

## **UK Roads Liaison Group meeting held on 14 November 2018 at St David's Hotel, Cardiff**

Graham Pendlebury (Chair)	Department for Transport
James Bailey (by phone)	Staffordshire County Council, representing the UK Roads Board
Steve Berry	Department for Transport
Nicola Debnam	Highways England
Satbir Gill (for Rob Gillespie)	Hounslow Highways, representing TAG
Hugh Gillies	Transport Scotland
Conor Loughrey	Transport NI
Liz Kirkham	Gloucestershire County Council, representing the UK Bridges Board
Mark Kemp	Herefordshire County Council, representing the UK Network Management Board
David Denner	Welsh Government, representing UK Lighting Board
Sheena Hague	Welsh Government
Garry Sterritt	Transport for London, representing the UK Asset Management Board
Tom Pinchbeck	Department for Transport
Darren Thomas	Pembrokeshire representing CSS Wales
Ewan Wallace (for Bill Barker)	Aberdeenshire Council, representing SCOTS
Justin Ward	CIHT (Secretariat)

### **1. Welcome, introduction and apologies**

Graham welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted for Mark Stevens (for ADEPT), Bill Barker, and Rob Gillespie.

### **2. DfT Update**

Graham Pendlebury referred to the recent Budget statement by the Chancellor, which including some major transport-related announcements, including £420m for road maintenance that must be spent in 2018/19, plus significant future years uplifts for the Transforming Cities and Housing Infrastructure Funds, plus a brand new "High Streets" fund. Graham said that the Chancellor and the Treasury are focused on road maintenance and local transport generally, and that this is a healthy sign for the sector.

Mark Kemp asked for an update on the Major Road Network (MRN), and Graham Pendlebury replied that publication of the Government response to the consultation plus investment guidance for the MRN was imminent. (NOTE: publication was subsequently deferred due to unrelated matters, and is expected in mid-December 2018).

### **3. UKRLG member updates**

Sheena provided an update on the M4 – a new relief road – (£1.3bn scheme) has just been round a public inquiry for a year and the inspectors report is currently being considered. Transport for Wales, set-up about two years ago and started working on rail procurement franchising; the next step is to look at other functions that might be considered for Transport for Wales. Finally the First Minister will step down shortly.

Steve Berry asked about the review of highway maintenance in Wales. State of Roads in Wales - scrutiny that had a number of recommendations. Progress focused on two acts Active Travel for walking and cycling and the Future Wellbeing Act.

Hugh Gillies provided an update on Scotland noting the new Minister had a clear focus on Transport and Roads and that the Minister would welcome a longer term funding settlement. Hugh said that new contracting are going out. Finally, there was a discussing about contracting issues in the industry.

#### **4. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising**

These were agreed.

#### **5. Parapet Height Protocol Document for adoption by UKRLG**

Liz presented the item and noted that the document had the support from the UK Bridges Board.

**Action: The Group agreed that the following disclaimer would need to be removed:**

*This document is issued for the party which commissioned it and for specific purposes connected with the above-captioned project only. It should not be relied upon by any other party or used for any other purpose.  
We accept no responsibility for the consequences of this document being relied upon by any other party, or being used for any other purpose, or containing any error or omission which is due to an error or omission in data supplied to us by other parties.  
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**Action: Liz Kirkham to confirm if HS2 is signed up in support of the document**

The Group agreed that the term – clarification and softening of the commitment - in clause 3.9 on Dispute resolution in terms of the phrase ‘*with independent advisors such as such as Railway Safety, HSE and the Institution of Civil Engineers, will find a solution.*’

Graham asked about HS2 as there is the phrase: The protocol covers only those roads maintainable at public expense – would HS2 be signed up to this?

Garry Sterritt asked a legal perspective for the issue of raising parapet heights for other bridges, but the view from the Group was this this Protocol was bespoke to the railway sector.

**Action: UKRLG endorsed the document subject to further editing further investigation to other railway operators (such as HS2) and take note of the legal issues**

Darren noted the issue of the Canal & River Trust and protocols that might be an issue.

**Action: Justin Ward to consider the best place on the UKRLG website (protocol, guidance, etc) for the placement of the Protocol on the website**

#### **6. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising**

**UK Bridges Board** - Liz Kirkham provided an update on the meeting, noting that the implications from the Genoa Bridge collapse was being considered. A number of measures on Safety Critical Fixings and Hidden Components and the Bridge Inspector Competency Scheme all demonstrated that the industry was focused on the safety of bridges. Liz added that post-tensioned bridges remain a concern for local authorities.

Also reported was that Kevin Dentith is now the Chair the ADEPT Bridges Group and the UKBB recorded the good work of Graham Cole. Finally, Liz said there had been good progress was noted on the Boundary issue.

**Action: Graham Pendlebury to draft a letter thanking Graham Cole**

Nicola Debnam said that Highways England was working through CEDR to understand the causes of the Genoa bridge collapse. Highways England investigated this internally and concluded that the level of governance and control in the management of their structures – as reviewed by their Executive Safety Committee - was sufficient.

**Asset Management** – Garry Sterritt said that the research was the main focus (see below).

**Lighting Board** – Dave Denner said that the Board agreed that technology within the lighting world was a focus of the meeting. Another element of concern was the research on the LED health concerns by the University of Exeter and the lack of engagement with the researcher. The only other element was the make-up of the Boards, to improve representation on the Board including younger members onto the Board. Graham noted that this sounded like a very good idea and that encouraging younger professionals to join would be helpful.

Satbir Gill said that it would be useful to engage with UCL, Professor Nick Tyler, to review the health impacts of LED lighting. Graham said that there was no harm to seek opinions on key issues and that he welcomed UKRLG members to do so. Steve Berry said that LightAware was undertaking a lot of work on research and he added that it would be worth UKLB meeting with them to find out more.

**Network Management** – Mark Kemp said the Board focused on road safety at the last meeting and that the Board had noted the lack of targets in England. There was also reporting back on a security audit process and work that the UKNMB was undertaking with CPNI to ensure that highway authorities are considering security. Finally, the Board is close to trying to do a pilot with Royal Mail on the BMW site for postcodes for better routing. The National Traffic Managers' Forum has resurrected itself, so better links are being made there. Darren said there in Wales there is now a National Road Safety Board. David Denner asked about the Road Worker Safety work (ROWSAF) and how this feeds through, Mark Kemp noted that HTMA was doing a lot on road safety. Steve Berry said that VR was being used to improve road worker safety.

Graham asked about the number of attendees at the UKNMB was quite low and asked Mark to consider alternative ways of working could be helpful. Mark said that the links with academia and the NTMF could be useful.

Hugh Gillies asked about where the UKRLG was with connected and autonomous vehicles (CAV) and Mobility-as-a-service. Mark Kemp highlighted air quality management issues that led to a wider discussion about addressing new issues. Graham Pendlebury said that the only thing that concerned him was that there were other bodies working on these issues; but added that UKRLG might be the only body that brings together all tiers of government together across the UK. Hugh Gillies said that as leaders we need to consider the future technologies. Graham said it would firstly involve finding out who is looking at the issues. The future of mobility would appear to address these issues.

**Action: Sheena Hague to produce a summary of the air quality issue and the high court ruling currently underway**

**Action: Email to Justin Ward on potential gaps of coverage by UKRLG and then investigate who is leading on the issue (or not)**

Mark Kemp said that the issues raised (CAV/air quality) are on the UKNMB business plan, but have not yet been prioritised.

**Action: Next UKRLG meeting to have a considered focus on significant issues, gaps, items for importance**

Steve Berry said that the DfT had a Technology Strategy Board and mapping out the various groups would be useful.

**UK Roads Board** – James Bailey said there was a significant discussion on the Transport Select Committee hearing. He then said the Board was seeking clarity on the Asset Management Board to share the report with the TSC. Graham noted the TSC enquiry into roads in England and they were taking evidence sessions currently. Garry Sterritt said that this would not be possible, but that the aim was to have a rough draft by the end of December. Graham said that the aim was to have the report available for the Spending Review. James also noted the Lugg Review and said that the UKRB was keen to engage with the work on this. James asked about future research funding levels and commitments and to schedule an annual process for the UKRLG. Steve Berry said that was a good idea, Steve said that we have seen some delays in commissioning this round and also that DfT would like to see some more match funding. James said that the sub-groups – the new Visual Survey Working Group Call for a new Chair – was circulated.

James also noted the NWSRG Winter Service Guidance documents had been circulated and it was confirmed that a dual process of UKRB and UKRLG had been asked for endorsement on the document by the end of the month.

Footway Cycleway Research Group was looking for representation from Scotland and Wales. James said that whilst membership is good, there is a growing concern about attending meetings due to expenditure controls within local authorities, and that was the reason for James not being able to attend the UKRLG (but was an issue for other Board members). Conor asked about the action on point 3 on Well-Managed Highway Liability Guidance document (5.5.13 – requirement of training) – suggestion was agreed that a supplementary paragraph was added in would be useful. Steve Berry said that in terms of the Guidance the document was produced by the IHE on behalf of the wider sector.

**Action: Steve Berry to liaise with Colin to inform IHE (Richard Hayes) that the UKRLG has agreed that an additional clause should be included to cover the training issue on 5.5.13**

**Action: James Bailey to check with Chris Cranston that the NWSRG Guidance will be made freely available to all highway authorities.**

## **7. DMRB**

Nicola Debnam said that Highways England was on target to complete the task in time of the licence requirement. Graham asked about local government colleagues' engagement with the process. Nicola said that every document goes through a technical approval process and that this often involves local authority staff.

## **8. Code of Practice**

Steve Berry provided a quick update. The DfT in coordination with Atkins and LOTAG held two workshops and a webinar. The events were well attended. One point that Steve Berry noted that some authorities were saying they could not move to a risk-based approach where they had framework contracts in place. Mark Kemp said the issue was who was making the decision and the cost implications of this. Steve noted that a further survey was being considered on the Code.

## 9. Research

The Group noted the updates on the research and reviewed a status report on the projects. Garry started by providing an update, the Group noted the good progress.

David Denner provided an update on behalf of the UKLB research projects. David said that the 020-UKRLG was moving forward.

19-UKRLG report was discussed and the procurement options were discussed. Steve Berry said that the DfT support the project but had a couple of concerns: firstly the cost of the project (having a breakdown of the costs was required) and that the project had not gone through a procurement framework that was competitive. David Denner said that the reason why Salix was chosen was that they hold a lot of data on LED conversions and they are a government company.

**Action: David Denner to get a breakdown on the costs work on moving forward the 19-UKRLG research project and provide this to Steve Berry.**

Justin Ward provided update on UKRB projects. Liz Kirkham provided an update on the UK Bridges Board research. Liz asked if the funding could be reallocated from the project on the Parapet research project to be shifted to work on some bridges indicators. The Group reviewed the two reserve items to consider if the funding should be provided to them. After looking at these the Group agreed that the focus should be amending the error for the bridge condition indicators.

**Action: Liz Kirkham to arrange for Herefordshire to undertake work on the correction required to bridge condition indicators**

**Action: UKRLG members to circulate research proposals by end January 2019 for agreement at the April UKRLG meeting. [Send timetable proposal for the meeting] – consider previous proposals.**

**Action: Justin Ward to share latest research programme for 2018/19**

David Denner asked about top-slicing the documents to ensure that they are maintained. David said that there are a number of documents that could require updating. Garry Sterritt said that the move to top-slice money for research has been very well received. The Group noted that progress was going well with the research.

## 10. AOB

- **World Road Congress 2019** – Abu Dhabi – Graham Pendlebury said that Ministerial agreement had been secured for a major UK presence at the event next year. There will be a programme of work over the next 12 months to ensure a good event.  
**National Reports** – these are produced by member countries of the UK. The UK has volunteered to produce reports on four topic areas (access and mobility, road safety, infrastructure, climate change/environment/disasters).

**Action: Justin Ward to share the PIARC Call for National Reports to UKRLG members for consideration**

- **Road Tunnel Safety Regulations 2007 are being updated** – this requires amendment. The Tunnel Manager produces a report that goes to the Commission. This only affects four tunnels on the Trans European Network, including a tunnel in Wales. With the UK's departure from the EU then the reports which are usually sent to the Commission will need to be sent to another body and it is suggested in the

drafting of the amendment to Regulations that we consider UK Roads Liaison Group as this body. It would be helpful if we could obtain consensus from the Group to this approach. It was agreed that Paul O'Hara in the DfT's highways maintenance team send a request to UKRLG members, via Justin Ward, seeking their approval through correspondence due to the timescales.

**11. Date of next meeting – 2019 dates TBC**