



ADEPT Transport & Connectivity Board Meeting

Friday 13th December 2024, 10am- 12:30pm

ATTENDEES PRESENT	<p>In-person: Amy Harhoff (AH) (chair) David Atkinson (DA) Edward Shortridge (ES) Hannah Bartram (HB) Haroon Chughtai (HC) Richard Ling (RL) Rose McArthur (RM) Ruth Harper (RH)</p> <p>Online: David Shepherd (DS) Abigail Nichols (AN) Anthony Ferguson (AF) Damien Jones (DJ) David Boyer (DB) David Hilton-Barber (DHB) Gary Bartlett (GB) Graham Bygrave (GBy) Hannah Battye (HBa) Isabel McCagg (IM) Kamal Panchal (KP) Lindsey Vallis (LV) Louise McBride (LM) Mark Hardie (MH) Nick Skelton (NS) Paul Copeland (PC) Peter Hopley (PH) Rupert Furness (RF) Rupert Thacker (RT) Sarah Spink (SS) Simon Jeffrey (SJ) Stuart Rankin (SR) Suzanne Buck (SB) Lorraine Board (notes)</p>
IN PART	Stephen Fidler (SF)
APOLOGIES	Jessica Matthew Ceren Clulow Simon Connick Chris Henning Felicity Tidbury

	<p> Jamie Hassall John Hall Julian Gould Kylie Russell Melanie Corcoran Neil Gibson Nigel Riglar Paul Fermer Paul Thompson Shona Butter Steve Bambrick Phil Robson Jake Kelly Alexandra Dodds Paul Crick Edwin McWilliam Fiona Foulkes Philip Greenup Ian Achurch Lee Quincey Lynne Stinson Owen Wilson Philip Lightowler Sam Edwards Tim Bellamy Elliot Shaw </p>
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Meeting Notes

Item	Detail	Actions
1.	<p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>AH welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted that due to the number of apologies, the list would be circulated with the minutes of the meeting. AH explained JM was unable to attend and SF would be joining the meeting by 10:30am.</p> <p>AH introduced DS as the new Chair of the Transport and Connectivity Board as AH is changing her substantive role. DS introduced himself and congratulated AH on her new role. AH advised key contacts will change.</p>	
2.	<p>Minutes of last meeting and Matters Arising</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2024 were agreed.</p>	
3.	<p>Updates from National Organisations</p>	

Department for Transport – Stephen Fidler, Ruth Harper, Rupert Furness and Anthony Ferguson

SF provided an update on Government and advised the new Secretary of State for Transport is in post.

Bus funding allocations were designed to be a one-year transition. A formula-based approach is the direction of travel and it is planned over the course of the next year to consider a revised formula which is transparent and appropriate for all local authorities.

The Statutory Instrument for Franchising comes into force on Wednesday and updated guidance is expected soon.

The DfT is looking to engage with rural authorities who may be interested in trialling a model. Any authorities can express an interest to SF or Sharon Maddox.

DfT may need to submit returns by February for the formal commission and will need support from local authorities with data and case studies, especially around growth.

New powers on ASB, fare evasion, safety training for bus drivers expected to be announced.

The Local Network Management Measure is planned to ensure there is an ongoing dialogue with relevant organisations and partnerships. SF advised this is not related to LGA funding.

RH provided an update on the standardised framework for devolution. Devolving traffic related issues would allow more matters to be resolved locally instead of going to the SoS. Bill to follow next year.

Potential for new devolution agreements may be taken forward following publication of the White Paper.

AF provided an update and confirmed they are working with the new Ministers to reconfirm work. Some consultation responses are due to be released early in the new year including street works. Pavement parking still being considered. The £20 million ITMF was cancelled post-election. The national parking platform has been stalled as Ministers are taking a different approach. Interest from Ministers on Microability with some existing trials continuing and the project can expand further.

Manual for streetworks guidance is progressing and looking to agree a way forward.

An updated was provided on the Digitisation of Traffic Orders under the Automated Vehicles Act. The platform continues to be built and moving towards a public beta in the new year with regulations being published.

RF advised work is ongoing to finalise funding allocations for the next financial year for highways maintenance which will include the additional funding announced by Government. Funding allocations are due to be issued shortly.

£100 million additional funding for active travel expected to be announced shortly and various other announcements are expected in the new year.

KP asked if the Better Buses Bill will include minimum infrastructure standards as there is concern over local authorities' resource. It was confirmed that guidance on and monitoring could be included on travel information, accessibility, and infrastructure however, no standards were expected.

It was raised that DTROs may cause some compliance issues for local authorities. AF advised it is not known what the guidance will state however, the state of readiness across the sector will need to be considered as some authorities are more paper focussed than others.

PH referred to TROs for Rights of Way and less engagement seems to have been undertaken on this area. AF will feed this back to the team to focus on this. ROW orders will only be for new TROs however, there is a question on readiness of Local Authorities and what happens with archived files.

DA advised Staffordshire are progressing their LTP with the assumption the national strategy will guide this. They have tested the method through BSIP and it was well received. Looking at how integrate journeys and the micromobility approach will impact on this. DfT will try to keep Local Authorities informed as matters progress to assist with planning.

It was requested that communications to Local Authorities on the BSIP funding state that this is additional funding and base budget should be maintained. Kent Council would welcome a conversation with RH on how LGR is viewed alongside devolution. It was noted the Government may prioritise councils who are open to devolution discussions for LGR.

Funding for projects was discussed where a decision is yet to be made. Including the Lower Thames Crossing. RF is unable to confirm when a decision will be made however, he will raise delays and possible issues with Purdah periods with the team.

It was noted operators are using National Insurance additional contributions to cut services. It is expected there will be soft ringfencing on additional funding and this should be spent in addition to existing budgets.

	<p>It was agreed for Cathy Miller, DfT to provide an update at the next meeting.</p> <p>The profile of failing structures across country as councils don't have funding to undertake inspections required is raising. It was suggested Government could create a special pot for councils to bid into however, this may involve top slicing resulting in lower base level budgets. It was agreed to keep this as an item on the agenda and for authorities to share statistics. RF would welcome a steer from ADEPT on ideas to manage the issue. It was suggested an ADEPT workshop could be organised.</p> <p><u>Local Government Association – Kamal Panchal:</u></p> <p>KP provided an update on streetworks and highways maintenance projects.</p> <p>The LGA are commissioning a guide to identify good practice and guidance for councils including the use of AI for highways maintenance.</p> <p>The Streetworks project is working with JAG UK as there is a view that current practice is not fit for purpose and it looks at good practice, accessibility, and the carbon footprint.</p> <p>The Transport Committee enquiry on rural buses is live and the LGA will be submitting a response. Local Authorities may also wish to submit responses.</p> <p>The LGA will submit a response to the Integrated Transport Strategy call for ideas. Local Authority positive responses will be valuable if responses could be submitted.</p> <p><u>Association of Transport Co-ordinating Officers – Damian Jones:</u></p> <p>DJ advised the changes to how rural funding is allocated is having an impact on budgets for next year.</p> <p>An annual survey from DfE on school transport is to start next year.</p> <p><u>National Highways – Elliot Shaw:</u></p> <p>ES was not at the meeting and no update was provided.</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p>Engagement With Network Rail – Stuart Rankin</p> <p>AH welcomed SR to the meeting.</p> <p>If anyone would like any matters covering at future meetings, please advise HB and SR can attend a couple of times a year.</p>	

	<p>The Passenger Railway Services Bill was approved which focuses on public sector running instead of franchising. South Western Railway will be first in May 25, followed by CTC and Anglia.</p> <p>The Railways Bill is looking to establish Great British Railways (GBR) and early benefits to be taken forward through a Shadow GBR. Network Rail will maintain day to day activities and the new set up will focus on collaboration.</p> <p>A ticketing reform is expected and the promoting of rail freight operators still having fair access to the network.</p> <p>Timescales for GBR are looking to be late 2026 at the earliest. Following Royal Assent, the design and mobilisation of GBR would be undertaken.</p>	
5.	<p>Updates from Working Groups</p> <p><u>The National Traffic Managers Forum – Mark Corbin:</u></p> <p>No update was provided.</p> <p><u>The Rights of Way Working Group – Peter Hobley:</u></p> <p>PH advised the number of deaths from cattle trampling increasing. HSE don't feel there is need to collect additional data and ADEPT may return to this in the future.</p> <p>The revision of the MOU with Network Rail is ongoing especially around communication and inconsistency with road/rail partnership meetings across the country.</p> <p><u>The Road Safety Working Group – Paul Copeland:</u></p> <p>PC advised more information may be available on Road Safety Strategy in the New Year, delayed by change of SoS.</p> <p>There is concern over sharing of Stat 19 crash data between Local Authorities and Police Forces. Scooter data is not consistent and principal issue is small wheels on unsuitable roads.</p> <p>If any authority would like to join the group or share data, please contact PC. PC advised the group tends to be engineer based.</p> <p><u>The Traffic Systems Working Group – Richard Ling:</u></p> <p>RL to replace Adrian Gray on invite list.</p>	

	<p>IMTF was cancelled by the new Government. £50 million transport funding is being spent well. Concerns over signal failures, lamp replacements and repair funding.</p> <p>It was suggested the supply chain issues for lamps can be raised with Director of DfT as a significant risk. RL confirmed this was manageable at the moment with existing stock within Local Authorities.</p> <p><u>The Digital Connectivity Group – Ceren Clulow:</u></p> <p>No update was provided.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>General ADEPT Update – Hannah Bartram</p> <p><u>Transport</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The former Secretary of State for Transport Louise Haigh launched her vision for the Integrated National Transport Strategy on Thursday 28th November – see here and here. The Integrated National Transport Strategy will set out a 'people first approach' to getting people around the country. We are told the new SoS, Heidi Alexander, is not proposing to change the focus or intent of the strategy. There are three sets of questions – for frontline workers, members of the public and organisations. Those for organisations (deadline 30th January) include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) In your opinion, how could the transport network be better 'joined-up'? b) Data in the context of the next question can mean having better information about journeys, such as but not limited to departure times, journey planning, traffic information and accessibility information. c) How could data be used to improve the transport network? d) Technology in the context of the next question means new and innovative ways to complete journeys, for example but not limited to the use of autonomous vehicles, electric scooters and e-hailing rides. e) How could technology be used to improve the transport network? f) How, if at all, would you improve the way decisions are made about the transport network? 2. ADEPT responded to the Public Accounts Committee inquiry into local roads – see here. 3. The Autumn has been very productive and exciting for ADEPT Live Labs 2. Here's our round up of key activity. <p><u>Devolution / Growth / Planning</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. In advance of the Autumn Budget, ADEPT joined forces with ADCS, ADPH and ADASS to publish a co-signed letter and briefing on local government finances (here). Our key asks were: 1) A fundamental review of local government funding 2) Introduction of multi-year funding settlements 3) Removal of 	

siloed and short-term funding streams and 4) Clarity on the future of a wide range of fixed term funding pots. ADEPT, ADASS and ADPH also submitted a joint response to the consultation on the NHS ten year plan – see [here](#). Meanwhile the Chancellor of the Exchequer has announced that she is asking all government departments to find 5pct efficiency savings as part of conversations around the CSR. All departmental budgets will be assessed by panels that will include bankers and each budget will be "zero based", which means departments will have to annually justify them. They will set day to day spending limits for 2026-2029 and investment budgets for 5yrs. To achieve all this, ministers have been told to stop spending on anything that doesn't meet government objectives and priorities.

5. ADEPT responded to the government consultation on its 'Invest 2035: Modern Industrial Strategy' Green Paper. We welcomed the government's long-term commitment to a Modern Industrial Strategy, emphasising that sustainable economic growth requires consistent, pro-growth policies, investment in infrastructure, and support for businesses, people, and places. Our response highlights the critical role of local authorities in addressing infrastructure gaps, supporting diverse economies, and ensuring the strategy benefits all communities, not just growth sectors or city regions. The response can be seen [here](#).
6. The 2025 PACE thought leadership programme concluded with a plenary session at the Autumn Conference. This focus this year was on 'making a stronger case for place'. The outputs of the three sessions, and the Stronger Places Assessment toolkit which came out of session 3, can be found [here](#).

Environment / Climate

7. We held the 3rd in the series of joint webinars with Natural England on 8th November, a successful session on nature and health with almost 60 participants and a panel of speakers from NE, South Gloucestershire Council, ADPH, UK Health Alliance on Climate Change and Intelligent Health. If you would like a copy of the recording, please ask [Hannah](#).
8. We held the 2nd in the series of joint webinars with the Environment Agency webinar on 19th November – 'Local authority staff webinar: What does the new flood and coastal erosion risk mapping mean for you?'. A great event with over 750 participants. Hannah introduced the event with the EA and Doug Hill, Chair of the ADEPT Flood and Water Management Group presented. The webinar score a usefulness rating 4.45/5 and 90% rated the slides as excellent/good. Our next joint webinar is on 12th Dec (see below).
9. ADEPT and EA delivered 3 Rapid Adaptation Pathway Assessment (RAPA) workshops during October, aimed at helping communities and stakeholders better prepare for the impacts of climate change. These pilot workshops were hosted

	<p>in Marlborough by Wiltshire Council, Chichester by West Sussex County Council and Bristol by South Gloucestershire Council & West of England Mayoral Combined Authority. The workshops brought together local councils, experts and community representatives to explore adaptation pathways for managing increasing flood risk due to climate change. The findings from these pilots will inform a toolkit designed to guide local authorities in making informed decisions under climate uncertainty, ensuring they are equipped to handle both current and future challenges.</p> <p>Events/Other</p> <p>10. The ADEPT Autumn Conference took place in Bristol on 21st & 22nd November, with the theme of ‘Creating places fit for the future: our past, our present, our future’. The event was attended by over 200 people, and provided place directors with an opportunity to reflect on the past and the present and consider how future spaces are created. More info here.</p> <p>11. We are looking for Expressions of Interest for the 2025 Leadership Development Programme – for more information, see here. The deadline is 17th January.</p> <p>12. Dates for your diary:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. A joint webinar with the EA takes place 11am-12pm on 12th December. The focus is sharing learning from the ‘Local Investment In Natural Capital’ (LINC) pilot local authorities. To book see here. b. The next Lunch & Learn will take place on 18th December. Stantec follow up their workshop at the ADEPT Autumn Conference with a session on funding regeneration. To register see here. c. The next ADEPT / NE webinar will focus on ‘Planning for nature & climate resilience’ and will take place 1330-1500 on Weds 22 January. If you would like to attend, please email Hannah Bartram. d. We are organising a ‘Navigating Transition’ training workshop, for people who are considering a new stage in their careers. It will be facilitated by Roger Paine and is being held in Birmingham on Friday 17th January. More information here. e. The Live Labs 2 Expo will be held in the Hilton Hotel, Liverpool on 25th March. To register your interest in attending and find more information – see here. f. The Spring Conference and Annual Awards Dinner will take place in London on Thursday 22nd May. Save the date! 	
7.	<p>Pathways Project – Mark Hardie and Isabel McCagg</p> <p>MH introduced himself, IM and the National Active Travel Wayfinding Project.</p>	

	<p>Further detail was provided through the presentation and MH advised the work can be scaled to work with various sized organisations on play books and apps.</p> <p>There is inconsistency with signs, colours and markings across the UK and conflicted shared paths.</p> <p>It is a five-phase programme. The prototype tool kit has been launched and they are now on phase 3 with 10 pilots ongoing and another 5 in the pipeline.</p> <p>Conversations are ongoing with Wales to ensure the project is moving forward in the right direction.</p> <p>All are welcome to download the prototype. There are two systems – directional and awareness.</p> <p>Further detail was provided on current pilots and feasibilities.</p> <p>Extensive R&D is being undertaken, working on elderly, disability and safety considerations.</p> <p>AH thanked MH and IM for the presentation and detail.</p> <p>PH raised signing of Rights of Way as this needs to be textual and equestrian implications and rights. MH advised all points have been incorporated. PH offered for MH to come to the Rights of Way Working Group.</p> <p>KP suggested MH submits a response on DfT’s active travel consultation and MH will contact KP regarding this in the new year.</p> <p>RL asked how the project would fit with existing guidance. MH advised the team are working with Active Travel England to develop and implement a system where it is embedded in the right way.</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>AH thanked everyone for attending and wished the group well going forward.</p>	