

Minutes of the 52nd meeting of the UK Bridges Board (UKBB) held at the CIHT on 16 February 2017

Board members in attendance:

Dana Skelley	TfL (Chairman)
Nick Burgess	Transport for London (Underground)
Kevin Dentith	ADEPT/Devon County Council
Richard Fish	BOF
Satbir Gill	TAG/Hounslow Highways
Nicola Head	Transport for London
Colin Hall (for Rob Dean)	Network Rail
Jason Hibbert	Welsh Government
Bob Humphreys	CSS Wales, Gwynedd Council
Gary Kemp	DfT
Liz Kirkham	ADEPT Rep/Gloucester (Deputy Chairman)
Neil Loudon	Highways England
Dr Hazel McDonald (for Wayne Hindshaw)	Transport Scotland
Stuart Molyneux	Metropolitan Councils
Peter Walker	Canal & River Trust
Justin Ward	CIHT (Secretariat)

1. Welcome

Dana Skelley welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted for Rob Dean, Wayne Hindshaw, Andrew Strang, Colin Ferris and Graham Cole.

2. UK Bridges Board – minutes of last meeting and matters arising

Personal safety incidents Nicola Head noted that TfL surface transport had responded to the personal safety incident enquiry.

Action: Nicola Head to share TfL surface transport response (attached with minutes)

M20 bridge strike Neil Loudon noted the work on the M20 following the bridge strike. For high load movements Highways England is in discussion with DfT about notification of these. A campaign, similar to the Strike It Out campaign that was effectively used by Transport Scotland, is also being considered. Neil also noted the need for very accurate records for smart motorways headrooms over hard shoulder and near verges.

Access planning group Neil Loudon noted that it was disappointing that Mark Gibbons was not able to attend the group. Colin Hall from Network Rail confirmed that Richard Sykes would replace Mark Gibbons for Network Rail.

Bridge Inspector Certification Scheme Neil Loudon said that over 300 people are now registered.

Action: Gary Kemp to investigate the letter of support from DfT for the bridge inspector certification scheme

Neil Loudon raised the issue of take-up of the scheme and highlighted the updated UKRLG Code and also possible links to Whole of Government Accounts. Kevin Dentith asked how much of the market the 300 registrants covered and Neil said around one third. Neil noted that Highways England has written to its supply chain and by November 2017 bridge inspectors will need to be certified through the scheme. It was noted also that Network Rail are looking at matching their inspection competencies to the scheme. Hazel said that

Transport Scotland were making progress with implementing the scheme through their supply chain. Board members agreed that ongoing awareness of the scheme would help.

Action: Justin Ward and Neil Loudon to publish an update on the Bridge Inspector Certification Scheme in Transportation Professional

3. UK Roads Liaison Group

Liz noted some key updates, there were no further questions.

4. BOF minutes

Richard provided an update noting that BOF had undertaken a review of bridge collapses and thought that the work by RAIB was helpful for rail bridges. Richard said that BOF's view was that there should be something similar for other bridges i.e. a similar independent review of bridge collapses: the Board supported the principle for the concept.

5. ADEPT/Canal & River Trust

Kevin Dentith thanked Peter Walker for his work on a draft MoU between ADEPT and the Canal & River Trust but highlighted some initial concerns over the cost of principal inspections.

Action: Kevin Dentith to consolidate the feedback views from ADEPT and send to Peter Walker for further review

6. Grand challenges

Richard said that the original document was now 10 years old and said the new document aimed to articulate where the sector is currently and where it aspires to go. Dana asked what had been considered outside the UK. Richard did note that BOF does undertake horizon scanning exercises, for instance through technical papers. Dana asked about more general practices, for instance how to get links to work in Japan. Justin Ward highlighted the potential of the World Road Association to explore this.

Action: Justin Ward to share recent World Road Association reports on bridge and tunnel related issues, including papers presented at the 2015 World Road Congress

Justin noted that, if determined useful, the UK representatives to the Road Bridges Technical Committee, from either the current or previous cycle, could be contacted for further information. Satbir asked about links to academics and it was noted that BOF did have links.

Action: Nicola Head to circulate a more detailed output of the BOF workshop

7. Management of safety critical fixings

Neil gave an update presentation on the research project on the management of safety critical fixings. The Board noted the good progress being made.

a. Deterioration rates

Richard said that both financial commitments and project management/procuring lead through TfL was in place and the only element was to confirm support from the DfT. Liz noted that there was an action from the UKRLG on research but that no further information had been provided.

Action: Gary Kemp to confirm DfT funding support for research on deterioration rates

8. Code of practice

Liz Kirkham noted an error on the summary recommendation that was different from the recommendation in the main body of the text.

Action: Justin Ward to work to amend the error on the RECOMMENDATION 15 – COMPETENCIES AND TRAINING

9. Boundary issues

Neil Loudon provided an update on the work towards agreeing the Code of Practice for the Definition of Asset Management Responsibilities: Bridges and Structures. He said that legal advice had been sought and that that ADEPT's comments were really helpful. Neil said that for safety fences he felt the draft previously circulated could be improved and that there were four key themes to this: 1) collaboration 2) agreement 3) technical responsibility and 4) financial. Neil outlined that Highways England was looking at taking a pragmatic solution and proposed that, for up to a maximum of 30 meters, Highways England would take financial responsibility if changes are required to safety fences.

Action: Neil Loudon to provide an update on the Boundary issues Code of Practice and circulate for final agreement

Neil noted that regarding retaining walls it is a balance of who derives the most benefits and not who suffers the most.

Liz Kirkham said that if they could get to a point whereby the majority of people can agree then that would be a good place. Neil agreed noting that it would be a framework by which decisions could be made. Neil said that the DfT legal view was being sought.

Action: Steve Berry to confirm DfT legal view on the Boundary Code of Practice

Liz said it was great to have the opportunity for the workshop between ADEPT and Highways England and to put the issues on the table. Both Scotland and Wales were pleased to hear of the progress made and would look to build on what had been achieved for England. Neil said that other assets (such as drainage) would be considered in due course and after the structures boundary issue had been resolved.

10. HAMFIG

Liz Kirkham led on this item and sought clarity from DfT on the rates review for highway network assets. Liz said that, without this review, highway authorities could have qualified accounts. Dana Skelly said that the matter should be resolved and Liz agreed and said that a cost-effective solution should be possible to agree.

Action: Dana Skelly to seek clarification on the situation with DfT [completed]

11. Any other business

Foxfield (RAIB report) Colin noted the report and highlighted that one of the recommendation was relevant to other infrastructure managers.

Action: Justin Ward to circulate RAIB report with minutes

Bridge inspector certification scheme Jason Hibbert raised concern at apparent inconsistency in the advice from scheme assessors with a perception that inspectors had to have experience working in design or assessment. Neil explained that LANTRA and the steering group would be holding a standardisation event to improve consistency.

Major review of DMRB – Neil noted this was underway and the aim would be to have this completed in two years. This would involve making a set of documents uniform in nature, make the standard of requirements clear at the outset, also remove all interim advice notes and make much more of the national annexes.

Liz confirmed that on the bridges side her view was one of relative comfort with DMRB but there was a massive concern for local roads and a potential widening gulf that could abandon local roads completely. Neil noted implications for safety and said this was a challenging exercise.

RAC report on bridges – Kevin noted that ADEPT had worked with the RAC Foundation on the report on bridges and noted that this involvement had improved the quality of the questions.

Bridge Guard level 3 assessments – Bob Humphries asked about this and Colin noted that anything that passed Level 0 would suggest that there were no concerns. If it fails then you move onto level 1.

Structures accreditation toolkit – Nicola Head raised this and Liz noted that she had not heard anything. Nicola noted potential disappointment if this were not to progress.

BIM – Justin Ward asked if anyone might be able to help secure a presenter for the CIHT Annual Conference on 2 March 2017.

Network Rail in Scotland incursion work – Liz Kirkham asked if it was correct that Network Rail in Scotland had no further allocation for incursion work for 2018/19. Colin said that each route is assigned a budget and this was dependent on risk profiles. Gary said that DfT have regular meetings and was quite surprised by this. Hazel added reviews are proposed of all the ones that have been done for changes in assumptions.