

**East West Rail Consortium Strategic Board
Meeting held on 11th September 2018.
Council Chamber, Cambridge Guildhall**

Present:

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| Cllr Mark Shaw (MS) | Buckinghamshire County Council (Chairman) |
| Cllr Sue Clark (SC) | Central Bedfordshire Council (Vice Chairman) |
| Cllr Carol Paternoser (CP) | Aylesbury Vale District Council |
| Cllr Michael Headley (MH) | Bedford Borough Council |
| Cllr Paul Irwin (PI) | Buckinghamshire County Council |
| Cllr Ian Bates (IB) | Cambridgeshire County Council |
| Cllr Lance Stanbury (LS) | Forest Heath District Council |
| Cllr Phil Smart (PS) | Ipswich Borough Council |
| Cllr Anthony White (AW) | Norfolk County Council |
| Cllr Phil Larratt (PL) | Northampton Borough Council |
| Cllr David Levett (DL) | North Hertfordshire District Council |
| Cllr David Roach (DR) | St Edmundsbury Borough Council |
| Cllr Aidan Van de Weyer (AVdW) | South Cambridgeshire District Council |
| Cllr Alexander Nicoll (AN) | Suffolk County Council |
| Cllr Alan Turner (AT) | Wycombe District Council |

EWR Consortium Secretariat:

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| 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 |
| Adam King (AK) (Comms) | Buckinghamshire County Council |

Also In Attendance

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| Andy Kirkham (AK) | Aylesbury Vale District Council |
| Chris Pettifer (CPE) | Bedford Borough Council |
| Andy Preston (AP) | Cambridgeshire County Council |
| Stephen Lakin (SL) | Central Bedfordshire Council |
| Dr Carolyn Barnes (CBa) | East Suffolk District Council |
| Alastair Southgate (AS) | Essex County Council |
| Trevor Mason (TM) | Hertfordshire County Council |
| Michael Newsham (MN) | Ipswich Borough Council |
| David Cumming (DC) | Norfolk County Council |
| Paul Everard (PE) | Northampton Borough Council |
| Louise Symes (LSy) | North Herts District Council |
| Tony Jones (TJ) | Norwich City Council |
| Stuart Morris (SM) | South Cambridgeshire District Council |
| Ellen Goodwin (EG) | New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership |
| Nick Hester (NH) | DfT |

Pete Winters (PW)
Stephen Barker (SB)
Geoff Leffek (GL)
Chris Nicholson (CN)
Ben James BJ)

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

Apologies:

Claire Britton
Joan Hancox
Cllr James Jamieson
Jodie Colclough
Cllr Colin Clarke
Cllr Barry Wood
Andrew Bowe
Cllr Derrick Ashley
Cllr Yvonne Constance
Caroline Danby
Ralph Raynor
Cllr Michael Ladd
Sara Noonan
Cllr David Johncock
John Callaghan
Hilary Chipping
Adam Wood
Chris Starkie
David Sexton
Joseph Hough
Steve Davis (Secretary)

Aylesbury Vale DC
Buckinghamshire CC
Central Bedfordshire Council
Central Bedfordshire Council
Cherwell DC
Cherwell DC
Cherwell DC
Hertfordshire CC
Oxfordshire CC
Stevenage Borough Council
Stevenage Borough Council
Waveney DC
West Suffolk Councils
Wycombe DC
Wycombe DC
SEMLEP
Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership
New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership
DfT
Suffolk County Council
Buckinghamshire County Council

1. Welcome and Introductions

- 1.1 Cllr Shaw welcomed the representative from New Anglia LEP (Ellen Goodwin) and noted Herts LEP have also joined.
- 1.2 Cllr Shaw informed the meeting that Dave Sexton has been unwell for some time and is undergoing treatment. **The meeting AGREED to send a message from the Board wishing David a speedy recovery.**

2. Apologies

- 2.1 As recorded above.

3. Revised Terms of Reference

- 3.1 MJT introduced the paper, noting that comments received from Board members had been incorporated into the final draft of the revised Terms of Reference.
- 3.2 **The meeting AGREED the revised Terms of Reference.**

4. **Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 June 2018**

- 4.1 The meeting accepted the minutes of the previous meeting as a true and accurate record. MJT advised that actions from the last meeting are covered in the agenda.

5. **Western Section Phase 2 – Response to TWAO and Next Steps**

- 5.1 POS presented the three issues set out in the covering, which were reflected in the recommendations before the Strategic Board.

- (a) Next steps following the submission of the TWA Order Application to the Department for Transport on 27 July 2018.

POS highlighted the major milestones due over the next 12 to 15 months. He drew attention to the fact that the DfT has already notified Network Rail that there will be a Public Inquiry. This Board noted that this indicates that whilst the programme for the TWAO is extremely tight early notification is indicative that every effort is being made to achieve the programme. It is very likely that a pre-Inquiry meeting will be scheduled, probably early in the New Year

- (b) Draft letter of support for submission to the Secretary of State

POS set out the basis on which the draft letter of support had been prepared, noting that the focus was on the strategic case for the proposal – he emphasised that this would not fetter individual authorities making representations on local issues of concern. It had been agreed with the Chair and Vice-Chair that – because of the timelines involved in the TWAO process – the draft letter had been submitted to the TWA Unit with a covering note saying that it was subject to consideration and confirmation by this meeting.

PS proposed that the letter should include within the list of ‘conditions’: this was agreed by the meeting.

The meeting AGREED the letter of support (with the addition of proposed by PS) on behalf of the Strategic Board

- (c) POS advised that the Consortium had appeared as a witness in support of the TWAO for the first phase of the Western Section. Indications from Network Rail were that they would value the Consortium supporting the proposal at the forthcoming Inquiry. POS explained that this would not preclude any individual member organisation from also seeking to appear at the Inquiry.

The meeting AGREED that officers from the Consortium be empowered to appear in support of the proposal at the TWAO Inquiry.

6. **Western Section Phase 2 – Progress Report**

- 6.1 PW provided an update on the emerging outcome following the end of the 6 week objection period to the TWAO application.
- 101 objections had been received as of 6 September. Further objections were expected. It was noted that no objections had been received from any local authorities but holding letters had been submitted very recently. Of the 101 objections two major issues have emerged, namely 40 objections regarding the

closure of the school crossing at Woburn sands and over 10 on the night time closure of the access road to Bletchley cemetery.

- In addition 5 letters of representation had been received which cover areas of concern which may develop into objections.
 - 138 letters of support had been received and Network Rail thanked the Consortium for the efforts made to muster such a level of support.
 - Network Rail noted that the EWR Co is taking ownership of developing the Business Case that will be required for the TWAO.
 - HS2/ EWR2 Integration - both projects are intrinsically linked, sharing a number of engineering deliverables. Programme interface/ dependency dates have been agreed.
 - In looking at the detail of issues arising from the integration a series of hackathons (workshops) had been held with representation from all stakeholders (FCC, LAs, LHA, Consortium, NR and DfT/ EWRCo). These have narrowed the options down to 2 viable ones:
 - Retain the freight services to FCC – the implications of which would be delays of up to two years to the opening of both HS2 and the MCJ line upgrade (MK to Aylesbury services)
- Or
- Temporarily close FCC to rail access which would reduce the delay incurred.
- HS2 is actively pursuing the option of a temporary closure of FCC rail freight terminal subject to further commercial discussions. In the event that this is not achievable, both projects will revert back to the strategy which allows FCC to remain open for rail deliveries of waste
 - PW reported that Network Rail was taking forward investigations relating to the proposed Bletchley Eastern Entrance. The EWR Co has requested that as part of the Secretary of State's ambitious aspirations for the station that the remit for the entrance is revisited to ensure that potential options for the long-term are not ruled out.

7. Communications

- 7.1 AK from the Consortium and BJ (recently appointed to the EWR Co) provided an update.
- 7.2 BJ gave an overview on how the EWR Co will manage communications on the project. They consider it a unique project from a communications perspective. They intend to launch a website and create a brand; and will continue to work with partners (such as the Consortium). Logos and colours etc are being developed. EWR Co are really keen to ensure they have a really firm view on what the community is looking for from them. Although relatively new in role, BJ Ben had quickly realised the level of awareness and support for the project amongst the community.
- 7.3 The meeting emphasised the critical importance of working with the Consortium as the Consortium members and officers will be able to greatly assist the EWR Co team. AK, as the comms lead, for the Consortium will continue to work closely

with the EWR Co. It is particularly important to ensure elected members are kept sighted in advance of material being put into the public domain. The Consortium comms team will continue to promote the strategic case for the project as a whole.

- 7.4 With regard to the Eastern Section communications work, it was agreed that the Consortium will push Eastern Section agenda in partnership with EWR Co.
- 7.5 The meeting stressed, in particular CP and AN, the importance of the EWR Co communications must include Parish Councils and local Members: Parish Councils in particular are a very useful conduit for communications and the importance of giving local Political leaders the 'heads up' on material being published – either for information or for engagement. MS noted that most local authorities will also have ways of engaging with Parish Councils.
- 7.6 AN emphasised the importance of the importance of the Eastern Section in communications – in particular avoiding over emphasis on the narrower 'Oxford to Cambridge' message.

8. **Central Section Update**

- 8.1 CN provided an update on the work underway in support of the Central Section: in particular key points touched on:
- There are four elements relating to route options that are being looked at:
 - Financial cost including environmental costs and impact;
 - Benefits analysis of options in compliance with the DFT's guidance (WebTag);
 - Wider economic benefits;
 - Implications of housing growth on future demand
 - EWR Co. is looking at different growth scenarios – this is necessary because the current round of Local Plans cover the period to early 2030s and there is a need to consider the longer term benefits of the route in supporting planned growth. The scenarios being used at present were a base scenario (reflecting the content of adopted Local Plans); an enhanced scenario (reflecting the levels of growth determined using more recent assessment of needs) and a higher level of growth (which appears to start taking into consideration the potential implication of EWR on future growth patterns).
 - EWR Co hopes to pull all this together over the next two to three weeks. The next activity will be to undertake a non-statutory consultation regarding the various route options, possibly starting towards the end of the year and running through to February next year. A decision on the preferred route is likely in June/ July 2019.
- 8.2 MT reminded the meeting that the Strategic Board has been established to strengthen the relationship between the Consortium members and the EWR Co. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Strategic Board sit on the new Programme Board for the scheme.
- 8.3 SC expressed extreme concern about the scenarios being evaluated, in particular she was deeply concerned the EWR Co appeared to be making judgement calls about the potential scale and location of growth (beyond Local Plans) without the benefit of local input. Moreover SC was concerned about the timing of the

proposed non-statutory consultation – both in terms of its timing relative to the timetables for examination of Local Plans, and the timing relative to local elections in May '19.

- 8.4 The Strategic Board strongly advised the EWR Co to tread very carefully in this regard and to listen carefully to the advice of the Consortium partners. This is especially true when looking at alternative scenarios that are out with the current Local Plan framework. There was a very real concern expressed by local Politicians as to the danger of 'setting hares running'

9. Eastern Section Prospectus

- 9.1 It was agreed that the prospectus as presented was a considerable improvement over the previous version. However AN advised the meeting that the local partners felt that further work was required. In particular AN emphasised the importance of being clear about the purpose of the document and its intended audience.

It was AGREED that the sub-group for the Eastern Section will take the lead in developing a further revision of the document.

10. Freight

- 10.1 MT advised the meeting that England's Economic Heartland has appointed WSP to undertake a freight and logistics piece of work. The work had been commissioned as an input into the development of the overarching Transport Strategy and will include work to develop the Evidence Base, developing an insight on the future of freight and logistic needs for businesses in the Heartland area, and a forward look at potential investment requirements.
- 10.2 Ian Brooker (WSP) provided a more detailed overview of the work to be undertaken, in the process of which he highlighted that key questions he is looking to answer are:
- What role will freight play in the EWR project
 - What is the potential for growth in through freight
 - How can EWR improve rail freight access for businesses in EEH#
 - Is there a need/requirement for new Strategic Rail Freight Interchanges in the Heartland region
 - What will the capacity of the route be in terms of loading gauge, train length, capacity and access to other routes
- 10.3 PS noted that Felixstowe dominates the study area, possibly more so than people realise. It is important to ensure that the needs of the corridor itself do not dominate to the detriment of the needs of the Midlands and Northern Powerhouse. Rail freight capacity to/from Felixstowe has been upgraded and potential for 60 trains per day has been promulgated: it was noted that 42% of freight from Felixstowe ends up in the 'golden triangle' of distribution centres in the 'midlands'. PS suggested that WSP should include consideration of movements to/from Felixstowe and Southampton.
- 10.4 PI suggested that the opportunities for removing freight from road to rail should be explored. The number of road movements to/from sites such as Calvert is extensive.

- 10.5 PL expressed concern about the current capacity of the line from Milton Keynes to Northampton, and in particular capacity on the 'Northampton loop'. He drew the meeting's attention to the fact that existing freight terminals struggle to secure the rail paths required. He noted that proposals for additional terminal facilities would require additional capacity if passenger services are to be maintained.
- 10.6 There is an obvious tie-in between this and the proposed 'Wider Linkages' workstream which will be reported on at the next meeting, as there will be a need to look in all directions.

11. **Oxfordshire Rail Connectivity Strategy**

- 11.1 JD presented an update, outlining the agreed study structure, principles, workflow, proposed programme and next steps.
- 11.2 The progress and outcomes of this work will need to be reflected in the wider linkages work programme. Together this will be a vital strategic input into decision making next summer on the spending review, franchises, etc
- 11.3 Cllr Headley reminded the meeting of previous discussions concerning future wider linkages work noting the need to look again at the linkages with the East Midlands Cities (Leicester, Derby, Nottingham).

12. **Future meetings**

- 11 December 2018 (Bedford) 2.30-4.30
- 12 March 2019 (AGM) (Cambridge)
- 11 June 2019 (Bedford)

Cllr Shaw closed the meeting at 4.00 pm

11 September 2018