

## UK Roads Board Meeting 18 September 2023 – held on Microsoft Teams

### Attendance

#### Present:

James Bailey (Chair)  
Andy Pickett  
Gary Kemp  
Amanda Richards  
Sueanne Sandford  
Donald Morrison  
David Kinsey  
Mark McPeak  
Ryan Cooper  
Anastasia Trofimova (Secretariat)

#### Representing:

Staffordshire County Council, representing ADEPT  
Footways & Cycle track Management Group (FCMG)  
Department for Transport  
Surrey County Council, representing Road Condition Management Group (RCMG)  
Monmouthshire County Council representing CSS Wales  
Transport Scotland  
Derby City Council, representing Footways & Cycle track Management Group (FCMG)  
Infrastructure Northern Ireland  
Transport for London (TfL)  
CIHT

### 1) Introduction and apologies

Apologies recorded for Carol Valentine. Introductions were made by the group.

Action: Carol Valentine to make a report on the National Winter Service Research Group (NWSRG) at the next board meeting.

### 2) Previous meeting on 6 June 2023 (actions)

The group looked through the actions.

*Action 4: Ryan to continue the work Rana did and arrange a speaker on connected vehicles as a future agenda item.*

Ryan found the speaker but needed to agree on the content of the presentation (e.g., TfL work/assets). James thinks it would be good to hear about the current developments in connected vehicles/future projects. Ryan said the presentation will be highly likely on how TfL prepares for the introduction of this technology. Amanda thinks it would be interesting to hear how to prepare their network for this (what they should do) or any lessons they can learn from TfL.

Donald mentioned the example of the autonomous bus service in Scotland – [Project CAVForth](#), and Donald is happy to share it later with the group.

**Action:** Donald and Ryan's speaker to make a presentation on autonomous and connected vehicles (10-15 min per speaker). As Ryan will not be present at the next meeting, that will be postponed till 2024.

James commented on item 6 and said there was some time spent reviewing the Roads Board Business Plan. There is still a lot of work to be done, and thus, he asks the group to come up with ideas in case anything should be done differently.

**Action:** James to ask about the role of the UK Roads Board in the future at the next UKRLG meeting.

### 3) Sub-group updates

Amanda gave a quick update on RCMG, given that their next meeting is only tomorrow and not much has happened since June. They had a meeting with DfT last month about the condition survey update (i.e., where this project is, TRL analyses the results of the survey that was conducted over the summer). The release date for PAS is July 2024.

David gave an update on FCMG as well, they managed to arrange the 'Strategy and Collaboration workshop' on 3 October, which is hosted by CIHT. The objectives of this workshop are to review the scope, representation, improve collaboration and consider renaming the group to represent the target to encourage walking, wheeling and cycling.

James asked Donald to give an update on the Asset Management Board, unfortunately, Donald was not available for the last meeting in June. But Donald mentioned some things from the February meeting: the group got some feedback on the Road Conditions Standards Project and discussed business planning, but not much on environmental issues due to a clear overlap with the ABC Board – so the group considers the issue of potential duplication of efforts.

**Action:** Anastasia to send minutes to Donald Morrison from the Asset Management Board meeting in June.

Gary Kemp gave an update on DfT, but at the moment there is very little to say. Right now, they are busy preparing for PIARC conference in Prague. Another update was on funding for the research, and it will be funded through TfL.

### 4) Devolved administration updates

Sueanne gave an update on Wales 20 miles speed limit. Certain authorities implemented this during, for example, school hours. So, it will be interesting to check how that works over the next few months.

Andy apologised and left the meeting because of some other commitments.

Mark spoke about the challenges that Northern Ireland experienced, including the budget pressure and subsequent limited maintenance service. Then he outlined that NI grit approximately 20% of the network that carries about 80% of all traffic – Mark asked the group about their strategy in delivering Winter service and how roads are selected for gritting routes. David commented that in his experience, it is around 30% of network is gritted because the resources are usually limited to extend this coverage.

Amanda elaborated on this point and said that there are 3 priorities, but sometimes high routes are prioritised above everything else, leading to no work at other routes at all. Because the public became vocal about issues, now they try to work on roads of 2<sup>nd</sup> priority as well in case they become extremely icy. Priority 3 roads are more about primary schools, but with more policies encouraging active travel among kids, they will have to consider the footways more.

Ryan's comment in the chat: it's often within the school grounds that the problem is - they close because of ice on their internal paths.

James believes it is a big challenge for local authorities to maintain footways and cycle lanes. And apart from that, there is a pressure of climate change and other priorities like reducing emissions.

David believes that schools tend to close without severe weather, so it is important to understand their real needs, as otherwise that will be wasted efforts. Amanda believes ice rather than snow stops children from walking to school.

Donald gave an update about Scotland. One significant thing that happened over the summer was the 2023 Cycling World Championships (overall 11 days), which was outdoor and on major roads/local routes. There was a risk for authorities not being ready to deliver this championship (planning, road traffic regulations, etc.). But over the summer, there was 'Just Stop Oil' Scotland protest that disrupted many other events, so the police have to deal with this. Also, budget annual planning will be published soon, but it is challenging now because less money is available than anticipated.

Donald also mentioned active travel aims, but some of those aspirational targets might not happen. For example, there is a target in Scotland to reduce car usage by 20% by 2030. They are not sure it is possible to deliver this. The modal shift will have to be imposed, but no enforcement is in place right now. And the public transport is not ready for this as well as the infrastructure for safe travel.

Another issue in Scotland is low emission zones. Currently those zones are in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, and Dundee. In Glasgow, there are in place as well as the enforcement: no charging for non-compliant vehicles, rather a penalty regime. Those vehicles are banned from entering those zones.

James thinks a 20% reduction in private vehicles is quite interesting; perhaps that is part of new LTPs and a part of the town centre regeneration (trying to get traffic out of some places and repurpose cities/towns to make them more like a Copenhagen model).

Ryan gave an update from TfL. The target is to have 80% of all journeys being non-motorised by 2030. But in London, there is a comprehensive public transport network and many other alternatives. Ryan believes more resources are needed to make a

meaningful change in Scotland. Ryan also mentioned challenges around ULEZ zones: signs have to be replaced as well as around 600 cameras due to vandalism. There are also security issues as staff working in ULEZ zones face threats and etc. So, there are some lessons to be learned for Scotland. Also, at TfL, there is a new team focusing on carbon reduction and PAS2080, and it reports on steps that they take in terms of carbon emissions reduction/carbon management journey. In terms of finance, TfL does not have enough resources, which will lead to bad consequences, including the risk of poor maintenance. Also, many projects will not get funding as a result, and many things will be closed.

No update from National Highways.

#### **5) UKRLG meeting**

Ryan apologised and left the meeting.

Amanda Highlighted that UKRLG has previously made good progress on updating the Strategic Plan, but that further progress/collaboration has been slower than anticipated. James agreed with this point and will raise it at the next UKRLG meeting. He referenced lack of momentum on the CoP update following earlier questionnaires and barriers to being able to progress the research programme as areas of frustration and leaving many boards struggling to make much progress. UKRLG is already reliant on busy people willing to volunteer and work beyond their regular work and other commitments.

#### **6) Future items for discussion**

Autonomous and connected vehicles, 20 miles speed limit, funding, LTPs, UKRLG research programs and CoP.

#### **7) AOB**

No items were mentioned.

#### **8) Next Meeting: Date and Format**

18 December 13:30 – 15:30 (Teams)

Action: Anastasia to send minutes to everyone and a link for the next meeting.

