

**Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme – 15th Board Meeting
Friday 18th May 2012, 10:00 – 12:30, Great Minster House**

Attendees

Mostaque Ahmed	<i>Chair, DfT</i>	Matthew Lugg	<i>Leicestershire CC</i>
Jason Russell	<i>Surrey CC</i>	Haydn Davies	<i>DfT</i>
Steve Kent	<i>Cheshire West & Chester</i>	Dana Skelley	<i>Transport for London</i>
David Hutchinson	<i>HTMA</i>	Tony Gates	<i>HTMA</i>
Paul Bird	<i>Essex CC</i>	David Grunwell	<i>Highways Agency</i>
Phil Dyer	<i>Atkins</i>	Chris Mulligan	<i>Atkins</i>
Michael MacAuley (part)	<i>Local Government Group</i>	Lloyd Miles	<i>Secretariat, DfT</i>

Distribution: All present plus Andrew Smith (Hampshire), Gary Thompson (Leicestershire), Sam Cunningham (Surrey), Tim Pemberton & Jane Coslett (Cheshire West and Chester), Eamon Lally (LGG), Steve Berry (DfT) and Derek Turner (HA).

Item

1. Introductions

1.1 Introductions were made.

2. Note and Actions from 14th Board meeting 19th March 2012

2.1 These were agreed and will be published on the HMEP website.

3. Programme Management - Dashboard

3.1 The Board discussed the latest version of the Programme Dashboard. Key points included:

- Issues – The summer break and Olympics would also be an opportunity to engage with some as it can be a relatively quiet time for parts of the sector.
- Engagement progress – Non local authority participants are more numerous than the 2 already noted.
- Engagement progress – maps of the non-aware local authorities, and the regional alliances were requested (**Action 15.1**; E&E Group).

4. Design Assurance Group

Update from 1st May 2012 meeting

- 4.1 DAG members were recognising the time and commitment required for HMEP if the group is to add value and act as the user's guardian of the Programme. All day sessions were now planned for future meetings.
- 4.2 The HTMA paper had been considered by DAG on 1st May, and now used the terms 'client' and 'provider'. It made relevant points beyond private sector providers, as all arrangements for highways maintenance reflected a client-provider relationship in some form (**Action 15.2**; TG/DH would circulate the paper to all HTMA representatives on HMEP projects). The HTMA would now develop two further papers for HMEP which could evolve into future projects (**Action B15.3**; DH/TG):
 - Risk management and apportionment; proper consideration of the factors and costs involved when deciding who should be responsible for risks is often crucial in providing efficient services.
 - Relationships between the client and provider; these were crucial from the very senior to the practitioner level as efficient working practices can be easily undermined by a single level not buying in.
- 4.3 Recognising the boundary between public and private sector and where they are in terms of the client/provider relationship at each local authority would be key in HMEP's engagement strategy. This would enable the appropriate language to be used so all clients and providers can be engaged, and not just the more obvious public-private ones. The involvement of DfT and HTMA must avoid the programme being labelled as only relevant for clients who have contracts with private companies.
- 4.4 The programme's output must be relevant to all highways maintenance services including those with direct service organisations. Whichever model was used the process for maintenance services needed to be efficient from one end to the other, and this was relevant to all authorities and providers.
- 4.5 Collaboration across the sector was also seen as key, providing a binding theme between individual HMEP products. While it may be difficult to quantify the benefit of this discretely, and it may not deliver the easily demonstrable benefits offered by other proposals, such as closer working between clients and providers, it was a key first step in the process. The HMEP survey had also revealed enthusiasm for this project.
- 4.6 The standard specification had generated discussion at DAG. While an outcome specification may deliver the most benefits in the long term, there were issues to resolve before it could be widely adopted by local authorities. Many would be unfamiliar with such a contract, and their networks were very different from the Highways Agency's, which had mostly purpose built roads. Dana Skelley confirmed that the experience

in developing the standard contracts in London were that clients would not be able to move to an outcome based contract at the moment.

- 4.7 The HA confirmed that they are about to issue an outcome based contract, but this had been a challenging process and lessons are likely to be learnt once it was underway. This should provide a useful case study for the future (**Action 15.4**; DG).
- 4.8 It was suggested that validated case studies that demonstrated clear efficiency benefits should be a focus for HMEP. The potholes report provided a template with its case studies and follow-up work, and the knowledge hub would be a critical method of communicating these examples to the sector.
- 4.9 DAG suggested that a further meeting be arranged with the project advocates and managers to clear the outstanding business cases. This would help ensure that DAG understood the full background to each project and could challenge it from an informed perspective (**Action 15.5**; PB/HD).

Benefits realisation and verification

- 4.10 DAG were planning on completing their review of the benefits associated with each project by their next meeting on 26th June. The key issues would be whether the benefits forecast by projects were realistic, how to establish a baseline figure and then measure the impact achieved by early enablers, especially as there were currently a lot of assumptions, but little measurement, in the figures provided.
- 4.11 It was noted that there was currently a mismatch between the longer timescales needed for measuring benefits realised, and the short timescale of early enablers. Any benefits process should therefore be light touch, and involve the sector input as much as possible. Proposals concerning benefits realisation and verification were also being considered as part of the future programme support.
- 4.12 It was noted that a number of the early projects did not have forecasted high direct benefits. Clients may not be willing to give direct feedback so a proxy approach would be needed. Some products would have cumulative benefits across the sector, such as the standard specification.
- 4.13 Potential examples of activities where a high level of direct benefits could be shown from working more efficiently were statutory inspections and street lighting inspections. Their links to liability and claims could also offer a positive quick win.

5. Engagement and Enabling Group update

- 5.1 The last E&E group meeting had focused on the contact tracker, local delivery plans and the sub-national structure for HMEP engagement. The advocates were encouraged to maintain their focus on these actions especially completing local delivery plans. However it was recognised that developing the right language and messages for engagement, and identifying appropriate individuals, would be challenging. It was stressed that there was a significant risk to the Programme if people were not identified and engaged to undertake local delivery plan activities

6. Knowledge Hub and LGA proposal

- 6.1 Steve Kent introduced this item as he was the advocate responsible. So far a number of workshops had looked at the key issues, and it was clear that it should be a modern 'knowledge community' type network rather than a mere repository of information. This approach potentially could deliver much of HMEP's output with only a 'thin' website retained. Mike MacAuley then gave a demonstration of the LGA's recently launched Knowledge Hub and explained its key features.
- 6.2 It was agreed that HMEP's Knowledge Hub project group would establish itself as a trial on the LGA's site. This would then be expanded to include others, such as the Board, E&E and DAG and appropriate HMEP documents placed on the site.

7. Future Programme Support

- 7.1 The Board were presented with some initial proposals on how HMEP work could develop between now and April 2013, and also beyond, with programme support. The Board then discussed these proposals with Atkins representatives absent from the room. It was agreed that Jason Russell would circulate a paper on the future requirements for HMEP for circulation to Board by 25th May with responses required from Board members by Tuesday 29th May. **(Action 15.6; JR/Board).**

8. Potholes Report publication and actions for HMEP

- 8.1 Matthew Lugg put forward draft follow-up actions resulting from publication of the final report as an example of how HMEP should handle future publications and releases. It was agreed that HMEP Board would now be responsible for monitoring and reporting on how the recommendations were being implemented periodically. Comments on the specific actions as currently worded were requested by Friday 25th May **(Action 15.7; ML/Board).**

9. Post 2013 options

- 9.1 Matthew Lugg explained that a number of existing models of sector led support programmes exist, but any preferred option for HMEP must be sustainable with an independent income stream. Due to the number of

factors that needed to be considered and resolved HMEP might not be ready to fully transfer from DfT sponsorship to the sector by April 2013.

9.2 DfT now had a longer-term commitment to support the programme so the April 2013 date was no longer as critical, but the Department would still need to understand where HMEP was heading in the longer term (in terms of a sustainable sector-led model) well before this date in order to make any decisions necessary on the issue.

9.3 It was agreed that the Board would start actively engaging with the sector and via representatives with Infrastructure UK and BIS on the future of the programme, and this should include service providers. However the nature and depth of this engagement would need further consideration as the timetable for actions was clarified (**Action 15.8**; ML).

10. Efficiency Proposal - Elgin Roadworks website

10.1 The promoters of this website and associated roadwork data were keen to see it developed as the single national source for free at point of public use roadworks information, and were seeking HMEP endorsement and also potentially funding for development of further capabilities. However the Board felt there were other more appropriate sources of funding available, and that HMEP was not in a position to financially support commercial products. As with previous requests, it would be better promoted by existing local authority clients, potentially as a good practice case study (**Action 15.9**; HD to respond to Elgin).

11. AOB

11.1 It was noted that this would be David Hutchinson's last meeting. The Board recorded their strong appreciation for his enthusiasm and hard work that had been critical in establishing the programme from its early beginnings.

12. Date of next meeting

12.1 Due to the 11 week gap between the 13th July and 1st October meetings it was agreed to hold an extra meeting between these dates, with Leicester as the suggested location (**Action 15.10**; LM). The next meetings would now be:

- Friday 13th July, 10:00, Room H3, GMH
- Friday 24th August, 10:00. Room 305, LCC
- Monday 1st October, 13:30, Room 3/23, GMH
- Friday 30th November, 13:30, GMH, London