

Strategic Transport Forum

Friday 16th March 2018

At

Transport Systems Catapult, Milton Keynes

Present:

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| Cllr Martin Tett | Buckinghamshire County Council (Chairman) |
| Mayor Dave Hodgson | Bedford Borough Council |
| Cllr Paul Irwin | Buckinghamshire County Council |
| Cllr Nigel Young | Central Bedfordshire Council |
| Cllr Paul Castleman | Luton Borough Council |
| Cllr Yvonne Constance | Oxfordshire County Council |
| Steve Hayes | Milton Keynes Council |
| Ian Barham | Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership |
| Phil Southall | Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership |
| Cllr Angela Macpherson | Central Growth Board (Aylesbury Vale District Council) |
| Ian Parsons | Highways England |
| Graham Botham | Network Rail |
| Nick Jones | Transport Systems Catapult |
| Laura Church | Chair Transport Officers Support Group (Luton Borough Council) |
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| Peter Austin | East-West Rail Company (<i>for item 6</i>) |
| Cheryl Monk | Heathrow Airport (<i>for item 7</i>) |
| Chris Joyce | Heathrow Airport (<i>for item 7</i>) |
| Oli Jaycock | Luton Airport (<i>for item 7</i>) |
| Nick Barton | Luton Airport (<i>for item 7</i>) |
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| Martin Tugwell | EEH Business Unit |
| Stephen Moody | EEH Business Unit |
| James Golding-Graham | EEH Business Unit (Oxfordshire County Council) |
| Adam King | EEH Business Unit |

Also in attendance:

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| Chris Pettifer | Bedford Borough Council |
| Joan Hancox | Buckinghamshire County Council |
| Jason Humm | Swindon Borough Council |

Minutes

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| 1. | WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS Martin Tett welcomed everyone to the meeting. He noted that the Forum's Chairman Heather Smith had recently stepped down as the Leader of Northamptonshire County Council. He had agreed to a request from Heather Smith to chair the meeting on this occasion but sought the meeting's support for him to do so – the meeting concurred. | |

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| | <p>Martin Tett recorded the Forum's thanks for Heather Smith's stewardship of the Forum during her time as its Chairman.</p> <p>Apologies: received in advance were noted:</p> <p>Cllr Heather Smith Northamptonshire County Council Cllr Neil Blake Central Growth Board (Aylesbury Vale District Council) Cllr Liz Gifford Milton Keynes Council</p> <p>Declarations of Interest: there were none declared</p> | |
| <p>2.</p> | <p>NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING</p> <p>Chairman, Cllr Tett, asked whether the minutes of the previous meeting were an accurate record: the meeting agreed the minutes as presented</p> <p>Actions arising: Cllr Constance raised a concern that the Update on Actions needed to be clearer in terms of the progress made, the identification of specific dates for actions and the work in hand to close out actions. The meeting agreed with this: Cllr Tett requested that the EEH Business Unit address this point for future meetings.</p> <p>The meeting then considered the Update on Actions in more detail:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport Officer Support Group consideration of issues on the M1 and A34 corridor: initial discussion at the Group's meeting held on 13th Feb: further discussion at next meeting of the Group • Bus Operators Association – Phil Southall reported that the operators had agreed a constitution and that an initial meeting of the group was scheduled for 1st June • Linkage with MHCLG – Martin Tugwell to pursue with Ruth Harper (DfT) after the meeting • Wider Stakeholder Group – to be progressed in time for June meeting of the Forum • Strengthen the working relationship with EWRCo – agenda item for today's meeting • Brief for future shape of rail passenger franchise – brief to be prepared by the end of April • Access to rail stations and rail franchises – Martin Tugwell to pursue with Ruth Harper (DfT) after the meeting • Chairman to write to Department for Transport regarding East Midlands Franchise – draft letter to be circulated by 21st March: Forum members to respond to draft by 23rd March • Proposal relating to future East Midlands franchise for input from emerging STBs – discussion with East Midlands previous week: no progress to report | <p style="text-align: right;">Agreed</p> <p style="text-align: right;">EEH BU</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Officer Group</p> <p style="text-align: right;">M Tugwell</p> <p style="text-align: right;">EEH BU</p> <p style="text-align: right;">EEH BU</p> <p style="text-align: right;">M Tugwell</p> <p style="text-align: right;">EEH BU & Forum</p> |
| <p>3.</p> | <p>INNOVATION</p> <p>James Golding Graham gave an overview of the work being taken forward by the Innovation and Research Working Group</p> <p>He outlined the three building blocks that the Group is looking to put in place, which in combination form the basis of the 'regional evidence base': identified in the DfT consultation on the Major Road Network as being one of the key roles for the STBs moving forward. The three building blocks are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The regional 'database' – a single overview of the EEH area, one that brings together plans for housing and economic growth, with socio-economic information and transport information. In effect the database is the current baseline of the EEH area: the first version of the 'database' was issued in February: all partners have access to the database | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 'datahub' – options for establishing a 'datahub' are being explored, with these to be considered by the Working Group in the summer • The 'policy scenario modelling tool' – development of the proof-of-concept has been commissioned and will be available mid-summer at which point there'll be an opportunity to run some initial tests which will then inform the specification of the definitive version of the model. The policy scenario model will enable decision makers to explore the relative implications of a range of policy scenarios – these could be either consideration of different scales/distributions of growth and/or different scenarios for policy interventions (for example looking at the impact of 'Mobility as a Service') <p>In discussion it was clarified that the policy model is not designed to consider the detail of a specific proposal but rather to look at the relative implications of alternative scenarios.</p> <p>The meeting also heard that in the medium term there was the potential to explore how the policy model might also be used to support operational management of the transport system.</p> <p>In response to questions James provided an overview of the potential for Mobility as a Service (MaaS) to improve the options available to transport users: discussion within the Working Group had identified the potential benefit of EEH providing a framework within which such services might develop.</p> | |
| <p>4.</p> | <p>TRANSPORT STRATEGY: VISION AND OBJECTIVES</p> <p>Stephen Moody provided an overview of the paper which set out an initial working draft for the vision and objectives of the overarching Transport Strategy.</p> <p>Points raised in the ensuing discussion were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Young thought that the strategic vision and objectives were okay at a high level but there is a need to develop the draft further so that there is clarity on what is needed to be done moving forward. He also commented that the vision and objectives need to reflect the pace of change • Mayor Dave commented that the objectives potentially served both the current and future situations: he too emphasised the need to ensure there is a focus on the here and now, as well as the longer term. • Cllr Constance was concerned that decisions on the 'expressway' were being taken in advance of a consideration of the wider strategic objectives: she supported the proposal to focus on the three broad areas of economy, environment, and user • Cllr Tett noted that the purpose of the vision and objectives is to provide an overarching context for the development of the Transport Strategy • Martin Tugwell noted the need to pull out themes around reliability, resilience and capacity in refining the draft objectives • Steve Hayes flagged the need to ensure that the objectives are measurable in some way. • Cllr Macpherson concurred with the need for clarity as to the emphasis between/across the draft objectives: she thought the vision is broadly good, but perhaps communities could be used instead of places. • Ian Barham suggested that the vision should be shorter and specific to the EEH area: a concise, focused vision would be memorable and have added value • Cllr Irwin made the point about the need to incorporate freight and logistics within the objectives. • Phil Southall made the point that there is a difference between zero carbon and zero | |

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| | <p>emissions and it will be important to be clear what the driver for change is in this regard.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martin Tugwell advised that the Transport Strategy would include reference to the strategic importance of the first-mile last-mile principles – so that local authorities have a framework within which the wider significance of their proposals can sit. • Cllr Tett highlighted that both inclusivity (travel for the many) and the global connectivity to the transport hubs are important. <p>The meeting ENDORSED the draft framework for the discussion document on Vision and Objectives and REQUESTED that the EEH Business Unit work with the Officer Group to develop a final version</p> | <p>EEH BU</p> |
| <p>5.</p> | <p>STRATEGIC INVESTMENT: ROADS</p> <p>a: Major Road Network DfT Consultation</p> <p>Martin Tugwell introduced the paper which included the draft response to the DfT Consultation on taking forward the Major Road Network proposal. He highlighted that in addition to individual responses the four STBs had also agreed to submit a single overarching response on a collective basis.</p> <p>The meeting AGREED to submit the consultation response as set out in Annex 1.</p> <p>b: Expressway</p> <p>Martin Tugwell introduced the paper which had been prompted by the need to update the Forum on the expressway study and in order to enable the Forum to take advantage of the opportunity afforded by the 'expressway' team for interests across the corridor to set out their views on the three options identified in the previous stage of the study.</p> <p>During the ensuing discussion, points raised by Forum members were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was universal concern expressed around the table as to how unsatisfactory the approach to engagement with key stakeholders had been - there was a general concern that engagement events to date had in fact been no more than a 'tick-box' exercise with information being given out but very little account being taken of points being raised • There was universal agreement as to the importance of the 'expressway' work being informed by the work on wider connectivity – particularly given the need to consider how wider connectivity requirements might inform corridor choice • There was support for ensuring that the objectives of the 'expressway' study sit within the wider strategic ambition for the corridor • There was universal concern expressed that views on the three corridors were being sought without there being sufficient information available in the public domain <p>It was agreed that the Forum needed to set out its concerns to the Secretary of State: the EEH Business Unit would circulate a draft for consideration by Forum members, with a view to sending the letter to the SofS by 12th April.</p> <p>The meeting AGREED to:</p> <p>a) Express its growing concern at the lack of progress made in arriving at a common understanding and agreement on the strategic objectives for the 'expressway' in a letter to the Secretary of State;</p> <p>b) Notwithstanding its support for investment in improved east-west connectivity to be delivered at pace, emphasis to the Secretary of State that it is essential that infrastructure requirements are identified within the wider strategic context provided by the emerging overarching Transport Strategy for the Oxford – Milton Keynes – Cambridge corridor.</p> | <p>EEH BU</p> <p>EEH BU</p> |

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| | <p>c: Connectivity Study</p> <p>Martin Tugwell introduced the covering paper which sought a steer from the Forum on the principles that should shape the brief for the connectivity study. Martin explained that the study – which was commissioned in the Autumn 2017 Budget – would need to be taken forward on a collaborative basis with DfT.</p> <p>Martin reported that an initial meeting with officers from some of the key local partners between Oxford and Milton Keynes had recently been held, and he confirmed that the Business Unit would work closely with all local partners in the development of the brief for the study.</p> <p>Forum members emphasised the importance of improved north-south connectivity alongside that of improved east-west connectivity: if the corridor is to realise its full economic potential the key issue is improved connectivity (both physical and digital) in the round.</p> <p>The meeting AGREED to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Endorse the principles set out in annex 1; and b) Endorse the proposal to establish a Working Group to oversee the connectivity study. | <p>EEH BU</p> |
| <p>6.</p> | <p>STRATEGIC INVESTMENT: RAIL</p> <p>a: East West Rail</p> <p>Peter Austin from the East-West Rail Company provided a short overview of the recent work of the EWR Company, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good progress is being made with the establishment of the new EWR Company: there is a meeting on the 19th March with the DfT to further progress this. • As part of the establishment of the new EWR Company, work is underway to put in place the appropriate governance arrangements: discussions are on-going with the EWR Consortium with a view to strengthening the linkage between the EWR Company and representatives from the Consortium. • The intention is to have the Company to be up and running by the end of June 2018, with the Company taking over the role of NR in Control Period 6 • Work is on-going regarding the identification of a preferred route for the 'central section' – it is anticipated that a view on the way forward will be taken later in 2018/early 2019. • Work is also on-going to look at the best options for securing a direct connection between Milton Keynes and Bedford: Peter emphasised that this is over and above the improvements to the Marston Vale Line that are included in the scope of the Western Section. <p>Martin Tugwell commented that the East-West Rail Consortium AGM – scheduled for 11th April – provided the Consortium partners with the opportunity to consider the need to revise the Consortium's Terms of Reference so as to realise the desire of the EWR Company to strengthen linkages with elected Members.</p> <p>Cllr Nigel Young highlighted the extent to which the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan identified opportunities for significant development in the Marston Vale and the importance of the availability of the rail service to support that.</p> <p>Steve Hayes thanked the EWR Company for their work in relation an 'eastern entrance' at Bletchley Station – agreement had been reached on the scope of the next piece of work which will look at the opportunity in more detail: there was agreement with the DfT that the proposal for an 'eastern entrance' could be considered as 'Work in Kind'.</p> | |

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| | <p>Alan Francis, addressing the meeting from the floor, highlighted the importance of interchange between orbital and radial lines.</p> <p>b: Network Rail: System Operator</p> <p>The presentation by Graham Botham (Network Rail) was deferred to the next meeting.</p> | <p>EEH BU</p> <p>EEH BU</p> |
| <p>7</p> | <p>AVIATION</p> <p>a: Luton Airport Expansion</p> <p>Nick Barton (Chief Executive – London Luton Airport) gave an overview of Luton Airport and the work that has been completed over the past three years. This is building towards accommodating 18 million passengers per annum (the current limit) by late summer 2018. Delivery of a public transport connection from Luton Airport Parkway station to the airport is being developed in partnership with Luton Borough Council, with work about to begin shortly on the ground. Additional car parking at the airport has been provided in support of the higher passenger numbers, and works to improve the passenger experience within the terminal building are coming to a conclusion.</p> <p>Nick commented that he saw the aviation market continuing to be robust with further growth in demand moving forward. As the airport operator they saw the case for further expansion of the airport. There was an acknowledgement that in the short term there is a need to address noise concerns associated with current air movements. In the short-medium term the widespread introduction of next generation aircraft too many routes will help address those concerns.</p> <p>The airport operator restated its position that there is a need to secure four fast trains per hour on the Midland Main Line calling at Luton Parkway. The airport operator believes this is achievable and has submitted its business case to prospective bidders for the new East Midlands rail passenger franchise.</p> <p>Phil Southall asked what the target was for sustainable mode share. Laura Church pointed out that the Luton Parkway has the potential to have a level of service akin to Gatwick Airport and yet at present the mode share for rail to/from Luton Airport is significantly lower than that achieved at Gatwick Airport.</p> <p>b: Heathrow Airport Expansion Consultation</p> <p>Chris Joyce/Cheryl Monk (Heathrow Airport Limited) gave an overview of the consultation currently underway in support of the proposal for Heathrow Airport to be expanded. They set out how the National Policy Statement establishes the 'need' for expansion at Heathrow Airport and work is now underway to take forward the detailed applications required through the Development Consent Order process.</p> <p>There are two consultations in place at the moment. The first relates directly to the delivery of additional capacity at Heathrow Airport: the second relates to changes in the use of airspace at the national level.</p> <p>Currently the component parts of the Masterplan are in development, with engagement by the Heathrow Airport Limited team with stakeholders. This will lead to the publication of the preferred Masterplan, upon which there will be a further round of consultation in approximately 12 months.</p> <p>Cheryl Monk gave an overview of the UK airspace consultation, which is looking at amendments to the 1950's planning of previous flightpaths. There is a consultation process and has three stages of which two will be aligned with the DCO process. Consultation reports will be prepared once the feedback has been received.</p> | |

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| | <p>Martin Tugwell drew the Forum's attention to the covering paper circulated with the agenda which included a draft response to the consultations.</p> <p>The Forum AGREED the consultation response (Annex 1)</p> | EEH BU |
| 8 | <p>BUSINESS PLAN</p> <p>The Forum AGREED to have a substantive discussion on the Business Plan at its next meeting</p> | EEH BU |
| | <p>DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS</p> <p>The 2018 dates for the Strategic Transport Forum are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 | |

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