

NOTES OF MEETING

CROSS BOUNDARY MEMBERS' REFERENCE GROUP
Thursday 9 July 2009 at 11.00am
ROOM 304/5, HCA OFFICES, CBX II, CENTRAL MILTON KEYNES

Attendance:**Members**

Cllr Carole Paternoster	AVDC (Chair)
Andrew Peck (chair)	MKPC
Malcolm Brighton	MKPC
Cllr Mike Galloway	MKC

Officers

Ian Haynes	MKC
Jennie Cook	MKP
Rachel Jones	Bucks CC
Richard Fox	CBC
Andy Barton	AVDC
Bruce Stewart	MKC
Diane Webber	MKC

Presentations

Martin Tugwell	Director of Regional Investment, South East Partnership Board
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Dave Gallagher	EA
John Oldfield	IDB
Kevin Boon	Anglian Water

Cheryl Montgomery	MKP
Marcus Rogers	Bucks CC
Patrick O'Sullivan	MKP

Regional organisations

Neil McKillen	Go East
Hilary Chipping	MKSM

Item**Action****1 Welcome / Introductions / Apologies****Apologies**

Cllr Tom Nicols – Central Bedfordshire
 Cllr David Rowlands – Buckinghamshire County Council
 Cllr Cec Tallack – Milton Keynes Council
 Sheila Keene – MKP
 John Lewis – MKP
 Richard Harrington - AVA
 David Paine – GOSE

2 Presentation on East-West Rail Funding Issues by Martin Tugwell, Director of Regional Investment, South East Partnership Board

A copy of the presentation is attached.

Key points from the presentation were:

- Work on GRIP 4 to continue
- Work to quantify the potential strategic value of the scheme is required as this might unlock investment from the DfT's central budgets.
- Continue with the development of the scheme so that it is 'oven ready' to take advantage of reprioritisation of existing funding programmes.
- Work is being commissioned to enable Voluntary Contribution Agreements (VCAs) to be put in place where appropriate
- Work is underway on standard wording for planning obligations in LDFs
- Regional and local bodies need to undertake some work to identify their potential contributions to the scheme.

Questions and Discussion

Neil McKillen asked if the GRIP 4 work extended as far as Bedford. He noted that there is a need for a strategic level discussion about this in the eastern region. Recently the North London Strategic Alliance has been encouraged by the Mayor of London to look across administrative boundaries at the London-Luton- Bedford corridor focussing on main transport routes and it may therefore be worth talking to this group.

Martin Tugwell responded that this was still under discussion, although the situation was a little less complex as the Bedford to Bletchley line already exists. EERA are already part of the project group, but there is a willingness to talk to other groups.

Malcolm Brighton asked if there were standard and accepted calculation methods behind the figure of £100 million for the strategic value of East-West Rail.

Andrew Peck added that whilst the strategic imperative is very much north-south, there are also important east-west links between Bristol and the North Sea ports which seem to be missing from the overall map.

Martin Tugwell confirmed that here was an accepted methodology for arriving at the £100 million and that he was happy to look at extending the project. The lessons learnt from the work at Reading station show that there are advantages to showing the benefits that a scheme can bring to the wider network.

Hilary Chipping asked who would be taking forward the work to assess strategic value and offered the services of MKSM to assist with this. Martin Tugwell welcomed the support of the inter-regional board in this process.

Ian Haynes noted that it was important to make sure that policies in Core Strategies are saying the right things for East-West rail. Also how will the current work on the Voluntary Contribution Agreements (VCA) be future proofed?

Martin Tugwell replied that the VCAs are being negotiated on a site by site basis but that it might be easier to attract private sector contributions if the public sector makes a commitment to invest in the scheme itself.

3 Presentation on cross-boundary water resource management from the Environment Agency, the Internal Drainage Board and Anglian Water.

The presentations are attached for information.

Dave Gallagher, Strategy Manager, Anglian Region, Environment Agency:

Challenges for Anglian region:

- a water scarce region, although the worst affected area is the Cambridge-Luton corridor.
- several existing sewage treatment works are at or near capacity and
- flood risk area to the north of the region.
- Continuing growth in demand for water supply and infrastructure, unlike the old industrial areas in northern England where decline of manufacturing industry has reduced water usage and freed up sewerage capacity

Meeting the Challenges:

- Water Cycle Studies look at implications of growth, flood risk and link these to the planning process
- Allow engineers to plan infrastructure and ensure it is in place early so as not to slow down development.
- Funding: Environment Agency need to ensure that the water companies are properly funded whilst also protecting the customer from monopolies.
- 2000-2010 has seen £1 billion investment leading to improvements in quality of river water; bathing water and protection of wetlands and rivers from over-abstraction.
- Development slow down is leading to a reprioritisation of investment and schemes.

John Oldfield, Engineer to the Board, Bedford Internal Drainage Board:

Role of IDB:

- Maintain, improve and build new infrastructure to reduce flood risk
- Works with local authorities and LDVs

- Protects non-main river water courses
- Adopts SUDS

Challenges:

- Increased development densities and infilling reduce amount of open land to absorb rainfall
- Tendency to a piecemeal approach to SUDS provision, resulting in small, site based schemes that do not provide as much flood relief as larger, strategic level SUDS.
- Need to ensure that flood drainage measures (eg ditches, swales etc) can be maintained otherwise their water carrying capacity is compromised.
- 'scope creep' – incremental increase in dwelling numbers on a consented site through minor amendment process can have serious impact on flood risk management
- Flood and Water Management Bill seeks to place more responsibility on first tier authorities.

Kevin Boon, Anglian Water

Anglian is the largest water and waste water company in England and Wales.

Different challenges for water and waste water assets:

- Water assets are interconnected; considered at a regional level and planned over long timescales
- Waste water assets are dealt with at a more local level and planning of them has, historically, been reactive rather than proactive.
- Current challenges are housing growth and climate change

Investment planning for water:

- statutory duty to provide water for customers
- 25 year water resource management plan approved by EA
- 5 year business plan currently in 2005-10; seeking approval of next one for 2010-15
- capital investment for strategic and resource schemes
- OFWAT final determination for new 5 year business plan November 2009

Investment planning for waste water:

- statutory duty to provide wastewater services
- right to connect only if planning permission
- no statutory long-term strategic plan
- OFWAT final determination for business plan for 2010-15 November 2009
- need to demonstrate certainty to invest in schemes for new development
- seeking to develop long-term strategic waste water plan.

Questions and Discussion

Cheryl Montgomery said it sounded as though we were okay for water supply until 2021 and that SUDS and existing drainage systems would cope with flooding, but was there sufficient capacity at the Cotton Valley STW at Pineham to cope with the growth? Understood that Cotton Valley capacity was 300,000 dwellings.

Kevin Boon replied that there is a scheme in place for the Cotton Valley STW to increase capacity to 400,000 dwellings

Dave Gallagher confirmed that there is capacity at Cotton Valley in the medium term.

Ian Haynes asked about the difficulties the Environment Agency experienced in working across administrative boundaries.

Dave Gallagher explained that the Sustainable Communities team in Peterborough addresses cross-boundary issues although he did acknowledge that there is always room to improve liaison between different agencies. He also accepted that in the past the Agency hasn't always seen the 'bigger picture' but they have been focussed on addressing the legacy of under investment in water infrastructure up to 2000.

Jennie Cook reported that, notwithstanding previous problems, detailed planning proposals in MKP area of authority are now being addressed jointly by MKP, the IDB and the EA.

Hilary Chipping noted that the Sustainable Communities team works well with the MKSM. Critical issues are whether OFWAT accepts the need for investment.

Malcolm Brighton asked if systems were in place to guard against serious water contamination events such as seen at Camelford

Dave Gallagher replied that the water industry has learnt a great deal from the Camelford incident and that there are systems in place to prevent a repeat of that type of incident. However, when water supplies come from abstraction from water courses there is always the possibility of a water quality issue.

Kevin Boon added that extensive sampling is effective in picking up problems at a very early stage.

John Oldfield raised a concern that developers had little consideration for strategic and integrated drainage, and needed to change their attitude to development.

4 Minutes from 16 March 2009 and matters arising

Note on the Terms of Reference – reference to SEERA needs to be updated with reference to South East Partnership Board.

DW

5 Development Plans update schedule

c) Salden Chase update from Hilary Chipping:

To aid joint working on this site, MKSM brought together all local authority and LDV officers working on the SDA and identified a way forward. This led to a meeting with David Lock Associates and the development consortium, led by Transform MKSM to review the masterplan for the site. This was a useful meeting which has led to further work on transport and the way the site connects with the surrounding parts of Milton Keynes and Aylesbury Vale. A further meeting with all partners is to be arranged for the end of July/ early August to review progress and allow the developers to feedback their revised proposals.

Carole Paternoster had been briefed by John Byrne on the design review meeting and AVDC was of the view that whilst there are issues, there are no major problems. It is hoped that David Lock Associates will continue to work closely with all to achieve a good solution for this site.

6 Any Other Business

None noted

7 Future agenda items

- The next meeting will seek a presentation from the three LEAs to talk about how they are planning for the cross-boundary growth in their school planning.
- Transport will be considered as a topic for the December meeting. Will need to clarify the level of detail for the presentation and who will be involved. Also need to consider whether recent MKSM transport presentation is appropriate.

8 Dates of forthcoming meetings:

- 13th October 2009
- 8 December 2009

Both meetings are at MKP in Room 304/5, starting at 12.00 noon – 2.00 pm. Lunch will be provided.