

Minutes of UK Roads Board meeting held on 15 May 2020 on Microsoft Teams

James Bailey (Chair)	Staffordshire County Council, representing ADEPT
Donald Morrison	Transport Scotland
Chris Cranston	Devon County Council (Chair of the National Winter Service Research Group, NWSRG)
Arash Khojinian	Highways England
Jason Jenkins	CSS Wales
Martin McMahon	Transport for London
Douglas Hill	Representing SCOTS
Amanda Richards	Surrey County Council representing the Road Condition Management Group (RCMG)
Joe Lawson	Department for Infrastructure Northern Ireland

1. Welcome, introduction

James Bailey welcomed people to the meeting, apologies were noted from David Kinsey and from the DfT.

2. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes were noted, the page number needed amending. Amend action Action: DfT to consider adding in footways and ~~carriageways~~ cycleways in the self-assessment process and remove: ~~In attendance Jim Smith and Anna Murphy (item 1-2)~~

3. Minutes of UKRLG meeting

James Bailey noted that he had raised his concern about DfT seeking the advice more proactively from UKRLG members. James said that an Away Day will be held this year for UKRLG and this element will be covered; he added that the meeting was most likely to be held virtually.

Action: Updating of Code of Practice for note on Lantra scheme

Chris Cranston said that the Planning for Winter Service Delivery document will be published shortly.

Action: Justin Ward to write to DfT on the Action: DfT to consider adding in footways and cycleways in the self-assessment process

Action: Snow wardens timing of article to be written later in the year for UKRLG pages in Transportation Professional and timing to be coordinated with launch of Winter Service Planning Guidance

The work on resilience being led by John Lamb is targeted for chief officers and was noted of interest to Board members who would like a briefing on the work.

Action: Justin Ward/James Bailey to write to John Lamb to ask for an update on the work on resilience for an update at the next UK Roads Board meeting

Donald Morrison reported that Transport Scotland still required testing/validation before they could share further information on the asset management system as noted in the last meeting. Donald said that Transport Scotland were keen to develop their own in-house

system. James Bailey noted that there might be wider interest in the work by Transport Scotland. Donald said that the aim would be to share this freely when the timing would be suitable and share demos and through conference events.

Action: Amend UKRLG website noting where the Board has agreed changes to the code including tree inspections (Justin Ward to confirm with James Bailey and Chris Cranston – checking with DfT officials prior to publication)

4. Minutes of the UK Roads Liaison Group

These were noted.

5. Covid-19 response

The Board noted that there was a degree of different approaches across the UK highways sector due to Covid-19. Jason Jenkins offered to share work in Wales on authorities' responses and James Bailey said that ADEPT had undertaken a similar exercise in England.

James also mentioned the next growing element of work will be the focus on walking and cycling from the recent Government announcement. Amanda Richards highlighted a letter from DfT from Emma Ward on walking and cycling and measures to put in place for prioritising active travel based on data.

Martin McMahon said that in London a number of changes were being made, particularly in the centre of London, to redeploy road space for walking and cycling. A number of temporary schemes have been in put in place over the last year or so. James noted that the responses will be bespoke to different areas.

Action: Martin McMahon to share measures that London has put in place to support cycling and walking with either FCMG/UK Roads Board

Donald Morrison said that in Scotland there had been a push to reallocate road space for cycling.

Action: David Kinsey to consider what role the Footways & Cycleways Group (FCMG) could undertake to support the Government's aims of increasing walking and cycling – either by scanning experiences across the UK or by sign-posting useful guidance

6. Sub-group updates

Road Condition Management Group (RCMG) – Amanda Richards

UKRLG Research

A draft specification has been circulated for comment on the project to develop a specification for machine surveys on unclassified roads. A 2nd workshop was due to take place in the Spring but was delayed due to Covid 19. A virtual meeting is being planned.

DfT Single Data List

The collection of data for the 2019/20 survey year had been due to launch by the end of April 2020 but has been delayed until the Autumn with publication due in January 2021 rather than October 2020.

The 2018/19 publication of Road Conditions England included publication of amber data for A roads. 90% of LAs had provided statistics on amber values however there was inconsistency in the way data for B&C roads was generated so this was not published.

London Borough condition surveys

Concern was raised that there was no funding for SCANNER or SCRIM surveys for 2020/21 for London Boroughs. This would result in the absence of London data from the state of the nation report and boroughs would not have up to date data to support maintenance decisions.

Action: Martin McMahon to review situation with London condition surveys and provide update

VOCAL Roads Group

The Vocal Roads Group was launched in November and a survey is currently being undertaken to understand the views and needs of the industry around asset data.

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/VOCALRoads/>

National Winter Service Research Group (NWSRG)

Chris Cranston said that the Planning for Winter Service Guidance was approved by UKRLG and will be published shortly (taking account of minor comments from UKRLG). Chris said that the Forecasting and RWIS section has been developed and would need to go through the regular approval process – i.e. through the UK Roads Board and then through the UK Roads Liaison Group.

Jason Jenkins asked about ice stations and Chris Cranston said that the depth sensor was appropriate and that consultation had been undertaken by NWSRG. The Board discussed timescales for approval and Jason Jenkins said he would like to circulate this to the CSS Wales Group.

Action: UK Roads Board review of Chapter 12 ‘Forecasting and RWIS section’ comments by 29 May – comments to Chris Cranston

A plan has been agreed with TRL to progress the remaining sections, Decision Making, Route Selection and Treatments for Footways and Cycleways, which are in an advanced stage of preparation with working groups, but have seen some delays.

Chris also mentioned that: NWSRG had agreed with Hemming Group to hold a practitioner workshop as part of the second day of Cold Comfort. Unfortunately, this has been cancelled due to COVID-19. The update noted that a winter service award has been agreed with Hemmings as part of the Highways Awards and is designed to support best practice use of the NWSRG guidance

Chris said the NWSRG are looking to further develop collaborative research with Highways England, Transport Scotland and others - developing an integrated research programme across the UK.

The NWSRG are looking at a more cost-effective method of operation, in the face of reduced funding available from the membership.

7. Future focus

James Bailey noted that there were a number of different elements in the future to focus on: drainage, trees for example, plus there was an issue of the constitution of UKRLG more widely.

James added that Paul Boss, from Staffordshire County Council, is due to become the Chief Executive of the Road Surface Treatment Association (RSTA). James asked if RSTA could

be represented on UK Roads Board.

Donald Morrison said that a lot of the focus by the Asset Management Board has been on competency aspects and on data, but on treatments there is a bit of a gap in that. Donald agreed that these aspects might fit better within UK Roads Boards.

The Board agreed that RSTA could be invited to present their work to the UK Roads Board but not to be an ongoing representative on the Board.

James Bailey noted that the FCMG could play a role in the future focus for work on cycling and walking. James also noted the resilience aspects. Chris Cranston said that there was an issue of support for the funding model for groups, and noted this was particularly acute for the National Winter Service Research Group (NWSRG). Chris also noted the issue of DfT using the UKRLG groups to solicit expert advice.

Action: James Bailey to take account of the above points: support for sub-groups/other groups, how DfT uses the group for advice, and also how DfT attend the meetings – as feedback points from the Board to take to the Away Day

James Bailey said that issues such as trees and also flooding would be useful to hear more about.

8. Any other business

The Board noted thanks to Ramesh Sinhal, who was retiring from Highways England, for his work and support to the Board.