

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

**18 JUNE 2007  
ACTION NOTE**

**Attendees:**

Martin Tugwell	South East England Regional Assembly (Chairman)
Andy Mak	South East England Regional Assembly
James Renwick	South East England Regional Assembly
Fiona Thorp	South East England Regional Assembly
Pat Baxter	Reading Borough Council
Peter Hayward	East Sussex County Council
Peter Mann	Oxfordshire County Council
Detlef Golletz	SEEDA
Lyndon Mendes	Surrey County Council
Kevin Travers	Hampshire County Council
Andrew Renaut	Brighton & Hove City Council
Liz Motherwell	Slough Borough Council
David Cooper	Government Office for the South East
Gary Bartlett	Buckinghamshire County Council
Mike Link	West Sussex County Council
Gail Kenyon	Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead
John Slater	Portsmouth City Council
Pete Brunskill	Southampton City Council
David Wilby	Wokingham District Council
John Harper	Milton Keynes Council

**1. Apologies**

Andy Barton	South East England Regional Assembly
Julian Lomas	Portsmouth City Council
Mick Sutch	Kent County Council
Mike Ford	Highways Agency

**2. Action Note of the Last Meeting**

- 2.1 Apologies should have read Mike Link (West Sussex) rather than Roger Jones (West Sussex).
- 2.2 The Action Note of the meeting of 30 March 2007 was otherwise agreed as a true record of the meeting and was approved without further amendment.

**3. Matters Arising**

- 3.1 There were no matters arising.

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

##### 4.1 Protocol for Significant Scheme Cost Increases.

4.1.1 James Renwick introduced this paper by explaining to the Group that the Regional Transport Board had already agreed the broad principles of the protocol. The views of this Group are being sought on the revised protocol, particularly with regard to the proposed thresholds and the operation of the flow chart.

4.1.2 The results from the discussion at this meeting will be taken to the next Board. A suggestion that the Board should consider whether a more effective solution to a problem exists in light of a cost increase is difficult to incorporate within the protocol. Current guidance from the Department for Transport is clear in that the funds allocated through the RFA are associated with a specific proposal. The process does not, at present, allow for the potential to transfer the funds for a particular scheme to an alternative.

4.1.3 The importance of managing the RFA budget effectively was emphasised. It was noted that this would require a collective change of culture on how schemes are developed and promoted. Affordability is a major issue. It was also pointed out that the Board is fully capable of making difficult decisions where necessary.

**ACTION: The Secretariat will re-examine the protocol and make the necessary changes agreed at this meeting.**

##### 4.2 Programme Management and Monitoring.

4.2.1 The Secretariat clarified that in considering any significant cost increase it was essential that promoters take into account Government guidance. This states that a proportion of the cost increase would be expected to be covered by the promoter. If the Board continued to support the scheme the remainder would come from the RFA. The group were then asked to give an update on specific schemes mentioned in the paper:

- a) Bexhill Hastings Link Road – it was reported that work was ongoing with a view to identifying contributions from third party sources.
- b) A23 Handcross to Warninglid – West Sussex reported no change at present.

4.2.2 The Group were informed that the prioritisation database had been updated. This will enable improved reporting and it will be easier to manage the data.

##### 4.3 Exceptional Maintenance

4.3.1 Any bids would be submitted to the Department for analysis but it was requested that if bids are sent, that they be copied into the Secretariat for

information. It was confirmed that maintenance funding will, in future, come out of the RFA. It is therefore important that the Secretariat know of any potential costs which would impact on the budget overall.

#### 4.4 Potential Schemes to Accelerate

- 4.4.1 Concern was expressed amongst the Group over the proposal to propose bringing forward any further schemes before the 2008 Refresh is undertaken. It was agreed that a cautious approach was preferable. However, where we can pull schemes forward without affecting the balance of the budget, the proposal should be presented for the Board's consideration.

### 5. Scheme Development Fund

- 5.1 Impending DfT guidelines are understood to confirm that local transport authorities will be able to claim 50% of scheme development costs once it has obtained 'Programme Entry' status.
- 5.2 At this stage in the development of a scheme the critical issue is ensuring the timely flow of funds to enable a promoter to manage the development of a scheme in a cost efficient manner. The recent Nichols report proposed that a model similar to the GRIP (in the rail industry) be developed and applied to road schemes. Introducing defined way points in the development of a scheme could provide the means of releasing development funding without the need to commit the entire sum required to deliver a scheme.
- 5.3 In these circumstances the Board's role in using the monitoring information would be critical. It could form the basis for the Board recommending to the DfT the release of further funds to enable a scheme to progress to the next GRIP-equivalent stage.
- 5.4 A number of regions have established a 'scheme development fund' as part of their RFA process. The fund provides a way for the region to facilitate the development of schemes identified in the regional programme. DfT policy officers seem to look quite favourably on initial proposals drafted by other Assemblies. General support to the concept was given by the Group. However it was acknowledged that there was a need for a substantive piece of work to be done in order to develop the details of such a proposal.

**ACTION: The Secretariat will work up a proposal with the help of Peter Mann (Oxfordshire), Gail Kenyon (RBWM) and Peter Hayward (East Sussex). The proposal will be brought before this Group at the next meeting.**

### 6. Transport Innovation Fund – Productivity Strand

- 6.1 A verbal update was given on this topic by David Cooper and Detlef Golletz. The Group was advised that the scope for bids would be limited.

- 6.2 The Group were also informed that the AirTrack Forum had commissioned Steer Davis Gleave Consultants to undertake research on the wider economic benefits of the AirTrack scheme. The consultants have extensive experience of the analysis of wider economic benefits. Experience of such assessments would be extremely helpful in considering further TiF bids.

## **7. Smarter Choices**

- 7.1 Andy Mak advised that the workshops arranged by the Consultants commissioned to undertake this work had taken place. The Secretariat are expecting their report in early July. This will be shared with this Group.
- 7.2 Views were sought from the Group on the criteria to be used to assess smarter choices proposals to be promoted as 'Exemplar' projects by the Board.

**ACTION: It was agreed that views would be shared with the Secretariat via email following this meeting to enable time for more informed views to be formulated.**

## **8. Thames Gateway Sub-Regional Priorities**

- 8.1 The Thames Gateway Strategic Partnership initiated a programme of work in autumn 2006 to develop an approach that would enable investment priorities to be identified were additional resources to be made available.
- 8.2 The Assembly has acted as technical lead in this process that is being overseen by a transport sub-group of the main Thames Gateway Strategic Partnership. The approach that is emerging is based on the prioritisation processes used in the East of England and South East England regions.
- 8.3 Once the questionnaire is agreed in its final form, and the decision taken as to which prioritisation tool to use, it is anticipated that a process of data collection will be initiated by each region in the Thames Gateway. Although the focus of this work is the Thames Gateway, it demonstrates that it is possible to refine the regional approach to enable its application at the sub-regional level

**ACTION: The Secretariat will continue to revise the questionnaire, which will be shared with this Group.**

## **9. Refresh of Regional Programme 2008**

- 9.1 Following the discussion of this group, the Assembly will revise Annex II of this paper. This will then be considered by the Board at its meeting in July. Refinement of the questionnaire will take place over the summer, with a final round of TAG, RTCG and Board meetings prior to adoption of a revised questionnaire in the autumn, which will be used to provide the inputs to the prioritisation process.

- 9.2 A short discussion took place on the issue of double counting of scheme benefits. Although the issue would appear to arise due to a lack of clarity in the data which is to be reported.

**ACTION: The Secretariat will complete the revision to the questionnaire taking into account the views of this Group and this will be submitted to this Group for further comments.**

## **10. Draft Local Transport Bill**

- 10.1 James Renwick introduced a paper that summarised the key issues arising from the draft Local Transport Bill. The draft Bill comprises three core strands: improving local bus transport; local transport governance and road charging.
- 10.2 The proposals set out in the draft Bill were broadly welcomed. In respect of improving local bus transport the Group emphasised the importance of ensuring that any new arrangements to support additional services was matched by a commitment from Government to provide sufficient funding. In addition it was considered that there was a need to ensure that the work of the Traffic Commissioners was better aligned with the work that takes place through the Local Transport Plan.
- 10.3 With regards to the proposals to enable new PTAs the Group expressed strong concern that the proposal to limit new PTAs to existing geographical boundaries would discourage authorities in the region from considering this as a way forward. It was noted that while the work in the PUSH area was identified as an exemplar of good practice, the proposals in the draft Bill would preclude the authorities from considering the option of a PTA.
- 10.4 On the issue of road user charging, the Group reiterated the importance of Government accepting that if they consider this to be the way forward at a national level, then it requires national leadership.

**ACTION: It was agreed that the Secretariat would report to the Board suggesting that a response be given to the Bill.**

## **12. 2008 Dates**

**ACTION: It was agreed that the Secretariat would distribute the 2008 meeting dates to this group with the notes of the meeting.**

## **11. Future Dates**

**[Note Change of Venue for October Meeting]**

**11 October 2007**  
11 December 2007

**Winston Churchill Room, SEEDA**  
Mandolay Hotel, Guildford

## **2008 Dates**

14.00 – 17.00	3 April 2008	Mandolay Hotel, Guildford
14.00 – 17.00	19 June 2008	Mandolay Hotel, Guildford
14.00 – 17.00	26 September 2008	Mandolay Hotel, Guildford

Meeting Closed at 16.45pm

**South East England Regional Assembly  
June 2007**