

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

**2 JULY 2009**

**MINUTES**

**Attendees:**

Martin Tugwell (Chairman)	South East England Partnership Board
Andy Mak	South East England Partnership Board
James Renwick	South East England Partnership Board
Nick Evans	South East England Partnership Board
Katie Hall	South East England Partnership Board
Paul Harwood	Network Rail
Colin Clarke	East Sussex County Council
Peter Mann	Oxfordshire County Council
Kevin Travers	Hampshire County Council
David Cooper	Government Office for the South East
Anne James	Buckinghamshire County Council
Roger Jones	West Sussex County Council
Philip Marshall	Southampton City Council
Arthur Norton	Highways Agency
Mick Sutch	Kent County Council
Chris Wells	Isle of Wight Council
Peter Day	Wokingham District Council
Mark Moon	Wokingham District Council
Mark Allgrove	Portsmouth City Council
Mark Johnson	Medway Council
John Harper	Milton Keynes Council
Darryl Hemmings	West Sussex County Council
Steve Hewlett	Medway Council
Lyndon Mendes	Surrey County Council
Andy Renaut	Brighton & Hove City Council
Hannah Budnitz	Reading Borough Council
Bryan Lyttle	West Berkshire Council
Gordon Oliver	Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead
Tony Pettitt	Reading Borough Council

**1. Apologies for absence**

Liz Motherwell	Slough Borough Council
Tim Stansfeld	SEEDA
Keith Wilcox	Hampshire County Council
Pat Baxter	Reading Borough Council
Gail Kenyon	Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead
Jenny Noble	West Berkshire Council
Rub Nawaz	Slough Borough Council
Richard Walker	South East England Partnership Board

**2. Minutes of meeting held on 12 March 2009.**

2.1 The minutes were agreed with no amendments.

**3. Matters Arising not elsewhere on the agenda**

3.1 There were no matters arising.

#### **4. South East Plan**

- 4.1 Katie Hall drew the Group's attention to the key issues following the publication by the Government of the final version of the South East Plan. The Plan sets out a clearly defined set of spatial challenges. It also emphasised the importance of making substantial progress in reducing the ecological footprint of activities in the region.
- 4.2 The Group noted that there had been six legal challenges submitted to Government; principally covering spatially specific issues. The Government Office confirmed that the Plan in its entirety stands as the current legal planning document unless substantial legal findings prove otherwise.

#### **5. Programme Management and Monitoring**

- 5.1 James Renwick set out the current status of the Regional Transport Programme in light of the most recent quarterly monitoring information.
- 5.2 Both Martin Tugwell and James Renwick highlighted to the group the mounting pressures on public spending. It is up to the Regional Transport Board, and this group, to take a pro-active approach in responding to these pressures – ensuring that the region is in the best possible position to set out its case as a priority for sustained investment. In this climate it is even more important that promoters ensure their schemes are delivered to time and to cost.
- 5.3 Where there is any possibility that a scheme may be delayed or increase in cost, promoters need to advise the secretariat at the earliest opportunity. The group was reminded that there is a significant level of over-programming in the period 2011-14; managing the programme over this period will be a key challenge.
- 5.4 The Government's response to the RFA2 submission is expected before the Parliamentary summer recess (21 July); it was anticipated that the region would receive an updated 'report card' from the Department for Transport soon afterwards.
- 5.5 The group was reminded that to date that cost increases associated with prioritised schemes had been dealt with under the DfT's 'Transitional arrangements'. These arrangements are now coming to an end. The implication is that in future a greater proportion of any increase above the programmed cost will be borne by the promoting local authority.
- 5.6 Transitional schemes had been able to seek additional funding through the RFA provided that 25% of the cost increase could be secured from non-RFA resource. The new regime, which affects all but four local authority schemes in the programme, will see a 'risk layer' being identified at the point of programme entry. Any increase within this layer would require a 50% contribution from a non-RFA source. Any increase above the risk layer will not receive any additional funding from the RFA.
- 5.7 In addition, if a scheme was to exceed the risk layer the DfT would expect the RTB to review the prioritisation of the scheme; a letter from the Board simply stating their satisfaction with the new cost is unlikely to be sufficient. A substantial increase in one scheme may, as a consequence, result in a need to review the entire programme.

- 5.8 The group was urged to ensure that the cost estimates for their schemes are robust. The secretariat was always happy to work with promoters to deal with any potential issues at the earliest possible opportunity.
- 5.9 The next meeting of the Group will discuss in greater detail the outcome of the RFA and the implications of budgetary pressures on the programme overall.
- 5.10 The Group was advised that the Board would consider the implications of the revised cost estimate for East Kent Access Phase 2 at its meeting on 24 July. Tenders for the scheme had been returned in March; the lowest option reported that the cost of works would now be £87m; £23m more than the 2006 estimate. The secretariat had discussed the cost increase with Kent County Council. The evidence available showed that the scheme continues to represent Value for Money and its delivery is not contingent on any statutory process. The secretariat will therefore be recommending that the Board continues to support the scheme at the new cost.
- 5.11 It was noted that from 2010/11 the RTB will be asked to advise on the distribution of funding associated with Local Transport Plans. The secretariat recognised the sensitivities associated with this; however it did offer the opportunity to consider the balance between major schemes and local transport plans; something that will be significant in terms of helping the transport sector redress its contribution to the region's ecological footprint.
- 5.12 The items for information included an update on the initial work undertaken to begin to look at this issue; there would be a more substantive discussion at the next meeting of this Group.

## **6. Delivering a Sustainable Transport System**

- 6.1 Andy Mak gave a short presentation updating the Group on the regional DaSTS Work Programme, focusing on the next steps.
- 6.2 The regional work programme had been submitted to the DfT on 30 June. The submission had set out the region's proposals for work to be commissioned; the evidence base gathered through the regional 'challenges mapping' work had been a key piece of evidence in putting the submission together. A copy of the timescale for the work programme had been included in the paper distributed to the Group.
- 6.3 The DfT will consider the submission; initial reactions are expected back from the Department by the end of July. Work has already begun on developing the commissioning briefs for the most urgent pieces of work.
- 6.4 David Cooper updated the Group on the key issues from a seminar held by the DfT to brief the regions on the overall DaSTS work programme. Key people within the Department associated with the DaSTS work programme are: Andy Braithwaite – National Studies Lead; Charlotte Dixon – Regional Studies Lead. Assessment of the region's proposals was proceeding quickly; there had already been a number of internal DfT meetings as part of the assessment process.
- 6.5 Martin Tugwell emphasised that the regional work programme highlighted the intention to, wherever possible, use existing sub-regional mechanisms to take forward discrete pieces of work.

- 6.6 Andy Mak recorded his thanks for the work undertaken by Katie Hall and Nick Evans to prepare the regional submission. The Group noted that this meeting would be Katie's last as her secondment to the secretariat was coming to a close; the Group expressed their thanks to her.
- 6.7 Regular reports on the progress with the regional DaSTS work programme will be made to both this Group and the RTB.

## **7. The Longer Term Future of Rail**

- 7.1 Nick Evans introduced the paper by requesting that the Group endorse the principle of a submission by the Regional Transport Board to the rail industry's Planning Ahead for the CP5 process.
- 7.2 The challenges arising from the need to support delivery of planned growth and reduce the region's ecological footprint will inevitably lead to the need for continued development of rail's contribution to the region's transport system.
- 7.3 The Group was invited to consider the potential priorities listed in the paper. Comments on this list were invited outside of the meeting; comments would need to be with Nick Evans by Monday 13 July.
- 7.4 Paul Harwood considered that the discussion questions were good but required a translation on why the schemes were being put forward; i.e. there is a need to identify the drivers for the priorities. Clarification on this point would assist in feeding the region's thoughts into future planning work commissioned by the rail industry.
- 7.5 Martin Tugwell reminded the Group of the importance of looking at rail investment alongside investment made in other modes.

**ACTION: Comments to be with Nick Evans by 13 July.**

## **8. Route Utilisation Strategies: Consultation Response**

- 8.1 Kent Route Utilisation Strategy
- 8.1.1 The Kent RUS covers the outer suburban services; it also includes the Hastings line. The RUS document has the same structure as the previous Sussex RUS: baselining; planning context; gap identification; optioneering; option appraisal; and draft strategy.
- 8.1.2 One of the key concerns associated with Kent RUS is the need to manage the impact of substantial changes in service patterns arising from the opening of HS1 and construction of Thameslink.
- 8.1.3 Several officers from authorities covered by this RUS expressed concerns as to how the proposed strategy relates to growth. Martin Tugwell urged those present to ensure that these concerns are set out in their individual responses to the consultation; however these need to be evidence based. The Group was invited to feedback any additional points to be included in the region's response to Nick Evans.

**ACTION: Any comments to be emailed to Nick Evans as a matter of urgency in order to be included in the draft response for the Regional Transport Board at their meeting on 24 July.**

## 8.2 Sussex RUS

- 8.2.1 This particular RUS covers Network Rail's Sussex route, including the Brighton Main Line and the Coastway lines. The document highlights the gaps between future supply and demand and provides suggested measures to fill those gaps and increase capacity. The document also looks beyond 2019 and potential options which may be viable.
- 8.2.2 There is a concern that the appraisal methodology may not enable the contribution of options towards delivering the statutory spatial planning framework to be assessed; this was a comment that applied to all RUS documents. It was noted that the draft response to be considered by the RTB would draw out this concern in more detail.
- 8.2.3 Concern was expressed by some authorities that local aspirations had not fully been taken into account; in particular aspirations for local service enhancements. Paul Harwood volunteered to meet and discuss these concerns with the local authorities and their political members if appropriate.

**ACTION: Any comments to be emailed to Nick Evans as a matter of urgency in order to be included in the draft response for the Regional Transport Board at their meeting on 24 July.**

## 8.3 Electrification RUS

- 8.3.1 Nick Evans informed the Group that the response to the Electrification RUS has to be submitted before the next RTB. The Board had agreed that a response would be 'signed-off' by the Chairman; reflecting the fact that the response would build upon an already established policy position.
- 8.3.2 The Group's comments on the draft response (attached to the distributed paper) were sought.
- 8.3.2 A short discussion took place which highlighted the importance of giving full justification for recommending specific elements which would then give greater strength to the arguments of this region. It was also pointed out that within the current financial uncertainty the incremental benefit of smaller scale schemes may have a higher degree of deliverability.

**ACTION: Any comments to be emailed to Nick Evans by cop 13 July in order to be included in the final response.**

## 9. Items for Information

### 9.1 Kickstart

- 9.1.1 The Group was reminded that the closing date for bids for the 2009 round of the Kickstart Bus Funding Competition is **3 July 2009**. The competition acts as a 'pump-priming' fund for new and improving bus routes outside of London. An announcement regarding successful bids is anticipated in autumn 2009.
- 9.1.2 David Cooper advised that the DfT had made available funding of £30m for a Green Bus competition; any authority interested in the competition should contact the Department for an information pack. Whilst bids from local authorities are welcome, the expectation is that the majority of the funding

will go to bus companies to enable them to purchase new and green buses as part of the Governments Carbon Reduction Strategy.

## **10. Any Other Business**

- 10.1 Martin Tugwell mapped out to the Group the proposed changes to the Regional Transport Board as a result of the changes regional governance.

## **11. Dates of Future Meetings**

01.10.09	14.00	Mandolay Hotel, Guildford
15.12.09	14.00	Mandolay Hotel, Guildford

## **South East England Regional Assembly July 2009**

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