

## **MINUTES OF THE REGIONAL TRANSPORT BOARD MEETING: 15 JUNE 2007**

### **ACTION**

#### **1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies**

Paul Jagger, Deputy Chair of the Assembly, took the Chair at the start of the meeting in the absence of the Chair. He welcomed members to the meeting and apologised that the Chair and a number of other members were delayed due to adverse weather.

At the start of the meeting, with fewer than half the members present, there was a suggestion that the meeting should be rescheduled for a future date, but it was felt that it would prove difficult to find a suitable date in members' diaries over the coming few weeks.

Chris Martin confirmed that there was no formal quorum for the Regional Transport Board. However, it was **agreed** that, should the attendance remain low, then the decision items should be circulated to members for comment then passed to the Regional Executive Board for approval at its meeting on 21 June 2007. Subsequently, with late arrivals taking attendance to 14 members, this provision was subsequently agreed not to be necessary (see minute under item 5).

The apologies for the meeting were **noted**. A full list of attendees and apologies are attached at **Annex A**.

#### **2. Developing the Role of the Board**

Members were updated on the discussions that had taken place at the Regional Transport Board Dinner on 14 June 2007.

The presentation and notes from this event are attached at **Annex B**.

Members then discussed how best to take this work forward. Suggestions included organising a Board Awayday in advance of the next round of Board meetings – or perhaps extend the next meeting of the Board in September to allow for a

comprehensive discussion on development of the Board.

It was **agreed** that Assembly officers should contact Board members to establish their views on the most appropriate way forward.

Chris Martin/  
Mike Padgett

### **3. Sheffield City Region Transport Vision**

Members received a presentation on Sheffield City Region's Transport Vision (slides attached at **Annex C**). This was one of an ongoing series of presentations to help the Board get a cross-region picture of emerging transport visions.

In the discussion that followed, a number of key points were raised:

- Some members found making progress with Finningley and Rossington Route Regeneration Scheme (FARRRS) very frustrating and were struggling to gain programme entry. In addition, there was some nervousness around private sector commitment to the scheme.
- The Board needs to fully understand the aims of the City Regions.
- There needs to be a balance between economic and environmental objectives.
- Questions were asked about the absence of demand management measures and it was felt that the Board needed to develop a regional approach to travel demand management.

Officers from Sheffield City Region were thanked for their presentation.

The Chair arrived at the meeting at this point and thanked Paul Jagger for chairing the meeting in his absence.

### **4. Minutes of the Last Meeting**

The minutes of the last meeting were **agreed** as an accurate record.

### **5. Matters Arising**

The matters arising from the previous meeting were **noted**.

Members were updated on the meeting between the Chair and National Grid regarding the Woodhead Tunnel, which

took place on 13 June 2007.

National Grid highlighted a number of key issues during the meeting including:

- The 400KV cable connects the north west with the Yorkshire power stations.
- The equipment is at the end of its useful life.
- The two older tunnels were damaged by years of operating steam trains and this process appears to be accelerating.
- There is not sufficient space in the Victorian tunnels for them to be relined and then to take additional cores which may be required in future.
- It would not be practicable to run trains in the same tunnel as the 400KV supply as temperatures can rise to a dangerous 50C.
- National Grid do not consider their proposals to lay the cable in the 'new' tunnel as a new transmission route.
- The work will be carried out in 2007-09 as permitted development.
- There will also be work on the 51 towers, which continue the line when it comes out of the tunnel.

The Chair emphasised that the route was (before Beeching) the main passenger route between South Yorkshire and Manchester. It was also a busy freight route until 1986. In the light of rapidly growing demand for rail travel (passenger and freight) and the particular difficulties of crossing the Pennines, the implications for transport of occupying the 1953 tunnel with cables must be fully considered.

It was noted that, although there have been a number of references to re-opening the tunnel for rail, nobody is working on a specific scheme. However, long-term improvement of transpennine rail links (including between Sheffield and Manchester) is a top priority in the Regional Transport Strategy.

It was **agreed** that the Chair should write to CLG and DfT expressing the Board's concerns about losing the opportunity to use the tunnel.

It was **agreed** that the number of members present at the meeting was now satisfactory for decision making purposes.

Chris Glen

## 6. Yorkshire and Humber Plan (RSS) – Publication of the EiP Panel Report

Members **noted** the key messages contained in the Panel Report from the Examination in Public of the Yorkshire and Humber Plan (draft RSS) – which incorporates the Regional Transport Strategy.

They were then asked to provide comments on the Panel's recommendations on Transport. In the discussion that followed, the following points were raised:

- The housing figures in West Yorkshire will have a major impact on transport and infrastructure in the region. The Board should be lobbying Government now to ensure the region gets the funding required.
- Recommendation 8.5 – Reference to Sheffield should be removed from the officer comments.
- Recommendation 8.6 – There needs to be a 'level playing field' with regards to parking restrictions.
- There are many important strategic issues for consideration.
- The covering report for this item was overly positive and one member felt that this did not accurately represent the Panel Report. It was felt that this was open to interpretation.

Members were asked to forward any additional comments to Mike Padgett ([Michael.Padgett@YHAssembly.gov.uk](mailto:Michael.Padgett@YHAssembly.gov.uk)) as soon as possible to enable them to be fed back to the Regional Planning Board at its meeting on 29 June 2007.

## 7. Requests for Endorsement of Local Transport Schemes for Funding from the Regional Funding Allocation

### a. Context for Decision Making on Endorsing New Schemes for Funding

Members **noted** the report, which provided the context within which the reports under items 7b and 7c should be considered.

It was confirmed that JMP Consultants had made some minor changes to the methodology, in line with the previous decision of the Board, and a presentation was given on the Assessment for the schemes featured at items 7b and 7c

(slides attached at **Annex D**).

Members asked for clarification on the 35 schemes that were not included in the previous regional funding bid submitted to Government in January 2006. It was stated that these schemes would not be revisited until the full review of transport priorities takes place in summer 2008.

The Board acknowledged that there are other avenues of funding available for all schemes and that promoters should be looking at alternatives.

### **b. Proposal for Leeds Bus Rapid Transit**

Members discussed proposals for a Leeds Bus Rapid Transit scheme to replace earlier proposals for light rail in Leeds.

It was confirmed that the assessment had been carried out on the full scheme, not just the element that the Board is asked to support. Had the assessment looked at only this element, the results of benefit/cost ratio would have been even better.

There were some concerns that the report was not clear on what the Board was being asked to endorse.

This was clarified and members **agreed** the recommendation in the report to endorse the first phase of funding (£150m) from within the Regional Funding Allocation to 2015/16. Discussions will continue with Metro and Leeds about a method of phasing the remaining expenditure as part of the overall review of RFA expected in 2008.

### **c. Proposal for a Link Road between the A18 and A180 near Stallingborough, North East Lincolnshire**

Members discussed proposals for a new link road connecting the A18 and the A180, providing access to the port of Immingham from the South.

Members **agreed** to endorse the request for £7.065m from the current Regional Funding Allocation for the scheme, in the terms set out in the recommendation in the report.

Some members expressed concerns about taking single schemes forward without anything to compare them with. It was felt that proper prioritisation could not take place

without comparison.

These concerns were noted, but it was stressed that the majority of schemes could not wait until other similar schemes are put forward to the Board for approval.

There were also concerns that the Board was over-programming, as the Highways Agency figures were not yet known. It was stressed that the Board can only deal with the figures available to it at the time and no formal notification had been received from the Highways Agency of any cost increases. Any Highways Agency schemes with a cost increase of greater than 10% would need to come back to the Board for approval.

### **INFORMATION ITEMS**

- **Integrated Regional Framework – Consultation Draft**
- **Governance Arrangements – Regional Transport Board**

The information items were **noted**.

**Date of Next Meeting: 14 September 2007 (TBC)**

Nicola Plumstead, Business Services Officer  
19 June 2007