

MINUTES, ACTIONS & DECISION NOTES

Meeting title	ADEPT Midlands Regional Board
Location/Platform	Microsoft Teams Meeting
Date and time	Friday 16th June 2023, 9am-12pm
Apologies	Jonathan Vining, Angie Astley, George Candler, Maria Machancoses, Darryl Evers, Helen Martin, Rachel North, Andrew Pritchard, Chris Henning, John Roseblade, Graeme Kane, Victoria Lazenby, Janna Walker, Louise Clare.

Attendees	Organisation
Andy Gutherson (AG) - <i>Chair</i>	Lincolnshire County Council
Derek Higton (DH)	Nottinghamshire County Council
Anthony Payne (AP)	ADEPT
Ross Cook (RC)	Herefordshire Council
Mark Ryder (MR)	Warwickshire County Council
Mary Morrissey (MM)	Solihull Council
Dave Brown (DB)	Walsall Council
Hannah Bartram (HB)	ADEPT
Sarah Spink (SS)	Midlands Connect
Ross Burton (RB)	Department for Transport
Philip Edwards (PE)	Birmingham City Council
Kamaljit Khokar (KK)	National Highways
Penny Sharp (PS)	Rutland County Council
Claire Brailsford (CB)	Derbyshire County Council
Janna Walker (JW)	Leicestershire County Council
Louise Clare (LC)	Department for Transport
Abigail Wells (AW) - <i>Notes</i>	Lincolnshire County Council
Guest speakers	Organisation
Elliot Shaw (EW)	National Highways
Sharon Suresh Kumar (SSK)	Active Travel England
Adrian Hill (AH)	Active Travel England
Tanya Vaughan (TV)	Lincolnshire County Council
Lana Meddings (LM)	Lincolnshire County Council
Roger Mendonça (RM)	Midlands Engine

Agenda Item

1 | Welcome and Apologies

AG welcomed and introduced Anthony Payne, ADEPT President, to the group. AP gave a brief overview of his career, and emphasised a commitment to supporting ADEPT agendas and feeding important information into national bodies. AG welcomed AP to join future ADEPT Midlands Regional Board meetings.

AG also introduced MM to the group, who is the new Vice Chair for the Midlands Regional Board. AG discussed ongoing commitments to coordinate agendas and ensure balance of items between the East and West Midlands which reflect issues affecting all.

AG noted the importance of shaping the agenda around items that the group would like to discuss, and encouraged members to provide items which could be showcased.

2 | Review of Previous Meeting Minutes and Actions

AG asked the group whether there were any action points from the previous meeting which they would like to provide feedback on. The group did not provide any feedback on this item.

3 | National Highways Update

Elliot Shaw- Chief Customer and Strategy Officer, National Highways

Presentation:

AG welcomed ES to the meeting, and noted the timeliness of discussions around National Highways work, as a range of consultations have been issued. ES agreed, and highlighted that a suite of documents had been published by National Highways, and the organisation were keen on views and thoughts on these.

ES provided an update on the Road Investment Strategy (RIS) and the Strategic Road Network (SRN), which accounts for 2.4% of the length of the overall road network, but is the most heavily trafficked. The RIS3 contains plans made with the government for 2025-2023 for the management and improvement of the SRN, including a strategic vision, performance specification, investment plan and statement of funds available. The strategic objectives proposed within RIS3 include; improving safety for all, improved environmental outcomes, network performance, growing the economy, managing and planning the SNR for the future, a technology enabled network.

ES reported that extensive customer and stakeholder engagement had been undertaken and enabled the identification of priorities; roads are an essential service, the network is aging and needs to be improved, inconsistent connectivity and capacity, more activity and transport focus for customers and improve safety and reliability.

ES provided a brief overview of each of the strategic documents produced;

- Long Term Strategic Plan to 2050 and 2050 ambitions
- Route Strategy Reports
- Strategic Road Network Initial Report
- Environmental Sustainability Strategy

ES shared links to the National Highways Future Roads Landing Page, and public consultations which are currently underway, emphasising the importance of people having their say and shaping the future of strategic roads over the next couple of years.

Questions:

AG opened the floor to questions, and asked for further clarification on the process of identifying roads for trunking/de-trunking. ES advised that the NH team work with DfT to identify areas which look as if they could benefit from trunking or detrunking, and then further work to understand the local appetite, asset health and financial implications is undertaken.

AG highlighted relationships between NH and Local Highway Authorities, and the need for consistent and continued conversation. Similarly, In the context of devolution, AG raised the need for control over infrastructure, and ability to integrate network solutions directly, rather than reliance on trunking to deliver priorities.

ACTION:

- ES and AG to arrange a call with Richard Leonard and Dave Stones regarding trunking consultations.

HB asked how NH are baselining carbon in order to achieve net zero ambitions, and referenced the Live Labs programme currently underway locally which may be of relevance for continues connections. ES indicated that modelling to assess carbon on the future transport network against the transport decarbonisation plan is undertaken, alongside potential uptake of electric vehicles. Modelling is compared with the government’s net zero strategy, and whilst it is noted that NH plans are ambitious, current performance is strong. ES stressed the importance of cohesive work on a national and local level.

ACTION:

- HB and ES to arrange discussion around Live Labs and local/national work on carbon baselining.

MR discussed capturing decarbonisation information which can be impacted in Local Authority areas by organisations, residents and businesses (i.e. use of motorways) and utilising it for Place reporting around net zero targets. ES highlighted the carbon reduction plans, and discussed a potential DfT consultation being released into the future. SE also raised the importance of engagement and the need for effective connectivity when sharing modelling. AG suggested that it would be valuable to facilitate an item around this at a future Midlands Regional Board.

ACTION:

- ES to discuss plans around decarbonisation reporting and connectivity with the NH team, and arrange for an item at a future Midlands Regional Board to be delivered.

AG raised ongoing frustrations around the prioritisation of the A1 on a political level. It was noted that the road is a significant element of the national network, which when is not in working order, causes traffic nuisance issues for rural residents of surrounding counties. ES recommended utilising the consultation phase to raise these issues, but acknowledged that funding is relatively tight. Correspondingly, ES discussed the shift of priorities towards A roads, due to performance and safety issues and highlighted the importance of political colleagues discussing these issues with their counterparts.

4	Active Travel Update <i>Sharon Suresh Kumar- West Midlands Regional Engagement Manager, Active Travel England</i> <i>Adrian Hill- East Midlands Regional Engagement Manager, Active Travel England</i>
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Presentation:

SSK shared a presentation with the group around Active Travel England (ATE), an executive agency appointed by the PM to deliver a change programme which supports authorities on

active travel measures across England. ATE's ambition is for 50% of all short urban trips in England to be walked, wheeled or cycled by 2030. Strategic priorities to support delivery include; investing in and improving standards for active travel across England, integrating active travel in the planning system, giving more people from all walks of life the opportunity to try active travel, and transforming how data is used in active travel planning. Investment objectives have also been outlined to support delivery, which cover improving sustainability, health and air quality, supporting local groups, and reducing emissions.

SSK discussed a suite of tools which are utilised by the inspectorate to ensure quality, safety and sustainability. Design reviews are also conducted on schemes that are selected for funding, and equality, diversity and inclusion is championed through schemes. A data digital analytics team work on new technologies and merging of existing technologies, and support data sharing across organisations. Finally, the Planning and Development team will support Local Planning Authorities on planning applications which meet the government's minimum thresholds.

Questions:

AG opened the floor to questions and observations. RB asked how ATE provide balance between quality infrastructure and best connectivity. SSK advised that work is undertaken to identify what exists in the area, and focus is given to a smaller number of high quality schemes which are likely to have the highest impact, rather than developing schemes which are not up to standard.

MR highlighted challenges in ATE acting as a statutory consultee for planning applications in the context of frequent conflict from developers and planning authorities, and raised how medium-large applications would be approached. SSK discussed collaborative work to provide wider understanding, and highlighted that ATE would be a consultee rather than an enforcing authority.

PS asked how ATE could develop a stronger understanding of local areas and context where authorities are expected to deliver schemes that would be inappropriate for a rural area. SSK indicated that work is underway on rural guidance, which will shape capability ratings for rural authorities and ensure support for rural authorities.

ACTION:

- AH to liaise with PS and AG regarding rural capability of ATE in Rutland and Lincolnshire.

PE asked how to work with a multi-modal approach where cycling and bus network infrastructures need to coexist within urban settlements, and indicated that there is interest in working together to bring active travel into inner city communities. SSK discussed work underway with DfT on multi-modal transport and infrastructure planning to ensure complimentary services.

MM highlighted the impact of potholes and tensions where funding is provided for cycling and walking. This has caused difficulty for local authorities who grapple with a wider lack of funding for highway infrastructure works. SSK acknowledged this challenge and emphasised the

importance of supporting behavioural change. ATE provide training and support for local authorities and political leaders with influence, which could be implemented.

ACTION:

- SSK and MM to discuss wider highways funding concerns, and training and support opportunities for local authorities.

AG discussed the importance of engagement, developing relationships and showcasing best practice. SSK and AH were invited to provide future items to the group to discuss work that has gone well.

5 Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Funding Update

Tanya Vaughan- Senior Commissioning Officer

Lana Meddings- Transport and Growth Manager

Presentation:

AG discussed LCC's success in gaining pilot funding for LEVI, and highlighted the potential of work underway to be of value to regional colleagues. TV is leading on the LEVI Pilot Scheme for LCC, and LM manages the main capital project.

LM reported that the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles is a team working across Government to support transition to zero emission vehicles. The team is providing support to encourage uptake of these vehicles, and is funding charge point infrastructure across the UK. Increased net zero vehicle usage contributes to economic growth and reduces greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution on roads.

An Electric Vehicle Strategy was produced as a supporting document for LCC's LTP 5, which was utilised to bid for government funding. The LEVI Fund supports LA's in England to work with charge point industry/operators to roll out local charging infrastructure. Local authorities across the Midlands were awarded government and private investment funding. In Lincolnshire, funding will be utilised to deliver 100 standalone electric vehicle charge points across approximately 40 sites.

Learning objectives have been developed as part of the project, enabling review of advantages and disadvantages; one of the key learning objectives is the availability of the power supply and impact of charges. A soft market engagement events have been delivered to identify commercial appetite and next steps will involve looking at analytical tools to review selected locations. The project team are aiming to go out to tender in September 2023, and exact locations of charge points will be determined once a charge point operator has been appointed. Additional provisional allocations from the LEVI Capital Fund have been announced by DfT, and LCC are awaiting update on whether any funds will be allocated across. Tranche 2 funding has been applied for, and work is underway to explore whether a multi authority consortium with dedicated LEVI offices would be required to support delivery due to capability gaps in the resource market.

Questions:

SS highlighted resourcing gaps around LEVI, and discussed the development of a centre of excellence for electric vehicles, which would allow partners to access the information they

need. SS emphasised the need to collaborate and encouraged the group to get in touch with Midlands Connect if support is required around LEVI bids and programmes.

TV highlighted that LEVI is an emerging market and discussed that maturity and knowledge is developing with it. Information shared via the consortium, and support from Midlands Connect has been identified as an advantage and has ensured that the project is having a positive impact.

6 ADEPT Updates *Hannah Bartram- Chief Executive Officer, ADEPT*

HB provided an update on key ADEPT activity, and shared the following discussion points via email:

Transport

1. Regular catch up with DfT Local Roads Directors Stephen Fidler & Jessica Matthews recently:
 - a. LTP guidance – still with Ministers, hoping to get it published ‘before recess’.
 - b. Spending Review 2024 – looking to continue building the evidence base – key aim will be securing a multi-year funding deal for local roads.
 - c. DfT has published its consultation: ‘[Shaping the future of England's strategic roads](#)’ (deadline 13 July) – Transport & Connectivity Board responding.
2. The NAO has published its report into Active Travel ([here](#)).
3. ADEPT has responded to the consultation on the draft National Networks National Policy Statement ([here](#)).

Devolution / Growth / planning

4. Consultations:
 - a. LEP future funding survey – the ADEPT response is [here](#). We also responded to the consultation on proposed changes to planning application fees ([here](#)), the consultation on the draft AQ strategy ([here](#)); on the Infrastructure Levy ([here](#)) and on the new system of Environmental Outcomes Reports (replacing SEAs and EIAs) ([here](#)).
 - b. The Office for Environmental Protection has launched a [call for evidence](#) as part of its scrutiny of Government’s plans and environmental targets for improving nature.
5. Devolution – looking to set up an ADEPT / LGA ‘Devo & Transport’ working group (under the auspices of the Transport & Connectivity Board) and a ‘Devo & Environment’ working group, under the Environment Board.
6. The OFLOG team from DLUHC attended the Waste Group meeting earlier this week – waste management is one of the proposed priority themes (see [here](#)). DLUHC will publish a policy document at the initial launch of Oflog (no date confirmed) which will set out the direction of travel in more detail.

Environment

7. Regular catch up with Defra DG David Hill – focus on roll out of Local Nature Recovery Strategies and BNG, not much to say about waste reforms. Defra also leading on developing a national Land Use Framework.
8. The National Audit Office is once again reviewing flood risk, and have asked ADEPT to promote a short survey to LAs about the challenges / opportunities of flood risk management – see here for the [LINK TO SURVEY](#). Deadline is 28 June.

9. We have established a Climate Change Board – read David Dale’s blog [here](#) – Andy Gutherson sits on this. We are also part of the Blueprint Coalition – the group has developed a set of [manifesto asks](#) which it is now sending to all the main political parties. There will also be a virtual launch event on 12 July – details to follow.

Events

10. Colas and ADEPT co-hosted a well-attended round table last month that focused on recruitment of young people into place services and retention issues. Those who attended the Spring Conference will have seen the outputs of that event a) a concept for a recruitment campaign and b) a good practice guide for staff retention. Both were really well received. We are now working up options for rolling out the recruitment campaign. A second workshop on EDI issues and future skills will take place 29 June in Chester – draft programme attached. Please do send a colleague if you can.
11. The ADEPT Spring Conference, AGM and Annual Awards Dinner took place in London a couple of weeks ago – all successful events. The award winners & highly commended (along with all other entries) can be seen [here](#). The MJ interview with the new ADEPT President Anthony Payne is [here](#).
12. Dates for your diary:
- 5th National Traffic Managers Conference – Northampton, 5 October ([here](#))
 - Navigating Transition workshop – Birmingham, 13 October ([here](#))
 - Autumn Conference – Nottingham, 16&17 November – the booking site will open w/b 10 July.
 - Plus many other webinars that take place under the auspices of the national subject boards and the monthly [Lunch & Learns](#).

ADEPT news

13. We published the new [ADEPT Strategic Plan 2023-26](#) at the Spring Conference. This has six priorities: a) Ensuring resilience in local government structures and governance b) Levelling up for people and place c) Delivering green growth d) Taking action on climate change e) Our most valuable asset is our people f) Being the best we can be. We are also drafting an ADEPT Manifesto.
14. Kylie Russell joins ADEPT on 21 July as deputy CEO.
15. Shared Intelligence carried out a review of ADEPT member perceptions – you may well have been interviewed. Overall conclusions were that members value ADEPT and its offer - the focus of recommendations were around internal comms. More on this to follow.

ACTIONS:

- Arrange for relevant ADEPT Spring Conference Award nominees to showcase their work at the ADEPT Midlands Regional Board.
- ALL advised to advertise the 50% reduction on ticket prices for those on the ADEPT Leadership Programme.

7 Midlands Engine UKREiiF Update *Roger Mendonça- Chief Executive, Midlands Engine*

RM shared an update on UKREiiF, and the increasing importance of the event as a place to highlight investment opportunities and meet investors. It was noted that many parties from across the Midlands had attended the event, but due to the cost of exhibition spaces, were

limited in having business conversations with investors. This led to consideration on whether there could be a collective solution at the 2024, and if there is an appetite for this.

AG suggested that a Midlands presence could deliver significant benefit, but appropriate levels of buy in and support would be required. Based upon the presence of Combined Authority mayors in the context of Devolution, a pavilion style approach was supported. AG highlighted that further work would be required to determine how the pavilion could be used for collective benefit.

DH reported a similar impression of the event, and highlighted that NCC would be supportive of a significant midlands presence, but stresses the importance of availability for all to tell the local story and a regional story to prevent missing out.

RM suggested setting up a working group for branding, presentations, space sharing, and developing the detail of the event. AG recognised costs attached to UKREiiF and asked if funding would need to be sourced from attendees. RM advised that work was underway around sponsorship to reduce costs, but suggested that a minor contribution would be likely. AG stressed that the group have relationships with corporate partners, who perhaps could be utilised and value gained from their attendance.

ACTION:

- ALL to feedback via AW, AG or RM interest in involvement in a Midlands UKREiiF pavilion.

8 AOB

HB and AG discussed potential future agenda items, including:

- Live Labs (Transport for West Midlands Project)
- LTP Guidance
- National Infrastructure Commission assessment
- National Adaptation Policy 3
- Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill

ACTION:

- ALL to feedback potential agenda items to AW, AG, HB and MM.

Next meeting:

Thursday 7th September 2023, 9am-12pm