



ADEPT Transport & Connectivity Board Meeting

Friday 17th July 2026, 10am- 12:00pm

ATTENDEES PRESENT	Online: David Shepherd - Chair Grahame Bygrave Peter Hobley Shortridge, Edward Esme Yuill Morris, Kate David Hilton-Barber Swift, Antony Paul Copeland Bella Fortune Kamal Panchal Stephen Fidler Lindsey Vallis Jamie Hullah Battye, Hannah - Oxfordshire County Council Damien Jones Rupert Thacker Becky Morrison Richard Ling Simon Jeffrey MCARTHUR, Rose Fiona Foulkes Bullock, David David Dale Giles Perkins Daniel Clarke Nicola Cullen
APOLOGIES	Hannah Bartram Bruse Low Chris Henning Julian Gould Katie Day Kylie Russell Louise McBride Natalie Wigman

	Paul Crick Phil Robson Rachel Ford Samantha Howell Sarah Spink Simon Connick David O'Donoghue John Lamb
--	--

Meeting Notes

Item	Detail	Actions/Slides
1.	Welcome and Apologies David Shepherd welcomed attendees and chaired the meeting	
2.	Minutes of last meeting and Matters Arising The minutes of the meeting held on 27 th March 2026 were agreed.	
3.	National Round Up Department for Transport Update Presented by: Stephen Fidler Bus Franchising - DfT has established: - A franchising expert support panel. - Funding to support franchising assessments and pre-assessment work. - Emphasis that franchising is not assumed to be the correct solution for every area and authorities should assess all options. Bus Funding - Additional local authority bus funding and Bus Grant allocations expected shortly. - Treasury approval remained outstanding but anticipated imminently. - Delay expected until the following week if final ministerial sign-off was not obtained. Summer Bus Offer "Kids Go Free" summer initiative progressing. - Following stakeholder feedback: - Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) included. - Community Transport included within funding arrangements. Devolution - Expectation that devolution reforms will continue.	

	• Uncertainty remains around the balance between expanding devolution geographically versus enhancing existing mayoral and city-region arrangements. Fares Policy • Anticipated early discussions regarding the future of the £3 fare cap ahead of its expiry in March. Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Reform • Continued consultation activity on licensing reform. • Core policy objective remains that drivers should be licensed where they principally operate. • DfT seeking local authority input on appropriate implementation mechanisms.	
	Highways and Roads Update Presented by: Becky Morrison Highways Maintenance Funding Transparency Reporting • Local authorities required to publish road condition and improvement information by 10 September. • Revised RAG-rating methodology being developed following sector feedback. • Ministers remain committed to maintaining a public-facing RAG-rating approach. Structures Fund • Applications open until 3 August. • Intended for bridges, tunnels and other structures. • Expected to be heavily oversubscribed. • Authorities encouraged to utilise bid support services. Well-Managed Highway Infrastructure Code • Updated code remains on track for publication in November. Streets and Regulation Updates Pavement Parking • Secondary legislation expected by end of year. • Authorities with parking enforcement powers will gain stronger powers to tackle obstructive pavement parking. • Additional powers to prohibit pavement parking expected within 18–24 months. Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions (TSRGD) • Review underway following Better Connected Transport Strategy. • Focus on: ◦ Improving walking and wheeling. ◦ Side road zebra crossings. ◦ Accessible street design. • Formal consultation planned. Lane Rental • Fourteen new schemes recently approved. • Total approved schemes increased to 26. • Legislative changes due in September.	

	• Future approvals expected to be devolved to Mayoral Strategic Authorities. Digital Traffic Regulation Orders (DTRO) • Statutory requirement for digital TRO submissions progressing. • More than 100,000 orders already uploaded. • Planned commencement in November with implementation 12 weeks later. Discussion • Concerns raised regarding: ◦ Combined authorities potentially having wider access to alternative funding streams. ◦ Capacity within MSAs to administer lane rental approvals. ◦ Portal delays affecting reporting requirements. • DfT agreed to review these issues.	
	3. Local Government Association (LGA) Update Presented by: Kamal Panchal Organisational Changes • Interim Chief Executive appointed: Jenny Rowlands. • New LGA Chair appointed: Eamon O'Brien (Leader of Bury Council). • LGA now comprises six political groups following Green Party representation growth. • Recent Activity • Live Labs 2 webinar delivered. • Bus franchising webinar held featuring: ◦ DfT ◦ Greater Manchester ◦ Peterborough & Cambridgeshire Combined Authority. Upcoming Activity • Extreme Weather and Highways webinar scheduled. • Continued work on: ◦ Pavement parking legislation. ◦ E-bike opportunities. ◦ Local transport planning under devolution. ◦ Future of flight and drone delivery implications for local authorities. ◦ Key Concern • Local authorities risk being excluded from planning and governance discussions regarding future drone deliveries and autonomous logistics systems.	
	4. Association of Transport Coordinating Officers (ATCO) Update	

	Presented by: Damien Jones Annual Conference • Over 100 delegates attended. • Key themes: ◦ SEND transport. ◦ Rising transport costs. ◦ Technology and automation. ◦ Taxi reform impacts. ◦ Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). ◦ Education attendance and transport. ◦ Current Work • Working with DfT, DfE and CPT regarding fuel cost pressures. • Concern over impacts on home-to-school transport operators. • Supporting implementation of summer youth travel initiatives. • Producing work on transport implications of devolution and local government reorganisation.	
4.	General ADEPT update ADEPT Update Presented by: David Dale Publications Released • LGR Highways Toolkit. • EV Policy Statement. • Highway Climate Adaptation Guidance. • ADEPT Strategic Plan 2026–2029. Carbon Leadership Programme • Introductory webinar scheduled for authorities not yet engaged. Climate Change Committee Report • New report on Local Authorities and the Seventh Carbon Budget published. • Further discussion planned through the ADEPT Climate Change Board. ADEPT Autumn Conference • Scheduled for 26–27 November in Brighton. • Bursary scheme available to support attendance. Local Government Reorganisation • Further support available through toolkits and peer learning. • Additional work planned following announcements on new LGR areas.	

5.	Live Labs 2 – Update & Next Steps Presented by: Giles Perkins Programme Overview • £30 million innovation programme. • Seven Live Labs operating across four themes: ◦ Decarbonised Roads. ◦ Green Assets. ◦ Corridors & Places. ◦ Centre for Excellence. Key Findings Significant benefits identified across: • Cost savings. • Carbon reductions. • Improved operational efficiency. • Reduced maintenance requirements. • Environmental enhancements. Examples Highlighted East Riding • Street lighting project demonstrated: ◦ 12% reduction in near misses. ◦ Up to 10% reduction in vehicle speeds. ◦ One-third reduction in collisions. ◦ £1.2m savings over ten years. South Gloucestershire & West Sussex • Successful use of verge cuttings to produce: ◦ Biochar. ◦ Biofuel products. Devon • Major road scheme applied carbon-led design approaches. • Reduced project timescales and carbon impacts. Future Activity • Regional workshops. • Triage support sessions. • Knowledge bank and AI-enabled search tools. • Greater dissemination and adoption of programme findings across the sector.	
6.	Automated Mobility Networks Presented by: Daniel Clarke Overview	

	• Network established to support local authorities regarding deployment of autonomous vehicles. • Membership includes authorities involved in automated vehicle trials. Emerging Developments • Driverless taxis expected on London streets later this year. • Automated buses already operating in trials. • Full commercial autonomous bus services targeted by 2028. Key Concerns • Impact on local transport networks. • Integration with franchising models. • Accessibility and customer experience. • Safety and regulation. • Risk of undermining conventional public transport provision. Automated Passenger Services Regulations • Local authorities will become key consenting bodies. • Authorities may have only six weeks to respond to applications. • Need for preparation across transport and licensing functions highlighted.	
7.	Bus Franchising Presented by: Nicola Cullen Pilot Areas • Cornwall • Hertfordshire • Westchester • Cumberland • York & North Yorkshire • Expansion • DfT funding approved for 18 further pre-feasibility studies. • Lessons Learned • No single franchising model fits all locations. • Strong governance arrangements are essential. • Stakeholder engagement is critical. • Franchising should be assessed alongside alternative reform models rather than assumed to be the preferred solution. Franchising Support Offer • DfT has established an expert support panel that authorities can access for franchising advice and expertise.	

8.	Any Other Business No other business	
	Date of next meeting – 10:00-12:00 Friday 25th September 2026	