. Martin Tugwell suggested that it is right to consider this, but at this stage it is not possible to take a view on whether the proposal to split the franchise is appropriate. Other things to consider included connectivity to Swindon from the wider Heartland area, and the restoration of rail connectivity to other communities west of Didcot. At this stage it is a case of putting down markers of items to discuss.</p> <p>Cllr Mark Shaw stated that there is a need to include a statement in the response around the importance of working with bus operators to in the franchise arrangements.</p> <p>Martin Tugwell summarised the points from the discussions as being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stressing the importance of improving access to for all to/ from and within stations. • Highlighting the need to improve integration between rail and bus services. • Need to make a stronger reference to the North Cotswold Line. <p>John Seddon asked that there be reference in the response to capacity challenges on Didcot to Swindon and Bicester areas if franchise is split.</p> <p>The meeting AGREED that Annex 1 form the basis of the Forum's response to the consultation. It also AGREED that the Chairman be delegated to sign off the consultation response</p> <p>5(c) East Midlands Franchise</p> <p>Martin Tugwell started the discussion by saying that the franchising process is still giving cause for concern. The timetable changes proposed from May 2018 came as a surprise and are deeply concerning.</p> <p>Mayor Dave Hodgson stated his concern that no intercity trains will be stopping at Luton and Bedford between 7am and 10am, and 4pm and 7pm. He was concerned that the Thameslink trains are currently standing room only and so there will be further concerns regarding capacity for passengers. There seems to be minimal concern about the users. He noted that inward investors are attracted by the 30 minutes journey time, increasing towards an hour changes their investment view of the area.</p>	<p><i>Ruth Harper</i></p> <p><i>Programme Team</i></p> <p><i>Programme Team</i></p>
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	<p>maintenance and renewals are included, continue to build smart motorways network, roll out of expressways, transformational schemes, whether there are smaller schemes that provide good benefit, an eye to the future to understand emerging technology.</p> <p>Mayor Dave Hodgson, highlighted that A1(M) infrastructure is needed up front to help deliver planned growth.</p> <p>Cllr Paul Castleman raised the question of the extension of smart motorways. Simon Amor responded that the programme for extending the smart motorways will be rolled out over the coming years.</p> <p>The meeting AGREED the response set out in Annex 1</p> <p>6(b) Major Roads Network Consultation</p> <p>Martin Tugwell gave an overview that the consultation is now out and that the next Forum will be asked to consider its response. At this stage he suggested that the key issues were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need for a single road network. • Definition based on current road conditions may not necessarily consider the impact of infrastructure that is transformational in terms of changing travel patterns. • The need for a programme approach, with a similar 5 year programme approach used for the SRN and rail networks. <p>6(c) Connectivity Study</p> <p>Martin Tugwell gave an overview with the key points being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome commitment of government to commission the connectivity study. • A draft project brief needs to be developed, in collaboration with the Department for Transport • The connectivity study would need to be undertaken at pace to support the development of the overarching transport strategy and development of the Expressway. 	<p><i>Programme Team</i></p>
<p>10.</p>	<p>DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS</p> <p>The 2018 dates for the Strategic Transport Forum are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friday 16th March : 11:00 – 13:00 @ Transport Systems Catapult • Friday 22nd June : 11:00 – 13:00 @ Transport Systems Catapult • Friday 21st September : 11:00 – 13:00 @ Transport Systems Catapult • Friday 7th December : 11:00 – 13:00 @ Transport Systems Catapult 	