

UK Network Management Board meeting 19 February 2021 held on Microsoft Teams

Mark Kemp (Chair)	Hertfordshire County Council representing Adept
Ewan Wallace (Vice Chair)	Aberdeenshire Council representing SCOTS
Satbir Gill	Hounslow Highways representing TAG
Trevor McIlhatton	Transport Scotland
Freda Rashdi	Highways England
Nick Tyler	UCL
Sally Gibbons	Department for Transport
Philip Robinson	Department for Infrastructure Northern Ireland
Justin Ward	CIHT

Including:

John Lauder – Sustrans

Phil Jones – Phil Jones Associates

1. Welcome, introduction and apologies

Mark Kemp welcomed everyone to the meeting, apologies were noted from Andrew Sherry and Mark Wheel.

2. Sustrans – John Lauder

John Lauder gave a presentation on the work of Sustrans. Following the conclusion of the presentation Mark Kemp asked about delivering change - in terms of reallocating space for active travel - at pace has resulted in some complaints about consultation from the public and asked for a view on that. Mark also asked about the public perception of what has been delivered. Mark also asked about linking parts of networks to make a network cohesive and avoid fragmentation.

John focused on the last question saying that they have mapped all the locations where things break down to address the issues of fragmentation. John answered the question on community engagement and did note that as consultation had to be undertaken virtually; he said everyone has tried really hard and that generally it had gone well. John said that the look and feel of the infrastructure has been important and now, a year into the project, we are seeing the semi-formalisation of the reallocation of road space in some areas and in other areas there has been an acknowledgement that schemes have not worked: as such, context is key. John said that they have had more community engagement online than in-person.

John said that if we are to reduce emissions in transport then measures will need to be put in place. The reallocation of space for walking and cycling is a visible demonstration of this transition.

Satbir asked about health benefits and safety. John said that through cameras that count users then a calculation can be undertaken on the health benefits using the HEAT tool, and added that the safety aspects will be looked at more.

Ewan Wallace said that it is important to understand the learning from the measures undertaken last year on reallocation of space for walking and cycling. John Lauder reflecting on the Spaces for People programme saying that they have seen statutory partners delivering widening of footways in areas where there might have been a perceived opposition to such measures have actually been really welcomed and embraced.

Trevor McIlhatton from Transport Scotland noted the work on the trunk way network in Scotland had supported active travel. Trevor noted the active freeway concept for commuting to workplaces is important. Trevor said that Scotland are launching their road safety framework this month and noted the dimension of inequalities to road safety, and issues of the perception of safety around active travel were to be addressed.

Action: Mark Kemp and Sally Gibbons to work on collating benefits of interventions on active travel – Justin Ward to work with John Lauder on evidence from Sustrans

3. 20mph and Welsh Pavement Parking – Phil Jones

Mark Kemp introduced Phil Jones to the Board. Both 20mph and pavement parking have strong support within the Welsh Parliament and actively advocated by Mark Drakeford, the Welsh First Minister.

Phil gave a presentation on 20mph and following this there was a question on the evidence of existing 20mph schemes and Phil said they had picked up as much evidence as possible and this was drawn from work undertaken by Adrian Davies and Sarah Jones from Public Health Wales.

Trevor asked about enforcement. Phil said if the objective is to get speeds below 20mph – without engineering measures – then this will require substantial enforcement. However, even with light tough measures then there will be safety improvements i.e. on a road where there was a 30mph speed limit the speeds could be 32mph. If this were to move to a 20mph the speed limit might still result in speeds of, for example 28mph – however if someone was hit by a vehicle the impact would be less severe than at the higher speed. Phil added that this is part of longer term move to change behaviours on the road network.

Satbir asked about accident rates. Phil said this was undertaken in the research by Sarah Jones. Satbir asked about increases in walking and cycling. Phil said that the evidence of this was somewhat limited and said that this was undertaken in the research by Adrian Davies. Phil concluded that this takes time; in that it takes a while for speeds to reduce and then overtime you may see the behaviour change, adding that this was hopefully going to happen.

Phil then gave a presentation on pavement parking. Philip said the presentation was interesting and asked about examples in Northern Ireland that - on narrow streets - there have been issues with refuse collection getting access if cars are parked on the road (as opposed to the footway). Phil noted that in Scotland the legislation is that you can part on footway if you leave 1.5 meters clear. Ewan said that, on behalf of SCOTS, he would welcome engagement with the work that Phil Jones was involved with in Wales. Phil said that of the two issues, 20mph and pavement parking – the latter was more politically challenging.

Nick Tyler said that what we do not have is a clear definition of the footway – its purpose, its use, its status. You could say ‘a footway is about feet’ and you cannot put a vehicle on it. A clear definition of this issue would be helpful. Phil Jones said that in the Highways Act there is a definition ‘that part of the highway that is reserved for the pedestrian’. Sally Gibbons said that you have ‘driving’ and ‘parking’ and that ‘driving’ on the footway is not permitted, but ‘parking’ is possible: so this is tricky in terms of enforcement. Mark Kemp said that it appeared that different parts of the UK are at different stages of this.

Action: Justin Ward and Mark Kemp to put 20mph and Pavement Parking on the business plan

4. Low-traffic neighbourhoods

Sally Gibbons gave a presentation on low-traffic neighbourhoods.

5. Manual for Streets

Sally Gibbons gave a presentation on Manual for Streets. Mark Kemp asked if ADEP was involved. Sally Gibbons said that ADEPT should be involved. Satbir Gill said that it would be important to work with the academic world asking if there was an academic Professor on the work. Satbir said they should be involved in the work. Sally took account of that suggestion. Ewan Wallace said that SCOTS would want to play a role in that work. Ewan said that the deployment of the last MfS was pretty good but from those who were using it currently there was acknowledgment that refreshing the guidance document was required. Ewan said the planning – road authority interaction was crucial. Sally said that there is engagement with Devolved Administrations.

6. World Road Association – Special Project

Justin Ward thanked Ewan Wallace for volunteering to being on the Project Oversight Team (POT) on the World Road Association Special Project on bridge and tunnel strikes.

7. AOB

Satbir Gill asked about the permitting charges and e-scooters and impact on Well-managed Highways.

Action: Sally Gibbons to share details on permit charges [completed]

Sally said that the e-scooter trials was underway so at this point it was about gathering data and evidence.

Decarbonisation of freight – Mark Kemp said that he had arranged for an update on this at the next meeting in June. He welcomed any proposals for any other items people would like added then to let him, Ewan Wallace and Justin Ward know.