



STRATEGIC TRANSPORT FORUM: Minutes

Friday 19th June 2020

11:00 – 13:00

Microsoft Teams Meeting

Present:

Mayor Dave Hodgson	Bedford Borough Council
Cllr Jason Smithers	Northamptonshire County Council
Cllr Ian Bates	Cambridgeshire County Council
Cllr Gary Sumner	Swindon Borough Council
Cllr Paul Castleman	Luton Borough Council
Cllr Yvonne Constance	Oxfordshire County Council
Cllr Maureen Penny	Swindon Borough Council
Cllr Derrick Ashley	Hertfordshire County Council
Cllr Adam Mitchell	Hertfordshire County Council
Cllr Jennifer Marklew	Milton Keynes Council
Cllr Nigel Young	Central Bedfordshire Council
Cllr Nick Naylor	Buckinghamshire Council
Cllr Steve Broadbent	BTVLEP
Ian Thompson	Buckinghamshire Council
Joan Hancox	Buckinghamshire Council
Jeremy Smith	Cambridgeshire County Council
John Disley	Oxfordshire County Council
Jon Shortland	Bedford Borough Council
Philip Martlew	Swindon Borough Council
Sam Howell	Swindon Borough Council
Tim Bellamy	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority
Steve Hayes	Milton Keynes Council
Laura Church	Luton Borough Council
Keith Dove	Luton Borough Council
Clara Kerr	Huntingdonshire District Council
Ian Achurch	Northamptonshire County Council
Karl Murphy	Department for Transport
Paul Moorby	SWLEP
Paddy Bradley	SWLEP
Hilary Chipping	SEMLEP
Phil Southall	OXLEP
Matt Taylor	Highways England
Robin Knight	EEH Bus Operators Association
Adrian Bocking	Network Rail System Operator
Gavin Dowland	Network Rail System Operator
Alex Tabrizi	Network Rail System Operator

Martin Tugwell	England's Economic Heartland
Naomi Green	England's Economic Heartland
James Golding-Graham	England's Economic Heartland
Adam King	England's Economic Heartland
Abi Nichols	England's Economic Heartland
Antony Swift	England's Economic Heartland

In attendance:	Greg Phillimore	Camargue
	William Barter	Independent Consultant

		ACTION
1	WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. The virtual meeting protocol was discussed and observed. Attendees agreed for the meeting to be recorded.	NONE ARISING
2	MINUTES FROM THE LAST MEETING Minutes from the previous meeting were agreed as a true record. Naomi Green took the meeting through the action log, with all actions either completed, ongoing or addressed as part of substantive agenda items.	NONE ARISING
3	PUBLIC QUESTIONS The Chair took a question from William Barter, who argued that the indicative train service pattern post HS2 on the West Coast Main Line outlined in the HS2 business case neglected the needs of Milton Keynes and Northampton. Antony Swift responded by confirming opportunities to influence train service configuration along the West Coast Main Line south, with a focus on those stations named, has been taken forward by engagement with an industry working groups and with the shadow operator. The Forum was advised that West Coast Partnership would be invited to the next meeting, during which further questions on plans for HS2 could be discussed	NONE ARISING
4	PATHWAYS TO DECARBONISATION James Golding-Graham presented the final report of EEH's Pathways to Decarbonisation commission to the Forum. The report, completed by a partnership between the universities of Oxford and Southampton. The work had looked at a number of pathways to decarbonise the transport system by 2050. James Golding-Graham confirmed that the Pathways to Decarbonisation report had been considered by the EEH Transport Officer Group and it was agreed via that group that Pathways 2 and 4 should be recommended to the Strategic Transport Forum as the preferred approach to taking forward the work. As requested at a previous Forum discussion, the study also now had waypoints embedded within it at 2030/2040 and 2050 to help measure the progress of each pathway. It was noted that Pathway 2, a 'highly connected' pathway (deployment of super-fast digital connectivity, better traffic management information and rapid deployment of CAVs) and Pathway 4, a 'behaviour shift/ policy led pathway' (encouraging people to use public transport and active travel) would overlap with other policy levers. Notwithstanding that, evidence has suggested that adopting these pathways would generate the greatest environmental and economic benefits. Cllr Adam Mitchell suggested the Forum should discuss the implications for these policy decisions before agreeing to adopt the approach. On that basis, an ensuing discussion took place. Cllr Nigel Young suggested that one mechanism of increasing levels of active	



	<p>travel set out within Pathway 4 is the need for increased powers to enforce the safety of cyclists using the highway.</p> <p>The Forum agreed that existing temporary measures to enforce cycle lanes that have been devolved to local authorities is welcome but falls short of necessary changes to the Traffic Management Act 2004. Further amendments to that legislation would put the Heartland’s local authorities on an equal footing with the extensive powers held by London, namely to enforce moving traffic violations through AMPR/CCTV.</p> <p>Cllr Ian Bates argued that cycling and home-working will increase following the collective response to the pandemic, lending itself well to the two preferred policy pathways identified. However, Cllr Ian Bates, supported by the Forum suggested removing the examples of specific demand management approaches cited in policy 4 (policy-led) to achieve this as these would be down to individual local authorities to decide and implement. James Golding-Graham agreed to circulate a revised version of the report to officers at Cambridgeshire County Council.</p> <p>The Forum reflected on the report’s finding that by 2040 there would still be 30% of current CO2 levels in transport. A discussion took place on what areas further carbon-reduction should be focused.</p> <p>Naomi Green concluded by confirming that she would speak to the DfT in the wake of new powers issued to local authorities to enforce cycle lanes. Whilst this showed positive progress, Naomi, with support of the Forum, will clarify with officials in Whitehall why only some elements of the Traffic Management Act 2004 were being devolved outside of London.</p> <p>The Forum Agreed:</p> <p>a) The implications of supporting Pathways 2 and 4.</p> <p>b) To adopt an approach that supports Pathways 2 and 4 as the mechanism for decarbonising the transport system in the Heartland region by 2050</p> <p>c) Endorse the Pathways to Decarbonisation report</p>	<p>NAOMI GREEN</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>TRANSPORT STRATEGY</p> <p>Naomi Green led a discussion on the region’s draft Transport Strategy, advising the meeting that the Strategy is the culmination of various technical work strands that have been prepared in support of it.</p> <p>Having received feedback from Officers, and subject to approval by the Strategic Transport Forum, the draft Transport Strategy will be launched on 14th July, accompanied by associated studies and a proposal to establish a statutory body. Following the launch of the Transport Strategy, there would be a statutory period of consultation before the document was brought back to the Forum in November 2020.</p> <p>A number of changes have been made to the document following the previous meeting of the Forum, these ranged from formatting to the implications of COVID-19.</p> <p>The development of the Integrated Sustainability Assessment has resulted in a number of changes that strengthen the Strategy’s focus on sustainability issues, such as community safety and access to green spaces. Equally, the findings of the pathways to decarbonisation work has led to revisions to policy T3 and T20 and reference to the creation of a ‘green-spine’ to encourage active travel along the route of the East West Main Line.</p> <p>The Forum were invited to discuss the final round of changes to the Strategy, driven largely by sustainability recommendations set out in the evidence base produced.</p>	



	<p>Cllr Yvonne Constance reiterated the need to reference the impact of COVID-19. The Forum agreed reflecting the relevance of COVID-19 should be captured within the foreword as a means of demonstrating how its constraints and opportunities can act as catalyst for greater levels of change in the Transport System.</p> <p>Cllr Nigel Young was supportive of the need to establish 'mobility hubs' as locations where interchange between travel modes is actively enabled. The Forum, supported by the EEH Bus Operators Association, argued the Strategy should go further in promoting bus rapid transit and segregated busways and bus lanes for medium and longer distance journeys.</p> <p>Poor Moorby asked for a point of clarification on policy T29 which referenced rail flows from Swindon/Southampton. Martin Tugwell clarified that citing Swindon/Southampton together was indicative of the way the two places act as gateways before routes from the south coast and west converge at Didcot. It was agreed that adjusting the policy wording would clarify that point more clearly.</p> <p>Cllr Gary Summers emphasised Swindon's connectivity opportunities and how improvements along the A417 would strengthen them. The A420's importance in providing strategic access to the employment site at Honda and in the near future, distribution employment at Symmetry Park was discussed as a corridor requiring greater exposure in the Strategy.</p> <p>On the subject of strategic corridors, Cllr Steven Broadbent recommending that towns within southern Buckinghamshire are identified as part of any north/south connectivity reference, owing to their roles as established economic centres.</p> <p>Naomi Green responded by confirming technical work, taken forward by a programme of connectivity studies would look at the multi-modal connectivity requirements of these places in more detail. Martin Tugwell reaffirmed, that the Strategy has sought to steer clear from identifying roads per se, rather seeking to establish the policy framework from which future technical work can sit within. This technical work will identify the preferred solution with partners.</p> <p>The Forum Agreed:</p> <p>a) Subject to the final amendments being made by the EEH Business Unit, the draft Transport Strategy as presented, for publication and consultation</p> <p>b) The revisions to Policy T3 and T20 in light of the recommended way forward on Pathways to Decarbonisation</p> <p>c) The contents of the draft Integrated Sustainability Appraisal, which will be published for consultation alongside the draft Transport Strategy</p>	<p>NAOMI GREEN</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>INVESTMENT PIPELINE</p> <p>Naomi Green advised Forum members that the investment pipeline included in the Transport Strategy is intended to reflect the agreed policy framework. The investment pipeline has been generated through technical work and independent studies commissioned by partners.</p> <p>Running concurrently to the development of the pipeline is the connectivity study programme. Identifying this programme involved a rigorous review process to determine future corridors of focus whilst embedding environmental considerations from the outset.</p>	



Naomi Green reminded Forum members of the sifting process that took place to determine, spatially, the programme and sequencing of nine independent connectivity studies.

Cllr Paul Castleman expressed concerns with the ongoing A505 study on behalf of partners at Central Bedfordshire Council, Luton Borough Council and Hertfordshire County Council. There was a general consensus amongst members of the Forum that progress on the study is slow. A request was made that the EEH Business unit help to apply pressure to expedite the study work considering its strategic importance in improving orbital connectivity.

Cllr Nigel Young supported the need to accelerate the study and stated that it would be useful to understand the timescales of other studies of relevance such as the A414, A1, A10. A1 study work shares synergy with proposed development on the A428, where Government has published plans for future development along this corridor with little attention afforded to how the A1 might manage this demand. Naomi Green confirmed that the business unit will endeavour to gather information on the status of the studies in the hope of increasing the pace of their delivery.

Abigail Nichols updated the Forum on the status of study work, confirming that the A414 multi-modal study commissioned by Hertfordshire County Council is now complete. The A1 study is underway and the business unit are working with Highways England to progress this. The A10 consists of a number of MRN schemes that have been announced for onward development including ongoing study work by local authorities along that corridor. It was agreed that an additional recommendation be added to the supporting paper that reflected the need for the EEH Business Unit to raise the issue of progress with these studies to the DfT and Highways England on behalf of the Forum.

Phil Southall enquired as to the role of Highways England in the connectivity study programme, citing a scheme in Oxfordshire where bus priority was given to cars at a junction, before Highways England rejected it in favour of supporting general traffic movement. Matthew Taylor wasn't familiar with the scheme raised but confirmed that capturing sustainability and decarbonisation benefits is an increasing priority for Highways England when determining infrastructure options. Matthew Taylor confirmed that with support from EEH, Highways England would take an active role on the project board for the studies set out within the Transport Strategy.

Cllr Ian Bates clarified that Cambridgeshire County Council along with the Combined Authority are undertaking study work on the A505. This is focused on connectivity between Royston and biopharmaceutical and technologically based Granta Park. Naomi Green advised the Forum that understanding the way the STB can add value in bringing this study work together would be the subject of a conversation on the 3rd July 2020.

Finally, Cllr Nick Naylor was pleased to see the importance of north/south connections in Buckinghamshire in study A. Notwithstanding, he felt that the premise of the study assumes too great a focus on the opportunities by rail for general connectivity north/south. It was proposed that the focus of the connectivity study should be widened to include north/south connectivity in the east towards the Ivers. In effect creating a London-Thames Valley and Buckinghamshire.

The Forum Agreed:

- a) The Investment Pipeline set out in the Transport Strategy**
- b) The programme of connectivity studies to be taken forward in support of the Investment Pipeline**
- c) Responsibility be delegated to the EEH Business Unit to raise with**

**EEH
BUSINESS
UNIT**



	Network Rail and Highways England the need to expedite strategically important study work	
6	<p>DRAFT TRANSPORT STRATEGY LAUNCH PLAN</p> <p>The Forum took this item as a written update and all recommendations were agreed.</p> <p>The Forum Agreed:</p> <p>a) The proposed communications approach to the launch of the draft Transport Strategy</p> <p>b) The proposed approach to the consultation on the draft Transport Strategy</p>	NONE ARISING
7	<p>PASSENGER RAIL STUDY PHASE 1</p> <p>Antony Swift introduced the item by advising the Forum that the industry steering group convened to oversee the work agreed the outputs in May, before being ratified by officers during their meeting on the 5th June 2020. The Phase 1 work strand has served as an evidence-led assessment of the Heartland's relative level of rail connectivity measured by generalised journey time between key regional nodes. The Phase 2 work is beginning to mobilise and will be taken forward by Network Rail's economic analysis team.</p> <p>Alex Tabrizi took officers through a presentation that set out the approach to the work. This included the methodology applied in determining the 45 key nodes, measuring service level provision between them and the corridors and key places included for further economic analysis to be identified in Phase 2.</p> <p>The analysis identified a number of connectivity gaps, such as poor orbital connectivity and a reliance on using central London termini to interchange between mainlines. To address this, a northern, southern and extended central arc concept is proposed to complement the existing East West Rail configuration whilst relieving the road network in these areas. In addition, seven further corridors were identified where rail performs poorly. It is intended that these corridors become the focus for economic analysis in Phase 2, in essence testing the potential GVA uplift through a reduction in generalised journey time between OD pairs.</p> <p>Mayor Dave Hodson raised the importance of improved connectivity between Luton/Bedford through to Wellingborough and Kettering to East Midland cities. Proposed timetable changes will see a reduction in through services between Bedford and Leicester, requiring change at Kettering. A corridor 8 was proposed as one way of aligning the rail study with the policy contained within the draft Transport Strategy.</p> <p>Cllr Ian Bates supported the need to expand connectivity eastwards from Cambridge into Norwich and Ipswich, currently being taken forward by an active group including local authority partners in the east. Cllr Ian Bates recommended that any work on Corridor 6 (Peterborough-Cambridge-Stanstead Airport) encompasses previous study work undertaken by the West Anglia Taskforce.</p> <p>The Forum Agreed:</p> <p>a) The recommendations of the Passenger Rail Study, including the areas for improved levels of connectivity, identified for further work in Phase 2 of the Passenger Rail Study</p> <p>b) Agreed subject to any final amendments, the Passenger Rail Study</p>	ANTONY SWIFT



<p>8</p>	<p>BUSINESS UNIT UPDATE</p> <p>The Forum noted the business unit updates. The Forum agreed to delegate responsibility to Mayor Dave as chair to send a tripartite STB letter to Treasury setting out the Forum’s support with respect to decisions being made to progress rail business case work at Haughley and Ely.</p> <p>All other updates were noted.</p> <p>The Forum Agreed:</p> <p>a) To sign a letter of support in respect of improvements to the strategically important Felixstowe to Nuneaton route and delegates the Chair to agree the letter on behalf of the Forum</p> <p>b) The update from the Business Unit</p>	<p>EEH BUSINESS UNIT</p>
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