

Minutes of the 56th meeting of the UK Bridges Board (UKBB) held at the CIHT on 21st June 2018

Board members in attendance:

Liz Kirkham	(Chair) ADEPT/Gloucestershire County Council
Nick Burgess	London Underground
Graham Cole	ADEPT/BOF
Kevin Dentith	ADEPT/Devon County Council
Richard Fish	BOF
Rob Dean	Network Rail
Bob Humphreys	CSS Wales, Gwynedd Council
Peter Walker	Canal & River Trust
Peter Simpson	Canal & River Trust
Colin Ferris	Infrastructure Northern Ireland
Stuart Molyneux	Metropolitan Councils
Hazel McDonald	Transport Scotland
Neil Loudon – by web call	Highways England
Hazel McDonald	Transport Scotland
Andrew Strang	SCOTS/Perth and Kinross Council
Martin Sachs (for Satbir Gill)	Representing TAG
Jason Hibbert – by web call	Welsh Government
Justin Ward	CIHT (Secretariat)

1. Welcome

Liz welcomed everyone to the meeting. Neil added a number of items on the agenda including: temporary bridges, boundary Issues and safety critical fixings. Kevin noted useful to have Better Information Management (BIM) on the agenda for the next meeting.

Action: Justin Ward to circulate paper on BIM Guidance document – working with Kevin Dentith

2. Minutes of the last meeting

Amend minutes – only one ‘a’ in Martin Sachs. Page two reference to Keith Harwood should be from ‘exhibitors’ as opposed to ‘supporters’ from the conference.

Matters arising

Large Bridges Group representation for UKBB- Richard Fish noted that David List (of the Large Bridges Group) has put three options to Cam Middleton and the preferred representative on BOF would be the same rep as UKBB.

Rob Dean noted that Network Rail was applying machine learning – through LIDAR scanning to create a model of their structures, but said this is still an early proof of concept.

Richard Fish said he will provide an update on BOF under a standing item on the agenda; this will include BOF activities and new/developing technology..

SCOSS update – the Board agreed that an update for early 2019 meeting would be useful.

Action: Liz Kirkham, Richard Fish and Justin Ward to arrange for update from SCOSS in 2019

In the discussion about the activities of SCOSS /CROSS, Richard Fish drew the board's attention to the recently published report by the Institution of Civil Engineering, chaired by Peter Hansford. This has highlighted the importance of CPD – following the Grenfell Tower tragedy – and that professional standards will become more important.

<https://www.ice.org.uk/news-and-insight/policy/in-plain-sight-reducing-the-risk-of-infrastructure>

Kevin recommended to the board that they follow Structural Safety on Twitter which provides safety alerts which would be of interest to the profession.

The Code of Practice currently makes no reference to Safety Critical Fixings. Once the report is published, this board will need to put forward a proposed revision to the Code to address this.

There was a brief discussion about the Letter of Hope circulated from Devon County Council, used on two bridges where there had been some personal safety incidents.

Highways England/Local Authority Boundary Issues.

Neil Loudon thanked Liz for the submission of comments from the ADEPT Bridges Group on the latest version of the HE Code of Practice for Highways England/Local Authority interfaces. He confirmed that some of the proposed amendments were acceptable and would be included in a final version of the Code, but that it would not be possible to meet all of the ADEPT NBG's aspirations. Liz asked Neil to confirm in writing back to the ADEPT NBG to confirm this, so that the matter could be brought to a conclusion.

Action: Neil Loudon to respond to ADEPT's comments – what can be accepted and what is not acceptable – for the Boundary Issue work

Bridge inspector certification scheme – the letter has been sent out as clarified by Liz Kirkham. (See item 8)

DMRB review – Neil Loudon pointed out the very tight timescales required for the update of DMRB, in relation to the RIS2 control period. The same timescales will also be applied to the revision of the Manual of Contract Documents for Highway Works. Kevin noted that ADEPT has been asked for volunteers on the MCHW review. Kevin noted that ADEPT Bridges Group had been disappointed that a planned presentation to the Group on the DMRB had not taken place

Action: Kevin Dentith to speak with Neil Loudon about an update on DMRB from Highways England at the next ADEPT Bridges Group

Peter Walker said that C&R Trust did have an interest in a section that requires updating and asked for the appropriate contact for feedback on that section.

Action: Peter Walker to email Neil Loudon on elements related to C&R Trust in DMRB with suggested enhancements to the document

There were a number of questions from Board members.

Neil Loudon said that BD21 will include a reference to MEXE within the document and also will be very clear about circumstances where it is not appropriate to use.

Andrew Strang echoed the time to review the DMRB documents being very tight and added that gaining access to the documentation was not always possible. Neil said that PDF copies can be provided. Kevin Dentith said that these difficulties all add to the time constraints.

Neil said that significant technical changes will be clearly identified.

Richard Fish said that ongoing use of MEXE was linked to the research item on masonry arch bridge assessments. Richard asked what the process would be for amending DMRB, if the new guidance said that MEXE should not be used. Neil said that this would not be the end of the process as new software, new technologies, new research meant that there would always be cope for updating DMRB, but that it was the intention that the updating process would be swifter.

Gary Kemp was going to chase up updates on the Access planning group, but this could not be confirmed, as there was no representation from DfT at this meeting.

3. UK Roads Liaison Group minutes

These were noted.

4. Research proposals

Liz thanked Graham Cole and Keith Harwood (of Hertfordshire, and ADEPT Bridges Group) for their work on compiling and submitting some very good research proposals against a very tight timescale. As a result of the strength of the proposals, 3 of the 4 had been agreed as priorities for funding by the DfT. The next stage in progressing the research is to get the paperwork in place for DfT to be able to allocate the funding to the agreed procuring bodies. The Board members focused on who is the project management lead, who is going to procure the work.

- ***Provision of Road Restraint Systems for Local Authority Roads.***

Liz Kirkham confirmed that Gloucestershire County Council would take on the procurement for the work.

Action: Graham Cole to draft research commission for Provision of Road Restraint Systems for Local Authority Roads and work with Liz Kirkham on commissioning

- ***Guidance for the assessment of masonry arch bridges***

Graham Cole confirmed that the work was related to updating an existing document. Nicola Head agreed to lead on the project management and procurement would take place from TfL. Peter Walker said that C&R Trust was keen to be involved with this. Graham Cole confirmed he would like to be involved with this project.

Structures Decision Support Tool

Hertfordshire have agreed to lead the work on this. Andrew Strang said under the SCOTS RAMP project Atkins have been commissioned to do some similar work already.

Action: Liz Kirkham to get Keith Harwood to contact Andrew Strang to avoid duplication for the work

Action: Liz Kirkham to contact Keith Harwood for project management and procurement lead

Guidance on reliable and realistic deterioration rates for bridge assets.

This project did not receive funding for this year. Neil Loudon said that the Highways England commitment of £10k may cause problems with budgeting as if this did not take place this year the money may be lost.

5. Parapet Height Protocol Document

Rob Dean noted Network Rail's change to requirement for parapet heights due to electrification. Rob said that, similar to the Bridge Strike Protocol, that the document would be better owned by an industry body. Rob said the document has been round a series of review. The Board agreed to endorse the document – subject to sign-off being agreed at the ADEPT Bridges Group and to then recommend adoption by UKRLG.

Rob Dean said that the document has no legal basis. Kevin Dentith said that he had comments from ADEPT on the document, but would put this on the agenda at the ADEPT Bridges Group meeting next week

Action: Kevin Dentith to review with the ADEPT Bridges Group meeting next week and provide comments to Rob Dean afterwards on the Parapet Height Protocol Document to Rob Dean

Action: Andrew Strang to provide feedback comments on the Parapet Height Protocol Document to Rob Dean

Action: Liz Kirkham (Rob Dean will attend the meeting on 11 July) to take Bridge Strike Protocol Document for endorsement at UKRLG for publishing on UKRLG website [subject to the above points] – and inclusion of UKRLG logo if agreed

Neil Loudon said he was really keen to get the document out as this would ensure consistent approaches would be taken. Colin Ferris asked about the implication for TD19 regarding parapet heights.

Action: Neil Loudon to confirm to Colin if there was an intention to incorporate the parapet height in the Protocol Document (i.e. increase the height limit) as TD19 currently has lower parapet heights

6. Bridge Strikes

Neil Loudon said that there have been a series of serious bridge strikes related to excavators, with a number of bridges knocked down or badly damaged. Neil said that as a result there has been consideration of a media campaign around freight issues. Hideo Takano from Highways England is a representative on the Bridge Strike Prevention Group. Neil sought views on the best positioning for a campaign on this.

Liz Kirkham confirmed that bridge strikes are more an issue for the UK Network Management. Neil confirmed that HE were pushing for a media campaign directed at the freight industry. The benefit of the BSPG is that it has representation from the haulage and freight industry representative groups (although they noted that it is not often their members who actually strike the bridges).

Rob Dean said that Network Rail has been running media campaigns for over a year with packs sent to the main haulage companies – Eddie Stobart and Tesco for instance and had paid for mugs with slogans such as: 'What the Truck' and 'Our Lorries Can't Limbo'.

Neil said that if there was a way of noting the need for a more proactive campaign from the Bridge Strike Prevention Group to prevent bridge strikes would be welcomed by the UK Bridges Board. Rob Dean said that Network Rail had been running a multifaceted campaign

to address the issue including working with the SatNav system providers. Rob said it was a broad ranging issue.

Hazel said that Transport Scotland had the 'Strike it out' campaign that ran about five years ago. Hazel said that they were keen to rerun this and work collaboratively on doing this. Peter Walker said that they had an issue with strikes and offered to work collaboratively through the C&R Trust on this. Rob Dean proposed that all activities should be coordinated through the Bridge Strike Prevention Group – the Board members agreed with this.

Kevin Dentith said that dual units on signs would be useful (for foreign drivers).

Action: Kevin Dentith to raise the issue of dual units and shape of the sign (relevant for prosecutions) with the ADEPT Bridges Group

Action: Rob Dean to circulate slides on the work by Network Rail on Bridge Strikes

7. Access planning sub-group

Nicola Head provided an update noting that work had stalled at the moment. Liz Kirkham said that a page was now live on the UKRLG website.

Action: Peter Walker to send update from C&R Trust for inclusion on the UKRLG page on access planning

The Board noted that maintaining infrastructure was becoming a challenge due to constraints with access. The Board agreed there was still a need to continue with the Group. Rob Dean said that professional head of outside protection role had been created at Network Rail and that it would be worth engaging with this new post on the Group.

BAPA – Andrew Strang raised the issue of this regarding the cost limits on this – if exceeding £10k then some of this could be claimed back. Andrew said that in Scotland, it was now accepted to use one BAPA for inspections of more than one bridge, and that this was welcomed.

Action: Kevin Dentith to circulate the details on the BAPA limit of £10k

8. Well Managed Highways, Code of Practice - Demonstration of Competency for Bridge Inspectors

Liz Kirkham provided an update on the BICS scheme.

Liz noted the feedback on the survey. Hazel McDonald said the results on the survey was disappointing in that the uptake of BICS was low. Reviewing competency by CV was considered not sufficient by the Board members.

Rob Dean said that there would be a move by Network Rail over the next control period to fully mandate the use of BICS. Liz Kirkham said her concern was that BICS will not be used as it is considered too complex and onerous by the sector. Liz sought views on how to address this. Hazel McDonald said they are working with Lantra on making the scheme more straightforward to use. Graham Cole said that some activities were focused on making the scheme less onerous. Neil said that some workshops will be run on the e-portfolios will be run to help inspectors going through the process to explain where it can be made a bit easier. Neil confirmed that anybody who is preparing their e-portfolio could attend a workshop. Andrew Strang asked if a workshop would be run in Scotland, Neil confirmed that this would be the case. Andrew said that he was working on a proposal for a workshop in

Scotland with a consultant who has some inspectors who have gone through the process. Going through 180 questions and with IT difficulties, there was benefit in running a session.

Neil Loudon said that by Highways England putting in money, then the workshops would be free to attend. Neil said there are about 550 people registered to attend the scheme, but lots who have not submitted their e-portfolios. Neil said that there has been good support from the supply chain to the scheme.

Action: Neil Loudon, Hazel McDonald and Andrew Strang to agree on the best format for a workshop on BICS in Scotland

Action: Neil Loudon to inform UKBB about dates and locations for the workshops on how to prepare for e-portfolios for the BICS

Action: Hazel to chase up for an update on the BICS scheme from Lantra including any changes to the scheme

Andrew Strang asked if the implementation of the scheme by June was on track by Transport Scotland and Highways England. Hazel McDonald said this was on the deadline. Neil Loudon said that Highways England would prepare a clarification note as there are some circumstances (special inspections for example) where an inspector would not require BICS accreditation.

Richard Fish said post Grenfell competency will mean proof of competency is becoming more important and raise the profile of Corporate Manslaughter. Richard said that the BICS scheme was therefore more significant given this issue. Rob Dean said that retaining wall issues were a key focus for Network Rail, ORR and RAIB as a vital safety issue. The cost of renewal was too significant so maintaining the retaining wall would only be the approach (as opposed to replacing bridges).

Liz Kirkham asked the Board how to reply to the results of the survey. Rob Dean noted if something required strengthening in the Code regarding what constitutes demonstration of competency. Liz Kirkham said that in Gloucestershire's new maintenance contract they had included a requirement for BICS for bridge inspectors.

Action: Hazel McDonald to reply to the results of the BICS survey working with Justin Ward

9. Any other business

Canal and River Trust representation – the Board thanked Peter Walker for his participation on the Board and noted Peter Simpson as his replacement.

10. Date of next meeting

18 October 2018.