

Minutes of the 49th meeting of the UK Bridges Board held at the Chartered Institution of Highways & Transportation on 8 February 2016

Board members in attendance:

Dana Skelley	TfL (Chairman)
Nick Burgess	Transport for London (Underground)
Robert Dean	Network Rail
Satbir Gill	TAG/Ringway Hounslow Highways Limited
Nicola Head	Transport for London
Jason Hibbert	Welsh Government
Peter Walker	Canal and Rivers Trust
Liz Kirkham	ADEPT Rep/Gloucester (Deputy Chairman)
Neil Loudon	Highways England
Stuart Molyneux	Metropolitan Councils
Paul Monaghan	LoBEG/City of London
Justin Ward	CIHT (Secretariat)

In attendance (items 1 and 2):

Heather Fessey	Network Rail
Mark Gibbons	Network Rail

1) Welcome, introduction and apologise

Dana welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted for Steve Berry/Gary Kemp, Bob Humphreys, David MacKenzie, Kevin Dentith, Wayne Hindshaw, Andrew Stevenson, Richard Fish, and Rod Howe.

The Board noted that this was Rod Howe's, from the Canal & Rivers Trust (CRT), last meeting (he was unable to attend due to personal circumstances). The Board wanted to record their thanks to Rod for all his contributions and support to the Board.

2) Possession planning

Following a presentation from Network Rail on the process undertaken to manage possession planning, the Board raised a number of concerns. Heather Fessey and Mark Gibbons said that specific examples, with details, would be necessary to investigate as there was the need to understand the trends of 'cancellations' through the collation of data and details.

Action: UKBB board members to collate any specific issues / locations that have caused them concern. Details to provide: how many possessions are in the plan, how many are cancelled, who actually cancelled them, why were they cancelled.

Action: Rob Dean to highlight the issues raised by UKBB members at the meeting of the Route Access Team (RAM) of Network Rail

The Board noted that the overall clarity of the approach and relationship between Network Rail and Highway Authorities was required. There should be benefits of piggybacking works. There was also a need for a consistent approach and a transparency of costs (with breakdowns provided).

3) Boundary issues

The Board noted the latest draft and agreed that feedback through ADEPT, TAG and LoBEG would be most appropriate.

Liz said that two critical points feedback by ADEPT from the previous draft had not been addressed. These were the following:

Highways England's responsibility should include the 30m of safety barrier from the connection between the parapet and the approach barriers for the bridge (to allow for the full protection of the bridge parapet system in accordance with TD19.)

Retaining walls should be the responsibility of which ever authority has "benefitted" from their construction. Unless the LHA road was built after the Trunk Road/Motorway, this should in almost every case mean the walls are the responsibility of Highways England. Parapets, Edge Protection and Vehicle Restraint Systems should be the responsibility of the owner of the wall.

Action: Liz Kirkham to collate an ADEPT response to the draft document on boundary issues by the end of February and get input from Satbir Gill for TAG and Paul Monaghan from LoBEG.

Action: Neil Loudon to raise issues raised by Liz Kirkham within Highways England.

Neil Loudon reiterated that the intention would be for DfT to publish this document.

4) Codes of Practice

Nicola Head provided an update on the Codes of Practice review noting that the local highways team at DfT have been very busy in response to the recent storms that many parts of the country has encountered but as such this had delayed the commissioning of the risk-based guidance [post-meeting note: Steve Berry, DfT has addressed this issue and progress is now being made].

There was a discussion on the inclusion of the bridge inspector certification scheme in the updated Code. The Board agreed that the current draft was suitable but that if they had any concerns then these should be fed back through Nicola.

5) Canal & Rivers Trust – working with 3rd parties to protect our assets and keep us safe

Peter Walker from the Canal & Rivers Trust (CRT) provided an overview of the Trust. Peter then outlined how he wanted to improve the working relationship between the Trust and statutory undertakers (that include highway authorities) when they are required to access land owned by the Trust.

Liz Kirkham said that Ken Marshall was trying to set up liaison meeting on behalf of ADEPT and agreed that a MoU would be useful. Liz did say that the main issue was the scale of the fees involved.

Action: Peter Walker to provide clarification on the legal status of the Canal & River Trust with respect of the transfer of Statutory Functions from British Waterways (See appendix a).

Action: Peter to set up a small working group to look at simplifying the process for Statutory Undertakers wanting to undertake works (inspections, repairs etc.) that could affect the CRT network (e.g. ADEPT, Network Rail and Highways England).

6) Structures Toolkit Accreditation

Liz Kirkham said that there had been a very good workshop with software suppliers where the proposals for an accreditation system for the valuation of structures (similar to UKPMS accreditation) were discussed. The risk that a system would not be in place in time to comply with next year's (2016/17) Whole of Government Accounts timetable was discussed and will be further discussed with DfT.

Action: Liz Kirkham to provide background details to Dana Skelley on the progress to date with the Toolkit

7) Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes were approved.

Matters arising

There was a discussion on the research project on deterioration and it was noted that the specification has not been completed yet. Dana confirmed that TfL does not have the resources to project manage or procure this project. Also confirmed that the project had not met the deadline for 2015/16 funding from DfT.

Action: Board agreed that BOF should develop a proposal of two/three major challenges for the bridge sector that could benefit from this research and put forward for next UKRLG research considerations.

The Board discussed skills within the sector and the government report on apprentices. Dana advised that Terry Morgan would attend the next UKRLG meeting. Rob explained how Network Rail was engaging with schools.

Action: UKBB to have an item on skills at the next meeting – Justin Ward to note.

There was a discussion on technology where the Board noted that there was a large amount of developments that would be relevant to how bridges are maintained, from the use of drones to high resolution imaging. The Board agreed that this area of focus fell within the remit of BOF and Rob and Neil agreed to pick this up to identify the key issues.

Action: Rob Dean and Neil Loudon to work through BOF to collate a summary of the range of technology related issues relevant to the bridge sector

8) UK Roads Liaison Group

The Board noted the minutes of the meeting.

9) Research

Dana provided a brief update on the BIM project saying that this was progressing well but that there was a limited number of case studies covering on how information requirements are defined, the use of 3D models, and on the common data environment (CDE).

Action: UKBB to provide case studies to the BIM project

Neil Loudon noted that the commission for the best practice guide on safety critical fixings had been let to WSP/PB. On the 22 March there would be an industry workshop and this will be very much fed into the final report.

10) UK Bridges Board Business Plan

Action: Justin Ward to add to the UKBB Business Plan the development of a MoU between the CRT and Highway Authorities to improve the working relationship

Dana noted that once UKRLG had clarified business planning for the Boards then the UKBB would be updated.

11) Liaison between Network Rail

Noted that Network Rail would attend the next ADEPT bridges group meeting.

12) Any other business

Nick Burgess raised the RAIB Froxfield bridge parapet incident. Rob asked what had happened since the publication of the RAIB report on Aspatria.

Action: Rob Dean and Nick Burgess to draft up a potential response to recommendation 2 (Froxfield) that asks the DfT to include in its guidance on Road Vehicle Incursions a method for assessing risk to bridge parapets

Action: Gary Kemp to provide an update on DfT response to recommendations on RAIB report Aspatria.

Satbir noted that ICE is doing work on technology. Dana replied noting the focus from BOF on technology would help outline to the Board the range of work going on currently. Satbir said that the ICE work on technology was good and Dana replied noting that the Board would need to be clear on where it wants to go.

Action: Satbir Gill to provide details on the ICE work on technology relevant to the Board

Neil Loudon raised flooding and highlighted the options that could provide a more rapid response to issues noting some options around temporary bridges.

Justin Ward noted a request from a media company for a programme proposal on bridges. The Board supported the idea.

Action: Justin Ward to send details of the inquiry from the media company [completed]

13) Date of next meeting

Dana Skelley and Justin Ward to set up the next meeting date.

Appendix a) Canal & River Trust legal status

Post-meeting note: details here:

The statutory functions of British Waterways Board in England and Wales were transferred to the Canal & River Trust on 2 July 2012 by the British Waterways Board (Transfer of Functions) Order 2012.

Article 2 of the Order provided for the transfer of functions exercisable by British Waterways Board under or by virtue of listed enactments and also of any functions under local acts i.e. the acts under which the canals were constructed. Article 3(1) ensured all the functions which British Waterways had by virtue of being a harbour authority, navigation authority or statutory undertaker transferred.

All statutory duties i.e. (things which British Waterways had a legal obligation to do) were transferred, and the majority of its powers (i.e. things it could choose to do). The only powers which were deliberately not transferred were those which were no longer needed because the Canal & River Trust would be able to do them anyway under companies law.

A copy of the Order can be found at:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/1659/contents/made> and the explanatory note at the end is quite helpful for explaining the effect of the Order.