

**SOUTH EAST ENGLAND PARTNERSHIP BOARD  
REGIONAL TRANSPORT BOARD**



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 23 OCTOBER 2009**

**ROYAL INSTITUTE OF BRITISH ARCHITECTS,  
PORTLAND PLACE,  
LONDON**

Present:

Board Members

Cllr. David Robertson (Chairman)  
Susan Stuart  
Jon Griffiths  
Paul Harwood  
Clive King  
Cllr. Tony Page  
Bob Goldfield  
Simon Pratt  
Cllr Cec Tallack  
Cllr. Val Letheren  
Cllr. Mel Kendal  
Cllr. David Lee  
Cllr Paul Watkins  
Mark Pearson

Officers

Martin Tugwell  
Andy Mak  
Rachel Barker  
James Renwick  
Richard Walker  
Dominic Veasey  
Simon Worsfold  
Pat Ayling  
David Cooper  
Arthur Norton  
Samantha Wilcox

In Attendance

Cllr Derek Whittington (West Sussex CC)  
Cllr Matthew Lock (East Sussex CC)  
Cllr Matthew Dean (Southampton CC)  
  
Cllr Rodney Rose (Oxfordshire CC)  
Cllr. Richard Kellaway (Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead)  
Cllr. Edward Giles (Isle of Wight Council)  
Cllr. Gary Cowan (Wokingham BC)  
Cllr. Phil Filmer (Medway Council)  
Cllr. James Swindlehurst (Slough BC)  
Cllr. Lynne Stagg (Portsmouth CC)  
Cllr. Alan Mallyon (Milton Keynes Council)

Hannah Battye (Buckinghamshire CC)  
James Harris (East Sussex CC)  
Gail Kenyon (Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead)  
Liz Motherwell (Slough BC)  
Keith Wilcox (Hampshire CC / Transport for South Hampshire)  
Gillian Ralphs (Slough BC)  
Tony Toynton (West Sussex CC)  
Peter Lee (Department for Transport)  
Daniel Round (Oxfordshire CC)  
Ruth Leuillette (Reading BC)  
Phil Marshall (Southampton CC)  
Mark Moon (Wokingham BC)  
Jeff Cousins (Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport)  
David Stewart (SEEDA)  
Sharon Hedges (Passenger Focus)  
Paul Bently (Passenger Focus)  
Simon Moon (Portsmouth CC)  
Chris Aldridge (Network Rail)

**1. Apologies for absence and declarations of interest**

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Cllr. Colin Rayner. The Chairman introduced Rachel Barker, the newly appointed Regional Transport Board Manager who will be managing all transport related matters other than DaSTS. Andy Mak will manage the DaSTS work programme. The additional resources now being made available reflects the additional workload arising from DaSTS.

- 1.2 The Chairman informed the Board that the updated 'Factbook' was available for all Board Members and Portfolio Holders. It is also available on the Partnership Board website.

## **2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 October 2009**

- 2.1 Cllr. Rodney Rose reported an omission from the minutes of the previous meeting under agenda item 7: DaSTS. At the meeting on the 24 July, Councillor Ian Hudspeth asked that in light of the Weston Otmoor eco-town no longer being progressed, the Highways Agency progress with the improvement scheme for Junction 9 of the M40 as a matter of urgency. Cllr Hudspeth had re-iterated the importance of the work being undertaken in order to support delivery of the growth identified. It was noted that the Leader of Oxfordshire County Council had written to Lord Adonis pressing for a commitment to early improvements to Junction 9.
- 2.2 Jon Griffiths stated that 7.3. in the July minutes should have referred to a "lower Thames Crossing". The minutes agreed without further amendments.

## **3. Matters Arising Not Elsewhere on the Agenda**

- 3.1 Bob Goldfield noted that in respect of item 6.7 of the previous minutes, construction inflation costs had actually fallen by 5.5% over the past twelve months. Compared with headline inflation of around 2.2% this represents quite a dramatic fall.

## **4. Programme Management and Monitoring**

- 4.1 James Renwick presented the report, which was based on the most recent local authority monitoring returns. Monitoring returns for the second quarter of 2009/10 have yet to be received however early indications are that there are no emerging issues for the Board to be aware of.
- 4.2 The Board noted that the Isle of Wight Council had dropped their proposal for the Ryde Interchange. The Board was advised that this decision had been arrived as a result of delays and conditions imposed by Network Rail. The Council had determined that the scheme no longer provides the best value against other local investment priorities. As a consequence the Isle of Wight Council will be required to repay DfT contributions towards the preparation costs.
- 4.3 Cllr. Edward Giles thanked the Board for their understanding in regard to the difficulties experienced with the Ryde Interchange scheme. He advised the Board that the Council may wish to promote an alternative scheme that meets the key objectives of the previous scheme; the Board indicated that it would consider the merits of an alternative scheme were it forthcoming.
- 4.4 The Board noted the progress with the Bexhill–Hastings Link Road. The scheme has planning permission and is now undergoing a Public Inquiry of the associated Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO). **The Board agreed that the Chairman would write to the Inspector restating the region's support for the scheme and the linkage with delivery of improvements to the A21 Baldslow Junction.**

- 4.5 The Board restated its support for the A21 Baldslow Junction and the stressed the need for the scheme to be delivered at the earliest possible opportunity following completion of the Bexhill-Hastings Link Road. The Board was advised that in light of potential cost increases associated with the current options for the improvement there was a need to consider alternative solutions. These solutions might be lower cost, and therefore more affordable, whilst still delivering the majority of the benefits of previous options.
- 4.6 Cllr. Matthew Lock thanked the Board for help and support given in respect of Bexhill-Hastings Link Road and informed the Board that the Minister had reconfirmed the provisional approval for the scheme. Cllr Lock welcomed the Board's support for ensuring an early delivery for an improvement to Baldslow Junction. However, he stressed the need for early engagement with the County Council with regards to potential alternative solutions. The Board supported the need for the Highways Agency to work closely with the County Council on this issue.
- 4.7 Jon Griffiths confirmed that Highways Agency colleagues would continue to work closely with the County Council in looking to develop a viable, affordable solution that could be delivered at the earliest opportunity.
- 4.8 Network Rail's response to the Board's concerns about the need to make provision for longer term aspirations to improve the passenger concourse at Reading Station was reported. This confirmed that provision was being made within the design of the Reading Station scheme for the longer-term aspiration. It was noted that there remained the need to identify the funding required in order to deliver the enhancement in the passenger concourse being sought
- 4.9 Cllr. Page informed the Board that in relation to Reading Station planning consent had been given a few weeks ago and that the Business Case for the core scheme was extremely robust.
- 4.10 The Board noted that Regional Infrastructure Fund (RIF) Investment Panel had recommended two schemes for support: an improvement to the M20 Junction 9 (£8m) and improvements to the A20 Drovers Roundabout (£7m) in Ashford. The Panel's recommendations had been endorsed by SEEDA (the accountable body for the RIF) and progress was being made to deliver the schemes.
- 4.11 In response to a question from Cllr David Lee Martin Tugwell advised that the Ashford schemes had emerged as priorities for investment through the RIF following discussions with local authorities that sought to identify potential schemes that might meet the RIF investment criteria. The Board was reminded that the purpose of RIF was to unlock growth that would otherwise not proceed, and equally important, to ensure that RIF investment was recovered through the planning system. The secretariat would be reviewing the list of potential schemes with local authorities prior to Christmas.
- 4.12 It was confirmed that of the funds currently identified for investment through the RIF £12m remained unallocated, of which £10m had to, in the first instance, be invested in transport schemes. The Board is represented on the RIF Investment Panel in recognition of the fact that the majority of the funding channelled through the RIF is transport funding.
- 4.13 Cllr Val Letheren sought clarification as to the timing of the next meeting of the RIF Investment Panel. The secretariat advised that it was hoped this would take place prior to Christmas.

- 4.14 Cllr Letheren advised the Board that work on delivering the High Wycombe Coachway was continuing to move forward. Jon Griffiths confirmed that the HA was working with BCC with a view to reaching agreement on the evidence base underpinning the proposal and the commercial development adjoining to the site. He confirmed that the HA had no concerns with the Coachway in itself, but that they are concerned about potential impacts on the nearby Handy Cross junction (M40 J4) of the proposed office development.
- 4.15 Cllr. Page reiterated that East West Rail was an important priority for the South East and requested an update on the proportion of funding that might be forthcoming from Chiltern Railways "Evergreen 3" proposal. Martin Tugwell responded by explaining that the Evergreen 3 proposal was being considered by the Secretary of State. If it was approved this would lever in investment that would deliver part of the western part of East-West Rail. The estimated value of that investment was approximately £70m out of an estimated cost of £250m.
- 4.16 Cllr. Richard Kellaway thanked the Board for its help and support in making funds available for investment in the Winsor Transport and Parking package (£5m) and improvements to the A332 Windsor and Eton Relief Road (£5m).
- 4.15 Martin Tugwell advised that the Board had been invited to consider whether it wanted to submit a statement to the forthcoming Inquiry into the Transport and Works Act application made by BAA in respect of Airtrack. It was agreed that the secretariat would prepare a supporting statement.

**ACTION: The Board agreed that it:**

- i) Noted the progress made in delivering the regional programme;**
- ii) Reaffirmed the region's support for the A21 Baldslow Junction Improvement as a regional priority and emphasised the importance of ensuring a cost effective and affordable solution is delivered at the earliest opportunity;**
- iii) Noted the outcome of the meeting of the East-West Rail Consortium with the Secretary of State for Transport and instructed the Secretariat to prepare a detailed paper on the funding options for consideration at its next meeting.**
- iv) Reaffirmed its support for the delivery of Heathrow Airtrack, and instruct the secretariat to present this support to the forthcoming Public Inquiry.**

**5. Delivering a Sustainable Transport System**

- 5.1 Dominick Veasey informed the Board that three briefs had so far been agreed by the Department for Transport. The briefs in respect of the Milton Keynes and the Thames Valley studies would be submitted shortly along with the remaining geographically focused studies: Central Oxfordshire and Access to Kent Ports.
- 5.2 Information on the regional work programme was now available on the Partnership Board's website. The next critical deadline to be met was the submission of the Interim Report from the region no later than the end of March 2010.

- 5.3 Simon Pratt requested information on how 'smarter choices' fitted in to the studies approach and whether there would be a specific Smarter Choices study. Martin Tugwell advised that promoting smarter choices was a key dimension of all the studies.
- 5.4 Cllr. Cec Tallack re-emphasised the importance of ensuring that the Milton Keynes/Aylesbury Vale study supporting the delivery of East West Rail. Dominick Veasey assured him that a decision on the brief for this study was expected in the next week.
- 5.5 Martin Tugwell informed the Board that a co-ordinating group was in place which consisted of the Partnership Board, GOSE, SEEDA and the Department and regular meetings had been put in place. Susan Stuart also reinforced that regular updates would be forthcoming from the Department concerning overall progress with the DaSTS process.
- 5.6 The Chairman extended his and the Board's thanks to Andy Mak as DaSTS Programme Manager, and Dominick Veasey for their efforts in bringing forward this key work programme to the stage it had reached within a very short timescale. He also thanked the Board members for their part in responding to the draft briefs, for which they had provided their comments to the Secretariat very quickly.

**ACTION: The Board noted the progress of the regional work programme.**

## **6. Assessment of Surface Access Requirements at Airports in the Greater South East**

- 6.1 Rachel Barker set out the timescale for completion of this study; the aim being for the Final Report to be available by the end of November. She clarified that one of the figures in item 3.5.1 concerning the public/private transport modal split for London City Airport had been incorrectly reversed.
- 6.2 Cllr. Paul Watkins sought clarification on whether the study had considered the potential of Kent International (Manston) Airport. This was especially relevant in light of the proposal from the Mayor of London for a new airport in the Thames Estuary. As a supplementary point, he queried whether there would be any possibility of extending the High Speed line through to Ramsgate.
- 6.3 Martin Tugwell responded by noting that there issue as to whether there is a need for additional runway capacity in the Greater South East was unlikely to resolved in the short term. However, it was clear that there is scope for additional growth in passenger numbers at the region's existing airports. The focus of this study was to identify the key surface access issues that need to be addressed in order for that potential to be realised. In this regard he noted that it was for Kent International Airport to use its Masterplan as the basis for developing a business case for future investment.
- 6.4 The Board was advised that whilst publication of the National Policy Statement (NPS) on Ports was imminent, that relating to Aviation was not expected until spring 2011 at the earliest.
- 6.5 Cllr. Cec Tallack observed that on the information available there seemed to be a substantial amount of capacity that had yet to be taken up within

the Greater South East airport system. In that context he questioned the need for any additional runway capacity in the short/medium term.

- 6.6 Clive King noted that the dynamics of airport usage and operations, including access by surface modes, had been affected by the increase in low cost flights and that passengers now tended to use rail and coaches accordingly. Cllr. Tony Page noted the potential benefit of high-speed rail services as an alternative for some domestic/short haul air services.
- 6.7 Simon Pratt stated that as any talk of aviation and airport development was always of serious concern for environmental groups. However he noted that the report was focusing on identifying opportunities to improve surface access with particular emphasis being given to non-car options. He agreed that improvements to surface access by public transport are urgently needed now and that Heathrow AirTrack is a move in the right direction.
- 6.8 Cllr. David Lee stated that a key barrier to rail use was affordability and sought guidance on how the Board might press this issue with Government. The Chairman pointed out that the Board was not empowered to make any direct impact, as the setting of fares was market-led save for certain regulated fares on the rail network. However, both the Chairman and the majority of Board Members felt it was appropriate for the Board to make representations to Government and public transport operators in this regard.
- 6.9 Martin Tugwell highlighted the opportunity created by the need to submit an interim report as part of the DaSTS process as a means for the Board pursuing this issue. Paul Harwood reinforced the message that the best way of inputting would be through the DaSTS process, and the forthcoming Interim Report.

**Action: The Board noted the contents of the report and the emerging themes for each of the major airports in respect of surface access.**

## **7. Gatwick Airport: Station Improvement**

- 7.1 Paul Harwood gave a presentation on Network Rail's scheme for the improvement of Gatwick rail station. The scheme would provide a new platform (Platform 7), increased capacity and reliability for peak time rail services on the Brighton Main Line. The station overbridge would be extended and a new entrance to the station would be opened up onto the airport road forecourt. This would reduce walking time for station users not using the airport terminal and relieve congestion on the airport link bridges.
- 7.2 He highlighted that there are major efficiencies gained from delivering the scheme at the same time as planned re-signalling. The current scheme had been costed at £53m, while Network Rail has £40m available for it, leaving a funding gap of £13m. The scheme would deliver improvements for both the airport and station but would not prevent a more substantial improvement going ahead at a later date.
- 7.3 Cllr. Derek Whittington queried the estimated cost of the scheme outlined to the Board. Paul Harwood explained that earlier proposals for an improvement to the station had increased in cost to the point where they were unaffordable. The proposal now on the table had been costed and was considered to be both good value for money and affordable.

- 7.4 Cllr. Whittington advised that he is a member of the standing Gatwick Airport Consultative Committee "GATCOM". With the sale of Gatwick ongoing, there was a renewed strong desire to continue joint working between local authorities and the new airport owners, especially in respect of surface access. He concluded by re-emphasising that Gatwick Airport is a major transport hub for all modes in the sub-region and wider South East.
- 7.5 Cllr. Tony Page asked if the ticket office area would be improved as it urgently requires it given the length of queues at all times. Paul Harwood stated that there would be some improvements to the layout of the ticket office area, but improvements would have to be made within the existing footprint of the area.
- 7.6 Mark Pearson advised that he was in contact with the airport's new owners who remained eager to engage and resolve all issues as soon as possible, he also pointed out that it was critical for the Board to help with this goal.

**ACTION: The Board agreed that it:**

- i) Would seek confirmation from Gatwick Airport Limited that the efficient and effective operation of the rail station remains central to the Airport Surface Access Strategy;**
- ii) Would seek confirmation from Network Rail as to the content of the scheme, its deliverability and benefits;**
- iii) Instruct the Secretariat to enter into discussions with Gatwick Airport Limited and Network Rail with a view to identifying an appropriate apportionment of the funding requirements;**
- iv) Instruct the Secretariat to report back to its next meeting in January.**

**8. Great Western Route Utilisation Strategy: Consultation Response**

- 8.1 Chris Aldridge from Network Rail gave a presentation to the Board on the contents of the draft Great Western RUS.
- 8.2 Cllr. Mel Kendal raised the issue of the need for longer trains on the Portsmouth – Cardiff service. Chris Aldridge stated that at present there was a shortage of suitable diesel rolling stock nationally and that procurement of new diesel stock was prohibitively expensive due to low levels of availability. However, the implementation of the Thameslink programme and electrification of the Great Western Main Line would create a rolling stock cascade allowing diesel rolling stock to be redeployed to this route, with the possibility of longer trains. Cllr. Kendal requested that proposed response be amended so as to include specific reference to the need for improvements in the level of service on this inter-regional corridor.
- 8.3 Cllr. Tony Page asked for paragraph 4.2 to be redrafted to make the intent clearer. Richard Walker agreed to look at the wording again and revise it accordingly.
- 8.4 Cllr. David Lee requested that Paragraph 7.2 regarding Heathrow Airtrack be reviewed. In particular he stressed the need for the implication of additional train services on road traffic at level crossings to be taken into consideration.

- 8.5 Martin Tugwell advised the Board that West Berkshire Council had requested that the need for improved services to Newbury be included in the consultation response. The Board agreed.

**ACTION: The Board agreed the consultation response attached at Annex 1 subject to the points raised during debate being incorporated in it.**

## **9. High Speed Rail 2**

- 9.1 Martin Tugwell introduced this paper and informed the Board that it was a short paper designed to brief the Board on the work of High Speed 2. It also sets out the key factors against which the Board may wish to judge any future proposal put forward for consultation.
- 9.2 Simon Pratt requested that additional wording under 2.4 should be added along the lines of: "in looking at any future proposal the Board should take into account the contribution that any future proposal might make towards reducing the region's CO2 footprint".
- 9.2 Following a short discussion it was agreed that 2.4i and 2.4ii would be looked at by the Secretariat and revised. It was suggested by Cllr. Tony Page that the early experience of High Speed 1 be taken into account by the Board when considering any future proposal.

**ACTION: The Board agreed, subject to the recommended changes, to adopt the criteria set out in paragraph 2.4 as the framework against which to consider any future proposal for a new high speed rail corridor.**

## **10. Items for Information**

- 10.1 Martin Tugwell advised that the Mayor of London's Transport Strategy had been published for consultation and that the Board would receive a draft response to consider at their meeting in January.

## **Date of Future Meetings**

8 January 2010  
12 March 2010  
11 June 2010  
10 September 2010  
10 December 2010

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 16.00 hrs.