

Strategic Transport Forum

Wednesday 28th June 2017

At

Portfolio Innovation Centre, Northampton

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| Present: | Cllr Heather Smith | Northamptonshire County Council (Chairman) |
| | Cllr Mark Shaw | Buckinghamshire County Council |
| | Cllr Paul Castleman | Luton Borough Council |
| | Cllr Liz Gifford | Milton Keynes Council |
| | Cllr James Jamieson | Central Bedfordshire Council |
| | Mayor Dave Hodgson | Bedford Borough Council |
| | Hilary Chipping | South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership |
| | Llewelyn Morgan | Oxfordshire County Council |
| | Andy Rhind | Department for Transport |
| | Simon Amor | Highways England |
| | Erica Blamire | Network Rail |
| | Simon Mathieson | Arriva |
| | Martin Tugwell | Programme Director, Strategic Alliance |
| | Steve Kent | Project Lead (Delivery Partners), Strategic Alliance |
| | Becca Dengler | Project Lead (Transport), Strategic Alliance |
| | Nick Evans | Bircham Dyson Bell (<i>part</i>) |
| | Jessica Healy | Bircham Dyson Bell (<i>part</i>) |

Minutes

| | | ACTION | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| 1. | <p>WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS</p> <p>Chairman, Heather Smith, welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies: received in advance were noted:</p> <table> <tr> <td>Cllr Ian Bates</td> <td>Cambridgeshire County Council</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Richard Harrington</td> <td>Buckinghamshire Thames Valley LEP</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Brian Forest</td> <td>Civil Engineering Contractors Association (<i>replacing Adam Tuke</i>)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bev Hindle</td> <td>Oxfordshire County Council</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Graham Hughes</td> <td>Cambridgeshire County Council</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Andy Tatt</td> <td>Peterborough City Council</td> </tr> </table> <p>Declarations of Interest: None were declared.</p> <p>Martin Tugwell welcomed Andy Rhind to the meeting, explaining that he has temporarily replaced Rupert Furness at the Department for Transport (DfT).</p> | Cllr Ian Bates | Cambridgeshire County Council | Richard Harrington | Buckinghamshire Thames Valley LEP | Brian Forest | Civil Engineering Contractors Association (<i>replacing Adam Tuke</i>) | Bev Hindle | Oxfordshire County Council | Graham Hughes | Cambridgeshire County Council | Andy Tatt | Peterborough City Council | |
| Cllr Ian Bates | Cambridgeshire County Council | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| 2. | <p>NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING</p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed. Martin Tugwell confirmed that any outstanding items would be covered through the main meeting agenda.</p> | |
| 3. | <p>SUB-NATIONAL TRANSPORT BODY</p> <p>Martin Tugwell highlighted that the Strategic Transport Forum's ambition to develop a proposal for a Sub-national Transport Body has already brought added value for the Alliance, particularly in terms of influencing the Route Strategies of Highways England and Network Rail.</p> <p>It was noted that there are currently a number of emerging Sub-national Transport Bodies, however only one has formally submitted a proposal to the DfT. Andy Rhind confirmed that Transport for the North's proposal is currently being considered by Government.</p> <p>Martin reminded the meeting that there is no template set for Sub-national Transport Bodies; therefore there is an ability for local partners to tailor proposals to suit the needs of the area. However, one essential requirement of a Sub-national Transport Body is to prepare and maintain a Transport Strategy.</p> <p>Bircham Dyson Bell was commissioned to provide initial advice to the Strategic Transport Forum, setting out the issues and options that the Forum would need to consider in developing a proposal. He noted that there had been an open invitation for quotes: Bircham Dyson Bell had submitted the best offer, as well as having had the benefit of already providing similar advice to Transport for the North.</p> <p>Bircham Dyson Bell's report highlighted that there are a range of options for a Sub-national Transport Body which the Forum could consider (further detail is contained within the meeting papers). He reported that the Transport Officers Support Group felt that an incremental approach would be the most appropriate way forward, focussing on option 2 (strengthening the current arrangements but remain a non-statutory partnership) as part of a journey towards option 3 (establishing a statutory Sub-national Transport Body, whose focus remains on strategic issues). This incremental approach would allow for further conversations with prospective partners and stakeholders to be had and for the proposal submitted to Government to have benefited from having evolved in response to practical experience. The ultimate aim remained to become a statutory body.</p> <p>Martin recommended that the next step should be to engage with and seek views from individual members of the Forum and other interested parties across the Heartland, and to seek view from adjoining areas (including local transport authorities and user groups such as Transport Focus).</p> <p>Martin emphasised that as part of the initial engagement to be undertaken there was a need to consider how the links to local planning authorities might be strengthened. He noted that the current working arrangements enabled some closer working (i.e. Oxfordshire Growth Board has the ability to nominate a representative to the Forum, in addition to Oxfordshire County Council and OxLEP). The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority was to be invited to participate in the Strategic Transport Forum.</p> <p>Keith Dove suggested that the ADEPT East of England meeting on 4th July would be a good opportunity to engage a wider group, Martin confirmed that Laura Church will be updating the ADEPT meeting and that members of the group will be offered</p> | <p>M Tugwell</p> |

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| | <p>Cllr Liz Gifford highlighted the importance of the interplay between local and strategic levels. Hilary Chipping highlighted this links in well with the National Infrastructure Commission’s ‘first mile, last mile’ work.</p> <p>The meeting ENDORSED the proposal for the wider Transport Strategy programme to commission the work in three phases (as set out in the paper).</p> | <p><i>Endorsed</i></p> |
| <p>5.</p> | <p>DELIVERY PARTNERS</p> <p>Steve Kent gave a verbal update on progress made to date with the Strategic Delivery Partners Group.</p> <p>Steve Kent advised that he is funded on a part-time basis by the delivery partners within the Heartland area to coordinate the group’s activities and represent them within the Alliance. Steve noted that not all of the delivery partners are currently engaged, and requested that Forum Members encourage those that are not yet involved. Those engaged with currently are: Kier WSP; Ringway Jacobs / Ringway; Skanska.</p> <p>Cllr Paul Castleman noted that Volker were not mentioned, therefore Luton Borough Council (via Laura Church) will liaise with Volker to encourage them to engage.</p> <p>Steve Kent stated that he is currently working with the delivery partners on how they can best align with the ambition/ objectives of the Alliance and identify the key work areas that should be developed in order to achieve this. Steve noted that the delivery partners have been informally requested to join the Alliance (highlighting the importance of their participation), but requested that this involvement be formalised in some way. Martin Tugwell agreed to draft an initial formal letter to the delivery partners from the Forum, with a follow-up letter to be sent through the relevant local authorities.</p> <p>Steve Kent outlined that the Strategic Delivery Partners Group has agreed to initially focus attention on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement in discussions regarding the Major Road Network, particularly around future management arrangements and how they might collectively contribute to it. • Collaboration with the private sector in terms of innovation / data etc. • Communication – how they will be able to communicate their work/successes on behalf of the Alliance with the wider world. <p>Steve Kent noted that in addition to the above there will be an operational group to drive key actions forward, focussing on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collectively providing support to Alliance partners, for example with the provision of DfT level 3 capital funding measures and evidence. • Service improvement through best practise – sharing good practise across the Heartland area. Perhaps moving towards an Alliance best practise (showcasing) event. • Data – exploring collaborative use of data across the area, potentially embracing a private sector partner (i.e. Elgin or Google). • Providing and retaining a skilled workforce, particularly focussing on apprentices and graduates (considering a collaborative approach to apprentices, to be shared across the Alliance). • Local Road Network – viewing it as a single network in terms of maintenance, | <p>L Church</p> <p>M Tugwell</p> |

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| | <p>traffic management etc. across the Heartland.</p> <p>Steve Kent said that he would appreciate feedback from the Forum on what Members would expect from such a collaborative delivery partners' group (in addition to notes above) - sw.kent@btinternet.com.</p> <p>Cllr Heather Smith noted that the Showcase event is an excellent idea.</p> <p>Simon Amor asked whether it might be appropriate for the Highways England's providers to be included within the group. Steve Kent to raise this as a discussion point within the delivery partner group.</p> <p>Cllr James Jamieson highlighted that the Local Enterprise Partnerships have a role to look into the skills agenda and asked whether the workforce demand might require different skills in the longer term, particularly in relation to data/ innovation. Steve Kent to take this back to the delivery partner group for consideration in terms of short and longer term skills planning.</p> <p>Simon Amor highlighted that Highways England have a legacy fund, focussed on training highways engineers due to the predicted future shortage.</p> <p>Glenn Barcham noted that Bedford Borough Council do not have a delivery partner, therefore will need to be involved but to a different extent. Steve Kent to consider how to best achieve this.</p> <p>Keith Dove noted that Elgin and TomTom are working together currently on a project which Luton Borough Council is involved with. Keith Dove to provide further information to Steve Kent so that he can investigate whether the delivery partners could get involved.</p> | <p>ALL</p> <p>S Kent</p> <p>S Kent</p> <p>S Kent</p> <p>K Dove</p> |
| <p>6.</p> | <p>ROADS</p> <p><i>Highways England – Update on Road Investment Strategy 2 (RIS2)</i></p> <p>Simon Amor highlighted that work on RIS2 work is progressing and that the Strategic Road Network Initial Report will be submitted to the DfT in the autumn, with public consultation taking place in December/January.</p> <p>Martin Tugwell noted that he attended the quarterly meeting between Sub-national Transport Bodies and Highways England yesterday, which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An update from the DfT on the current political landscape within Government. They noted that a statement on road investment is being prepared, which will soon be circulated by Government, outlining 10 key themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Strategic Vision</i>: access to housing, industrial strategy, fitting in with regional strategy, stakeholder pressure, trade and international gateways - <i>Technical Focus</i>: network safety, strategic planning (long term), environmental impact, deliverability, value for money • A discussion around the funding split between new infrastructure and maintenance, the assumption at present being that the balance is likely to stay the same for RIS2. • The DfT confirmed that Highways England (under the Infrastructure Act) can investment in local authority owned roads where the scheme benefits the Strategic Road Network. <p>Martin Tugwell noted that there is an opportunity to feed views to Highways England, particularly over the summer, in order to inform the initial RIS2 work (prior</p> | |

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| | <p><i>A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet Improvements</i></p> <p>Simon Amor stated that the outcome of the Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet consultation will be announced later this year.</p> | |
| <p>7.</p> | <p>EAST WEST RAIL</p> <p>Cllr Mark Shaw provided a verbal update (to complement the supporting paper), including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead Politicians had recently met with the Secretary of State who reaffirmed his support for the route to go ahead and be progressed as quickly as possible. He is however concerned over the funding available, and had therefore tasked Rob Brighouse and Phil Verster with a 'cost challenge' for the Western Section (the outcome of this work to be released in due course). • Phil Verster gave a presentation at yesterday's East West Rail Joint Delivery Board, providing an overview of the 'cost challenge' work. The consortium had reaffirmed its position that the scope of the Western Section needed to be maintained. • Cllr Mark Shaw is now Chairman for the Western Section, with Yvonne Constance as Vice Chair (Oxfordshire County Council). A further meeting is being arranged with the Secretary of State as soon as possible in order to discuss the next steps following the completion of the 'cost challenge' report. <p>Cllr James Jamieson emphasised the critical importance of investment in the Bletchley to Bedford part of the Western Section: Cllr James Jamieson stated that without upgrading the Bletchley – Bedford section it would be difficult to bring forward significant development opportunities.</p> <p>Martin Tugwell noted the Transport & Works Act as an opportunity to highlight the Forum's position on the scope of the western section.</p> <p>The meeting AGREED to delegate to the Chairman the sign off of a Forum response to the Transport and Works Act Order consultation.</p> <p>Central Section</p> <p>Erica Blamire stated that work on the central section is currently on programme and budget, noting that the central section working group is taking place on 24th July. Erica highlighted that there are issues with collectively agreeing scope/objectives of the scheme, but this is being worked through with all parties.</p> <p>Eastern Section</p> <p>Erica Blamire noted that the eastern section resides with Network Rail's Anglia team. The output from the conditional output study commissioned by the East West Rail Consortium has been shared with the DfT and confirmation of next steps is awaited</p> | <p><i>Agreed</i></p> |

