

**SOUTH EAST ENGLAND REGIONAL ASSEMBLY
REGIONAL TRANSPORT CO-ORDINATION GROUP**

Meeting on Tuesday, 17 February 2004

ACTION NOTE

Attendees:

Paul Bevan	South East England Regional Assembly (Chair)
Jon Freer	Bracknell Forest Borough Council
Gary Bartlett	Buckinghamshire County Council
Mark Amiss	East Sussex County Council
Mike Ford	Highways Agency
Andy Roberts	Government Office for the South East
Mick Sutch	Kent County Council
Richard Carr	Oxfordshire County Council
Charles Stunell	Portsmouth City Council
Paul Hudson	SEEDA
Liz Motherwell	Slough Borough Council
Martin Tugwell	South East England Regional Assembly
Chris Witt	South East England Regional Assembly
George Burnett	Surrey County Council

1. Apologies for Absence

Carolyn Dwyer	Brighton & Hove City Council
Bob Wilkins	East Sussex County Council
David Cooper	Government Office for the South East
Martin Heffer	Strategic Rail Authority
Nicky Linihan-Mardon	West Berkshire Council
Colin McKenna	West Sussex County Council

2. Action Note of the Last Meeting

2.1 The Action Note of the meeting of 23 October 2004 was **approved** without amendment.

3. Matters Arising

3.1 No Matters Arising were raised.

4. Update on Schemes

4.1 The group discussed the key schemes contained on the updated progress chart that had been circulated prior to the meeting, and the **following ACTIONS** were agreed:

- **CTRL Domestics** – Kent County Council and Medway Council to advise Regional Assembly of key issues and concerns arising as part of the consultation on the detailed Integrated Kent Franchise specification.

POST MEETING NOTE:

Regional Assembly to agree response to the consultation through Regional Planning Committee scheduled for 31 March. Local authorities wishing their views to be taken into consideration should ensure comments are with the Assembly secretariat at the earliest opportunity.

- **Fastrack** – the Assembly secretariat to circulate a draft of the joint statement by the Regional Planning Bodies for the South East, East of England, and London on planning for future growth in the Thames Gateway. (The case for Phase 2 of the scheme could be added by the document, which notes the importance of Fastrack – Assembly secretariat to await further advice from Kent County Council.)
- **East West Rail Link Phase 1** – Buckinghamshire County Council (on behalf of East-West Rail Consortium) to ensure that regional bodies (Assembly and SEEDA) are invited to attend proposed meetings with Government at official and political level. Buckinghamshire County Council to provide Assembly secretariat with costing information to enable bid for development costs to be made to the Milton Keynes and South Midlands Delivery Board.

POST MEETING NOTE:

Regional Assembly invited to attend meeting with Government Officials but unable to attend. Buckinghamshire County Council to ensure regional bodies invited to political meeting. Initial costing information received from Buckinghamshire County Council.

- **M20 Junction 10** – the Assembly to raise with the Ashford Delivery Board the delays to the delivery of the interim junction improvement (related to developer funding problems), in an effort to expedite a resolution to these issues.

POST MEETING NOTE:

The Regional Assembly was unable to be represented at the meeting of the Delivery Board on 25 February. However, it was agreed that subsequent to that meeting the Chief Executive of Ashford Borough Council would request, in writing to Transport Minister Kim Howells, assistance in resolving the problems.

- **South Coast Coastway** – the Assembly to work with Local Transport Authorities to review how actions identified by the South Coast Corridor MMS are being taken forward, with a view to ensuring that information is submitted to the Secretary of State in conjunction with the HA's update on a possible way forward for the A27 schemes.
- **Reading Station** – Assembly to finalise letter to Secretary of State for Transport on behalf of Wider Stakeholder Group. Assembly and SEEDA to continue to support work of Reading Station Partnership Board in developing proposals to address bottleneck. Assembly and SEEDA to work with colleagues in South West and Welsh Assembly Government to continue to press the case for investment.
- **Airtrack** – Surrey County Council (on behalf of Airtrack Forum) to ensure that regional bodies (Assembly and SEEDA) are fully engaged in developing the action plan that will use the outline business case to press the need for the proposal.
- **Bus and Coach Network** – draft Action Plan arising from the Regional Coach and Bus Summit will be considered by the Transport Advisory Group on 18 May. Any comments from Group members to be fed to the Assembly secretariat by 31 March.
- **South Hampshire Rapid Transit** – Hampshire County Council to advise Assembly secretariat of any wider issues that need to be raised with the Government while Ministers continue to consider possible way forward.

5. Implementation Mechanisms

a) Progress and Reporting Group

- 5.1 Andy Roberts updated the position on the Progress and Reporting Group, the arrangements for which had been outlined in a paper circulated prior to the meeting. The Group, comprising the Government Office, Regional Assembly, Regional Development Agency, SRA and the HA (and local authorities on an ad-hoc basis), is in the process of being established, and associated papers will be circulated to the Regional Transport Co-ordination Group as a matter of course.

ACTION: GOSE to ensure that the first meeting of the Group is set up.

b) Regional Transport Board

- 5.2 A paper circulated to the Group prior to the meeting outlined the proposals set out in the Regional Emphasis Document (produced by GOSE, the Assembly and SEEDA) for the formation of a South East England Regional Transport Board. The proposal reflected the need for a clearer financial framework at the regional level within which funding priorities might be determined. It would be particularly important to ensure a greater degree of

regional involvement in decisions associated with investments made by national delivery agencies. Were a Board to be established the Transport Co-ordination Group could provide the necessary officer advice to the Board Members (a similar support mechanism exists for the Regional Housing Board).

- 5.3 Andy Roberts informed the Group that the DfT were in the process of considering existing decision making and funding streams in order to consider what could be devolved to a Regional Transport Board. Two regions (including the South East) had been identified as part of this work and would act as pilots for the proposal (similar proposals have been made by the Regional Emphasis Documents of a number of other regions).

ACTION: GOSE to keep the Group advised of progress with the pilot.

6. Future Priorities for Investment

- 6.1 Martin Tugwell introduced his paper outlining the progress made on developing a methodology for the identification of future regional transport priorities for investment. As requested by this Group, the consultant's brief had been prepared by a sub-group of the Transport Advisory Group, and the process of procuring consultants initiated.
- 6.2 The DfT have been consulted on the content of the brief and would be kept up to date with the progress of this work. The outputs of this commission would be reported to the next meeting of this Group.

ACTION: Assembly to report back on the output from the study to the next meeting of the Group.

7. RDAs and Regional Transport and Access Studies

- 7.1 A note outlining SEEDA's progress with considering the way forward for allocating the additional funds for transport related studies provided by the Department for Trade and Industry (DTI) had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted that the DTI had stipulated that the studies to be identified by the Development Agency should help build on the transport studies commissioned in the past. It was also noted that the original announcement referred to the money being used to commission studies via the Regional Planning Bodies.
- 7.2 The Group thought that the funds could usefully enable work to be commissioned that could pick up any issues not addressed in detail by the Sub-Regional Studies being undertaken as part of the development of the South East Plan. Access to the Isle of Wight was suggested as one area that could be considered further through this programme of studies.
- 7.3 Paul Hudson urged caution in discussing the allocation of the additional funds while SEEDA was still in the process of finalising its budget for the

forthcoming year. He acknowledged that there would be a need for SEEDA to seek the views of the Assembly on any proposed allocation.

ACTION: Paul Hudson to advise on the position once SEEDA's budget is finalised.

8. Any Other Business

8.1 Andy Roberts fed back (for information) some relevant issues arising from a recent meeting of the Government Office Transport Directors and the DfT, including:

- Positive feedback from DfT on the progress that had been made on the Regional Transport Strategy.
- To note the suggestion that there should be a greater role for regional bodies in delivering the potential of regional airports identified in the Aviation White Paper.
- To note that draft guidance for the next round of Local Transport Plans would be issued by the DfT in the Spring.

9. Date of Next Meeting

9.1 It was agreed that potential meeting dates for this Group for the year ahead would be canvassed and circulated to the Group in due course.

ACTION: Assembly to set up dates for future meetings of the Group a year ahead.

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