Creating opportunities in Devon, Plymouth, Somerset and Torbay

Heart of South West Local Transport Board

Minutes of Meeting 10.00, 12th July 2016, Great Moor House, Exeter

Tim Jones *	Heart of SW LEP
Cllr Robert Excell *	Torbay Council
Dave Black *	Devon County Council
Sally Farley *	Plymouth City Council
Nick Engert *	Heart of SW LEP
Cllr David Fothergill *	Somerset County Council
David Northey	Network Rail
Andrew Roberts	Highways England
Ian Beavis	Independent Transport Advisor (ITA)
Chris Sanders	Independent Transport Advisor (ITA)
Ian Harrison	Independent Transport Advisor (ITA)
Philip Heseltine	Plymouth City Council
Mike O'Dowd Jones	Somerset County Council
Sunita Mills	Somerset County Council
Melanie Sealey	Devon County Council
James Anstee	Devon County Council
Adam Luscombe	Torbay Council
Adam Chambers	LEP Strategic Investment Panel
Chris Garcia	Heart of SW LEP

* Voting member of Board (or nominated substitute)

1. Apologies:

Councillor Andrew Leadbetter – Devon County Council
Councillor Patrick Nicholson – Plymouth City Council
Paul Barnard – Plymouth City Council
Paul Garrod – Highways England
Mark King – Torbay Council
Paula Hewitt – Somerset County Council
Jamie Hulland – Devon County Council
Andrew Ardley – Devon County Council

2. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

It was proposed that Councillor David Fothergill proposed to be confirmed as Chairman and all voting members agreed. It was proposed by David Fothergill that Councillor Robert Excell be elected as Vice Chairman and seconded by Dave Black, all voting members agreed.

3. Minutes of meeting 9th February 2016

These were agreed as a true record of the meeting.

4. Formal confirmation of decisions made at informal meetings (Paper C)

Paper C was presented as a record of decisions made at the informal meetings held on the 25th April 2016 and on the 31st May 2016. All Board members confirmed agreement.

5. Programme entry business case: M5 Junction 25, Taunton (Paper A)

Mike O'Dowd Jones introduced the scheme and summarised the objectives, risks and economic appraisal as detailed in the programme entry business case Paper A.

The scheme to improve capacity at M5 Junction 25 supports the economy in Taunton by facilitating the delivery of new employment and residential development and improves access to Taunton and the motorway.

Board members raised questions regarding;

- The potential for Environment Agency Contributions towards the scheme.
- The delay in progressing planning through a local development order.
- That if one of the benefits is to provide access to further residential development, then is this an opportunity for securing additional external funding.
- That if there is any delay in external funding, is there a way to fund and bring this scheme forward.

Ian Harrison provided a summary from the ITA;

- It is a complex scheme due to the uncertainties and the assumptions that have been made about the A358 and local development. The employment site is not in the local plan hence the requirement for a Local Development Order from Taunton Dean. And the scheme is dependent on this going ahead.
- The Transport Model has been updated to consider this proposed scheme and Tone Way. But not the A358. Highways England modelling information is needed for this.
- The benefits for the scheme are significant. But if the A358 indicates free flow then this will step the benefits down due to less impact on junction 25.
- Flooding impacts need to be resolved as this is an unquantified impact at present. There are deliverability challenges.
- Contributions depend on the interrelationships with the strategic employment site and with Highways England. Risks are present with planning and the LDO process. With land acquisition and agreement from Highways England.
- Financially the £18m scheme estimate is more than we would want it to cost. The 44% OB figure is prudent with the risks. But it is high and this may come down. Would also think that higher developer contributions should be possible.

Highway England was asked to comment on the A358 project. Andy Roberts responded that there is no confirmed timescale and that HE cannot be seen to be prejudicing any outcomes from consultation. But indicated that a preferred option should be available in 2017.

Board Members considered the ITA recommendation to;

1. Approve programme entry for M5 Junction 25 Capacity Improvements as part of the LTB 2015-2021 Programme.
2. Noting the proposed layout for the scheme is contingent upon the promotion of the Strategic Employment Site by Taunton Deane BC through a Local Development Order, and the development by Highways England of proposals for dualling the A358 between Ilminster and Taunton.
3. Noting the cost estimate for the scheme will be further refined, and in view of the inter-relationship with the Strategic Employment Site and A358 a further report is to be considered before the scale of the financial contribution from the Growth Deal 2 programme is determined. In the interim the indicative allocation remains at £12.90m
4. And that in view of the scale of the current scheme estimate, that the promoters should make every effort to secure additional external funding.

All Board members voted in favour of the recommendations.

6. Final approval business case: Torbay Western Corridor (Paper B)

Ian Harrison introduced the scheme to provide capacity improvements on the A3022 from Churscombe Cross to Windy Corner. The full scheme comprises six related improvements along the full route. The final business case in Paper B deals with three improvements and a further Final Business case will be submitted for the remaining sections. The Strategic case has been previously agreed. The scheme proposal has not changed and the outputs remain the same. The cost estimate has increased and the BCR has reduced but still remains very high. The requested LTB contribution remains the same.

Board members raised questions regarding;

- Taking common land and needing Secretary of State approval.
- Any local opposition to the proposals.

Board Members considered the ITA recommendation that;

1. The Local Transport Board confirms their continued support for the Torbay Western Corridor scheme through a contribution of £7.30m.

All Board members voted in favour of the recommendation.

7. Business Case Progress Update (Paper D)

Ian Harrison presented a progress update summary of the Major and Non-Major schemes included in Paper D.

Tim Jones requested that financial and delivery reports need to be included for all projects. Ian Harrison confirmed that this will be reported to the next Board meeting.

Nick Engert queried any issues with the delivery of the Majors Scheme for Edginswell Station and dates to be on site. Adam Luscombe responded on scheme progress to update that that there have been no further announcements yet on the New Stations Fund. But the GRIP3 report has been received but not signed off. Outline drawings have been submitted, planning consent is in and land is under our control. Sally Farley that we raise New Stations Funding through the Peninsula Rail Partnership. It was confirmed that our representative on the board will raise timescales for funding decisions.

Tim Jones queried whether there were any issues with procurement for the Majors Scheme Yeovil Western Corridor. Mike O'Dowd Jones provided an update that the procurement timetable has extended but advanced works are starting and they are happy with the progress.

No decisions were required by Board members.

8. Dates for future meetings.

It was agreed that forward dates for future board meetings would be circulated to suit the availability of voting Board members. Commencing September 2016 on an initial three monthly recurring basis.

9. AOB

Sally Farley reminded board members that Claim Forms need to in this Friday (15/07/2016). But a revised form has not been circulated.

Tim Jones suggested that following the referendum a truth check on match funding will need to be made at the next meeting.

The meeting ended at 11.50