

Minutes of UKRLG held on 20 July 2021 held via Microsoft Teams

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| Stephen Fidler | Department for Transport |
| Lila Tachtsi | Highways England |
| Satbir Gill (for Mark Kemp) | Hounslow Highways representing the UK Network Management Board |
| Hugh Gillies | Transport Scotland |
| Mark Stevens | ADEPT |
| Darren Thomas | Pembrokeshire representing CSS Wales |
| Liz Kirkham | Gloucestershire County Council, UK Bridges Board |
| Garry Sterritt | TfL, representing UK Asset Management Board |
| Mark Macgarty (for Matthew Eglinton) | Department for Transport |
| Andy Falley | Welsh Government |
| David Denner | Welsh Government, representing UK Lighting and Technology Board |
| Gary Kemp | Department for Transport |
| James Bailey | Staffordshire Council representing UK Road Board |
| Conor Loughrey | Department for Infrastructure, Northern Ireland |
| John Lamb | Local Government Technical Advisers Group (LGTAG) |
| Justin Ward | Secretariat |

1) Welcome, introduction and apologies

Stephen welcomed everyone to the meeting. Mark Macgarty from DfT introduced himself noting he worked in the highways team at DfT. Conor Loughrey from Department for Infrastructure, Northern Ireland had sent apologies

2) Board updates

UK Bridges Board – Liz Kirkham said that this would be her last meeting at UKRLG due to the Board seeking to appoint a new Chair. There was a discussion on document management for the bridge sector. Liz noted that there was a focus on the various bodies in the sector. There was also point on cost sharing obligations historically relating to Network Rail. John Lamb noted that as a lot of the duties of bridge management now sit within the supply chain and that this, alongside the need to bring in younger people to the sector, would be worth investigating. Satbir Gill said that the university sector should also be pursued for a potential replacement. Liz responded that it might be worth investigating different areas for the next Chair

Action: UK Bridges Board Chair – members of UKRLG to assist with raising awareness of the call for the next Chair

Action: Justin Ward to draft a press release for the call for Chair for UK Bridges Board

UK Roads Board – James Bailey said the focus was on resilience through a presentation by John Lamb saying that this was very helpful. James noted that the Board had been focusing on drainage issues; adding that in addition to the operational focus it was useful to bring in the strategic focus. John Lamb noted the

recent flooding in Belgium and Germany – noting this has been a very near miss for the UK given the geographic proximity to those issues (i.e. Belgium is closer to London than Edinburgh). Stephen Fidler noted that how the UKRLG is managing this risk is very important; highlighting that if the Group has a role in leadership and management then this risk would be high up on a risk register.

UK Lighting & Technology Board – David Denner said the last meeting involved a focus on research projects and prioritisation highlighting the three research topics that had been identified. David mentioned supply chain constraints of raw materials. Hugh Gillies said the materials supply chain issues is an issue that extends beyond roads and is across all transport infrastructure. There was a discussion around the role of UKLRG in this issue. Stephen Fidler noted that previously the UKRLG had focused on supply chain issues for salt stocks. Hugh Gillies noted that standards were an issue with Brexit. Hugh Gillies said that a mutual aid model might be implemented in Scotland. Darren Thomas highlighted the need for evidence.

Stephen Fidler asked for evidence from a Board and Organisational lens to understand the scale of the issues in supply-chain. The Group noted issues around price increases and potential hoarding of materials but noted the importance of responding with good planning.

Action: Justin Ward to outline the questions to ask to better understand supply chain constraints for UK highways sector and then seek to secure this from UKRLG Organisations/Boards and consider how to work in partnership with CECA, Highways Sector Council.

Action: Consider a focused meeting with some UKRLG members to review the evidence base once gathered on supply issues

UK Network Management Board – Satbir Gill highlighted there was a major focus on road safety at the last meeting, alongside an item on Manual for Streets, and research proposals.

UK Asset Management Board – Garry Sterritt said that the Board is providing analysis on the case for funding local highways for the next spending review period. Garry said there was a major focus on the Board on this to gather the evidence base. This will focus on the Government focus on Building Back Better.

3) UKRLG research

Stephen Fidler noted that having more space and focus for Boards to progress research projects would be helpful for the sector. Garry Sterritt said that having a minimum budget for the Boards, ideally for a longer-term period (3 years) would be helpful. Additionally, having collaborative funding would be helpful. Garry added that embedding and disseminating the work would be helpful and keeping the communication updated would be useful. Stephen said that the evaluation strategy would be important to build into the process.

Action: Board Chairs to work with finalising their proposals for research

Stephen Fidler noted that at an officials' level there was support for the Live Labs 2 idea and that this would work well across the UK for application and support was being considered.

Action: Stephen Fidler to work with UKRLG on the shaping proposal of Live Labs 2

4) Future of UKRLG

John Lamb outlined major challenges for the highways sector and where the future direction of the focus is being given. John asked that UKRLG members could consider what are the issues and opportunities ahead and noted that some preparation in advance of a planning day would be useful.

Liz Kirkham said that 'what is the output' needs to be the focus. Darren Thomas asked about where UKRLG sits within the leadership of the sector. Darren noted that appropriate leadership within the Board's was important and that this was possibly lacking. Darren noted a potential peer review would be useful. Darren noted that should the UKRLG look at resourcing issues. Darren noted the key agendas: active travel, EV charging etc...and asked if UKRLG was leading on them. Darren added diversity is an issue. Lila Tachtsi said we don't want to reinvent what we have done previously. Lila asked about data and other aspects to review to manage the service in a better way. Lila added that if we don't invest things can fall apart. Leadership, training, skills and how to move to a service model would be helpful. Hugh Gillies said the core public sector voice of UKRLG was important and he would not want that to be diluted. Andy Falley agreed stepping back and reviewing the organisation would be useful. Andy said that the road asset will make a huge contribution to getting to net zero. Stephen Fidler noted the Transport Decarbonisation Plan.

Action: Justin Ward to email UKRLG members for volunteers to assist with UKRLG Away Day

Action: John Lamb, Justin Ward, Stephen Fidler, Garry Sterritt to lead on pulling together a UKRLG Away Day

5) Minutes of last meeting

The actions from the last meeting were noted.

6) Date of next meeting

2 November.