

Minutes of the 58th meeting of the UK Roads Board meeting held on 16 February 2018 at the Chartered Institution of Highways & Transportation (CIHT)

Board members:

Present:

James Bailey
David Kinsey (for Chris Cranston)

Rob Gillespie
Stuart Giddings

Alexis Tregenza
Nina Ley (for Richard Morgan)
Donald Morrison

Graeme Fergusson (for Douglas Hill)

Anthony Radford-Foley
Amanda Richards

Jason Jenkins

Ian Hawthorn (replacing Garry Warner)

Justin Ward

Representing:

Chair, Staffordshire & ADEPT
Derby Council representing the National Winter Service Research Group (NWSRG)
Hounslow Highways representing TAG
Hampshire County Council, representing the Footways & Cycleways Group (FCMG)
Department for Transport
Welsh Government
Transport Scotland, representing the Asset Management Board
Perth & Kinross Council, representing SCOTS
Bracknell Council representing TAG
Surrey County Council, representing the Road Condition Management Group (RCMG)
CSS Wales

London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham representing LoTAG
CIHT (Secretariat)

In attendance

Chris Spong and Andy Pickett from Hyperion Consultancy.

1. Welcome, introduction and apologies

James Bailey welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were recorded for Martin McHahon, Simon Richardson, Richard Morgan, Chris Cranston and Douglas Hill.

2. Presentation on Footway and Cycleways Group research projects

Stuart Giddings introduced Chris Spong and Andy Pickett. Chris said the project has come to a close and that the reports are being finalised. The project started in 2016, but Chris noted the projects had been around for a while, and were procured through TfL on behalf of UKRLG and the FCMG. This was a project to promote good asset management for footways and cycleways.

Andy outlined details of the Task 1 on guidance on pavement design and maintenance, putting all the relevant information into one place for designer and therefore helpful for the sector.

Chris provided an overview of Task 2 on risk based maintenance management, noting this is a network level tool to provide an objective basis for making decisions based on published research and evidence. Chris noted it is consistent with Well-managed Highway Infrastructure. Chris said this involved consultation with authorities, LoTAG, CIHT Asset Management Panel and legal advice and that feedback has been very positive. A tool – 'Footway Safety Risk Tool' - has been developed to support the process (on Excel) that will be available online and based on published research.

Task 3 on the project was on cycletrack service levels and condition assessment. The approach taken is looking how to take into account the needs of users. This looked at dedicated and

shared cycleways/cyclelanes (but was not looking at cycling on the carriageway). The context is really about making the case for asset management for cycle infrastructure. Andy said a lot of the focus to date has been on encouraging new infrastructure and economic benefits (often high) of developing this new infrastructure (predominately based on health benefits), but that there has been limited work on making the case for the maintenance of cycling infrastructure. The task was based on results from a cycle user survey conducted in London. Lower level of satisfaction were reported on issues such as road condition and limited space for cyclists. Task 3 looks at a network wide level of service for cycling. The idea would be you would cycle and carry out an assessment of the particular length you have cycled (but carrying out assessment not while cycling).

Andy noted that the cycleproofing DfT working group, and other cycling groups have noted that the asset management focus of Task 3 is helpful.

Ian Hawthorn made a few observations: Ironworks came up very high as of importance for cyclists, but often this is an asset owned by utility companies (therefore not a highway authority responsibility). Aspects of importance within London included permeable paving for flooding and hostile vehicle measures. Ian noted the impacts of these on maintaining the asset. Chris said the idea of a document that links out and signposts to other work is helpful.

Anthony asked about winter service and cycling and Andy said that this was not within the scope of the work, but they did look at slippery surfaces. Chris said this would be finalised in a matter of weeks and within the final review phase.

Donald asked if the cycle user service results would be published, Andy confirmed this would happen. Donald said that Transport Scotland was interested in the level of service and maintenance approach for cycling infrastructure.

Rob Gillespie asked about the use of colour and cycling views on this and maintenance issues of this adding that lines and signs is the minimum required, and colour has been an enhancement. It was noted this was not included in the reports.

Nina Ley asked if the tool would be updated based on new data, Chris replied that authorities can use their own data.

David Kinsey asked if it was worth a conversation with NWSRG on Winter Service and cycling. The Board agreed with this.

Rob noted that UKRLG should note the benefit of the investment in research as a useful contribution to the sector.

Action: Chris Spong and Andy Pickett to ensure reference to security minded approaches to be included in the FCMG reports where relevant

Action: NWSRG to work with FCMG on issues related to winter service and cycling

Action: Justin Ward to work with FCMG on publication and awareness raising of the projects via a podcast and article in Transportation Professional

Action: James Bailey to note at UKRLG that the FCMG publications should be referenced within Well-managed Highway Infrastructure

Action: UKRB members to sign-off the document and note to UKRLG – deadline to clear by April 2018

3. Note of last meeting

Accuracy was noted. Matters outstanding:

Action: Justin Ward to email Ramesh on the Highways England research programme

Action: Justin Ward to contact Andy Warrington from Atkins about the survey on the Code of Practice to find out the results

Justin Ward provided a brief overview on the Urban Big Data Centre activity with UKRLG.

4. Minutes of UKRLG

James said that the Board should keep an eye on the report by ADEPT on digital innovation. Research is still of interest to the UKRLG but details are to be confirmed. James welcomed the suggestion from DfT on top-slicing approach for research funding. Donald Morrison noted that clarity on funding would be useful for 2018 as the Scottish Road Research Board as a number of projects on SCANNER and RCMG would require collaborative funding and hence clarity on DfT support for funding would be really helpful.

James noted that DMRB review issues should be kept aware of. Future areas of focus topics from UKRLG - low emissions transport, road safety, air quality, information and data. Justin Ward confirmed that the UK Network Management Board was looking to lead on road safety. Amanda noted that information and data was important for the RCMG, FCMG, and NWSRG.

5. Business plan

Updated during the meeting.

Action: James Bailey and Justin Ward to finalise and publish the Plan

6. Inspection of trees

Action: UKRB to propose amendment to UKRLG to the Code of Practice as an amendment:

UKRB proposed that Code is changed from:

B.5.4.2. In England and Wales the Highway Authority is also responsible for ensuring that trees outside the highway boundary, but within falling distance, are safe. Section 154 of the Highways Act 1980 empowers the authority to deal, by notice, with hedges, trees and shrubs growing on adjacent land which overhang the highway, and to recover costs.

To:

B.5.4.2. In England and Wales it is the common law duty of the landowner to take reasonable care to ensure that trees outside the highway boundary, but within falling distance, are safe. However Highway Authorities may become aware of trees, hedges or shrubs which are not safe. Section 154 of the Highways Act 1980 empowers the authority to deal, by notice, with hedges, trees and shrubs growing on adjacent land which overhang the highway, and to recover costs.

Amend B.5.4.4 to:

“B.5.4.4. Safety inspections should incorporate highway trees, and may include those outside of the highway boundary but within falling distance of the highway. For trees off highway limits inspections should only be made so far as can be seen without trespassing. Owners’ permission should be obtained to enter property where suspect trees are observed. Inspections should take note of any encroachment or visibility obstruction and any obvious damage, ill health or trip hazards”.

7. Updates from sub-groups

a. Asset management

Donald Morrison provided an update, noting that the Board was looking to refresh the membership and ensure wider representation, e.g. ALARM, CIPFA, RAC, Highways England, Welsh Authorities etc... Donald then noted specific projects and prioritisation of these: 1) streamlining the existing asset management guidance; 2) resources, recruitment and retention – encouraging people into the sector (a possible questionnaire around authorities); 3) making the case for investing in highway maintenance. Other aspects were raised such as the extent to which authorities are using the HMEP asset management tool.

b. Road Condition Management Group

Amanda Richards provided an update:

- DfT updated RCMG in January that they have developed a strategy on road condition that is with the Minister for approval. The strategy includes the suggestion of a consultation on road condition collection which if approved is likely to go out in Spring/Summer 2018.
- Road Conditions England was published in January this year, which is earlier than in previous years, giving authorities the ability to use the data to help plan their maintenance strategies for the coming financial year. The publication also includes an interactive map presenting information on the proportion of local authority managed A, B and C roads that should have been considered for maintenance. The map can be found at the following link: <http://maps.dft.gov.uk/road-conditions-map-2017>. The group discussed the fact that only 'red' is reported nationally and agreed to form a task group to carry out some analysis that focusses on the amber condition bands.
- The VSSG are continuing with their work on updates to visual surveys. While the proposed Annual Engineers Inspection requires some further development, the enhanced CVI survey has been agreed by the VSSG. Work is now being done to update the Inspector Accreditation tests and software with the hope that this work will be completed in early April. Once the work has been completed, the new manuals will be published on the RCMG website and an article launching the enhanced survey will be written for inclusion in the trade press.

Action: Amanda Richards to contact Justin Ward to ensure coverage of the enhanced CVI survey for write up in Transportation Professional

- Following the DfT, Transport Scotland and CHiCS funded SCANNER development research project which completed last summer, the recommendation to have a Winter Shutdown of the SCANNER fleet in order to improve consistency has been agreed by the SCANNER contractors and ratified by the RCMG. A winter shutdown will be in force during December and January from next season.
- The SCANNER development research project also proposed that improvements should be made to the consistency of the SCANNER crack identification. The research proposed a SCANNER cracking fleet consistency test, but trials of the tests have been inconclusive. The SCANNER Contractor's Liaison Group (SCLG) has suggested that changes in environmental conditions during the accreditation process could be affecting the robustness of the consistency assessment. The RCMG has endorsed a proposal from the SCANNER Auditor that SCANNER contractors should undertake fleet tests in the summer of 2018 to assess fleet consistency in directly comparable conditions. This should help in benchmarking the consistency of the fleet, and support the establishment of consistency requirements.

c. National Winter Service Research Group (NWSRG)

David Kinsey provided an update noting a number of issues including:

- Carol Valentine, on behalf of the NWSRG, will be delivering a presentation at the upcoming International Winter Road Congress in Gdansk 'The Development of Evidence Based Best Practice Guidance in the UK.
- Articles and events on the new Guidance.
- Initial skills audit to establish where challenges lie with loss of experience to winter service.
- Practical Guidance progress
 - Guidance sections have been reformatted by the IHE and are under final review before circulating to members. Where feedback has been received from appendix H, this has been considered as part of the redrafting. Sections will be published firstly on the NWSRG website in draft form, before final sign off from the UKRB
 - The Met Office are continuing to develop guidance for the use of Weather Forecasting and Road Weather Information Systems to aid winter service decision making using a risk-based approach
 - Met Office are considering pulling out of providing road specific weather forecasting services
 - A working group has been formed and initial meetings held to develop guidance on Route Selection and risk based approaches

Rob Gillespie asked if anyone knew of deselection of winter service gritting routes based on risk based approach - Board members were not aware of any.

James Bailey asked if the Guidance extended to include consideration of fleet management, especially in regard to corrosion prevention. David said the main focus on fleet related to calibration matters, but corrosion was a good point to consider.

d. Footway & Cycleway Management Group

Stuart Giddings noted that FCMG at risk as currently no further funding for projects, but noted need to link with other sub-groups and finalisation of the business plan and general membership.

8. Communication

Justin Ward brief update on this.

9. HMEP

Alexis provided an update noting that a couple of years ago Atkins had worked on a transition plan for HMEP. The new model was agreed in summer of 2016 by the HMEP Board identifying four delivery partners who would take forward the work without funding from DfT. Alexis said NHT and LGA had been making good progress with Connect and Share and Peer Review respectively. CIHT are currently hosting the HMEP website, but require funding to maintain, update and resource the website. DfT are currently looking at alternative models for HMEP through the HMEP Strategic Steering Group (SSG) and that there is a meeting next week to discuss.

Action: Alexis to share the note of the meeting of the HMEP Strategic Steering Group (SSG)

10. Footways & Cycleways Group Chair

Stuart Giddings noted that he was standing down and the Board discussed arrangements for the next Chair. James Bailey thanked, on behalf of the Board, the work that Stuart had undertaken on the FCMG.

Action: Justin Ward and Stuart Giddings to put out a call for the next FCMG Chair (to be approved by the UK Roads Board)

11. AOB

RCMG Chair - Amanda Richards noted her three year term had come to an end. Amanda said she was willing to continue and the Board supported this.

Action: Amanda Richards to outline the UKRB support of her in continuing to Chair the RCMG

Research – Rob Gillespie noted the importance of thinking about research. Amanda Richards noted there had been a number of projects identified by still to be funded.

Action: Justin Ward to share previous research proposals that went to UKRLG

Presentations - James Bailey noted that it was helpful to have a presentation at the start of the meeting. He asked: does this Board feel it is appropriate to make itself available for proprietary products. The Board agreed that presentations were important and that the priorities for topics should come from sub-groups and other Boards but that consideration of presentations from commercial companies was ok.

Action: Amanda Richards to arrange for an update on CVI at the next meeting

12. Date of next meeting

8 June 2018