



# Strategic Transport Leadership Board Minutes

13 May 2022

*Meeting held via Teams*

Present:	Cllr Richard Wenham Cllr Liz Leffman Cllr David Renard Mayor Dave Hodgson Cllr Martin Tett Cllr Emily Darlington Cllr Graham Lawman Cllr Phil Larratt Cllr Robert Roche Cllr Lucy Nethsingha	Leader, Central Bedfordshire Council (Chair) Leader, Oxfordshire County Council Leader, Swindon Borough Council Mayor, Bedford Borough Council Leader, Buckinghamshire Council Cabinet member, Milton Keynes Council Executive member, North Northamptonshire Council Cabinet member, West Northamptonshire Council Executive member, Luton Council Leader, Cambridgeshire County Council
Apologies:	Cllr Phil Bibby Wayne Fitzgerald Mayor Dr Nik Johnson	Executive member, Hertfordshire County Council Leader, Peterborough City Council Mayor, Cambs & P'borough Combined Authority
In attendance:	Paul Moorby Richard Bell Andy Rhind Antony Swift David Allatt Ian Thompson Carew Satchwell Nicola Monk Aaron Berry Mark Kemp Tim Bellamy Wolfgang Schuster Hilary Chipping Paul Thomas Chris Wragg Matthew Taylor Jon Shortland	Swindon and Wiltshire LEP Swindon Borough Council DfT Luton Borough Council Cambridgeshire County Council Buckinghamshire Council Network Rail Luton Borough Council OZEV Hertfordshire County Council Cambs and P'boro Combined Authority Connected Places Catapult SEMLEP Milton Keynes Council West Northamptonshire Council National Highways Bedford Borough Council
From EEH:	Naomi Green Suzanne Winkels Fiona Foulkes James Golding-Graham Abi Nichols Trevor Brennan Nathalie Mazhunga Adam King	Managing director Principal technical lead Business manager Decarbonisation and innovation manager Project lead Project Lead Project officer Communications and policy manager

	<b>Item</b>
<b>1</b>	<p><b>Welcome &amp; Actions</b></p> <p>Richard Wenham (RW) opened the meeting. Members were content with the accuracy of the minutes of the previous meeting. Naomi Green (NG) noted that all actions are either complete or agenda items during this discussion.</p> <p>Naomi Green said the majority of actions arising were complete or on the agenda for this meeting. She is following up a public question from the last meeting and has recently received further information from them.</p> <p>In regards to long-term investment priorities, EEH continues to work with the Great British Railways transition team and it remains a core part of the work programme.</p> <p>On active travel, officers are currently finalising the brief of works for phase two of the project and factoring in the role of Active Travel England.</p> <p>James Golding-Graham has continued to advance talks on digital connectivity following the steer given by the Board in February.</p> <p>The business unit is in the process of setting up the EEH APPG. An MP was approached to chair the APPG but was not available. Another MP has been approached and we are awaiting a response from him.</p>
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Public Questions</b></p> <p><i>Attending members of the public are asked to register the wish to speak in advance. Comments will be invited on any of the listed agenda items. Speakers will be invited to ask a question, a supplementary question and to make a short statement.</i></p> <p>There were no questions from members of the public.</p>
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Annual Review 2021/22</b></p> <p><i>To consider and agree the year-end financial position and annual report for 2021/22</i></p> <p>Naomi Green introduced the item. She said the year had been one of evolution for EEH. This includes moving to a new governance structure and a significant number of staffing changes. Both have put EEH on a good footing moving forwards. During the financial year EEH commenced and started to deliver a significant step up in work – not least because in January DfT confirmed in-year funding which represented a 60% uplift in total funding. During the year there has been considerable focus on delivering the connectivity studies, the Passenger Rail Study and the Oxford to Cambridge Roads Study.</p> <p>She presented to Board members the financial statement for the year which was agreed by members in the private meeting before the public meeting. She was seeking approval for this to be the year-end financial statement.</p> <p>All funding apart from £611 had been committed to projects. She explained there was a tail so that funding is transferring to the year ahead but this is committed/ allocated.</p> <p>Cllr Lawman said he wished to record his congratulations to Naomi on the work done as it was very beneficial to his authority's work.</p>

	<p>The Chair said this was the first year EEH had had a Section 151 officer go over the accounts and independently sign them off, was which was a measure of how EEH has developed.</p> <p>The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Agreed the year-end financial position, to be presented to the Board during the meeting.</li> <li>b) Noted the financial commitments carried forward into 2022/23.</li> <li>c) Agreed the draft annual report for 2021/22 as set out in annex 1.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>Business plan 2022-2025</b></p> <p><i>To agree the business plan for next three years based on DfT indicative funding, including the work programme for 2022/23</i></p> <p>Naomi introduced the item. In February she presented to Board a paper on the three-year plan based on assumptions of what might be received from DfT. Through the steer Board gave her, when the DfT settlement was confirmed on 21 March the business unit was in a strong really good position to turn this into a plan.</p> <p>Naomi thanked DfT officials who had put in a huge amount with regards the allocation. The settlement of £1.3m represent an additional income of 50%. She added that the indicative funding for 2024 and 2025 gives EEH confidence to plan for the longer-term. She said the in-depth figures for 2022/23 were presented in private as they contain details on staffing.</p> <p>Naomi said that with a growing work programme there was an opportunity for board members to consider creating ‘board champions’ based on the different themes of the work programme.</p> <p>With regards the regional evidence base, she said a lot of work has been done to make this more accessible. EEH was seeking to work with a range of partners to make it accessible to, including planning authorities and universities.</p> <p>With regards future connectivity studies, the business unit took away an action from previous Board to review this based on feedback. She hoped the revised study areas reflected the Board’s comments.</p> <p>The Chair asked for comments to be based on the paper recommendations as follows:</p> <p>Recommendations A and B: Cllr Larratt said the map contained the boundaries of the old Northamptonshire County Council geography.</p> <p>Recommendation C: The Chair said the boundaries between each Board champion needs to be clearly defined and circulated to Board members so they can be more informed before volunteering for the roles.</p> <p>Cllr Lawman agreed. Cllr Darlington said the board champions were a great idea, but more clarity on them was required.</p> <p>Recommendation D: Cllr Lawman said he couldn’t emphasise enough how important the regional evidence base was for his authority.</p> <p>Recommendation E:</p>

	<p>Cllr Tett said he was content so long as Naomi had taken on board comments previously made. Cllr Larratt said he was pleased with the Thames Valley study because of the importance of connectivity from West Northamptonshire to Luton and the airport.</p> <p>Carew Satchwell asked to extent rail is considered in the connectivity studies. Naomi confirmed rail was an important consideration as the connectivity studies are multimodal and follow the policies within the EEH transport strategy.</p> <p>Nicola Monk said about the timing of the study which included the A4120. Naomi said it was due to commence during 2022/23 and intended to complement rather than duplicate efforts or change outcomes arising from other studies.</p> <p>The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Noted the confirmed financial settlement from the Department for Transport for 2022/23, and indicative allocations provided for two years beyond that.</li> <li>b) Agreed the three-year business plan (annex 1) for EEH and the proposed work programme for 2022/23 (annex 2).</li> <li>c) Agreed to complement the Board’s role in overseeing delivery of the Business Plan through the creation of Board champions, to be elected in July 2022.</li> <li>d) Agreed that the Regional Evidence Base should be developed with the principle of ensuring it is easily accessible for all public sector partners</li> <li>e) Agreed the programme of connectivity studies (annex 3), revised following previous feedback from the Board.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b>Electric vehicle infrastructure strategy</b></p> <p><i>To receive an update on the government’s EV Infrastructure Strategy, published in April 2022 and to consider any implications for the Heartland region.</i></p> <p>Aaron Berry from OZEV gave a presentation highlighting the scale of the investment being made by the government in electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure provision and to consider how EEH partners can maximise the impact of the government’s commitment in the region.</p> <p>Mark Kemp asked if the OZEV guidance includes advice on positioning of residential on-street chargers.</p> <p>Aaron said specific guidance will come out later this year which will cover all aspect of EV charge point installation including positioning. In terms of space he understood the challenges for particular streets. There are various designs that can maximise the space, eg integrating into lampposts and existing bollards.</p> <p>Cllr Renard how grid capacity issue is going to be resolved?</p> <p>Aaron said there were several actions at industry and government level to address capacity. A lot of modelling has been done in BEIS and Ofgem looking at nation’s needs across in the round. Not just transport, also heat pumps and growing economy. Increasingly there has been investment ahead of need. There are various support schemes in place, including £950m funding to ensure there was sufficient local capacity. Smart charging will look to reduce burden on the network – doing it at times when networks are under least pressure.</p>

Cllr Roche asked when details of the £15m funding for local authorities to deliver EV infrastructure will be announced.

Aaron said this would be the end of the year, or sooner if possible.

Cllr Lawman said some charging points are not the easiest to use for disabled or elderly drivers. The process for getting charge points installed is unwieldy and convincing people they're not losing a parking space is an issue. He raised the difficulties with procurement and said a framework would be useful. He said rapid charge points need to be co-ordinated so they were suitable distances apart. Cllr Lawman said there were also licensing issues with chargers being installed on lampposts.

Aaron thanked Cllr Lawman for these points and said action was being taken on them. For example, OZEV is developing a publicly available standard for disabled drivers. On coordination of charge points, he said one had to take account that this is a competitive market and OZEV didn't want to discourage this.

Cllr Leffman said it was important EV infrastructure was available in rural areas, not just conurbations.

Aaron agreed, and said OZEV encouraging local authorities to develop broad strategies that cover the entirety of their geographies and procuring at scale to take advantage of economies of scale.

Cllr Tett agreed about the need to cater for rural areas. He asked whether utility companies are committed to pre-provision of network capacity.

Aaron said all the DNOs need to put plans to OFGEM for approval. Historically been reticent and rules not encouraged investment ahead of need. There is an increased awareness that we're going to need to invest more ahead of need in line with projections. OFGEM have taken that on board and becoming more permissive in terms of investment plans utilities can put forward. Rules are changing from 2023.

Tim Bellamy said that digital connectivity in rural areas needs to be considered to allow people to pay contactlessly for charging.

Aaron agreed and said it is an area that needs to be developed further and DCMS are on that.

Paul Moorby asked if Aaron receives any input on the role of hydrogen as part of the overall vehicle mix, which might reduce demand for EV?

Aaron said hydrogen is part of zero carbon future. Probably greater challenges in near term in terms hydrogen production. More likely to be used in heavier vehicles. It's not so much a near term solution, its typically not zero carbon and very energy intensive to produce.

The Board

a) Received a presentation from the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) on "Taking charge: the electric vehicle infrastructure strategy"

b) Considered the implications of the electric vehicle infrastructure strategy on local authority EV infrastructure delivery, particularly noting funding opportunities available for local authority-led initiatives

	<p>c) Confirmed its support for EEH business unit to work with partner authorities to better deliver and coordinate planning for EV infrastructure across the region.</p>
<p><b>6</b></p>	<p><b>Innovation</b></p> <p><i>To set the Board’s ambitions for using the region’s innovation expertise to deliver a transport system for the future.</i></p> <p>The Board received a presentation from Dr Wolfgang Schuster Executive Director, Ecosystem Innovation, Connected Places Catapult.</p> <p>CLlr Darlington said the Catapult’s programme is so important and created so many new markets. She said EEH should be more ambitious than what was detailed in the report.</p> <p>The Chair agreed. He said more detail was needed about what EEH was trying to achieve. He would like to see the item return to the next meeting with more concrete proposals.</p> <p>Hilary Chipping said the LEPs are really keen to have innovation at the forefront of what we do as we develop and strengthen our role as the voice of business. Very happy to work with EEH to achieve that.</p> <p>Paul Moorby declared a conflict, standard register, as he has pitched with the Catapult.</p> <p>Naomi said she was happy to rework the innovation paper. The proposed board champion for innovation would also help drive this forward.</p> <p>James Golding-Graham added that going forwards he would like to see practical applications of innovation – something on the ground and makes a difference.</p> <p>The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Received a presentation from Dr Wolfgang Schuster, Executive Director, Ecosystem Innovation – Connected Places Catapult</li> <li>b) Reviewed the approach to supporting innovation activity across the region</li> <li>c) Agreed to support officer engagement with EEH to better deliver and coordinate innovation projects in the region</li> <li>d) Asked EEH officers to provide more detail about how can take real actions to take this item forward.</li> </ul>
<p><b>7</b></p>	<p><b>Regional bus study</b></p> <p><i>To consider the final report of the Regional Bus Study and agree next steps for its implementation.</i></p> <p>Trevor Brennan introduced the item. EEH sees bus transport significant opportunity, not only unlocking transport issues but reduce inequalities and provide levelling up. Paper looks primarily at cross border opportunities. Trevor went over the recommendations as set out in the accompanying paper.</p>

	<p>Cllr Larratt welcomed the strategy. However, he questioned the cross-boundary flows between North and West Northamptonshire. Is the data from when Northamptonshire was one county authority?</p> <p>Cllr Lawman said he had also noticed issues with Northamptonshire. He said new initiatives were important, but no good if there simply weren't any buses. He said he has got areas in main towns with no buses. We need to get services running, then talk about the strategy for hubs etc.</p> <p>Naomi said they were reliant on pre-covid data and therefore difficult as Northamptonshire's transition happened during same time frame. She added that as buses are quite locally led, it was important to understand how EEH can add value.</p> <p>Cllr Tett said he was surprised Aylesbury-MK didn't feature as a key flow. He added that buses are so pivotal in rural areas. The fact there is a two tier funding structure worrying. Four councils have done very well, but eight got nothing. They have little money to invest into services. He said the region was going to end up with gold plated services in Oxfordshire, Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire and the rest of us are 'in the dark ages'. He wanted to see EEH challenging that disparity. If we're trying to have coherent regional strategy disparity in funding is going to hold us back.</p> <p>The Chair suggested writing a letter making that point to DfT. Cllr Tett agreed.</p> <p>Cllr Nethsingha said she was struggling to understand why some authorities received funding and some didn't. She suggested this is asked in the letter.</p> <p>Cllr Roche said the funding has created inequalities across the region.</p> <p>Cllr Leffman said a big problem was they were all bidding against one another into one pot. Need to take regional approach to this. The current situation doesn't help regional connectivity.</p> <p>The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Agreed to publish the Regional Bus Strategy</li> <li>b) Agreed to develop a delivery framework with local authority partners and bus operators, based upon the actions within the Regional Bus Strategy and 'Bus Back Better' support commission.</li> <li>c) Noted the creation of a regional bus forum within the 'Bus Back Better' support commission.</li> <li>d) Asked for EEH to draft letter to government regarding distribution of BSIP funding and circulate to members for approval prior to being sent to DfT.</li> </ul>
<p><b>8</b></p>	<p><b>Business Unit Update</b>  <i>To note updates on East West Rail local business case/narrative; Future of Motoring Taxation; MRN and Route Strategies Update; Procurement of in-year funding streams; Regional narrative</i></p> <p>The paper was taken as read.</p>

	<p>CLlr Nethsingha said she was glad to hear EWR section Bletchley-Cambridge was high on agenda. She said this should be supported as publicly as possible, including getting MPs involved.</p> <p>CLlr Renard said EWR connectivity to Bristol should be considered within the work, not just Oxford-Cambridge.</p> <p>Naomi said that Network Rail recently published a document about the East West Main Line and the work of the East West Main Line Partnership was doing a considerable amount of work on this too. The work by EEH is about enabling coast to coast by ensuring the first stage of EWR Bletchley-Cambridge is delivered. Then about making the most of it coast to coast.</p> <p>Tim Bellamy said with regard the MRN update dualling should be removed from the phrasing regarding the A10.</p> <p>The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Noted progress on EEH’s work to support the East West Rail Strategic Business</li> <li>b) Noted the progress of MRN schemes in the region</li> <li>c) Noted the update on DfT in-year funding projects</li> <li>d) Noted the update on the Oxford to Cambridge Road Study</li> <li>e) Noted the amended version of the Levelling Up Regional Narrative</li> </ul>
<p><b>9</b></p>	<p><b>Future Meeting Dates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 15 July 2022 11am-1pm</li> <li>- 30 September 2022 11am – 1pm</li> <li>- 9 December 2022 11am – 1pm</li> </ul> <p><i>It is proposed that three meetings per year be held virtually, with two meetings in person</i></p>