

**SOUTH EAST ENGLAND
REGIONAL TRANSPORT BOARD**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 13 July 2007



Present:

Board Members

Cllr Nick Skellett (Chairman)
Cllr Tony Page
Cllr Cec Tallack
John Peel
Gwyn Drake
Simon Pratt
Clive King
Pam Palmer
Mark Pearson
Susan Stuart

Officers

Paul Bevan
Martin Tugwell
Paul Lovejoy
Andy Barton
Andy Mak
James Renwick
David Cooper
Fiona Thorp
Pat Ayling

Media

Arun Marsh, Surveyor Magazine
Robin Mannering, Surveyor

In Attendance

Pat Baxter, Reading Borough Council
Detlef Golletz, SEEDA
Cllr. Gavin Dick, Southampton City Council
Peter Hayward, East Sussex County Council
Andy Renaut, Brighton and Hove Council
Steve Hayes, Oxfordshire County Council
Lesley van Dijk
Howard Holt, Port of Dover
Mike Krayenbrink, Port of Dover
Julian Lomas, Portsmouth City Council
Stuart Jarvis, Hampshire County Council
Cllr. Nigel Collor, Dover District Council
Jeff Cousins

1. Apologies for absence and declarations of interest

1.1 No apologies were received.

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 1 February 2007.

The Minutes were AGREED noting the following corrections:

A misspelling of the word Secretariat in paragraph 5.3 iv.

3. Matters Arising Not Elsewhere on the Agenda

- 3.1 The Board expressed thanks to Pam Palmer who is retiring and thanked her for her contributions to the Board.
- 3.2 The Board also welcomed new members Cllr. Cec Tallack who replaces Cllr. Jill Baston, and Cllr. Tony Page who replaces Cllr. John Howarth.

4. Programme Management and Monitoring

4.1 Protocol for Significant Scheme Changes

- 4.1.1 This item was introduced by James Renwick. At the last Board meeting two substantive issues were identified that required more detailed consideration;
 - i) Whether the proposed threshold for triggering the application of the protocol is the most appropriate;
 - ii) Whether there is a need to give consideration to assessing alternative schemes (i.e. the intervention) to deliver a defined proposal (i.e. the objective) when defining future actions.
- 4.1.2 The Board agreed that the approach suggested in the paper to a sliding scale threshold proportionate to the cost of the project was appropriate. The Board briefly debated the issue of alternative schemes using the same funding, and concluded that under current guidance that it was not possible to adopt this approach. Furthermore depending upon the level of progress that a scheme had undergone this may be an inappropriate action, and that this type of approach should be considered on a case by case basis.

It was AGREED that the Board:

- a) Approved the revised protocol contained in Annex I, and the thresholds proposed in Annex II;**
- b) Agreed that, pending the work on the refresh of the forward programme, the protocol is applied to those situations where the increase in scheme cost is a consequence of factors other than inflationary effects;**
- c) Required scheme promoters to submit a revised Benefit-Cost Ratio calculation prior to its consideration of a significant increase in scheme cost.**

4.2 Programme Management

- 4.2.1 This item was introduced by Andy Barton. The Department for Transport (DfT) had made it clear that exceptional maintenance bids would now be funded through the RFA. Currently there is no clear guidance and the Board agreed that there was an urgent need for clarification from DfT. The Government Office agreed to help clarify this matter, and a meeting is to be set up between officers supporting the Board and the Department.

- 4.2.2 The Board was informed that work was still underway with regard to Bexhill to Hastings Link Road and A23 Handcross to Warninglid, the outcome of which would reported to the Board at the next meeting in October.
- 4.2.3 A discussion was held on A24 Ashington to Southwater improvement costs and it was agreed that this should be dealt with in the 2008 refresh programme to be undertaken. Walton Bridge costs would also be dealt with in the 2008 refresh programme. However it was confirmed by the Board that both schemes remained in the priorities for the 2006-2016 period.
- 4.2.4 Stoke Hammond and Linslade Western Bypass is subject to a cost increase of £5m caused by two particular events that occurred during construction. The Board discussed the importance of promoters ensuring that any potential cost increases were notified as soon as possible. The Board also wished to seek clarification from the Department on the extent to which the Board should seek to advise on cost increases once construction had commenced.
- 4.2.5 Brighton and Hove Rapid Transit has received support from the Secretary of State for early delivery of the scheme, subject to the normal processes of approval and sufficient funding being available at the time.
- 4.2.6 On the matter of regionally significant schemes it was agreed that it would be extremely helpful if contributions made by regional partners could be made clear to the Secretariat in order to have a complete picture of the contributions being made. It was noted that SEEDA had contributed £40k to East West Rail and £250k to the SMART project.
- 4.2.7 The Board endorse the criteria set out in paragraph 6.2 in order to provide some clarity as to the basis on which regional partners might help support the development of schemes. It was noted that in the context of any financial contributions made by the Regional Assembly these would be agreed with the Chairman.

It was AGREED that the Board:

- i) Noted the outcome of the monitoring of the RFA programme as a whole;**
- ii) Would seek clarification from the Department for Transport regarding the proposal that exceptional maintenance expenditure form part of the Regional Funding Allocation;**
- iii) Agreed that the additional expenditure incurred in respect of the Stoke Hammond and Linslade Western Bypass is funded from within the programme;**
- iv) Agreed that consideration of the inflation-related increases in scheme costs associated with the A244 Walton Bridge and A24 Ashington Southwater schemes be considered as part of the wider 2008 refresh of the regional programme;**

- v) **Endorsed the criteria set out in Annex III as the basis for assessing the potential to bring forward schemes within the programme, explicit acknowledgement of time taken to develop and progress schemes needs to be included;**
- vi) **The Board endorsed the criteria set out below in providing financial support for scheme development**
 - a) **Supports the development of a proposal that is identified as being of regional or sub-regional significance;**
 - b) **Facilitates the delivery of an identified priority in the short term (i.e. 2-3 years);**
 - c) **Matches resources invested by the scheme promoter in the development of the proposal.**

5. Transport Innovation Fund – Productivity Strand

- 5.1 Martin Tugwell gave a short update to the Board. He indicated that thinking in respect of the Transport Innovation Fund – Productivity strand (TiF-P) should be formulated quickly to ensure that the region is well placed to take advantage of any opportunity to secure additional funds. However it would be unrealistic to expect significant additional funding as a matter of course, due to the likely draw on the fund. It was also recognised that smaller, more local schemes are likely to struggle to obtain funding through TiF-P.
- 5.2 The Board recognised that there is still work to do in this area and this will continue through the ‘task and finish’ group and will report back to the Board.

It was AGREED that the Board noted the content of this report.

6. Presentations

- 6.1 Dover Port Master Plan
 - 6.1.1 A presentation was made to the Board by the Port of Dover. This covered the growth in future demand for port facilities and the planned expansion of the Port. The Board discussed the issues around the expansion plans, how this would relate to the Ports Policy Review, and also the potential demand on landside infrastructure.
- 6.2 Operation Stack
 - 6.2.1 A presentation was given by Gwyn Drake from Highways Agency on Operation Stack. This narrated the progress to date on addressing the issues caused by Operation Stack, and also the progress being made in managing this issue.

7. Smarter Choices

- 7.1 This paper was introduced by Andy Mak who emphasised the role of the criteria set out in the paper for selecting those proposals which may attract funding/support. The paper also set out the other workstreams being undertaken by the Assembly. The report was welcomed by the Board.
- 7.2 The Board noted that although the capital funding for such schemes may come via the RFA, there is a need to consider potential funding sources for revenue funding. There was recognition of the need for a partnership approach to this type of project development.
- 7.3 On a discussion on the criteria itself, it was noted that there was a mix of assessment and operational issues. The Board requested that the secretariat review the contents of Annex 1, identifying the assessment criteria explicitly, and identify any information that would have to be submitted as part of a proposal.

It was AGREED that the Board:

- i) Note the progress with the commission on accessibility and mobility management**
- ii) Instruct the secretariat to prepare a definitive set of criteria for wider circulation.**

8. Sub Regional Developments

8.1 Thames Gateway Sub-Regional Priorities

- 8.1.1 The Board were given an update on this issue by Andy Mak. Work is ongoing to arrive at a prioritised list of transport schemes which will facilitate delivery in the Thames Gateway, building upon the Board's prioritisation process.
- 8.1.2 The final form of the questionnaire is due to be agreed by the Thames Gateway Strategic Partnership (TGSP). Once this is done the secretariat will work with individual local authorities to collect the required information. It is envisaged that the outcomes will be reported to this Board at the meeting in October when the Board will be invited to comment. The Board's views will be fed back to the TGSP.

The Board noted the progress made to date on the application of the prioritisation process to the Thames Gateway

8.2 Presentation – Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH)

- 8.2.1 A joint presentation was made by Portsmouth City Council and Hampshire County Council on the work which had been carried out in the South Hampshire area. This illustrated the level of progress that can be achieved when adjoining authorities work together on common issues.

- 8.2.2 Transport for South Hampshire is the delivery arm of PUSH, formed from 20 stakeholders and including county, unitary and district councils. A PUSH Transport Strategy has been published and success has been achieved with their Solent travel card covering multi-operator bus network, negotiations are now in place to roll this out further to cover trains and ferries.
- 8.2.3 PUSH authorities are formalising the arrangements for considering strategic transport issues in the form of a formally constituted joint committee of the local authorities in the area. Transport for South Hampshire works alongside the partnership group (PUSH) to deliver the priorities for the sub-region.

9. Refresh of Regional Programme 2008

- 9.1 Andy Barton introduced this item. The paper set out how the Board could approach a number of detailed issues. These included the robustness of scheme cost estimation. GOSE highlighted the need for the work to be undertaken in close tandem with the Nichols report and the ramifications arising from it. The Board also agreed that all costs submitted in the refresh should be on a 2007 cost base.
- 9.2 The Board agreed that particular information would now be requested on a formal basis such as an Appraisal Summary Table (AST), which should be readily available to scheme promoters. Although the current prioritisation methodology can create a synthesised output, it would be preferable to have an actual AST for the scheme, which would help in the robustness of the prioritisation process.

It was AGREED that the Board:

- i) Endorsed the need to collect additional information on scheme costs than has previously been the case;**
- ii) Agreed that the base year for all scheme costs should be 2007, apart from those schemes which have had a rebasing of scheme costs undertaken subsequent to 1 January 2005;**
- iii) Agreed to publish guidance on the inflation figure to be used in providing cost estimates;**
- iv) Agreed that only proposals accompanied by an up to date Appraisal Summary Table will be eligible for inclusion in the forward programme;**
- v) Noted the work underway to review the content of the prioritisation questionnaire.**

10. Draft Local Transport Bill

- 10.1 James Renwick introduced this item. The Board discussed the content of the proposed response at some length. A suggestion was made on the importance of ensuring that the local authorities have access to a variety of controls and actions to improve bus use/services. At the current time there was a perception that the draft Bill sets out a 'one size fits all' approach, and there was a need for it to recognise that the need for a suite of options to suit different issues in different locations. The draft Bill also sets out an increased role for Traffic Commissioners but to enable this to happen there is a need to ensure that they are both funded for this role, and that they are sufficiently tied into the policy and actions of local transport authorities.

Subject to the above comments, it was AGREED that the Board submit the response as set out in Annex II of the report.

11. Items for Information

It was AGREED that the Board noted the contents of the report.

12. Date of Next Meeting

26 October 2007 Institute of Materials, London

2008 Dates

24 January 2008 Institute of Materials, London
24 April 2008 Institute of Materials, London
10 July 2008 Institute of Materials, London
23 October 2008 Institute of Materials, London

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 16.30