

**East West Rail Consortium Strategic Board / AGM
Meeting held on 13th March 2019.
Quy Mill Hotel, Cambridge**

Present:

Cllr Carol Paternoser (CP)	Aylesbury Vale District Council
Cllr Michael Headley (MH)	Bedford Borough Council
Cllr Paul Irwin (PI)	Buckinghamshire County Council
Cllr Mark Shaw (MS)	Buckinghamshire County Council (Chairman)
Cllr Ian Bates (IB)	Cambridgeshire County Council
Cllr Sue Clark (SC)	Central Bedfordshire Council
Cllr Derrick Ashley (DA)	Hertfordshire County Council
Cllr Phil Smart (PS)	Ipswich Borough Council
Cllr Phil Larratt (PL)	Northampton Borough Council
Cllr Aidan Van de Weyer (AVW)	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Cllr Geoff Holdcroft (GH)	Suffolk Coastal District Council
Cllr Alexander Nicoll (AN)	Suffolk County Council

EWR Consortium Secretariat:

Martin Tugwell (MJT)	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
Adam King (AK) (Comms)	England's Economic Heartland

Also In Attendance

Marc Cole (MC)	Babergh and Mid Suffolk Councils
Chris Pettifer (CPE)	Bedford Borough Council
Bruce Waller (BW)	Cambridge City Council
Andy Preston (AP)	Cambridgeshire County Council
Stephen Lakin (SL)	Central Bedfordshire Council
Dr Carolyn Barnes (CBa)	East Suffolk District Council
Keith Dove (KD)	Luton Borough Council
David Cumming (DC)	Norfolk County Council
Paul Everard (PE)	Northampton Borough Council
Kerry Allen (KA)	Suffolk County Council
Sara Noonan (SN)	West Suffolk Councils
Pete Winters (PW)	Network Rail
Danny Miller (DM)	Network Rail
Stephen Barker (SBa)	East West Railway Company
Simon Blanchflower (SB)	East West Railway Company
Rasika Anantharaman (RA)	DfT

Apologies:

Claire Britton	Aylesbury Vale District Council
Andy Kirkham	Aylesbury Vale District Council
Cllr Simon Barratt	Babergh District Council
Joan Hancox	Buckinghamshire County Council
Cllr James Jamieson	Central Bedfordshire Council
Jodie Colclough	Central Bedfordshire Council
Cllr Barry Wood	Cherwell District Council
Michael Newsham	Ipswich Borough Council
Cllr Roy Davis	Luton Borough Council
Cllr Gerald Brewster	Mid Suffolk District Council
Ishwer Gohil	Milton Keynes Council
Steve Hayes	Milton Keynes Council
Cllr David Levett	North Hertfordshire District Council
Louise Symes	North Herts District Council
Cllr Mike Stonard	Norwich City Council
Tony Jones	Norwich City Council
Cllr Yvonne Constance	Oxfordshire County Council
Cllr David Roach	St Edmundsbury Borough Council
Caroline Hunt	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Ralph Raynor	Stevenage Borough Council
Cllr Andy Smith	Suffolk Coastal District Council
Cllr Mary Evans	Suffolk County Council
Cllr Michael Ladd	Waveney District Council
Cllr Alan Turner	Wycombe District Council
Cllr David Johncock	Wycombe District Council
John Callaghan	Wycombe District Council
John Rippon	BTVLEP
Hilary Chipping	SEMLEP
Adam Wood	Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership
Ellen Goodwin	New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership
David Sexton	DfT

1. Introductions and Apologies

- 1.1 MT opened the AGM and welcomed Consortium members to the Annual General Meeting.
- 1.2 Apologies are as recorded above.

2. Election of Chairman / Vice-Chair

- 2.1 MT invited nominations for the Chair: Cllr Paternoster proposed Cllr Shaw as Chairman. Cllr Bates seconded. Cllr Shaw was duly elected as Chair for 2019/20.

- 2.2 Cllr Shaw took the chair of the meeting and invited nominations for the Vice-Chair: Cllr Bates proposed Cllr Clark as Vice-Chair. Cllr Irwin seconded. Cllr Clark was duly elected as Vice-Chair
3. **Minutes of the last meeting**
- 3.1 The meeting accepted the minutes of the previous meeting as a true and accurate record, noting that ongoing items for discussion were on the agenda.
4. **East West Railway Company**
- 4.1 Newly appointed CEO of the EWR Company Simon Blanchflower provided an update (see slides).
- 4.2 Key highlights from the Central Section non-statutory public consultation:
- It introduced the EWRCo to stakeholders and public (3500 attendees; 3200 individual responses to consultation; 25,000 visitors to the EWRCo website, strong interest from local media)
 - It marked the start of discussions with statutory and non-statutory stakeholders
 - It provides an invaluable opportunity to collect feedback from stakeholders that will help inform route option work
 - Overall it was viewed as very successful in terms of levels of engagement and responses
 - In terms of moving forward the key assessment criteria that will be used to underpin route selection were - supporting economic growth, supporting delivery of new homes, costs/ affordability, benefit to transport users, environmental impact
 - Next steps: there will be continuous engagement through to 2023 – timetable for securing the Development Consent Order
 - The working relationship between the EWR Project and the Consortium remained a key foundation for delivering the investment at the earliest opportunity.
- 4.3 SB also provided the meeting with an update on where EWRCo is as an organisation:
- CEO in place in December
 - SB is working on the Company taking on additional responsibilities from DfT
 - SB is working with DfT to release next stage of development funding
 - The Company is looking to appoint a development partner
- 4.3 Cllr Van de Weyer said that now the Central Section routes are public we can discuss issues more openly. SB agreed, noting engagement with Members and the public is important.
- 4.4 Cllr Headley expressed the view that the consultation website - 'was like a comprehension test for a 10 year old' which may not have promoted proper engagement. SB noted there are various ways people respond to questions and they tried to maintain a balance between simplicity and greater detail.
- 4.5 Cllr Ashley asked that since the Central Section was a new route (as compared to the Western Section which is restoring an existing route) what thought is being given to complementary adjacent infrastructure such as cycle routes? SB confirmed the EWRCo remit is just for the railway; however he is open to other

partners contributing to include other modes of transport. MJT suggested this could be picked up through the Transport Strategy work, where work is being taken forward to support first-last mile, noting that it is important that stations become true interchanges.

- 4.6 Cllr Nicoll confirmed there is general agreement from the local authorities involved in the Eastern Section in support of the Central Section, highlighting in particular their concern that they do not want services from Ipswich/Norwich needing to reverse at Cambridge. He also emphasised the need to engage with freight companies to ensure that the full commercial and economic benefits are realised.
- 4.7 With regard to the discussion on wider linkages JD noted the opportunity to build on initiatives linked with the proposed expressway: here Highways England is looking to see how use of its designated funds might promote benefits to wider community (cycleways, etc).
- 4.8 Cllr Smart emphasised the importance of EWRCo engaging with authorities further east of Cambridge which are also impacted on by delivery of the Central Section. He was concerned lest the remit from Sec of State inadvertently caused the EWRCo to focus on just the Western and Central Sections. SB pointed to the Programme Board, which the Consortium Chair, Vice Chair and Secretariat attend and which provides the opportunity for the Consortium's view on wider connections to be fed into the debate.
- 4.9 Cllr Bates reported Cambridgeshire CC very much supports development towards the east; he also noted that 5G and broadband will need to be encompassed within the proposal from EWRCo. Cambridgeshire CC is working with the Universities on this and is happy to help the EWRCo.
- 4.10 Cllr Clark asked if the responses to the consultation will be published: SB confirmed a report will be published which consolidates outcomes of consultation.
- 4.11 Cllr Shaw thanked SB for attending the AGM and noted that he looked forward to working with SB and the EWRCo in the year ahead.

5. Central Section Consultation Response

- 5.1 MJT introduced the paper before the meeting, setting out the process that had been undertaken to prepare it:
 - The secretariat initially consulted officers in the local authorities directly affected
 - Based on those discussions a first draft response had been produced and shared with the local authority officers
 - Following a round table discussion, a second draft was prepared and circulated for further comment
 - The second draft had been shared with lead officers for the Eastern Section
 - Further comments from officers were incorporated into the paper, and it was that version that was now before the meeting for its consideration and agreement
- 5.2 Cllr Clark asked if new stations proposed as part of the Central Section would replace existing stations, noting the importance of ensuring that the existing population is not unduly disadvantaged. MJT noted the response highlighted the importance of linking with first/last mile opportunities.

- 5.3 Cllr Smart emphasised the importance of ensuring alignment of services on East/ West with the rest of the rail network, noting the importance of taking into consideration service frequency and timetabling coordination.
- 5.4 Cllr Bates emphasised the importance of linking consideration of the Central Section with discussions about services, noting in particular the challenges that had been encountered in ensuring some operators make use of new stations such as Cambridge North. MJT confirmed that whatever the mechanism is, it needs to be made clearer so that services support the planned growth.

The meeting AGREED the response set out in section 11 of the report.

6. Eastern Section

- 6.1 Cllr Nicoll presented this item confirming that the initial objective of the Eastern Section Prospectus had been achieved.
- 6.2 The Prospectus emphasises the economic benefits to community and support from relevant stakeholders including collaboration from the LEPs. It has been launched successfully with good media interest including radio and front-page coverage with good illustrations involving Norwich, Felixstowe and Ipswich.
- 6.3 The Prospectus is available via the Consortium website:
<https://www.eastwestrail.org.uk/eastern-section-prospectus/>
- 6.4 MPs have responded positively. Cllr Nicoll thanked the Consortium on behalf of the Eastern Section working group who are grateful for the endorsement of the Prospectus.
- 6.5 Cllr Nicol noted that under agenda item 9 it is proposed that the ongoing work comes under a Task and Finish Group supported by funding from the Consortium (£50K). Cllr Nicoll welcomed this proposal and pledged the Eastern Section authorities continuing engagement in ensuring the Eastern Section is actively promoted.
- 6.6 MJT advised the meeting that the next stage of work for the Eastern Section is consistent with what has happened for the other Sections and it feels both timely and appropriate for the Consortium to support the Eastern Section in this way.
- 6.7 Cllr Smart noted that the proposed Consortium funding might be useful seed corn on which to secure the funding required to take forward further work on the Eastern Section: he noted the importance of remembering that delivery of the Eastern Section was not dependent upon the Central Section – indeed the case for the Central Section would be helped by delivery of the Eastern Section.

The meeting AGREED to:

- a) Note the publication of the Eastern Section Prospectus**
- b) Promote the Prospectus to local MPs across the East West Rail project, reflecting its strategic significance**
- c) Support the next steps, taking into consideration the opportunities set out in section 3.**

7. Western Section Phase 2 – Progress Report

- 7.1 PW provided an update on progress with the TWAO Inquiry and outlined some of the key works planned for this year – slides attached. Key points:

- Currently in the middle of TWAO Inquiry - now in its 5th week.
 - Remainder of the Inquiry is covering objections from housing developers; with focus on Kempston Hardwick, Lidlington, Winslow and SE MK
 - Other objectors set to present evidence to the inspector are Highways England, Natural England and Bucks County Council
 - Network Rail remain in discussion with the objectors yet to appear at Inquiry with a view to resolving issues
 - Currently anticipated that 25th April will be the final date of Inquiry
 - In terms of looking ahead, a key area of activity this year will be work on Bletchley Viaduct – with a series of works scheduled throughout the year
 - Other works planned in 2019 include GRIP5 detailed design, start of investment in highways improvements, utility investigations/diversions, further environmental mitigation works, ground/ structural investigations, track modifications to existing FCC waste facility, and a start on the relocation of the Claydon signal box
- 7.2 Cllr Ashley raised the need to ensure that the Planning Inspectorate’s work is mindful of the wider ambition for the region. MJT noted that he was aware that MHCLG were looking to ensure that the Inspectorate understand the linkages between infrastructure investment and delivery of planned growth.
- 7.3 Danny Miller - the EWR Social Values Manager – presented the annual update on work in support of the social values/ legacy work – slides attached. Key points:
- Highlights and successes included - rail safety talks, completion of a ‘ground force’ style project, the Destination Aylesbury schools competition, work to promote STEM, butterfly conservation work at Saunderton Tunnel, attendance at a number of careers fairs, as well as the Buckinghamshire Skills Show
 - DM set out how the year’s activities had continued to lay foundations on which to build during the construction phase – this included ensuring social sustainability requirements are included in all contracts; work to promote apprenticeships and graduate opportunities was particular important
 - A particular highlight had been the success of a member of the EWR Alliance as the ‘Star Apprentice’ – a resident along the route, she was currently undertaking a civil engineering apprenticeship, and had been nominated for 2 awards – ‘Apprentice of the Year’ and ‘Women in Rail’
 - On-going challenges include – making connections with schools along the route; local partners being able to identify appropriate projects (although this may be helped once activity on site starts for real at the turn of the calendar year)
 - Looking ahead DM noted that:
 - EWR Alliance will move offices from Birmingham to MK towards the end of the current year
 - Compounds on site will start to be set up around the same time
 - Work continues on ensuring that requirements to support SMEs locally are in procurement contracts
 - Opportunities for paid and voluntary work experience placements will be promoted, as will employment opportunities more generally (including apprenticeships)

- Opportunities for working with the Canal Society and Bucks UTC are being explored – there'll be a rerun of the Destination Aylesbury challenge
- DM was keen to focus on the long-term legacy – one opportunity being to target long term unemployed and disadvantaged groups
- Other opportunities being explored include linkages with Spring Hill Prison, and the Milton Keynes and Bucks catering colleges

7.4 Cllr Nicoll noted MK has second highest night time homelessness; by day and by night particularly visible; Cllr Nicoll noted that in his day job his company was looking at how it might help address this issue in Milton Keynes. DM confirmed this can be looked at for opportunities to add value.

7.5 Cllr Paternoster emphasised the importance of ensuring work on EWR was linked with that on the expressway: MJT confirmed that working arrangements between the two projects would ensure such considerations are taken into account. MJT agreed to keep the Consortium updated on the collaborative working

8. **West Coast Mainline Released Capacity Study**

8.1 MT introduced this item. Key points:

- Work is underway to look at future use of the WCML following the opening of HS2
- Network Rail is working with the STBs through which the WCML runs
- Involvement of the STBs enables consideration of local issues to be fed into the study, as well as providing the opportunity to ensure wider linkages are considered
- Work is also being taken forward – led by DfT – as to the station requirements at Old Oak Common
- Taken together the two pieces of work are important in the context of ensuring the ambition to realise the Northampton – Milton Keynes – Aylesbury – High Wycombe – Old Oak Common corridor potential

8.2 Cllr Irwin queried as to whether Heathrow Airport is investing into facilities at Old Oak Common given they will be one of the biggest beneficiaries? MJT noted that improved surface access to Heathrow Airport is a key issue associated with the 3rd runway.

8.3 KA noted we need to ensure that proper consideration is given to the importance of rail freight. MJT noted that EEH's input so far had flagged strategic freight as an issue: it was very much something that the emerging work on Freight and Logistics (in which the Consortium provided some funding) is flagging in the context of connectivity to/from the main ports. Joint working with colleagues in Midlands Connect around bottlenecks on the Felixstowe – Nuneaton – Midlands corridor was something being looked at.

8.4 Cllr Larratt noted Northampton aspires to be far better connected post HS2; future use of the Northampton loop must provide the flexibility that enables it to support delivery of planned growth: he highlighted the importance of looking north and west (towards Crewe) was important. MJT noted organisations like Homes England recognise the importance of rail connectivity as a factor in support of planned housing.

8.5 Cllr Smart advised the potential for releasing freight from North London should not be missed.

The meeting AGREED to:

- a) **Note the update on the West Coast Main Line Released Capacity study**
- b) **Endorse the strategic issues identified in paragraph 2.6 (of the report) that have been identified by England’s Economic Heartland as needing to be considered by the study**
- c) **Note that England’s Economic Heartland has established a working group of representative interests, working on a ‘task and finish’ basis to support the EEH Business Unit**
- d) **Note the update on the Old Oak Common: Future Chiltern Capacity**

9. Treasurers Report and Work Programme

- 9.1 FM presented the Treasurers report; MJT introduced the remainder of the paper which set out a review of the previous year and proposed a work programme for the year ahead.
- 9.2 Cllr Headley requested that the work on Wider Linkages needed to include consideration of links into the East (as well as West) Midlands: this was agreed.

The meeting AGREED to:

- a) **Note the Treasurer’s Report as set out in Section 1**
- b) **the subscription rates for 2019-20 as being**

District Authorities	£1,500
Unitary and County Authorities	£3,000
- c) **Note the update on the 2018/19 work programme priorities set out in Section 3**
- d) **The work programme priorities for 2019/2020 based on the information set out in Section 4**
- e) **Establish a ‘task and finish’ member group for the purpose of reviewing how the Consortium works with, and supports the activities of Sub-national Transport Bodies.**

10. Future Meetings

- 11 June 2019 (Bedford)
- 17 September 2019 (Cambridge)
- 10 December 2019 (Bedford)

11. Any other business

- 11.1 Cllr Shaw said he looked forward to continue to work with Cllr Clark in the year ahead. In addition he invited the meeting to thank Patrick O’Sullivan for his long service and good luck in his retirement, Steve Davis for his support as Secretary and good luck in his new job and finally Cllr Roy Davis, who is stepping down after great commitment to the project over many years.

Cllr Shaw closed the meeting at 4 pm

13 March 2019