

**East West Rail Consortium Strategic Board
Meeting held on 14th June 2018.
Council Chamber, Bedford Borough Hall**

Present:

Cllr Carol Paternoser (CP)	Aylesbury Vale District Council
Cllr Michael Headley (MH)	Bedford Borough Council
Cllr Mark Shaw (MS)	Buckinghamshire County Council
Cllr Paul Irwin (PI)	Buckinghamshire County Council
Cllr Ian Bates (IB)	Cambridgeshire County Council
Cllr Sue Clarke (SC)	Central Bedfordshire Council
Cllr Derrick Ashley (DA)	Hertfordshire County Council
Cllr Phil Smart (PS)	Ipswich Borough Council
Cllr Roy Davis (RD)	Luton Borough Council
Cllr Anthony White (AW)	Norfolk County Council
Cllr Phil Larratt (PL)	Northampton Borough Council
Cllr Mike Stonard	Norwich City Council
Cllr Yvonne Constance	Oxfordshire County Council
Cllr David Roach	St Edmundsbury Borough Council
Cllr Aidan Van de Weyer (AVdW)	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Cllr Mary Evans (ME)	Suffolk County Council
Cllr Alexander Nicoll (AN)	Suffolk County Council
Cllr Alan Turner (AT)	Wycombe District Council

EWR Consortium Secretariat:

Martin Tugwell	England's Economic Heartland
John Disley (JD)	Oxfordshire County Council
Patrick O'Sullivan POS)	EWR Consortium
Fiorella Mugari (FM) (Treasurer)	Buckinghamshire County Council
Steve Davis (SD) (Secretary)	Buckinghamshire County Council

Also In Attendance

Andy Kirkham (AK)	Aylesbury Vale District Council
Melanie MacLeod (MM)	Bedford Borough Council
Greg Logan (GL)	Bedford Borough Council
Joan Hancox (JH)	Buckinghamshire County Council
Jo Morphet JM)	Buckinghamshire County Council
Andy Preston (AP)	Cambridgeshire County Council
Jeremy Smith (JS)	Cambridgeshire County Council
Dr Carolyn Barnes (CBa)	East Suffolk District Council
Alastair Southgate (AS)	Essex County Council
Michael Newsham	Ipswich Borough Council
Keith Dove (KD)	Luton Borough Council
Ishwer Gohil (IG)	Milton Keynes Council

David Cumming (DC)
Noreen Banks (NB)
Louise Symes (LS)
Tony Jones (TJ)
Stuart Morris (SM)
Joseph Hough (JH)
Sara Noonan (SN)

Stephen Barker (SB)
Will Gallagher (WG)
Geoff Leffek (GL)
Chris Nicholson (CN)
Simon Winfield (SW)
Pip Hoskins (PH)

Apologies:

Cllr Colin Clarke
Cllr Barry Wood
Cllr Lance Stanbury
Cllr James Jamieson
Cllr David Levett
Cllr Alaric Pugh
Cllr Geoff Holdcroft
Cllr David Johncock

Claire Britton
Chris Pettifer
Jodie Colclough
Andrew Bowe
Trevor Mason
Steve Hayes
Peter Baguley
Sara Saunders
Caroline Danby
John Callaghan
David Sexton
Nick Hester
Erica Blamire
Martyn Angus

Norfolk County Council
Northampton Borough Council
North Herts District Council
Norwich City Council
South Cambridgeshire District Council
Suffolk County Council
West Suffolk Councils

East West Railway Company
East West Railway Company
East West Railway Company
East West Railway Company
Network Rail
Network Rail

Cherwell District Council
Cherwell District Council
Forest Heath District Council
Central Bedfordshire Council
North Herts District Council
St Edmundsbury Borough Council
Suffolk Coastal DC
Wycombe District Council

Aylesbury Vale District Council
Bedford Borough Council
Central Bedfordshire Council
Cherwell District Council
Hertfordshire County Council
Milton Keynes Council
Northampton Borough Council
South Cambridgeshire District Council
Stevenage Borough Council
Wycombe District Council
DfT
DfT
Network Rail
Network Rail

1. Welcome and Introductions

- 1.1 MT welcomed attendees to the meeting, noting he would take the meeting through consideration of the Terms of Reference and the election of the Chairman.

2. Apologies

- 2.1 As recorded above. MT reconfirmed that substitute members may attend if the lead representative is not available (see terms of reference 3.3).

3. Revised Terms of Reference

- 3.1 MT reported a number of comments on the draft Terms of Reference had been received from consortium members, mainly eastern authorities who wanted to ensure the importance of the Eastern section was not lost as part of the wider project.

- 3.2 MT confirmed that the ToR would be reviewed to ensure the importance of the Eastern Section and the strategic nature of the project.

- 3.3 With reference to section 1.1 of the ToR the meeting agreed that constituent members should be referenced in some way.

[*POST MEETING NOTE*: it is proposed that a list of paid up members of the Consortium is published on the website: the list of members to be updated on an annual basis following the Annual General Meeting].

- 3.4 With reference to section 6 of the ToR Cllr Turner asked if it would be more appropriate for the Accountable Body to be a LEP? This was discussed with the conclusion that the meeting agreed BCC should remain as the Accountable Body, since it had performed the role well and the local enterprise partnerships are not an elected body.

- 3.5 With reference to section 2.1 of the ToR Cllr Headley raised a concern about local authorities' views becoming the minority if membership was open to all, whilst accepting that the involvement of other bodies was in itself a good thing. This was discussed noting that: a. Membership applications are considered by the Board (2.2); b. Members are required to pay a subscription (2.3); and; c. ex-officio members do not have voting rights (3.10).

- 3.6 Cllr Smart proposed that the ToR should be explicit that only elected members from local authorities should have voting rights. The meeting agreed.

- 3.7 MT proposed that the Secretariat would prepare a revised version of the ToR – to reflect the points raised in the meeting – and that this would be circulated to the Consortium members for electronic approval.

The meeting AGREED in principle the revised Terms of Reference, subject to a final version being circulated for sign off electronically

4. Election of Chairman/Vice-Chairman

- 4.1 MT invited nominations for Chairman, noting in the process that it is appropriate for the two positions to reflect the geographical extent of the Consortium membership and project itself.

- 4.2 Cllr Paternoster nominated Cllr Mark Shaw. Cllr Constance seconded. No other nominations were made.

The meeting AGREED that Cllr Shaw was appointed as Chairman.

- 4.3 Cllr Shaw took the role of Chairman and invited nominations for Vice-Chairman.

- 4.4 Cllr Bates nominated Cllr Sue Clarke. Cllr Irwin seconded. No other nominations were made.

The meeting AGREED that Cllr Clarke was appointed Vice-Chairman.

5. Minutes of AGM

- 5.1 The notes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.
- 5.2 With reference to AGM point 9.3 MT informed the meeting that Alastair Southgate from Essex County Council is attending this meeting as an observer to assess how Essex might wish to engage with the work of the Consortium.

6. Update from East West Railway Company (Will Gallagher)

- 6.1 WG provided an update from the Company: key points noted by the meeting:
- EWR Co is on target to receive delegated authority from DfT on 1 July.
 - New governance arrangements will commence from that date.
 - There will be new Programme Board arrangements and the newly elected Consortium Strategic Board Chairman and Vice-Chairman will sit on this.
 - The organisation is growing rapidly, with the 20 current staff expanding to 60-70 within 6 months
 - Systems/processes for stakeholder engagement are going live

7. Eastern Section Update (Patrick O’Sullivan, EWR Consortium)

- 7.1 POS explained that the draft Eastern Section Prospectus circulated needed further work. The Chairman confirmed that although the covering paper for this agenda item states it is for agreement, the discussion at this meeting was focused on agreeing the principle of the prospectus.
- 7.2 POS confirmed that a technical meeting of officers from the Eastern Section would be organised to enable detailed discussion, including consideration of points raised by this meeting. The proposal was to bring the final draft of the document to the next meeting of the Board in September for its approval.

Key points made by POS in introducing the draft document:

- The Western section prospectus had great success: the intention is to achieve the similar outcome for the Eastern section.
- The intention is for the prospectus to be ambitious and aspirational, with targets for the short, medium and longer term.
- Infrastructure enhancement recommendations are a first attempt at identifying what is needed to enable new and faster train services, albeit the feasibility of the potential infrastructure enhancements have yet to be tested.
- Once completed it will be published on the EWR website and shared with the rail industry
- A Working group consisting of members from the Eastern Section footprint is to be established with a view to beginning the work outlined in the prospectus and

- The Working Group would look to work with the rail industry in terms of developing plans for funding and delivery of the enhancements

The meeting was advised that specific comments on the draft document were requested by 30 June to POS.

7.3 Points raised by the meeting in discussion:

- Cllr Evans stated the aims should be more realistic than ambitious: we have to be able to achieve them.
- Cllr Smart noted comments have been provided and emphasised the need to agree with the eastern authorities prior to sharing with the rail industry. He recommended reference to the 'Anglia Route Study' and the LEP's 'Our Counties Connected'
- Cllr Constance emphasised the importance of the Secretariat mapping out a clear course of action once the document had been agreed: MT verbally mapped out the proposed approach: following approval by the Strategic Board the intention would be to work with the APPG to organise a launch event later in September, and to then press the case with Government in the run up to Budget and next year's Spending Review.
- Cllr Ashley raised the importance of the offer in the public's mind. It needs to be seen as positive in tests of time/cost/convenience to ensure it is a valid alternative to the car. It needs to guarantee connections throughout the length of EWR, with major hubs seen as strategic interchange points.
- AP suggested it needs to work ahead of Central section, not in sequence.
- Cllr Smart noted that interconnectivity between lines is important.

The meeting **AGREED** to:

- (a) Provide comments on the draft document to POS by 30 June;**
- (b) Support the need for ambitious aspirations in terms of line speed and journey time improvements as outlined in the draft prospectus; and**
- (c) Consider the final draft at its next meeting**

8. Central Section Update (Chris Nicholson, East West Railway Company)

Central Section Progress update

8.1 CN provided an update; key points included:

- There has been a change to recommendations for development on the Central section with a greater emphasis on connectivity, housing and economic growth. The balance between route options and uncertainty as to where housing/economic development will go is critical.
- The journey time from Oxford to Cambridge has been increased to '80 minutes or less' since the previous target of 60 minutes is not achievable – the best possible time NR have estimated is 74 minutes.
- There is a change for freight from 1 tph, to make this more flexible.
- Working groups have been looking at route selection (transport analysis + KPMG commission on wider economic benefits on CS route selection).
- Non-statutory consultation on route selection options is planned for Q4 2018 with a final route decision Q1 2019.

- Process to select technical partner is in progress - to look at route alignment, detailed design, and consent order development.

Strategic Objectives and Conditional Output Statement

8.2 CN provided an update; key points included:

- There is a need to ensure that the strategic objectives and conditional output statement for the Western and Central sections are aligned as best as possible.
- In order to achieve this it is necessary to review both the strategic objectives and condition output statements for the Central Section – to ensure that they are fit for purpose
- The Conditional Output Statement in particular needs to be looked at in terms of what is achievable in terms of unlocking economic development and delivering planned housing growth.
- This may require a trade-off between the most direct route between Bletchley and Cambridge and the one that supports planned growth
- Proposed changes to the Conditional Output Statement include a service of 80 minutes or less and therefore more frequency of trains - so up to 6 trains per hour (from 2 tph)

CN invited comments and feedback.

8.3 Points raised by the meeting in the ensuing discussion:

- It was suggested that specific places (i.e. Bedford, Sandy, and Cambridge) are named rather than say 'nodes'.
- Cllr Van de Weyer asked if the route options are the same as before and requested engagement with his authority. CN said there are a couple of variances which have been shared with officers in the Stakeholder group. He confirmed they will liaise with the local authorities prior to the consultation.
- Cllr Bates raised concern that freight is not sufficiently brought out within the Company's thinking to date. He reminded the meeting that freight movements from Felixstowe were particularly important, not just for consortium but for the UK economy.
- CN sought to reassure the meeting that the stakeholder group includes the Rail Freight Group: he noted though that specifying 1tph for freight might drive up overall costs and/or introduce constraints for passenger services. There was a clear consensus though amongst the Consortium members that the role/potential for freight movements was being underplayed
- MT reminded the meeting that they would be considering the issue of freight will at the September meeting. The Consortium may have a more ambitious view for freight than EWR Co. The housing/development construction will bring huge amounts of movement of construction materials for which rail should play an important part.
- Cllr Smart highlighted the importance of the Board staying focused on the strategic opportunity presented by EWR. He was concerned that an emphasis on short distance services might compromise the opportunity to improve longer

distance connectivity. He asked how much passive provision can be included so as not to preclude better long distance journey times in future? Also there are 3 important points for freight:

- Capacity during the construction phase
 - Taking into account changes in the distribution of consumables
 - Diversionary – from Felixstowe to avoid London. It is known there is currently suppressed demand for Felixstowe due to capacity issues
- Cllr Irwin asked that the word 'Conurbations' is removed as there are none in Bucks.
 - TJ stated Norwich would prefer a service time not greater than 75 minutes. CN responded this might constrain route options and also the ability for a new station.
 - Cllr Larratt raised concern about the lack of provision being made for freight suggesting we should be looking further ahead.
 - Cllr Headley confirmed he supports the 80 minute journey time.

8.4 Cllr Shaw asked how EWRCo will pick up the points raised and in what timescale?

8.5 CN said that the comments made by the meeting needed to be reflected on further: he anticipated that they should be able to address most of them although the provision made for freight would be more challenging.

9. Western Section Update

Western Section Progress update (Simon Winfield and Pip Hoskins)

9.1 SW and PH provided an update (Slides attached). Key points:

- Transport and Works Act submission date is 27 July 2018.
- A 6 week period follows during which comments/representations/objections can be made. An Inquiry in Public is anticipated around February 2019.
- SW encouraged Consortium members to make representations: support for the scheme would be most welcome at the next stage in the process.
- A more detailed programme of supporting consents required will be provided
- The team is continuing to work with the HS2 team to resolve issues relating to the interface: at this stage it is not possible to confirm when EWR services will start.

9.2 Discussion:

- Cllr Irwin raised great concern about the possibility of FCC transporting material to the EfW along the A41, a road already close to capacity. He stressed that ongoing dialogue with local elected Members in Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire is essential. SW confirmed this is work in progress and the final decision has not yet been made by HS2.

- Cllr Paternoster agreed with Cllr Irwin noting the potential impact on AVDC waste collection arrangements and the potential for additional costs were of concern.
- KD asked if there will be a public exhibition for the TWAO and whether consideration had been given for a longer period in which representations could be made (given the period will fall over the school summer holidays). SW confirmed there are no further public exhibitions, but that they are seeking to issue key documents early as requested by the Consortium.

Service Planning for EWR Trains through Oxford and on the West Coast Mainline (John Disley)

- 9.3 JD presented this subject (see attached paper).
- 9.4 Cllr Ashley raised concerns over EWR services being prioritised over all other services on the WCML. MT clarified that from an EWR Consortium perspective the key issue was to ensure that the current WCML did not become a constraint on considering new north-south services that might be possible in a post-HS2 world. Cllr Ashley suggested wording be changed to reflect this and the meeting agreed.

The meeting AGREED to:

- a) The need for train planning for EWR train services to include consideration of the potential to extend these through Oxford to Didcot (and potentially on to Reading) and as part of the Oxfordshire Rail Connectivity Study, as outlined in item 10.1;**
- b) Ensure that the allocation of capacity on the WCML in a post-HS2 world given equal consideration to the enabling the development of Northampton – Milton Keynes – Aylesbury – Wycombe – Old Oak Common.**
- c) Support the need, in the longer term for train services to be extended beyond Aylesbury to London Marylebone**

10. Oxfordshire Rail Connectivity Strategy

Update on work on the Oxford Corridor

- 10.1 JD presented an update, which builds upon the announcement in the 2017 Budget for there to be a study into the future capacity of the rail corridor through Oxfordshire.

The meeting AGREED to:

- a) Welcome and support the proposed study, noting the prominence of East West Rail in shaping the need and scope for the work;**
- b) Endorse the draft Remit for the study.**

Funding request for work on the Oxford Corridor Study

- 10.2 MT reminded the meeting that the AGM had identified 3 areas of interest that would form the focus for work for the year ahead: development and promotion of

the Eastern prospectus; identifying the potential for freight and; developing wider linkages.

- 10.3 The funding commitment from Government for the Oxfordshire Rail Connectivity Study (£300k) requires match funding from local partners. His recommendation was that the Consortium should make a contribution of £25k reflecting the strategic linkages with the EWR project. MT noted the same recommendation will be tabled at the England's Economic Heartland Strategic Transport Board and that Oxfordshire had already identified £200k of match funding.

The meeting AGREED to:

- a) Approve a contribution of £25,000 from Consortium Funds as match funding towards the Study.**

London Road Level Crossing (Bicester) update

- 10.4 JD presented an update.

The meeting AGREED to:

- a) Note the continuing pressure to identify a long term solution to this crossing, in the context of further development of East West Rail;**
b) Commit to working with local Stakeholders to progress a solution.

11. Future meetings

- 11.1 The next meeting is to be on 11 September. Cllr Shaw asked Cllr Bates if the meeting could be held in Cambridge. Cllr Bates to look into. Cllr Roach offered Bury St Edmonds as an alternative venue.

- 11.2 The meeting agreed that the location of Strategic Board meetings would be rotated around the membership.

Cllr Shaw closed the meeting at 12:14

14 June 2018