

Minutes of the 53rd meeting of the UK Roads Board meeting held on 5 July 2016 at the Chartered Institution of Highways & Transportation.

Board members:

Present:

James Bailey

Tim Barnes (substituting for Richard Morgan)

Steve Berry

David Davies

Jason Jenkins

Andrew Murray (by phone)

Amanda Richards

Garry Warner

Ramesh Sinhal

Justin Ward

Representing:

Chair, Staffordshire, representing the Asset Management Group
Welsh Government

Department for Transport
Lincolnshire County Council representing the National Winter Service Research Group (NWSRG)

Bridgend County Borough Council, representing CSS Wales

Chairman, Transport Northern Ireland
Surrey County Council, representing the Road Condition Management Group (RCMG)

Bromley representing London Technical Advisors' Group (LoTAG)

Highways England (HE)

CIHT (Secretariat)

In attendance

Present:

Haydn Davies

Representing:

Department for Transport (HMEP update)
– items 1 - 4

1. Welcome, introduction and apologies.

James Bailey welcomed everyone to the meeting. James Bailey, on behalf of the Board recorded their thanks to Andrew Murray for three years in his role as Chair and wished him every success. The Board recorded their thanks to Steve Spender who was stepping down from the Footways & Cycleways Management Group (FCMG). Apologies were recorded for: Anthony Radford-Foley, Douglas Hill, Rob Gillespie, Stuart Giddings and Donald Morrison.

2. Minutes of last meeting

A number of the matters arising were included on the agenda. Regarding research, Andrew Murray noted that a cost profile would be useful. Steve Berry said that work would be undertaken to reconcile the budget position. Steve said that, as a result of the Autumn Statement, the profile of spend for DfT budgets had changed. Steve said that DfT would be taking a paper to UKRLG on those projects committed and what is remaining in this financial year.

There was a discussion on community capacity and the Board noted that Devon County Council had undertaken a lot of work with regards to community road wardens.

Action: Steve Berry to speak with Dave Whitton from Devon County Council regarding a possible presentation at the next UK Roads Board on community capacity.

Justin Ward did say that, as with other Boards, following a presentation it can be useful to add the presentation material onto the UKRLG website.

There was a noted accuracy on the previous minutes in reference to Gaist that it should have been the RCMG not the FCMG. [updated here: <http://www.ukroadsliasongroup.org/en/utilities/document-summary.cfm?docid=194FDB09-6C10-4F45-98AF8789F5CA8B1F>]

3. UK Roads Liaison Group minutes

Andrew Murray provided an update noting that Sir Terry Morgan, Chairman of Crossrail, gave a very interesting presentation on the Transport Infrastructure Skills Strategy. Andrew recommended listening to the CIHT Podcast on this area [www.ciht.org.uk/podcasts].

The Board discussed other matters following the UKRLG meeting, noting progress on how Asset Management is treated within UKRLG. James said he had developed a paper but would have a further discussion with Dana Skelley, Chair of the UK Bridges Board to come to a conclusion on the work.

Amanda Richards noted that one of the RCMG research bids was related to a review of the knowledge gap in the sector and the development of training tools to bridge the gap, the outcomes were intended to be but that this had been rejected. The Group were keen to highlight the importance of e-learning.

4. HMEP

Haydn Davies provided an update on HMEP outlining the target operating model that the HMEP Board were considering. Haydn noted that three product partners had expressed willingness to keep HMEP updated: 1) Local Partnerships 2) LGA and 3) National Highways & Transportation Network. CIHT has been identified as a potential partner for maintain the HMEP website.

Haydn noted the importance of ensuring that there was a strong governance approach. There followed a discussion and Haydn thanked the Board for the suggestions and said that these would be taken forward for a further version of the report that would be presented at the UKRLG meeting on 21 July.

5. Review of Codes

Steve Berry said that he could assure everyone that Atkins was, and had been, working on the Codes. Version 3 had been completed and the aim would be to publish in September following sign-off by UKRLG and confirmed that the publication deadline would include the supporting guidance on a risk-based approach.

Steve outlined that the brief for the risk-based guidance was that this should be 12 pages long and cover every asset type – lighting, roads/highways, - with covering text. Steve said that a web page would be set up on the UKRLG website to house case study material. Garry asked about legal advice and Steve said that DfT legal team would be looking at this.

Ramesh Sinhal noted that the term 'risk-based' could have negative connotations and Steve said that a public facing document could use a different term.

There were some questions on legal challenge with case studies and also on maintenance of these. Steve said regarding legal challenge that decisions made should be based on a highway authority's own evidence. Steve also said that UKRLG would have to keep the Codes under review and as part of this a monitoring role of reviewing the case studies would be useful. Steve noted that it will be an evolving guidance document.

Action: DfT to circulate the updated version of the Code and risk-based guidance for final review to UKRLG and to corresponding members to seek feedback on any factually incorrect parts [and not for a further round of consultation].

6. Updates from sub-groups

Asset management

James noted that he was taking forward the recommendation from UKRLG that the group should take a pan-asset approach and was aiming to get that agreed by 4 October.

James also said that a business plan review was underway. There followed a discussion on public engagement and perception of local highways. Steve Berry said that DfT wants to work in partnership with highways authorities and the sector to help support the case to the Treasury. The Board agreed that this was a good area of focus and that RCMG could also play an important role in supporting this. Ramesh Sinhal noted that Highways England now has Transport Focus monitoring the road network from a user/customer perspective. The Board agreed that it would be useful to learn more about this.

Action: Ramesh Sinhal to share information on what Highways England are doing regarding customer research.

- ***Road condition management group (RCMG)***

Amanda Richards provided an update on the research projects noting that progress was good. Amanda mentioned the website pages for the PCIS were due to be held open for one-year but that the website had been closed down. There was a process underway of transferring the material over to the UKRLG website.

Amanda also raised a point for agreement on the UKPMS processed appeals and escalation process and the Board approved the suggested process.

Action: Amanda Richards to provide DfT a copy of the files from the PCIS website

- ***National Winter Service Research Group (NWSRG)***

David Davies relayed thanks from the NWSRG to DfT for managing to clear the outstanding payment due.

Action: James Bailey to arrange for an ADEPT representative on NWSRG

Steve Berry suggested that given recent flood events (e.g. Storm Desmond) perhaps there should be a focus on extreme weather events. The Board members agreed this was a good suggestion.

Ramesh provided an overview of work that Highways England was involved including a bid that HE had put forward with the Dutch Road Administration to Horizon 2020 (an EU funded programme) looking at engineering issues including meeting stakeholders objectives, whole life costs and risk-based approaches.

Ramesh provided an update on developments with vehicles to survey road condition and exploring a trial of a new surfacing material that combines the benefits of thick surfacing with the durability of HRA. James Bailey and Amanda Richards offered their authorities could take part in trials if the new surfacing material was going to be applied to local authority networks.

Ramesh also noted that technology and innovation was a focus for HE with potential applications of nanotechnology for monitoring and also solar highways (that the Federal Highway Administration is currently looking at).

- ***Footways and Cycleways Group (FCMG)***

The Board noted the paper produced for the meeting.

Action: Amanda Richards to speak with Stuart Giddings on the interfaces between the RCMG and FCMG

7. Communication

Action: Justin Ward to publish updated Business Plans on the website

8. Any other business

Amanda noted the seven day working consultation that was presented to the House of Commons on 4th July.

Action: Steve Berry to provide an update on the seven day working proposal for road works

Jason Jenkins said that he was interested in seeing details of the road adoption advice note that Parvis raised at the UKRLG meeting.

Action: Steve Berry to arrange for circulation of the Road Adoption Advice Note to Jason

9. Date of next meeting

It was agreed the meeting would take place in Cardiff in September – date to be agreed