



## **STRATEGIC TRANSPORT FORUM: Minutes**

Friday 7<sup>th</sup> December

11:00 – 13:00

### **Board Room 14 Innovation Centre, University Way Cranfield, MK43 0BT**

**Present:**

Laura Church	Luton Borough Council
Hilary Chiping	SEMLEP
Helen Wylde	Transport Systems Catapult
Simon Bowers	Daventry District Council
Adam King	EEH Business Unit
Naomi Green	EEH Business Unit
Amanda Jacobs	EEH Business Unit
Martin Tugwell	EEH Business Unit
Ian Barnham	Bucks Thames Valley LEP
Simon Amor	Highways England
Mayor Dave	Bedfordshire Borough Council
Martin Hartley	Network Rail
Patsy Dell	Hertfordshire County Council
Chris Pettifer	Bedford Borough Council
Ahmed Goga	Oxfordshire LEP
Angela Macpherson	Aylesbury Vale District Council
Nigel Young	Central Bedfordshire Council
Yvonne Constance	Oxfordshire County Council
Nigel McCurdy	Huntingdonshire
Maureen Penny	Swindon
John Disley	Oxfordshire County Council
Graham Hughes	Cambridgeshire
Roy Boulton	Northamptonshire
Richard Harrington	Bucks County Council
Jan Simpson	Highways England
Josh Monahan	DfT Rail review
Steve Hayes	Milton Keynes City Council
Mark Kemp	Hertfordshire County Council
Helen Wylde	TSC
Andrea Haynes	Network Rail
Paul Castleman	Luton Borough Council
Ian Bates	Cambridgeshire County Council
Robin Knight	Stagecoach
Ruth Harper	Department for Transport

**Apologies:** Joan Hancox Buckinghamshire County Council  
Rob Smith Buckinghamshire County Council

# Minutes

		ACTIONS
<b>1</b>	<p><b>WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS</b></p> <p>Mayor Dave welcomed everyone to the meeting, introductions were given and the meeting was informed that it was a public meeting which was being casted to Youtube.</p>	<b>None arising</b>
<b>2</b>	<p><b>NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING</b></p> <p>The meeting agreed that the previous minutes were a true and accurate record, with the exception of agenda item 3 (Expressway and Connectivity Study). Agenda item 3 incorrectly stated that the announcement on the preferred route for 'Corridor B' was anticipated to be made in the second half of 2019, this should have been '2020'.</p>	<b>None arising</b>
<b>3</b>	<p><b>TRANSPORT STRATEGY</b></p> <p>Naomi Green opened the item by reporting that the EEH Business Unit were working towards the delivery of a Draft Transport Strategy by the summer of 2019. The Strategy will help drive economic growth along the corridor by setting the right connectivity conditions to realise the NIC's ambition of doubling/tripling the economy.</p> <p>To achieve this, a coordinated approach to investment and strategic transport planning is required. Naomi Green highlighted the important foundations the Strategic Transport Forum has laid to deliver things differently, complementing the unique growth conditions facing the Heartland.</p> <p>The conversation focused around the need for the Transport Strategy to look towards 2050 whilst recognising the current short term infrastructure requirements of the Heartland, which includes the next couple of years. The vision of a zero carbon network continued to be well received by the meeting. A commitment to work collaboratively to ensure the best chance of achieving this was agreed.</p> <p>The meeting agreed that the principles for the Transport Strategy were a good reflection of the Forum's previously recorded expectations and noted the progress that had been made in terms of developing the regional evidence base, which included Project View, the Databank and the Scenario Modelling Tool, which most recently demonstrated proof of concept.</p> <p>The meeting confirmed the importance of the Transport Strategy in realising LEP's pan-corridor economic vision and how a spatial vision could improve the way growth is unlocked. The meeting noted and supported EEH's vision for the Transport Strategy which centres on connecting our people and places with opportunities and services. This vision encompasses better connectivity that supports housing and employment markets that work for everyone.</p> <p>Naomi Green proceeded to give a summary on the approach to the Transport Strategy. The three pillars of the Strategy were economy, quality of life, and accessibility and inclusion. The Strategy would be split into two parts, the first focusing on transformative growth and maximising our global links and major investment, the second about maintaining existing service levels. The ensuing discussion referred to the work EEH are taking forward on Freight and Logistics and a first/last mile study that is being commissioned imminently. Behaviour change, preserving our assets and resilience will be captured as part of this work.</p> <p>Many of the forum felt that upfront, day one transport investment in new developments is essential. Imbedding best practice into the early design stages creates the greatest ground swell of propensity to change.</p>	



	<p>Retrofitting transport infrastructure was felt to many to be an inadequate strategy.</p> <p>Cllr Yvonne Constance echoed this challenge and highlighted issues of demand on the network in Oxfordshire. Resolving this requires radical new thinking. Any lessons learnt in first/last mile principles will be shared with her respective officers. Naomi Green responded by confirming that an engagement programme with Oxfordshire and those communities will be set out in due course.</p> <p>The meeting acknowledged that it was key to understand the connectivity between East West Rail and the expressway, and that increasing innovation of the transformative growth section of the Strategy was key. Naomi Green responded by confirming that HE continues to collect evidence on the relationship between these two projects ,and additionally, work with the Bus Operator Association continues to be taken forward.</p> <p>Cllr Dave highlighted that the principles around quality of life links to the first/last mile study, although arguing for investment was needed. Naomi Green recognised this and confirmed a feature of the solutions suggested in the first/last mile study will determine how we will set the pathway for increased investment.</p> <p>Cllr Nigel Young welcomed the work being taken forward on Freight and Logistics, particularly the way we have engaged with businesses. Cllr Ian Bates suggested there would be value in the EEH Transport Strategy considering the work undertaken by Dame Kate Barker on behalf of Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority - this should feed into the thought process, helping futureproof the Strategy.</p> <p>Final comments on the Transport Strategy were received from Al Francis from the MK Green Party to reiterate the importance of considering the environment. Robin Knight from Stagecoach felt the outline Strategy was a very good platform in which to move forward, and reminded the meeting that the Strategy should continue to focus on users.</p> <p><b>The Forum AGREED to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a) Endorse the proposed approach to the Transport Strategy;</b></li> <li><b>b) The vision and three strategic principles and proposed approaches for defining and measuring them for the Economic Heartland strategy;</b></li> <li><b>c) Note the proposed content of the transport strategy, set out in Annex A.</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Naomi Green</b></p>
<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>EXPRESSWAY AND CONNECTIVITY STUDY</b></p> <p>Jan Simpson from Highway’s England (HE) provided an overview on engagement being taken forward in relation to the Expressway. Jan confirm that HE were preparing for non-statutory consultation in November 2019 and continued to engage with various MP’s in the corridor. Jan advised the group that future engagement would be with all local authorities and committed to increasing stakeholder engagement throughout 2019.</p> <p>Members of the forum pressed the need for the engagement project to encompass, and put into ongoing discussions with HE, the Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet and the Girton Interchange. Jan confirmed that the Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet remains a firm commitment with HE and further detail on this should be announced by the end of the year. An announcement on the Girton Interchange is less forthcoming, due in part to the need to understand modelling outputs from the Ox-Cambridge expressway.</p>	



	<p>The meeting were advised that the M40 would be captured as part of the Connectivity Study and the findings of the A1 East of England study would bear relevance as part of this work too. Other key A-roads including the A416/A505 were also noted as being significant corridors that required consideration.</p> <p>Martin Tugwell suggested that at the next meeting there should be a session that focused on connectivity on the east of the corridor, this should include the A47. As part of the MRN work moving forward, it was agreed that this should include how we pick up connectivity with Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire moving forward. There continued to be a general consensus that the 'missing link' element of the Expressway was intrinsically linked to shaping local plans – something HE accepted.</p> <p>Maureen Penny confirmed that Swindon's positioning on the West End of the corridor was a key link that should not be forgotten. Naomi Green confirmed that the A420 was being captured in the scope of the connectivity study. Naomi Green advised the group that findings of the connectivity study would inform the Transport Strategy. This includes how we must capture the behaviour change that may affect the planning of the expressway. There was an opinion that HE did not always provide visibility to design a road network suited to our place, rather a linear structure in a given geography.</p> <p>Naomi's Green sentiment was echoed by the group, and Martin Tugwell, who felt we need to think about the logic of designing a road that will be delivered ten years after East-West Rail. Ruther Harper confirmed that the DfT are integrating road and rail as part of their strategic focus and HE responded by confirming that construction of the Expressway would start in 2025 and be open by 2030. In addition, communities would receive an appropriate level of severance in terms of junction design to relieve network capacity challenges.</p> <p><b>The Forum AGREED to :</b></p> <p><b>a) Write to the Secretary of State for Transport setting out its concerns regarding the approach being following by the expressway project team</b></p> <p><b>b) Endorse the proposed approach for taking forward the connectivity study</b></p>	<p><b>Martin Tugwell</b></p>
<p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b>MAJOR ROAD NETWORK</b></p> <p>Naomi Green gave an update and overview on the Major Road Network. The meeting were reminded that early entry proposals were submitted by EEH on behalf of Hertfordshire (A414) and Buckinghamshire (Aylesbury Eastern Link Road). The EEH Business Unit are yet to hear from the DfT regarding these schemes, despite the Department announcing others. A view was taken that they might be considered in light of the spending review.</p> <p>Naomi Green suggested that the impact of not agreeing schemes now could risk loss of potential future development alongside these schemes. Forum members recognised the misbalance in spending between the MRN and SRN, that being an indicative spend of 25 million on the SRN versus 3.8 million on the MRN. Nigel Young suggested this was in the region of a 90% - 10% split.</p> <p>Forum members recognised that despite some details being released in the MRN consultation guidance, there continued to be no agreed principles on how funding will be allocated. It was felt that the SRN/MRN should not be treated in isolation, particularly where there is a better solution which may</p>	



	<p>not necessarily align with the proposed DfT model.</p> <p>The meeting were advised that the DfT will be working closely with Sub-national Transport Bodies to develop an indicative budget. The meeting welcomed this but many demonstrated frustration in not having heard back regarding the MRN schemes, particularly when considering they had a very tight window in which to put these schemes forward.</p> <p>A final point was made on the need to consider the way MRN prioritisation takes account of Local Growth Fund Schemes, particularly if there is an opportunity to incorporate the two.</p> <p><b>The Forum AGREED to:</b></p> <p><b>a) Restate its concerns about the delayed announcement of MRN early entry schemes.</b></p> <p><b>b) Note the DfT's approach to the structure of the MRN, including the breakdown of the National Roads Fund between the SRN and the MRN.</b></p> <p><b>c) Note the proposed approach to developing a methodology for the investment prioritisation of the MRN in the Heartland area.</b></p>	<p><b>Naomi Green</b></p>
<p><b>6</b></p>	<p><b>RAIL REVIEW</b></p> <p>Josh Monahan presented some of the key aspects of the William's Rail Review. Josh opened the meeting by suggesting that aspects of the existing rail system is ridged and part of the review should consider how it can flex before it hits a breaking point.</p> <p>The presentation covered what was in scope, and what was out of scope, of the review. This included governance arrangements and deliverables. The meeting was advised that the government is investing record levels in the railways. Recommendations should therefore avoid negative impacts on the public sector balance sheet and/or creating additional government expenditure beyond reasonable transition cost.</p> <p>The group were advised that the secretariat is made up of 25 members, and government will be producing a white paper which will broadly follow engagement in the Spring, testing in the Summer and finalising in the Autumn of 2019. The call for evidence, launched on the 6<sup>th</sup> December, was a key component in this programme.</p> <p>Mayor Dave reminded the DfT of the need for future franchising models to better understand the needs of the travelling public. Historical examples were cited where DfT's assumptions on what passengers wanted has actually compounded issues.</p> <p>The Forum suggested the review should capture pricing, particularly given the high cost of travelling by rail, which does not always guarantee a quality travel experience. This prompted challenges from the Forum, including the need for the DfT to consider a whole sale change of cultural investing in trains.</p> <p>Comments regarding the need to better integrate rail with other public services at the point of franchise renewal were received. The review needed to focus on 'time/cost and convenience' and with the Bus Services Act 2017.</p> <p>Forum members agreed that England's Economic Heartland should have a place on the Rail Review Team. Cllr Yvonne Constance recommended this message should receive greater focus in the draft submission from the Strategic Transport Forum.</p>	



	<p>Cllr Ian Bates welcomed the call for evidence and highlighted both local connectivity challenges, with Cambridge North Station, and the need to understand freight requirements as part of this review, particularly with the volume of freight coming from Felixstowe. Helen Wylde echoed this point and felt there is a need for DfT to pick up linkages into the East Coast.</p> <p>John Disley provided comment on the need for the scope of work to consider how the rail industry can play a part in delivering growth. The Oxfordshire Rail Review goes some way in exploring how growth can shape the delivery of the railway in that part of the Heartland. Mark Kemp added that there needs to be a cultural shift in the way Network Rail and local authorities work together, recommending that both parties working together on the right strategic objectives would improve the issue of shared value uplift.</p> <p>Martin Tugwell summarised by confirming that the draft submission to the Department for Transport was work in progress. A final message was provided to the Forum about the need to challenge assumptions about rail growth. It was felt that there is a strong propensity in the Heartland to use rail but the system does not allow the public to do it. A closing point was made on the way franchise bidders did not integrate with bus operators due to commercial competition sensitivities.</p> <p><b>The Forum AGREED to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a) Welcome the Rail Review and note the Terms of Reference</b></li> <li><b>b) Set out the key strategic issues for the Forum in a submission to the Rail Review (Annex 2)</b></li> <li><b>c) Note the work being taken forward that is of relevance to the Rail Review</b></li> </ul>	<b>Martin Tugwell</b>
<b>7</b>	<p><b>EAST WEST RAIL</b></p> <p>Martin Tugwell introduced this agenda item by reaffirming the importance of East West Rail as one of the major pieces of infrastructure being shaped by EEH. The Western Section continues to head towards a Transport and Works Act Order. The EWR Consortium's position is provided in the papers.</p> <p>The meeting reflected on the direction of travel for the West Coast Mainline post-delivery of HS2 and East West Rail. The meeting were advised that Sub-national Transport Bodies would be instrumental in taking forward this work, an example of the way EEH are looking to see how they imbed fibre and 5g along the corridor was indicative of the way EEH are shaping design of this project.</p> <p>The meeting enquired as to which train operating company may operate the railway, Martin Tugwell expressed that work would be ongoing with Chiltern Railways to understand more about future franchising intentions.</p> <p>The Forum reflected on the Central Section and requirements that may need to be considered ahead of the consultation commencing in January. The meeting acknowledged a strategic view on the Eastern Section must be kept and collectively agreed that it is of equal importance to the Western Section. Cllr Ian Bates supported recommendations on the Eastern Section and reminded the meeting of the Ipswich's legacy in the East West Rail concept.</p> <p>Ensuing discussions highlighted some particular local concerns with elements of the Western and Central Sections but the meeting were satisfied with all the recommendations set out in the paper.</p>	



	<p><b>The Forum AGREED to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a) Endorse the East West Rail Consortium’s position in relation to the draft Transport and Works Act Order for the Western Section, specifically the need for the Order scheme to address the issues identified by the Consortium as being integral to its delivery.</b></li> <li><b>b) Note the work being taken forward by Network Rail to look at the future use of capacity on the West Coast Main Line</b></li> <li><b>c) Support the development of a business case for the installation of digital infrastructure alongside the delivery of the Western Section</b></li> <li><b>d) Support the need to explore with existing Train Operators the best way of delivering initial passenger services on the Western Section and to that end invite Chiltern Railways to attend the next meeting of the Forum</b></li> <li><b>e) Note the arrangements being put in place in anticipation of the forthcoming engagement by the East West Railway Company on the Central Section</b></li> <li><b>f) Confirm the strategic importance of the Eastern Section to this Forum as an integral element of the overall East West Rail project</b></li> <li><b>g) Instruct the EEH Business Unit to work with local partners in the Eastern Section and with Network Rail with a view to identifying the work required to develop detailed proposals for the Eastern Section</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Martin Tugwell</b></p>
<p><b>8</b></p>	<p><b>EEH BUSINESS UNIT UPDATE</b></p> <p>Naomi Green provided an update on the EEH Business Unit and confirmed that EEH are expecting a spending review in the forthcoming year. EEH have a regional evidence base to build in to that review.</p> <p>Naomi Green reported that cross cutting approaches with the Local Enterprise Partnerships and other Sub-national transport bodies were ongoing to deliver the economic vision for the Heartland and understand the opportunities to deliver transport and infrastructure respectively.</p> <p>The meeting were advised that the EEH Business Unit would meet economists and modellers of the Department for Transport on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> December to demonstrate the policy scenario modelling tool. The tool will build on static data we already hold and new live UTMC traffic data from local transport authorities.</p> <p>The Forum were updated on the conferences attended by the EEH Business Unit in November that included Highways UK and the Local Transport Summit, both of which reinforced the value of Sub-national transport bodies.</p> <p>The meeting concluded by requesting that agenda papers are put on the EEH website a week in advance of the meeting.</p>	<p><b>None arising</b></p>

<p><b>9</b></p>	<p><b>Future Meetings – 2019</b></p> <p>25th January (11-14.00) @ Bedford Borough Council , Borough Hall, Cauldwell St, Bedford MK42 9AP</p> <p>29th March (11-14.00) @ Transport Systems Catapult, The Pinnacle, 170 Midsummer Blvd, Milton Keynes MK9 1BP</p> <p>17th May (11-14.00) @ Bedford Borough Council , Borough Hall, Cauldwell St, Bedford MK42 9AP</p>	<p><b>None arising</b></p>
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