

Western Gateway - Sub-National Transport Body

MINUTES

<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Location</i>
Shadow Partnership Board	Wednesday 17 th Mar 2021	14:00-16:00	MS Teams virtual meeting

Attendance:

Present:

- Cllr Bridget Wayman, Wiltshire Council (Chair)
- Cllr Ray Bryan, Dorset Council
- Cllr Stephen Reade, South Gloucestershire Council
- Cllr Joanna Wright, Bath and North East Somerset Council
- Cllr Neil Butters, Bath and North East Somerset Council
- Cllr Cherry Brooks, Dorset Council
- Cllr Geoffrey Richardson, North Somerset Council
- Cllr Mike Greene, Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Council
- Cllr James Tonkin, North Somerset Council
- Julian McLaughlin, Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Council
- Andrew Davies, Bristol City Council
- Wayne Sayers, Dorset Council
- Ben Watts, Gloucestershire County Council
- Colin Medus, North Somerset Council
- Priscilla Dibble, Sphere Marketing
- James White, West of England Combined Authority
- Peter Mann, West of England Combined Authority
- David Carter, West of England Combined Authority
- Sarah Beatrice, West of England Combined Authority (minutes)
- Nuala Waters, West of England Combined Authority
- Parvis Khansari, Wiltshire Council
- Allan Creedy, Wiltshire Council
- Kingsley Hampton, Wiltshire Council
- Andrew Morrison, Wiltshire Council
- David Glinos, Department for Transport
- Alice Darley, Highways England
- Sam Howell, Swindon Borough Council
- Jim Stuart, Chair for Western Gateway Transport and Business Forum, Chair for Dorset LEP
- Daniel Round, Network Rail
- Andrew Wiles, SW Peninsula STB
- Geoff Brown, SW Peninsula STB

Apologies:

- Cllr Nigel Moor, Gloucestershire County Council
- Cllr Toby Savage, on behalf of West of England Combined Authority
- Cllr Andy Hadley, Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Council
- Colin Chick, Gloucestershire County Council
- Cllr Kye Dudd, Bristol City Council
- Andy Whitehead, South Gloucestershire Council
- Elizabeth Mills, West of England Combined Authority

<p>Ewan Wilson, Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Council Nick Evans, West of England Combined Authority Nuala Gallagher, Bristol City Council Mandy Bishop, Bath & North East Somerset Emma Blackham, South Gloucestershire Council Alex Hearn, North Somerset Council</p>
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Summary of Actions & Decisions	Allocated to:	Target Date:
Agreed to report to WG on NR's electrification Programme	DR	23/06/21
Review Comms Protocol in line with DfT comments and bring back to next Board for approval.	Prog. Team	23/06/21

Item No	Notes / Actions
1.	Welcome and apologies - noted above
2.	Minutes and actions from the previous meeting – the Board approved the minutes and actions of the previous meeting
3.	<p>Public Participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Questions or Representations from Members of the public in line with the Board's Public Participation Scheme: Questions/statements were received and responses are available as part of the combined meeting papers on the website https://westerngatewaystb.org.uk/about/board-meetings-and-minutes/
4.	<p>Updates from Associate Members (verbal unless otherwise stated)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Peninsula – Andrew Wiles: Peninsula have received DfT funding for 21/22. High-level transport strategy to be published May/June this year. Further studies and works to lead to a detailed strategy at the end of the year. Engaging well with the WG STB and working jointly on areas, particularly on rail strategic planning studies for rail corridors through joint areas and participating in WG Corridor Study workshops. ○ Jim Stewart - Transport & Business Forum: Highlighted the recent B&T Forum on 10th March, which was well attended. Aim was to promote understanding of the corridor strategy and planned work programme. Discussion was held on the importance of the corridors. Delegates were provided with an overview of the STB, an update on the Strategic Transport Plan. Attendees raised key issues: links to other STBs and regions, questions on the Western Gateway Powerhouse, understanding of competitive nature of funding and concern that sufficient is provided for the local area. Future needs, environmental issues, resilience and an integrated transport network. The multi-modal approach was welcomed. ○ Swindon Borough Council - Sam Howell (Head of PT & Infrastructure) Towns Fund announcement – £19.5m to progress new boulevard and heritage action zone,

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	<p>working closely with EEH on connectivity study for Oxford-Swindon-Didcot, multi modal study, further information to be shared in due course.</p> <p>Significant investment programme in east of Borough, to improve capacity on highway network and enable development opportunities.</p> <p>Determining transport modelling scope for local plan review, subject to 2nd rounds of consultation this summer. Looking closely at scenario testing, market conditions, future development at Honda.</p> <p>Working on implementation plan underpinning Decarbonisation strategy. Transport making good progress with electric & vehicle charging and alt fuels for bus operators.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ DfT – David Glinos: update note circulated to Members. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key announcements: STB funding has been confirmed for 21-22 at £425k, subject to ministers signing off proposals, to be focussed on the development of a transport strategy & advising Government. Covid-19 work continues, DG/DfT has regular updates with key LA contacts. Budget announcements include the levelling-up fund (further guidance expected shortly on 1st bid round) investing in regeneration, upgrading and heritage. Towns fund, Bournemouth & Swindon both secured funds. Intercity transport settlement for CAs; £4.1m of capacity funding awarded to WECA. Walking & Cycling investment applications – both revenue & capital allocations. Highways maintenance funding allocations have been communicated to LAs. Bus Strategy “Bus Back Better” plan released, with aims to return bus to pre-pandemic usage and then increase. LAs will devise local bus service improvement plans, to commit to pursue EP or franchising agreement By 30th June. Support through CBSSG will be dependent on this funding after 1st July. Bus Improvement Plan. April 2022 new discretionary finding will be available. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cllr Wayman noted that the Solent freeport was announced. ● JS noted that no WG freeport applications were successful. Disappointed that the Government restricted the number to ten. There will be an impact on our area with the success of those going forward. ● Cllr Brown. Question to JS; how is Poole being impacted by Brexit and shellfish exports. JS: Poole used to be the biggest exporter in the country. Long way we go before import/export teething issues are sorted out. All French ferry connection was lost last year. Questions over what will happen with passenger ferries. New freight service was announced from Morocco into Poole. All ports have been hit hard by Covid. ○ Highways England – Alice Darley: Scheme updates – Stonehenge Scheme A303, date for judicial review reports not correct - a date for the decision is 23rd June. HE is continuing with preliminary work, procurement of contractor. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sparkford to Ilchester - decision, SoS approval given in January to dual 3 mile section of single carriageway, work ongoing. Planning to start work later this year.

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	<p>M4 Dorset Coast, strategic Study (RIS2) – conversations with WG officers on strategic study for a high quality route between M4 and the Dorset Coast, to identify which corridor is the main strategic route. Preliminary scoping study is underway, nearing completion, final report due in April, which will go the DfT for approval. Linking with WG corridor study and looking at aligning as much as possible.</p> <p>Engagement framework for STBs, draft principles for this work issued.</p> <p>Latest safety campaign; keeping safe on the SRM “Go Left”.</p> <p>Forward look for next update – launch of route strategies and decarbonisation strategy within HE around SRN/own activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Network Rail – Daniel Round – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demand is currently lower than normal but beginning to see increases across route. Operators now planning service increases in line with roadmap on previous levels. Commuting into London remains low, but regional centres (e.g. Swindon, Bristol etc) have been higher than anticipated, aim to see similar summer increases as per last year. WG officers working with NR on strategic studies – Bristol-Birmingham, Bristol-Exeter: due to final report in April. Wessex-Dorset study ongoing. HE is working looking at freight moving to Midlands. More road haulage onto rail, to benefit rest of network. Bristol suburban study – Union connectivity, life beyond metro-west, Cardiff-BRISTOL connectivity. Regarding at JWh Rail paper (item 7), keen to see Access to Stations is progressed. NR’s own studies looking as first/last mile opportunities. Join highway/Rail network to provide overall transport solutions. Re the Restoring Your Railway (RYR) programme - Round 2 of bids announced; St Anne’s station, Langport new station, connecting light rail from Cirencester to Kemble. Round 3 bids of RYR March - early summer. NR also continue to work on Portishead proposal with WECA/NSC. Infrastructure work in relation to Bristol East junction, key junction with wide-reaching impact on whole region. Over summer, comms plans in place regarding works.
5.	<p>WGSTB Programme</p> <p>Paper A – Nuala Waters - WECA</p> <p>Update on programme and request to approve the 2021/22 programme and funding request to DfT Looking for decision to ratify forward plan for FY21/22.</p> <p>NW highlighted:</p> <p>Carbon scenario planning; working closely with Midlands Connect. Will provide overview about what different policy levers are.</p> <p>Cllr Richardson asked about the alternative fuels strategy/working with Midlands Connect:</p> <p>NW responded that a map of freight potential charging points has been created by Midlands Connect, this is of interest if done at a national level. Non-commercial vehicles are not currently included; this is still TBC.</p> <p>DG emphasized that the business plan proposal need to include additional detail to headline packages. Need to work cross-STB where appropriate.</p> <p>DC raised the National Bus Strategy; a lot will be at different levels, to be looked at in next SOG meeting, this is not concluded. Some guidance still TBC regarding modelling and envisaged going forward.</p>

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	<p>NW noted in relation to the forward plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Cycle routes - WG programme team in discussion with Sustrans. • Ewan Wilson is lead on the Freight Strategy, in conversation with other STBs, TfSE, need to speak with NR and HE also in relation to their freight strategy scope. • Regarding rural mobility, we would be wise to consider what the DfT advice is on rural strategy. <p>The Board:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Noted the update on delivery progress and overall programme. Agreed to delegate any amendments to scope to the Senior Officers Group based on the outcomes of discussions with National STB group and following the publication of the Department for Transport's Decarbonisation, Rural Mobility and National Bus & Coach Recovery Plans. Ratified the 2021/22 forward plan and approved the STB's request to draw down 2021/22 funds from the Department for Transport for these projects. <p>NW gave an update on the financial position:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Underspend on team is due to resources. • Forward forecast next year notes the increased resourcing budget, tied to delivery-specific outputs. <p>Cllr Wayman noted need to check with DfT to ensure items can be moved into next year's budget.</p> <p>The Board:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Noted the financial update.
6.	<p>Strategic Transport Plan 2025-2050 (STP) Ben Watts – Gloucestershire County Council</p> <p>Update on project</p> <p>BW highlighted the January Corridor meetings (strategic partnership groups). New regional evidence being gathered to feed into the long term STP.</p> <p>3 key stages. Delivery dates under review. BW covered off progress to date (procurement & stakeholder engagement) and next steps April-July 21.</p> <p>Cllr Richardson asked about adjacent STBs; are they running with a corridor model and do they align? BW responded that the Peninsula approach is similar and believed other STBs take similar approaches. They will complement each other.</p>
7.	<p>Strategic Rail programme Paper B – James White – WECA</p> <p>Update on project and request to approve the 2021/22 programme and funding request to DfT</p> <p>JWh gave an update including noting the budget of £65k. Priorities set out in the attached report. <u>Station & Access to Rail</u> - station audit for all of WG stations, access to and from (first-last miles) and also a standard for provisions.</p> <p>JWh gave an update on task forces: <u>Strategic</u> – this is a priority but will be put on hold whilst various other studies (local strategic rail) are completed.</p>

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	<p><u>Freight</u> will be picked up by MM studies and the Corridor work for the STP. <u>Future Ready/Resilience</u> – industry to lead, based on what comes out of CMSP studies. He noted the limited budget, restricting what we can achieve, but believed we can deliver quite a lot in the coming financial year.</p> <p>Cllr Richardson – availability of digital solutions at stations, facilities to work at stations. Is this part of the station & access or digital solutions? JWh - digital connectivity will be part of the whole station audit process.</p> <p>Cllr Butters asked if there was an update on NR’s plans for electrification, there needs to be a rolling programme – is this something we should be pushing more for? JWh – NR’s Traction Decarbonisation Plan programme for electrification was expected in December 2020 but an update is still awaited. DR better placed to confirm. ACTION: Note for DR to report to us on the NR electrification Programme.</p> <p>The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Agreed the 2021/22 prioritised programme and resources for the Stations & Access to Rail and Digital Solutions rail task forces.
8	<p>Comms Update Paper C – Priscilla Dibble – Sphere Marketing Update and request to approve Comms Protocol PM – Media Protocol document to illustrate the process for the management of media comms. All LAs have had opportunity to comment. The Board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Approved the Western Gateway STB media process and protocol document and its implementation <i>subject to</i> including the DfT standard working on process. <p>DG (DfT) – useful if DfT is kept in the loop on any significant announcements. Would like to ensure any external STB comms are not used for lobbying. Text can be provided, similar text from Midlands connect. ACTION - DG to supply wording. Protocol to be reviewed by SOG and brought to next Board for sign-off.</p>
9	AoB
Date of Next Meeting: Date of next meeting – Wednesday 23rd June 2021 – 1400-1600, Virtual Meeting.	