



ADEPT Transport & Connectivity Board Meeting

Friday 7th June 2024, 10-13:00

<p>ATTENDEES PRESENT</p>	<p>Amy Harhoff (AC) (Chair) Abigail Nichols (AN) Allan Creedy (AC) Caroline Barker (CB) Damien Jones (DJ) David Boyer (DBo) Edward Shortridge (ESh) Gary Bartlett (GB) Grahame Bygrave GBy) Hannah Bartram (HB) Jamie Hulland (JH) John Lamb (JLa) Kamal Panchal Karl Melville (KM) Kylie Russell (KR) Louise McBride (LB) Michelle Love (ML) Nick Skelton (NS) Paul Copeland (PC) Paul Fermer (PF) Peter Hobley (PH) Philip Robson (PR) Rachel Ford (RF) Robin McCartney (RM) Sarah Spink (SS) Suzanne Buck (SB) Suzanne Winkels (SW) Essi Salonen (ESa) (notes)</p>
<p>IN PART</p>	<p>Stephen Fidler (SF) Dean Sargeant (DS) Matt Powell (MP) Mark Jackson (MJ) Peter Mann (PM) Rose McArthur (RM) David Buttery (DB) John Hall (JH) Elliot Shaw (ES) Anthony Ferguson (AF) Lynne Stinson (LS) Paul Crick (PCr)</p>

APOLOGIES	Haroona Chughtai Ceren Clulow Chris Henning Melanie Corcoran Neil Gibson Paul Thompson Rupert Thacker Sam Edwards Shona Butter Stuart Proffitt Tim Bellamy Tim Lawton Mark Corbin David Atkinson Ian Achurch Adele Wearing
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Meeting Notes

Item	Detail	Actions
1.	<p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>AH welcomed everyone to the meeting. With the meeting being her first as chair, AH briefly explained her background in local government and confirmed that ESa has now taken over the meeting administration.</p> <p>With General Election now called, AH explained that DfT would not be able to provide a detailed update at this meeting.</p>	
2.	<p>Minutes of last meeting and Matters Arising</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2024 were agreed. No actions from the previous meeting.</p>	
3.	<p>Updates from National Organisations</p> <p><u>Department for Transport – Stephen Fidler and David Buttery:</u></p> <p>SF explained that as we are now in the pre-election period, there is not a lot of information he can provide. Everything that was previously in train has now been put on hold and we need to wait until after the election to see where that takes us. Routine payments of existing grants will continue as normal where there is already an agreement in place, however new decisions are not going to be taken unless there is a critical emergency around them.</p> <p>DB joined the conversation to provide some further details on what is still going to be happening during the pre-election period. From MRN LLM (Major Road Network and Large Local Majors) perspective, DB</p>	

explained that they are going to continue reviewing business cases and although they cannot do the final decision making that would involve speaking with MPs, they will continue to complete the internal governance part of the process. DB continued that on the local road maintenance side, something that they had planned to do but now cannot do is regarding the Network North Uplift. They had asked for quarterly reporting on this and were going to provide some guidance on what should go into that, however that is now not possible. The expectation still is for local authorities to report on what they have done. All other matters are currently on hold until after the General Election.

National Highways – Elliot Shaw:

ES provided an update on RIS2 (Road Investment Strategy 2 – 2020-2025), where they are at in the current five-year cycle and how things are progressing with RIS3. ES explained that they are now in the final year of RIS2, and it is hoped that whilst they are not going to have everything delivered exactly as it was planned out 4-5 years ago, it will largely be a success.

19 schemes have been completed so far and approximately 90% were delivered on time meaning that they are on track to hit the efficiency target. Close to £2 billion of efficiency has been delivered over the period and they are on track to deliver a lot of their environmental targets also. Average delays on the network are getting worse and they are for example seeing more freight type vehicles on the network that are then slowing traffic down.

Safety targets have also been tricky to meet, however this has again been impacted by the growing traffic. Planning processes have also been another big issue and a lot of the major enhancement schemes have been hit by legal challenges.

ES continued to speak about RIS3 and how they are planning to change the focus away from enhancements more towards the renewal space. As the network is ageing, it is going to need more care and because of this, the plan is to focus more on the renewals of some of the structures.

A huge amount of work has already been done in the carbon space and there are net zero targets to meet: corporate emissions by 2030, supply chain emissions by 2040 and road user emissions by 2050.

ES further explained that the focus on digital and technology is growing, and they are acknowledging that this is at the heart of everything they do. Over recent years, there have been a lot of challenges in smart motorways and the technology needs to work consistently and efficiently, which they think it already is in a lot of

places. A lot of that technology needs to be renewed and they need to make sure they continue to focus on making it as robust as possible.

To finish, ES explained that they are also trying to dial up customer focus as in the last 15 years, they have transformed from a “builder of roads” more towards being an operator.

Comments/Discussion:

- PCr asked about the figure of £2 billion efficiency and how they had reached that number? ES responded explaining that their ability to plan long term and build relationships with the supply chain has made the biggest difference. ES continued that approximately £500 million has largely come through better planning and delivery of their renewals activity.
- PCr also mentioned social value and queried that given the value of risk, what social value have NH gained as a result of that? ES explained that social value is a part of what they do; contracts have parts relating to social value and on schemes they for example have social value funds that work with local communities.
- PH noted that Somerset Council was successful in some DLUHC funding to look at home to make the DCO process smoother. It was an interesting piece of work that PH was involved in, and it should be going back to DLUHC soon – one for awareness.
- AC queried RIS3 and how we were meant to see a draft before Christmas, however things have been delayed. AC asked how much more delay can the programme stand before we run out of time in order to get the programme completed? DB answered the question and explained that there is a risk that the decision making is not complete in time before April 2025, however now that the election has been called early, it is better for the programme as it gives the new incoming government time to make a decision.
- AH noted that social value could be brought into a future meeting as a show and tell to see what NH are doing.
- JH brought up the 2023 policy paper which set out that NH were moving away from the “predict and provide” approach to “vision and validate”. JH noted that it would be interesting to see what work is being done to turn that policy into practise.

Local Government Association – Kamal Panchal:

KP explained that there had been a [press release](#) yesterday (6th June 2024), which stated that the funding gap has now been calculated as £6.2 billion over the next two years and explained that the full White

	<p>Paper, which is calling for a renewed relationship with the central government, has now been published. KP continued to explain that the focus around the paper is securing long-term financial certainty and empowering councils to deal with the issues that the country faces in a more efficient way.</p> <p>Comments/Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PCr noted three points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Links of roads coned off with 40 mph control limit and no one working on the road; PCr acknowledges there are good reasons for this however communication with the public should be improved. b) Disabled access and pedestrian access around local roadworks. c) Roadwork abuse, which is a growing issue. • RM noted that they have a new borough plan with six objectives underneath and 80% of the objectives will be driven by delivery of good place and growth. RM continued that investment in place will actually support LGA with everything that they are trying to achieve from an adult and social care and children’s perspective. • NS noted that there are significant amounts of budgets being spent where there is no risk or high need due to tight strategy requirements, for example home to school transport for non-SEND pupils. <p><u>Association of Transport Co-Ordinating Officers – Damien Jones:</u></p> <p>DJ explained that the focus at ATCO has recently been their summer conference taking place on June 18th. The conference is partly to celebrate ATCO’s 50th birthday and there are also two themes: public transport and SEN.</p> <p><u>Additional update from Department for Transport – John Hall:</u></p> <p>JH joined the discussion to add that devolution is still on the agenda for the two main parties in the elections and that hopefully next time we meet in September, a more detailed update can be provided.</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p>Updates from Working Groups</p> <p><u>The National Traffic Managers Forum – Mark Corbin:</u></p> <p>No update provided.</p> <p><u>The Rights of Way Working Group – Peter Hobley:</u></p> <p>Update previously circulated.</p>	

	<p><u>The Road Safety Working Group – Paul Copeland:</u></p> <p>Update previously circulated.</p> <p><u>The Traffic Systems Working Group – Richard Ling:</u></p> <p>No update provided.</p> <p><u>The Digital Connectivity Group – Ceren Clulow:</u></p> <p>Update previously circulated.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>SEND Transport toolkit: Case Study</p> <p>Dean Sargeant, Director for Neighbourhood and Enforcement and Matt Powell, Service Delivery Manager for Strategic Transport and Highway Network Management from Telford and Wrekin Council attended to present the transport toolkit and shared a presentation demonstrating the work that has been carried out over the last few years.</p> <p>The presentation outlined the challenges, what actions have been taken and what are the outcomes, and finally what the next steps are.</p> <p>The presentation was circulated to the group after the meeting.</p> <p>Group members to pick up any queries and questions directly with DS and MP offline.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>The Implications of Devolution for Transport</p> <p>AH introduced Mark Jackson (Head of Transport and Contract Services from Durham County Council), Peter Mann (Interim Transport Programme Director at East Midlands Combined County Authority) and Rose McArthur (Director of Transport, Highways and Climate Change at Cheshire West and Chester Council) to the meeting to present their slides on the implications of Devolution for Transport in each of their areas.</p> <p><u>Durham, Devolution and Transport</u></p> <p>MJ shared a presentation and explained that the combined authority for the North East, NEMCA, was formed on 7th May 2024 and it consists of seven local authorities. MJ ran through the presentation and touched on the vision and objectives, governance and interim portfolios and then looked deeper into Transport, more specifically the projects and programmes, funding and delivery.</p> <p>The presentation was circulated to the group after the meeting.</p> <p><u>East Midlands Combined County Authority</u></p>	

PM shared a presentation and explained that the combined authority covering Derby and Nottingham cities and Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire counties was formed on 2nd May 2024. PM ran through the presentation and explained the high-level transport objectives, powers and responsibilities as well as the current issues.

The presentation was circulated to the group after the meeting.

Cheshire West and Chester Council

RM shared a brief presentation from a non-devolution area point of view explaining that their preferred group to go forward into being a combined authority would consist of Cheshire West, Cheshire East and Warrington – ECW. ECW are in a “shadow devolution” conversation at the moment and how as a group of organisations, they are well joined up. They recently attended UKREiiF making sure that with one voice, they were talking about investment opportunities and what they have to offer.

RM continued to explain that in the Transport for the North area, 90% of their coverage is now covered by a mayoral combined authority and how they are a part of that 10%, which makes every conversation you have strikingly different. As an example, RM mentioned a conversation at an event in Manchester where a gentleman was talking about their £300 million capital programme of activity for active travel, whereas ECW are still existing on their £1.4 million ITB.

ECW are currently at the point of portfolios being allocated; meetings are taking place and the decision making has been established. Engagement with the government has slightly halted due to the election announcement and discussions on the type of deal they want to be considered for are still ongoing.

RM explained that when ECW moves closer towards a devolution deal, they are wanting to put a lot of their focus on rail. The implications of the HS2 cancellation for Cheshire and Warrington is really pronounced as HS2 would have added £2 billion per annum to GVA, created new jobs whilst also improving transport links and securing growth around key stations: Crewe, Chester City Gateway and Warrington Bank Quay.

At present, ECW are hoping that with the new government getting announced on July 4th, they can be at the front of the queue for conversations on devolution.

Comments/Discussion:

- HB queried what experiences the presenters, more specifically MJ and PM had with different government

	<p>departments during the devolution process, how those relationships were ongoing and whether they were looking for any additional support not only from DfT but other departments as well. Both MJ and PM confirmed that their experiences have been positive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KP queried how the funding for highways maintenance is coming through. For the North East, MJ confirmed that this is still done in the same way where the funding comes to the North East and it then gets divided between the 7 local authorities. PM added that in East Midlands, the current capital programme was set in the beginning of the year, and they will be passing on that funding as per those allocations. When they get to new allocations, a three-year indicative allocation could be a potential. 	
<p>7.</p>	<p>General ADEPT Update</p> <p>HB updated the meeting on:</p> <p><u>Transport</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We had a useful catch-up meeting with Nick Harris (CEO) and Elliot Shaw (Chief Customer and Strategy Officer) from National Highways – discussed Network North, RIS3, Office for Road & Rail efficiency review of NH, potential areas of collaboration including Live Labs 2, freight, planning, environment. • We have responded to the DfT consultation on its Transport Adaptation Strategy (here), and the draft network management duty guidance on implementing low-traffic neighbourhoods (here). • National Highways has launched a Litter Task Force, bringing together a number of organisations including government agencies, waste companies, trade associations (freight and commercial drivers), nature conservation bodies, food and beverage companies, and behavioural change organisations. ADEPT is the only local authority representative body. If you'd like to know more and/or get involved, please contact Hannah Bartram (here). <p><u>Devolution / Growth / Planning</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are refreshing the ADEPT Housing Policy Position Publication by the summer. • The LGA has published its local government white paper (here) - ADEPT submitted evidence to the LGA earlier this year (here). The CCN has also published its manifesto (https://www.manifestoforcounties.co.uk/). • Workforce activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ADEPT launched a LinkedIn EDI campaign earlier this year. We have now published a compendium of the stories (here); in addition, we have published an ADEPT EDI Charter (here). 	

- Plans to roll out our Gen Z recruitment campaign pilot are developing well – there are 5 LAs involved (S Glos, Plymouth, Oxfordshire, Barnsley, Hounslow). We plan to run a digital campaign from October through to December.
- We launched a Leadership Pathway Programme for managers at the Spring Conference ([here](#)). Developed in partnership with Solace, the programme has been designed to meet the needs of managers looking to move into a more senior leadership role. It is the precursor to ADEPT's highly regarded Leadership Development Programme. For further information click [here](#) and to download an expression of interest form click [here](#).

Environment

- We are working with the Environment Agency to build capability in LAs to apply adaptation pathway approaches in flood and coastal erosion risk management. One of the early findings from the [Adaptation Pathways programme](#) is the importance of starting simple and building consensus around a pathway/ pathways before launching head long into technical assessment. We are working with consultancy *Climate Sense* to develop guidance for LAs on undertaking a Rapid Adaptation Pathways Assessment (RAPA), via three pilot projects. If you would like more information, please contact Kylie Russell ([here](#)).
- The Blueprint Coalition (of which ADEPT is a member) has been discussing the merits of promoting a climate change statutory duty for local government; it was also discussed at the recent Climate Change Board. London Councils and UK100 are developing a scoping paper to shape the work on this. We will also be reviewing and updating our Climate Change and Green Growth policy position over the coming months.
- The Greener Transport Council (of which ADEPT is a member) is running a webinar on 27 June - *Shifting the focus: Is adaptation the key to mainstreaming action on climate change?* Join this webinar to listen about new approaches to galvanising action around climate breakdown and the mobility transition. For more info and to register – see [here](#).

Events / Other

- We have published updated versions of the Commuted Sums for Highway Infrastructure Asset Management guidance ([here](#)) and the ADEPT Digital Connectivity policy position ([here](#)).
- Dates for your diary:
 - Live Labs 2 celebrated its first year with a successful live Expo in Birmingham on 17th April – the event was such a success that we ran a follow up online mini-Expo on 14 May. You can find out more [here](#).
 - Hot on the heels of a successful Spring Conference and Annual Awards Dinner – we are beginning to plan the

	<p>Autumn Conference. This will be held in Bristol on 21st & 22nd November – booking details to be published in July.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Please note - the Blueprint Coalition online webinar <i>How can devolution deliver on environmental ambition?</i> (5 June) has been postponed. ○ The 2024 PACE Programme is well underway – this year focusing on the strategic theme of ‘making a stronger case for place’. The summary report for Session 1 – <i>Advocating the case for place</i> – can be found here and the blog is here. ● Building on the launch of the ADEPT Manifesto for Stronger Places, we’re currently developing a public affairs strategy that will help us to engage with Westminster more effectively. 	
<p>8.</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>AH thanked everyone for attending and mentioned that anyone has any thoughts on the forward plan for the next 12 months, they should contact her, HB and ESa directly.</p>	