

Minutes of the 55th meeting of the UK Roads Board meeting held on 22 March 2017 at the Chartered Institution of Highways & Transportation (CIHT)

Board members:

Present:

James Bailey

Chris Cranston

Rob Gillespie

Douglas Hill

Herbert Micallef (substituting for Stuart Giddings)

Jason Jenkins

Richard Morgan

Donald Morrison

Amanda Richards

Simon Richardson

Ramesh Sinhal

Garry Warner

Justin Ward

Representing:

Chair, Staffordshire, representing the Asset Management Group

Devon County Council representing the National Winter Service Research Group (NWSRG)

Hounslow Highways representing TAG

Angus Council representing SCOTS

TfL, representing the Footways & Cycleways Group (FCMG)

Bridgend County Borough Council, representing CSS Wales

Welsh Government

Transport Scotland

Surrey County Council, representing the Road Condition Management Group (RCMG)

Infrastructure Northern Ireland

Highways England

Bromley representing London Technical Advisors' Group (LoTAG)

CIHT (Secretariat)

In attendance

Present:

Emma Benbow

Ro Cartwright

Alex Wright

Representing:

TRL

Linhay Consulting

TRL

1. Welcome, introduction and apologies

James Bailey welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were recorded for Stuart Giddings, Steve Berry, and Anthony Radford-Foley.

2. SCANNER research

There was a presentation on SCANNER research provided by Alex Wright, Emma Benbow and Ro Cartwright on the findings of the project.

Garry Warner asked about future proposals for SCANNER on unclassified road networks as bid to the UKRLG. Donald said that the Scottish Roads Research Board (SRRB) had eight proposals for work related to SCANNER, but that funding was limited so it would not be possible to go ahead with all of them.

Donald later added that in March 2019 – for both Transport Scotland and the Welsh Government the current SCANNER contracts will run out. Donald said that to have a consistent approach across Wales and Scotland that both organisations can put in the specifications for tenders based on the research i.e. take account of the new parameters. Herbert Micallef said that measures on fretting would be very useful. Justin Ward asked

about new technologies such as the Pothole Spotter in Thurrock and York and what this meant for SCANNER. Alex Wright said that this the Thurrock and York work was likely only to inform the authorities about roughness and not about fretting and rutting.

Action: Justin Ward to work with Amanda Richards on an article in Transportation Professional on the SCANNER research project

3. Minutes of last meeting

These were noted as accurate.

Matters arising

Action: Presentation by Welsh Government on the condition of the Welsh Motorway and Trunk Road Network – Justin Ward to circulate [completed by email 5 April 2017]

Action: Justin Ward to arrange a presentation on BIM for the next meeting

Ramesh noted that Highways England was updating the DMRB.

Action: Ramesh Sinhal to provide an update on Highways England's research programme

Action: James Bailey to send the minutes of the HMEP meeting

4. UK Roads Liaison Group minutes

Justin Ward said he would add a link to the UKRLG website on Road Worker Safety – [available here: <http://www.ukroadsliasongroup.org/en/guidance/road-worker-safety.cfm>]

5. Presentation on Community Warden scheme in Devon

Chris Cranston gave an update on the Community Warden scheme in Devon. He noted that the local authority covers the third party liability and the focus on work is not on fundamental issues and not in areas where there could be a safety risk. He showed a video on the scheme [available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cN2oHCfsVow>]

6. Pothole action fund

Donald Morrison said Transport Scotland recently attended the Scottish Parliament's Public Audit and Post-Legislative Scrutiny Committee to give evidence on a report published last year by Audit Scotland on *Maintaining Scotland's Roads*. Donald said one the questions the Committee had was to ask if there was any analysis of the impact of the new £250m Pothole Action Fund and its effectiveness. The Board agreed that such measures such as the Pothole Fund are useful if the funding was *additional* but noted that bidding for funds took away time from limited staff resources for local authorities.

7. CIPFA LASAAC

Jason Jenkins noted the statement that reported:

Statement by CIPFA/LASAAC on the Implementation of the Highways Network Asset Code into the Financial Reporting Requirements of Local Authorities

At its meeting on March 8th, the CIPFA/LASAAC Code Boardi decided not to proceed with the introduction of the Highways Network Asset Codeii into the financial reporting requirements for local authorities. The Board decided that, currently and in particular in the absence of central support for key elements of the valuation, the benefits are outweighed by the costs of implementation for local authorities. The Board determined that it will give further

consideration to this issue only if provided with clear evidence that benefits outweigh costs for local authorities.

The Board recognises the work undertaken by accounts preparers, auditors and highways engineers in preparing for the planned changes and would encourage continued improvement of the management of the highways network asset through better inventory and cost information.

The Board discussed the issue noting some disappointment as the developments for financial reporting were starting to gain traction. Amanda Richards said that the financial reporting arrangements had made Surrey County Council conduct a full footway survey illustrating an example where the requirements for financial reporting were having tangible benefits for asset management. The Board also agreed that it was also important to take stock and agreed that the authorities would benefit from informing DfT/CIPFA of the benefits of the approach to encourage onward progress with the approach.

Asset management – James Bailey noted that the business plan had been updated to 2018 but until the UKRLG Strategic Planning Session later in the month, the position of the group was still not determined.

Road Condition Management Group (RCMG) – Amanda Richards provided an update on the work of the Group. This included a short presentation update on the results from a survey carried out in late 2016 to collect data about how authorities are collecting road condition data and what they are using it for. Amanda also noted that a draft of the new Visual Survey Manual is now ready.

Action: UK Roads Board members to feedback any views/concerns/issues with the new Visual Survey Manual

Amanda highlighted the RCMG wish list – a range of projects that they would like to undertake but these would be dependent on securing funding.

National Winter Service Research Group (NWSRG)

Chris Cranson reported that he had been elected to take over from the previous Chair, David Davies, who has now retired. Key updates included: NWSRG strong links with conferences and the Hemming Group and the need to confirm the review of the research funding proposals following submission to DfT. The NWSRG could also see some logic of extending their remit to cover extreme weather incidents but any extra tasks also cannot take precedence over the current focus of issuing the winter guidance (and would also require additional funding to support). Other aspects included a review of the constitution and a need to look at new forms of communications, considering webinars and podcasts in this regard.

Footways & Cycleways Management Group (FCMG) – Herbert Micallef provided an update noting the really exciting work underway currently. Herbert did note some gaps in membership that required filling – including North of England, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Herbert provided an update on the research projects being led by the FCMG.

Action: Stuart Giddings to provide latest copy of FCMG business plan for publication on UKRB website

8. Communication

Justin Ward had no further update following the agreement on the article on SCANNER in the next pages of Transportation Professional.

9. Any other business

Research benefits - James Bailey said he would highlight to UKRLG the view from Board members around the benefits of research and the need for funding to deliver key elements of work. He said that, following the UKRLG Strategic Planning session the next meeting would look to deliver against the new strategic direction.

Risk-based approach – Herbert Micallef said that RCMG – through the research projects – will make sure the output supports the overarching approach to risk management. Herbert said this would be a useful support to Well-managed Highway Infrastructure.

Herbert also asked about sponsorship and if it was possible for UKRLG to secure corporate sponsorship for supporting research.

Action: James Bailey/Justin Ward to ask UKRLG for a view on corporate sponsorship at the UKRLG Strategic Planning Session [post-meeting note – deferred to next UKRLG meeting]

10. Date of next meeting

3 July 2017.