

27th July 2020

MINUTES

Of meeting held virtually via Microsoft Teams

Present:

Cllr Sue Clark	(Chair) Central Bedfordshire Council
Cllr Philip Smart	Ipswich Borough Council
Cllr Michael Headley	Bedford Borough Council
Cllr Susan Glossop	West Suffolk Council
Cllr Yvonne Constance	Oxfordshire County Council
Cllr Paul Castleman	Luton Borough Council
Cllr Nick Naylor	Buckinghamshire Council
Cllr Norman Brooks	East Suffolk Council
Cllr Alexander Nicoll	Suffolk County Council
Cllr Aidan Van de Weyer	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Cllr Derrick Ashley	Hertfordshire County Council
Cllr Ian Bates	Cambridgeshire County Council

EWR Consortium Secretariat:

Martin Tugwell	England's Economic Heartland
Adam King	England's Economic Heartland
Beth Dormer	England's Economic Heartland

Also In Attendance:

Andrew Summers	Suffolk County Council
Steve Lakin	Central Bedfordshire Council
Chris Winfield	Network Rail
Carolyn Barnes	East Suffolk Council
James Gagg	Oxfordshire County Council
Michael Newsham	Ipswich Borough Council
Trevor Mason	Hertfordshire County Council
Hilary Chipping	SEMLEP
John Shortland	Bedford Borough Council
Keith Dove	Luton Borough Council
Danny Miller	East West Rail Alliance
Pip Hoskins	Network Rail
Will Gallagher	East West Rail Company
Laura Leech	Buckinghamshire Council
Sara Noonan	West Suffolk Council
Stuart Morris	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Lee Carvell	Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council
Melanie Macleod	Bedford Borough Council

Louise Symes
 Rajesh Kungur
 Jez Baldock
 Mark James
 Kerry Allen
 Tony Jones

North Hertfordshire District Council
 Milton Keynes Council
 EWR Alliance
 EWR Alliance
 Suffolk County Council
 Norwich City Council

Apologies:

Cllr James Jamieson
 Cllr Martin Wilby
 Cllr Paul Clark
 Adam Wood
 Joan Hancox
 Jodie Colclough
 Anthony White
 Andrew Reid
 David Cumming
 Jennifer Wilson-Marklew
 Caroline Hunt
 Jeremy Smith
 Jack Eagle
 John Rippon
 Greg Logan

Central Bedfordshire Council
 South Norfolk Council
 North Hertfordshire District Council
 Hertfordshire County Council
 Buckinghamshire Council
 Central Bedfordshire Council
 Norfolk County Council
 Suffolk County Council
 Norfolk County Council
 Milton Keynes Council
 Greater Cambridgeshire Planning
 Cambridgeshire County Council
 Cambridgeshire County Council
 BTVLEP
 Bedford Borough Council

Item		Action
1	<p>Introductions and Apologies Cllr Sue Clark introduced the meeting and noted apologies.</p>	
2	<p>Minutes of Last Meeting Cllr Michael Headley identified the need to amend item 6 on the minutes of the previous meeting: to reflect importance of ensuring the Bletchley to Bedford section of the project is opened as part of the Western Section.</p>	
3	<p>Appointment of Deputy Chair At its meeting on 3rd March the Consortium voted Cllr Mark Shaw (the Transport Portfolio holder for Buckinghamshire County Council) to the position of Deputy Chair. Following the formation of Buckinghamshire Council in April 2020 the Transport Portfolio holder is now Cllr Nick Naylor. The meeting AGREED that Cllr Naylor is appointed to the role of Deputy Chair.</p>	

<p>4</p>	<p>Eastern Section: Preliminary SOBC</p> <p>Kerry Allen introduced the paper which builds on the agreement at the Strategic Board’s meeting in January to commission a Preliminary Strategic Outline Business Case (Pre-SOBC) for the Eastern Section.</p> <p>Kerry’s presentation outlined the scope of the Pre-SOBC and the approach that will be followed working with the consultants appointed to undertake the work. In doing so the work will build on the work previously undertaken by the Consortium to establish the strategic aims and objectives for the Eastern Section.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the pre-SOBC work will follow the process required for projects that are looking to be included in the rail investment pipeline.</p> <p>The aim is to secure a commitment to realise increase in passenger rail frequency between Ipswich, Norwich and Cambridge in the short term: in the longer term full, direct connectivity across the East West Main Line in its entirety.</p> <p>It was noted that the work would include consideration of the potential for rail freight. It was also noted that the Consortium would liaise with Network Rail throughout the commission. The expectation was that the output from the commission would provide the basis for seeking funding from DfT to take forward the development of the full SOBC.</p> <p>Kerry reported that whilst the Covid-19 pandemic had had resulted in a delay in commissioning the consultants, the contract had now been awarded to Steer and rapid progress was now being made. The programme would deliver the pre-SOBC by the end of the year.</p> <p>Cllr Phil Smart welcomed the update and the involvement of Network Rail. He added that the work of the STBs on freight and logistics (particularly the study undertaken by EEH) should be used to inform the work.</p> <p>Cllr Ian Bates notes that Cambridgeshire County Council is very supportive of the Eastern section project.</p> <p>Cllr Alexander Nicoll advised that he had recently written an update to the members of the Eastern section and emphasised the importance of maintaining visibility of the work with members.</p> <p>Will Gallagher confirmed that the EWR Company would support the work, noting the inter-dependencies between the various sections of the East West project.</p> <p>The meeting NOTED the update of the Eastern Section</p>	
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5**Western Section - Update**

Will Gallagher advised that the EWR Company is now the co-sponsor for the Western Section (with NR).

Will noted that the latest Infrastructure Planning Authority monitoring report had identified the Western Section as having a red rating (moving from amber). He noted that this rating reflected a moment in time. Since then EWR Company has worked with all the key parties to address the uncertainties that had led to the rating. He reassured the meeting that the Company was working with Government to secure the required final funding approvals.

Mark James advised the meeting that the EWR Alliance had managed to maintain progress throughout the pandemic, working with Network Rail and the DfT to put in the required guidelines.

Jez Baldock updated the meeting on progress with securing the detailed approvals that flow from the Transport and Works Order. It was noted that progress with the pre-commencement conditions was very good: Jez recorded the Alliance's thanks to all the local partners for their continued support. There are still some pre-commencement conditions to discharge, mainly around surface water and archaeology.

Pip Hoskins noted that work on site is now quite significant and acknowledged that the temporary closures required to enable the works to progress would cause some disruption. Pip and her team are continuing to review when footpaths can safely reopen to ensure that disruption is kept to a minimum. Communications with the communities is being stepped up and include a regular newsletter providing details of closures. The project has recruited community liaison offices who will act as the primary contact for each area.

Cllr Yvonne Constance noted that the report indicated that only 23 out of 137 conditions had been approved and that only 5 out of 10 temporary compounds had been approved. Responding Jez Baldock advised that there are a number of stages of pre-commencement conditions, all of which have now been approved. The 137 conditions relate to matters of detail: he advised that progress with these was on track.

Laura Leech sought further details of the newsletter. Mark James advised that the newsletter will be cascaded to all stakeholders and to members of the public. Members were asked to Pip if they are aware of any other stakeholders who should be included on the distribution.

Danny Miller (Social Value Manager with the EWR Alliance) presented his annual report on the community engagement and social value.

	<p>A number of targets for securing social value had been set including work placements, rail structure and curriculum support activities, graduates, summer placements, apprenticeships starts and completions, accredited and non-accredited training and community engagement events. Danny reported on progress against these targets.</p> <p>Cllr Yvonne Constance thanked Danny for his report and welcomed the work undertaken to ensure the Alliance's procurement strategy supported the delivery of those targets.</p> <p>Cllr Constance sought Danny's observations of support within the community for EWR: Danny noted that support remains very high.</p> <p>Cllr Alexander Nicoll sought clarification on how the value of social return was arrived at: Danny advised that the figures in the report were provisional as they were in the process of being validated by an independent third party.</p> <p>Cllr Clark drew to the attention of the Board that the covering paper sought a decision from them about extending the working arrangements for 2 further years until December 2022. Martin Tugwell advised that if approved the proposal was that the post would continue to be funded as Work In Kind.</p> <p>The meeting AGREED to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Progress with the delivery of the Western Section b) Welcome the annual report of activity by the Social Value Manager c) Extend the working arrangements for the Social Value Manager until December 2022 	
6	<p>East West Railway Company – Update</p> <p>Will Gallagher advised that following the identification of the preferred route for the Central Section at the beginning of 2020 the process of ongoing alignment development work is now underway. This includes engagement with local authorities, Natural England as well as technical engineering work to understand what is possible and deliverable. Will noted that an innovative approach is being taken, using the latest technology and GIS. Local engagement is progressing as lockdown eases.</p> <p>A lot of work on time table and performance modelling work is being done on the approach to Cambridge which is important to make sure that the right capacity is being built. Positive, on-going engagement has taken place with Bedford on the Bedford Midland Station plans. Freight research from WSP has been received to understand likely demand is for freight paths.</p> <p>Cllr Phil Smart enquired about the performance modelling on the approach to Cambridge and the work on freight demand:</p>	

	<p>responding Will advised that the work regarding the approach to Cambridge was on-going, as was the work on identifying requirements for freight paths. Will noted that with regards to freight the issue was linked as to whether the required capacity existed elsewhere on the national network. Susan Glossop asked that West Suffolk Council be involved in conversations moving forward.</p> <p>The meeting NOTED the update from the Company</p>	
7	<p>Digital Infrastructure (Western Section)</p> <p>Martin Tugwell introduced the paper before the meeting. The paper sets out a proposal to commission an impact assessment that would guide the Board as to whether there is a business case for investing in the provision of fibre connectivity as part of the delivery of the Western Section.</p> <p>Responding to Cllr Michael Headley, it was confirmed that the scope of the assessment is the section between Bicester and Bletchley. Cllr Headley emphasised the importance of ensuring that the whole project is delivered with digital connectivity. Martin advised that he understood that the opportunity to create a digital spine across the region was at the forefront of DfT's minds: Will Gallagher concurred.</p> <p>The meeting AGREED to:</p> <p>a) Support the principle of delivering East West Rail (Western Section) as a digitally enabled corridor</p> <p>b) Support the proposal to commission an Impact Assessment that will enable the costs and benefits of delivering a digitally enabled corridor to be identified</p> <p>c) Consider the output of the Impact Assessment at its meeting on 23rd September</p>	
8	<p>Sub-national Transport Bodies – Update</p> <p>Andrew Summers introduced himself as the Strategic Director for Transport East. His initial priority has been to build capacity and capability.</p> <p>Andrew set out Transport East's support for the Consortium, and in particular welcomed the work on the Eastern Section. He advised that the papers for the Transport East meeting held recently were available online. He noted three key items: the programme to develop the Transport Strategy, a report on decarbonisation and the approach to developing an investment and delivery plan.</p> <p>Cllr Alexander Nicoll welcomed the involvement of Transport East in the work of the Consortium and noted that the Transport East strategy should take into account the implications of the construction work linked with the proposed nuclear power</p>	

	<p>stations.</p> <p>Martin Tugwell drew the meeting’s attention to the update on the work of England’s Economic Heartland: he reminded the meeting that consultation on the EEH draft Transport Strategy was open until 6th October.</p> <p>Martin noted that the Board papers included a joint letter from 3 STBs (EEH, Transport East and Midlands Connect) to the Chancellor of the Exchequer in respect of Felixstowe and Nuneaton.</p> <p>Cllr Phil Smart noted that work on Felixstowe and Nuneaton is linked to the Eastern section: issues such as Haughley junction are crucial to both projects and the business cases for both help each other. In relation to decarbonisation, a third of what lands at Felixstowe travels onward by rail, a third goes by road to places where rail isn’t suitable and a third goes by road to the same places as rail. This highlights the importance of the work happening at Felixstowe and Nuneaton.</p>	
9	Future meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 23rd September 2020• 9th December 2020• 4th March 2021	