

**SOUTH EAST ENGLAND  
REGIONAL TRANSPORT BOARD**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 16 MAY 2008**



Present:

Board Members

Cllr. Nick Skellett (Chairman)  
Susan Stuart  
John Aspinall  
Ben Craig  
Clive King  
Joan O'Byrne  
Cllr. Tony Page  
Mark Pearson  
John Peel  
Simon Pratt  
Cllr. Cec Tallack  
Cllr. Paul Watkins

Officers

Martin Tugwell  
Andy Mak  
James Renwick  
Fiona Thorp  
Detlef Golletz  
Lesley van Dijk  
Richard Walker  
Pat Ayling  
Jo Shockley, South East England Regional Assembly

In Attendance

Cllr. Matthew Lock, East Sussex County Council  
Cllr. Valerie Letheren, Buckinghamshire Council  
Cllr. Nigel Collor, Dover District Council  
Anne James, Buckinghamshire County Council  
Eric Portchmouth, East Sussex County Council  
Tim Stansfeld, SEEDA  
Mark Heverin, SEEDA  
Pat Baxter, Reading Borough Council  
Jeff Cousins  
Stuart Baker, Hampshire County Council  
Jamie Robinson, Hyder Consulting  
Russell Matthews, Hyder Consulting  
Peter Stubbs, Parsons Brinckerhoff  
Sandra Deakin, Parsons Brinckerhoff  
Mr Ken Isaji, Nippon TV  
Simon Bradley, Nippon TV  
Ms Fumiko Kotaka, Nippon TV

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

- 1.1 The Chairman welcomed all present to the meeting. Apologies had been received from Paul Harwood (Network Rail) with Ben Craig as substitute. Apologies had also been received from Paul Lovejoy.
- 1.2 The Chairman expressed the Board's thanks to Mark Pearson for his contributions to the Board as this was his last meeting. He also welcomed John Aspinall the new Regional Director for the Highways Agency. The Board recorded his thanks to John's predecessor Gwyn Drake, who had taken on a new role within the HA.

## **2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 24 January and 12 March 2008**

- 2.1 The Minutes were **AGREED** without amendment for both meetings.

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

- 3.1 There were no matters arising. Susan Stuart notified the meeting that she would not participate in the discussion item 4a (Community Infrastructure Fund) or item 5 (South Central Franchise) in order to avoid a potential conflict of interest arising from her role within the Government Office.

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

### **4a Community Infrastructure Fund Round 2**

- 4.1 Andy Mak informed the Board that twenty seven expressions of interest had been submitted. The recommendations before the Board were set out in the three annexes to the report.
  - i) Annex 1 identified schemes recommended as priorities for consideration for funding in the period 2008/09 – 2010/11;
  - ii) Annex 2 identified schemes recommended for consideration as part of a future round of Community Infrastructure Fund post 2010/11; and
  - iii) Annex 3 identified schemes that were considered to be either not ready or not eligible for funding via the CIF.
- 4.2 The Chairman highlighted the importance of investment in infrastructure in order to support delivery of the Growth Point agenda at Reigate/Redhill. He emphasised the point that as a regional hub and a Growth Point it was important for Government to be made aware of the importance of funding being made available in a timely manner. The Board **AGREED** a proposal that the proposals put forward for the Reigate/Redhill hub be moved from Annex 3 to Annex 2.
- 4.3 Cllr Tony Page drew attention to the proposal submitted for Gas Works Road Bridge, Reading. He confirmed that the scheme could be delivered in the timeframe of the current round of CIF. He drew attention to the fact that in

addition to supporting improved access to an existing housing development, the proposal would support further development planned in the area, development that was in turn being actively supported by SEEDA. The Board **AGREED** that this proposal be moved from Annex 2 to Annex 1.

4.4 Cllr. Cec Tallack did not accept the suggestion that the proposal to upgrade the Milton Keynes Multi Modal Transport Model was ineligible for CIF. He made reference to informal advice received by local officers from Government officials that the proposal was eligible. The Board **AGREED** to ask the secretariat to seek further clarification.

4.5 Simon Pratt expressed concern that the majority of proposals for cycle and pedestrian improvements had been included within Annex 2. He suggested that this underplayed the shorter delivery timescales typically associated with such proposals. He considered that in this respect the schemes in Annex 2 were arguably more capable of delivery in the period covered by CIF than the schemes currently listed in Annex 1.

POST MEETING NOTE: the submission to the Secretary of State highlights the critical importance of ensuring an up to date evidence base in support of investment proposals that unlock growth. It notes that the fact that the MKSM Transport Board identified the upgrading of the MK transport model as being a 'gold scheme' is indicative of the critical nature of that work.

**The Board AGREED to advise the Department for Transport, and Communities and Local Government that:**

- i) the schemes listed in Annex 1 (as amended) are priorities for receiving funding from the Community Infrastructure Fund in the period 2008/09 – 2010/11;**
- ii) the schemes listed in Annex 2 (as amended) should be considered as part of any future round of Community Infrastructure Fund;**
- iii) the schemes listed in Annex 3 are currently not ready/eligible for consideration for funding from the Community Infrastructure Fund.**

4b Regional Infrastructure Fund

4.6 Martin Tugwell reminded the Board that the item had been deferred from the January meeting. In the intervening time SEEDA and the Assembly had continued to make progress with the development of detailed proposals for the RIF. It was currently anticipated that the RIF would be operational from autumn 2008. The outcome of this work will be considered by the Assembly's Executive Committee and the SEEDA Board in June.

4.7 The Board was encouraged to consider the draft Governance and Accountability framework. It was noted that the Chairman of the Board would be involved in the Investment Panel that manages the RIF.

- 4.8 Cllr Tony Page sought clarification on the relationship between the RIF and the RTB. Martin Tugwell explained that the policy framework within which investment decisions would be taken was set out in the South East Plan and in the RES. The role of the RTB would continue to be to advise Government on the region's priorities for investment within the budget set by the Regional Funding Allocation. The RTB would determine whether it wished to make available some of the RFA funding to support the RIF.
- 4.9 If the RTB decided to make some funds available that would be allocated through the Investment Panel. The basis on which the Investment Panel would decide to invest in a proposal was set out in the Governance and Accountability framework. As previously noted, the Chairman of the RTB would be a member of the Investment Panel. This would ensure that decisions made by the Investment Panel were taken in the knowledge of the views of the RTB.
- 4.10 Martin Tugwell emphasised that the RIF was a pump priming fund. As such, any investment made through the RIF would be recovered through the planning system in the form of developer contributions that had been agreed in advance.

**The Board expressed its support for the draft Governance and Accountability framework.**

- 4c Programme Management and Monitoring
- 4.11 James Renwick informed the Board that there were no substantial changes in the regional programme to be reported.
- 4.12 He confirmed that the Secretariat had received a response from the Secretary of State in respect of the Board's advice on the A21 and A23 schemes that had been agreed following consideration of the increases in their costs. The Board's advice had been accepted in principle however the Secretary of State had not accepted the argument that there was a case for additional funds to be made available to the region as a consequence of the cost increases. She was confident though that the schemes could be afforded within the funding envelope through suitable over-programming.
- 4.13 The Board's advice to make the regional contribution towards the cost of the Reading Station upgrade available earlier than previously planned had also been accepted by the Secretary of State.
- 4.14 Cllr. Matthew Lock drew attention to the fact that the Secretary of State had not responded to the RTB comment that the A21 Baldslow Junction proposal remained a regional priority. John Aspinall and Susan Stuart agreed to provide clarification.
- 4.15 James Renwick highlighted the framework that had been developed to monitor progress with the development of priority schemes. He confirmed that this would form part of the regular monitoring report in future. The framework provides a context within which progress can be monitored and the need for corrective action identified at the earliest opportunity. It was noted that delays in scheme preparation can be a major contributor to cost increases.

- 4.16 Martin Tugwell explained that the basis on which the RTB was being advised to over programme by 15%. He highlighted how this would give the Board greater flexibility in advising on the overall programme management. He stressed that it did not mean there was additional money overall. He also emphasised that over programming would be primarily achieved by looking at the timing of schemes that are already prioritised.
- 4.17 The Board was advised that over programming of the main programme would provide scope for it to identify a contribution towards the establishment of the RIF. This was because the RIF investment would be recovered through the planning system and hence, over time, there is no net additional expenditure on the programme. Over programming would also enable the RTB to react quickly to short term funding opportunities where these were consistent with the agreed regional policy framework.

**The Board AGREED:**

- i) **To note that the Secretary of State for Transport had accepted the Board's Advice to continue progressing the following projects:**
  - **A23 Handcross to Warninglid Widening**
  - **A21 Tonbridge to Pembury Dualling**
  - **A21 Kippings Cross to Lamberhurst Improvement**
- ii) **To note that the Secretary of State for Transport had accepted the Board's advice to bring forward the RFA contribution to the Reading Station improvements;**
- iii) **To over programme the agreed regional programme for the period to 2010/11 by 15% (£66m);**
- iv) **That the over programming be used to:**
  - a) **bring forward the contribution towards the Reading Station Improvement (£15m);**
  - b) **make available funds to support the establishment of the Regional Infrastructure Fund (£25m);**
- v) **To instruct the secretariat to prepare a detailed proposition in respect of the remaining £26m of over programming for consideration at the next Board meeting;**
- vi) **To seek clarification regarding the position of the Baldslow Junction scheme.**

**5. South Central Franchise**

- 5.1 Martin Tugwell reminded the Board that a presentation had been given by the Department for Transport at their meeting in January. Discussions with local authorities had enabled the regional priorities for the new franchise to be identified. It was noted that where longer term issues were not picked up

through the franchise these could be considered as part of the Route Utilisation Strategy process now underway in parts of the franchise area.

- 5.2 Network Rail highlighted their preference for proposals for new stations to be ordinarily considered through the Route Utilisation Strategy process.

**The Board agreed Annex I as the region's requirements for the South Central franchise specification.**

## **6. Bus and Coach Network**

- 6.1 Richard Walker presented the outcomes of his work to date and identified the key recommendations that emerged from it. He summarised what had been achieved to date with regard to the development of an inter-urban network and identified a number of opportunities for taking the work forward.
- 6.2 The paper was welcomed and it was acknowledged that a great deal of work had already been undertaken. Board members highlighted that redressing the serious image problem which buses unfortunately suffer from will require substantial investment of time and money.
- 6.3 The merits of some of the potential priority corridors were questioned (notably Oxford-Cambridge and Maidenhead-Heathrow). Board members queried whether the proposals duplicated existing public transport opportunities or indeed proposals being taken forward by other partners. Richard Walker clarified that the development of inter urban bus services had the potential to act as a catalyst for more substantive behavioural change.
- 6.4.1 Cllr Letheren highlighted the work underway to develop the High Wycombe coachway hub. Board members noted that the proposal is included within the current list of regional priorities. Martin Tugwell indicated that the secretariat would discuss with the promoters whether scope existed to accelerate this scheme as part of the over-programming.

**The Board AGREED that further work to develop the regional inter-urban bus and coach network would be carried out in 2008/09 under the following headings:**

- i) **Development of the trunk network – with a focus on:**
  - a. **The provision of priority lanes, including on motorways;**
  - b. **Delivering coachways and strategic park & ride facilities;**
  - c. **Strengthening the scheduled network and improving the quality and availability of passenger Information.**
  
- ii) **Development of the hub to hub network – with a focus on:**
  - a. **Developing interurban “quality bus corridors”;**
  - b. **Improving bus-rail integration.**

## **7. Mobility Management**

- 7.1 Fiona Thorp advised that workshops with local authorities were being held in June as part of the development of the guidance on incorporating the transport requirements of the South East Plan into the LDF.
- 7.2 Opportunities to support work on area-wide travel plans and integrated ticketing and travel information had been identified and were being pursued. The Board was advised that Milton Keynes and Southampton had been short listed as a cycling demonstration town; an announcement of the successful candidates was expected in June.
- 7.3 Work was moving forward with the implementation of the national station improvement programme. The Board noted that significant opportunities existed to work with the rail industry in encouraging proposals under this programme to be developed with wider linkages. The Access for All improvement programme is also underway.
- 7.4 The Board noted the many opportunities are available for funding mobility management measures. Martin Tugwell commented that the plethora of discrete funding streams was in itself a potential barrier to delivery. Simplification of the funding regime would potentially release resources within local authorities to focus on delivery. The lack of ready access to revenue investment remained a key constraint for many local authorities.

### **It was AGREED that the Board would:**

- i) encourage local authorities to use Local Delivery Groups as the mechanism for identifying local programmes that co-ordinate activities that build upon the opportunities identified in Annexes I and 2;**
- ii) raise awareness of existing and emerging tools that support delivery of mobility management, including:**
  - a. the LDF and transport conformity guidance (work package A);**
  - b. opportunities available for taking forward area-wide travel plans (work package B) and integrated ticketing and travel information (work package C);**
  - c. the 'resources' of the ACT TravelWise website and smarter working information on WorkWise UK website (work package D);**
- iii) work with strategic partners to develop a regional picture of the benefits of mobility management measures in achieving smarter travel and working choices;**
- iv) encourage local authorities to get involved in national events to promote smarter travel and working choices.**

