

Strategic Transport Forum

Friday 20th January 2017

At

Transport Systems Catapult, Milton Keynes

Present:	Cllr Heather Smith	Northamptonshire County Council (Chairman)
	Cllr Mark Shaw	Buckinghamshire County Council
	Cllr David Nimmo-Smith	Oxfordshire County Council
	Cllr Nigel Young	Central Bedfordshire Council
	Cllr Liz Gifford	Milton Keynes Council
	Cllr Paul Castleman	Luton Borough Council
	Mayor Dave Hodgson	Bedford Borough Council
	Richard Harrington	Buckinghamshire Thames Valley LEP
	Hilary Chipping	South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership
	Rupert Furness	Department for Transport
	Graham Botham	Network Rail
	Simon Amor	Highways England
	Adam Tuke	Civil Engineering Contractors Association
	Gary Nolan	Stagecoach UK
	Nick Barton	Luton Airport (for item 3i)
	Oliver Jaycock	Luton Airport (for item 3i)
	Bob Houghton	North Star Consulting (for item 3i)
	Tony Ciaburro	Executive Director, Northamptonshire County Council
	Martin Tugwell	Programme Director, Strategic Alliance

Minutes

		ACTION
1	<p>WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS</p> <p>Heather Smith welcomed everyone to the meeting. APOLOGIES: received in advance were noted:</p> <p>Cllr Rodney Rose Oxfordshire County Council (Cllr David Nimmo-Smith substituting)</p> <p>Cllr James Jamieson Central Bedfordshire Council (Cllr Nigel Young substituting)</p> <p>Cllr Ian Bates Cambridgeshire County Council</p> <p>Cllr Steve Bowles Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership (Richard Harrington substituting)</p> <p>Ann Limb South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (Hilary Chipping substituting)</p> <p>Nick Jones Transport Systems Catapult</p> <p>Declarations of Interest – Heather Smith outlined to the meeting the need to ensure that the discussions at the Forum were transparent. Moving forward Lyndsey Cox (the Strategic Alliance Programme Executive) would be</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With opening of the mass passenger transit service in 2020, the primary focus for improvement lies in access to longer distant rail services (provided under the East Midlands franchise) • At present only 1 train per hour out of the 5 operating calls at Luton Airport Parkway (over and above services provided under the Thameslink franchise) • The new East Midlands franchise proposes to increase the number of long distance services to 6 tph. Luton Airport's proposition is that it is possible for 4 of the 6 to call at the Parkway station. • Work commissioned by the Airport suggests that the impact on existing services would be minimal, but would deliver significant improvements in connectivity which would result in significant additional revenue plus contribute to a reduction in use of the car <p>Points discussed in the ensuing discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul Castleman emphasised the importance of good road connectivity – in addition to improvements in public transport connectivity. Nick Barton noted that under the terms of their contract the airport operator makes a payment to airport owners (Luton Airport) based on passenger numbers: an example of the local economy benefiting directly from growth at the airport • Richard Harrington sought clarification as to what the Airport operator was seeking from the Forum and asked to what extent the operator understood the profile of business aviation users passing through the airport. Nick Barton explained that by the very nature of the people using business aviation information on the profile of users was hard to come by: in terms of outcome of the debate the operator was seeking support from the Forum for the role of the airport and in particular support for seeking improvements in rail connectivity • Dave Hodgson sought reassurance that improving connectivity via Luton Airport Parkway would not adversely impact on the existing level of service to/from Bedford. Bob Houghton confirmed that whilst there was predicted to be an increase in journey times (of 3 mins) for services to Leicester, those serving Bedford would not be affected. Dave Hodgson reserved his position until he had had an opportunity to study in more detail the proposal being put forward by Luton Airport. Martin Tugwell noted that the meeting would discuss the East Midlands franchise later on the agenda – the proposed response on the franchise clearly set out the need for improved connectivity to Bedford and Luton • Graham Botham sought clarification as to the extent to which Network Rail had been involved to date with the analysis of the proposal. Bob Houghton responded by confirming that initial discussions had taken place with NR but more detailed discussions were planned. <p>The meeting AGREED that the Chairman of the Forum would write a letter of support to the airport.</p>	<p>Chairman</p>
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	<p>ii. Heathrow Update</p> <p>The meeting noted the update on Heathrow Airport, and in particular the importance of the forthcoming consultation. There would be a substantive discussion on this issue at the next meeting of the Forum</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p>NATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE COMMISSION: INTERIM REPORT</p> <p>Heather Smith introduced the item noting that whilst the Commission’s report had been discussed by partners individually this was the first opportunity that the Forum had had to discuss the Commission’s report and the Government’s subsequent response.</p> <p>Martin Tugwell introduced the paper that had been circulated prior to the meeting, highlighting that whilst the Commission’s report should be broadly welcomed, there were issues that the Forum needed to consider – these were reflected in the recommendations before the meeting.</p> <p>Mark Shaw set out the concerns of the EWR Consortium at the delay in delivering ‘trains on tracks’ on the Western Section of East West Rail. He observed that services had originally intended to be running in 2017 but may not be delivered until 2024. He made the observation that with the Commission having identified the importance of improved connectivity to support housing delivery, the Government needed to understand the adverse impact that delays in the delivery of infrastructure such as EWR had implications for housing delivery. He suggested that whilst EWR was a specific example of this issue, it applied more widely. He went on to highlight the difficulty that Local Planning Authorities were having in preparing their Local Plans with uncertainty on some key strategic infrastructure.</p> <p>Graham Botham explained a factor in the delays caused to delivering EWR had been a lack of clarity as to the core purpose of the new infrastructure. He observed that the lack of clarity in turn had led to changes in the scope of the works which had consequential implications for the delivery of the investment.</p> <p>In response to further questions, Graham Botham observed that a constraint had been the limitations placed on NR investment following its reclassification as a public body. However he noted the Secretary of State had appointed Rob Brighouse to explore alternative models for delivery that might enable the scheme to be delivered faster and cheaper. Mark Shaw commented that having met with Rob Brighouse he was impressed with his commitment and outlook towards the project.</p> <p>Gary Nolan repeated his comment from previous meetings that the Stagecoach X5 service could have potential to provide improved connectivity in the short term.</p> <p>The meeting AGREED to:</p> <p>a) Welcome the publication of the National Infrastructure Commission’s Interim Report and confirm its commitment to work collaboratively with the Commission as part of its on-going programme of work.</p>	

	<p>b) Whilst welcoming the initiative of the Secretary of State for Transport to explore alternative delivery models for East-West Rail, set out its on-going concern regarding the timescale associated with delivery of the Western Section</p> <p>c) Whilst welcoming the availability of development funding for the Oxford – Cambridge Expressway, set out the importance of the development work being taken forward in collaboration with the Strategic Transport Forum so as to ensure it takes into account the work to identify a Major Road Network</p> <p>d) Emphasise to Government the critical importance of funding allocations determined nationally better reflecting the need for investment in strategic transport infrastructure to support delivery of planned economic and housing opportunities.</p> <p>Martin Tugwell would communicate the Forum’s position to the National Infrastructure Commission and Department for Transport</p>	<p>Martin Tugwell</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>WORK PROGRAMME</p> <p>Martin Tugwell introduced the paper, which included as an Annex the outline of the work programme for the year ahead. He noted that the work programme built upon the momentum that had been generated in 2016 and reflected the ambition to push forward with developing the framework for the longer Transport Strategy.</p> <p>He also highlighted that a key part of the work programme was the proposal to move forward with developing the proposal to establish a statutory Sub-national Transport Body.</p> <p>The Forum welcomed the approach set out in the Annex; specific points raised in the discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Richard Harrington emphasised the important role that LEPs had played to date in helping identify infrastructure requirements and secure funding to enable their delivery. He also suggested that thought needed to be given to the extent to which the Forum needs to look for changes in the way Government departments support locally driven initiatives at the sub-national level • Hilary Chipping reflected on the success of the ‘Planning for Growth’ document – approved at the previous Forum meeting, noting though that there was a substantial challenge ahead in terms of developing a longer-term transport framework • Rupert Furness confirmed that the Department for Transport was in discussion with the Strategic Alliance programme team with a view to securing funding from the Department in support of the work programme. <p>The meeting AGREED to endorse the work programme</p>	<p>Noted</p>

<p>6.</p>	<p>EAST MIDLANDS FRANCHISE</p> <p>Keith Dove introduced the paper that had been circulated with the agenda, highlighting in particular the proposed response set out in Section 3 of the paper. Keith Dove confirmed that colleagues from Bedford Borough and Northamptonshire County Council had been consulted on the proposed response.</p> <p>Rupert Furness updated the meeting on the timeline that had been set out in the paper – specifically</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue ITT to bidders – June '17 • Receipt of ITT submissions – October '17 • Contract Award – June '18 • Anticipated franchise start date – Nov '18 <p>Martin Tugwell reinforced the point about the need for improved north-south connectivity (as well as improved east-west connectivity). He noted that in addition to the East Midlands franchise the Forum would need to ensure the Heartland's requirements are reflected in discussions around the West Coast Partnership – this covers both the period before and immediately after the opening of HS2. As such the issue of the allocation of capacity on the West Coast Main Line is an issue for the Forum given the importance of the Northampton – Milton Keynes – Bletchley – Aylesbury – Old Oak Common corridor.</p> <p>The meeting AGREED to:</p> <p>i) Note the timescale for procurement of the East Midlands rail franchise</p> <p>ii) The response as set out in Section 3 of the report</p> <p>iii) Seek assurances from the Department for Transport that England's Economic Heartland will be engaged as part of the process for procuring a new franchise</p>	<p>Keith Dove</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>SUB-NATIONAL TRANSPORT BODY</p> <p>Martin Tugwell introduced the paper, noting that the National Infrastructure Commission's Interim Report had recognised the importance of addressing strategic transport issues across the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford corridor through a single strategic body.</p> <p>He outlined that the proposal was to commission an initial piece of work that would provide the Forum with bespoke advice on the issues that needed to be considered in developing a specific proposal. He outlined that the intention was to bring this work back to the next meeting of the Forum, thereby enabling stakeholder discussions to take place over the late spring/summer.</p> <p>He noted that taking this work forward in this timeframe would ensure that developing the proposal is undertaken in parallel with the work being led by the National Infrastructure Commission on working arrangements and governance.</p> <p>Points raised in discussion:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heather Smith set out her desire for the Forum to start moving forward in its ways of working so as to be capable of operating as a 'shadow' Sub-national Transport Body • Nigel Young sought clarification of the relationship with Local Enterprise Partnerships and local planning authorities: in response Heather Smith emphasised the important that LEPs had to play and the commitments of the Strategic Alliance leaders to reach out to local planning authorities as the proposal is developed. <p>The meeting endorsed the proposal set out in the paper for developing the detailed proposal for a Sub-national Transport Body</p>	<p>Martin Tugwell</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>STRATEGIC ECONOMIC GROWTH PLAN</p> <p>Hilary Chipping introduced the paper, setting out the context in which the discussion paper had been prepared and issued by Highways England. Hilary emphasised the commitment by Highways England to support economic growth was welcomed.</p> <p>Hilary went on to outline the importance of ensuring that decisions regarding the identification of investment priorities needed to be taken within a context that was wider than just Highways England's network. Martin Tugwell provided a summary of the implications of changes following changes within Government in the summer.</p> <p>The Forum at its previous meeting had agreed to adopt the principle of identifying a Major Road Network and the draft response emphasised the need to build on this decision moving forward.</p> <p>Simon Amor welcomed the Strategic Transport Forum engaging in the process and confirmed Highways England's on-going commitment to work with emerging Sub-national Transport Bodies as they develop their proposals as a company.</p> <p>Points raised in the ensuing discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liz Gifford emphasised the importance of ensuring a strong linkage between the work of Highways England and that of local partners, particularly as they continue with the preparation of their Local Plans • Richard Harrington suggested that consideration should be given to use a gap analysis to ensure that proposals for investment reflect the need to address both existing and future investment requirements <p>Subject to incorporating references to the points made during the discussion, the meeting AGREED to submit the response set out in Annex 1 of the report.</p> <p>Hilary Chipping agreed to submit the response on behalf of the Strategic Transport Forum</p>	<p>Hilary Chipping</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>PROGRAMME UPDATE</p> <p>Martin Tugwell gave a verbal update on a number of on-going activities:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following publication of the 'Planning for Growth' document the Strategic Alliance had attended a number of national conferences over the course of the autumn – the Alliance's presence had been well received and it was clear that the core messages were being understood more widely and that the Alliance was gaining traction within Westminster • There had been a meeting with the 'delivery partners' earlier in the month. This had been very positive, with the delivery partners confirming their commitment to work collaboratively. They had confirmed their commitment to fund a 'single point of contact' who would work with the programme team. A more substantive discussion on the work of the delivery partners would be given at the next Forum meeting <p>The meeting NOTED the update.</p>	
<p>9.</p>	<p>DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS</p> <p>Martin Tugwell drew the Forum's attention to the fact that the March date shown on the agenda was incorrect – the meeting is scheduled for 24th March (not the 26th) – the full list of Forum dates for 2017 is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24th March 11:00 – 13:00 Transport Systems Catapult • 9th June 11:00 – 13:00 venue to be confirmed • 15th September 11:00 – 13:00 Transport Systems Catapult • 15th December 11:00 – 13:00 Transport Systems Catapult 	

Also in attendance:

Ryan Bunce
Llewelyn Morgan
Glenn Barcham
Keith Dove
Jim Tombe
Lee Sambrook
Andrew Bowe

Buckinghamshire County Council
Oxfordshire County Council
Bedford Borough Council
Luton Borough Council
Central Bedfordshire Council
Department for Transport
Cherwell and South Northants Council