



EAST WEST MAIN LINE PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIC BOARD

Wednesday 15 March 2023

11am – 12pm

Virtual Meeting held via Microsoft Teams

Apologies

Cllr Duncan Enright
Cllr Robert Roche
Cllr Richard Stobart
Cllr Katie Thornburrow

Oxfordshire County Council
Luton Borough Council
Cambridge City Council
Cambridge City Council

Present

Cllr Sue Clark
Cllr Steve Broadbent
Cllr Suzie Morely
Cllr Philip Smart
Cllr Ian Stutely
Cllr Alex Beckett
Cllr Liz Leffman
Cllr Michael Headley
Cllr Phil Larratt
Cllr Phil Bibby
Cllr Norman Brooks
Cllr Ruth Brown
Cllr Alison Cackett
Cllr Susan Glossop
Cllr Alexander Nicoll

Central Bedfordshire
Buckinghamshire Council
Mid Suffolk District Council
Ipswich Borough Council
Norwich City Council
Cambridgeshire County Council
Oxfordshire County Council
Bedford Borough Council
West Northamptonshire Council
Hertfordshire County Council
East Suffolk Council
North Hertfordshire District Council
East Suffolk Council
West Suffolk Council
Suffolk County Council

In attendance

David Allatt
Jordi Beascochea
Lewis Boudville
Andrew Bramwell
Trevor Brennan
Susan Browning
Kate Campbell
Hilary Chipping
David Cumming
Katherine Davies
Hanane Elmaarouf
Helen Fallon

Cambridgeshire County Council
East West Rail Company
East Suffolk Council
Suffolk County Council
England's Economic Heartland
Buckinghamshire Council
East West Railway Company
South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership
Norfolk County Council
Babergh and Mid Suffolk Council
England's Economic Heartland
England's Economic Heartland

Fiona Foulkes	England's Economic Heartland
James Gagg	England's Economic Heartland
Will Gallagher	East West Rail Company
Naomi Green	England's Economic Heartland
Philip Howard	Central Bedfordshire Council
Mark James	East West Rail Alliance
Tony Jones	Norwich City Council
Adam King	England's Economic Heartland
Laura Leech	Buckinghamshire Council
Greg Logan	Bedford Borough Council
Sara Noonan	West Suffolk Council
Erin Pitcher	England's Economic Heartland
James Povey	Milton Keynes City Council
Jon Shortland	Bedford Borough Council
Jeremy Smith	Cambridgeshire County Council
Andrew Summers	Transport East
Julian Sykes	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Louise Symes	North Hertfordshire District Council
James White	Western Gateway
Adam Wood	Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership
Rupert Zierler	Buckinghamshire Council

Item		Action
1	<p>Introduction and apologies</p> <p>Chair introduced the meeting and attendees were made aware the meeting was being recorded for minute taking purpose.</p> <p>Cllr Phil Smart made a declaration of interest as an employee of Rail Freight Group.</p>	
2	<p>Minutes of last meeting</p> <p>Incorrect names in the previous minutes were corrected.</p>	Update the minutes.
3	<p>Aylesbury link</p> <p>Naomi Green gave an update on the Aylesbury link.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letter from the Department of Transport (DfT) set out that the Aylesbury link was not included as part of the commitment made in the Budget but did set out some of the additional work being done around the Marylebone to Claydon Junction and work being done by Network Rail (NR) to look at the feasibility of extending small enhancements to allow services to go beyond the Aylesbury Vale Parkway terminus. EEH has spoken to NR to understand the work they are doing. Discussions are continuing between NR and DfT, but we have not had sight of anything yet. Need to continue to make the case for the Aylesbury link. Proposal that EWMLP continues to scope some of the economic case and strengthen some of the economic analysis but not move into a full business case development which we originally proposed as we do not know what is coming out of the Network Rail work and conversations. Recommendation: EWMLP should continue to develop the support for the Aylesbury link in a proportionate way whilst waiting for the outcomes of other activity in this area. <p>Questions</p> <p>Cllr Phil Larratt said it is disappointing that the Aylesbury link is not going ahead as originally thought. Highlighted that it is a vital link on the north-south route to</p>	

	<p>improve connectivity to and from Northampton and Long Buckby. Happy to support the recommendation and West Northamptonshire Council is happy to work to take this forward and provide support.</p> <p>Naomi Green said that alongside this project EEH is taking forth a connectivity study from the Thames Valley through Buckinghamshire to Northamptonshire. Said it will hopefully complement the Aylesbury link work and it can reinforce the connectivity benefits.</p> <p>Recommendation agreed.</p>	
4	<p>EWR Company engagement approach</p> <p>Will Gallagher provided an update on East West Rail Company (EWRC) engagement approach.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been an increase in media interest and positive coverage on EWR over the last three to four months - directly linked to its priority in the Autumn Statement. • A lot of engagement work has been done - work with local stakeholders, meeting local MPs, being out and about in Cambridgeshire and Bedford. • After the route update announcement, EWRC want to have a good pattern of engagement so that local communities can more directly influence the shape of the scheme that is being developed. • The awareness and perceptions tracker shows that awareness has significantly increased over the last three months and that perceptions are more positive. • Over the last three months 92% of public enquiries were resolved within five days. • The EWR newsletter has a high engagement rate. • About to put out a video campaign on what EWR means to me, highlighting the human benefits of the scheme. <p>Questions</p> <p>Cllr Sue Clark asked if there will be any announcements during the pre-election period?</p> <p>Will Gallagher said there will not.</p> <p>Cllr Steve Broadbent asked whether the awareness and perception tracker tracks trends by area over time? Do you go coast to coast?</p> <p>Will Gallagher said there is some insight at a more granular level than overall, however need to be careful as the sample size might not be statistically significant to draw too many conclusions from. But every area has seen an increase in awareness. Currently do not go coast to coast but will have a conversation with the team to get an understanding if this can be done.</p> <p>Andrew Summers said he supported the coast-to-coast narrative as Transport East has just submitted transport strategy to the Secretary of State. One of the key elements is energising coastal communities. If EWRC want support with the coast-to-coast narrative Transport East has a lot of material which can be used.</p> <p>Will Gallagher said that is helpful and EWRC will reach out as it is an important part of the narrative.</p> <p>Cllr Sue Clark raised that in the previous meeting Will Gallagher said he would look into improving the stakeholder group meetings and asked for an update on this.</p> <p>Will Gallagher said they have a new member of their team who is leading the local representative groups. Two briefings on high interest areas including the business case and the environmental assessment.</p> <p>Cllr Sue Clark suggested for the next set of meetings to be in person.</p>	<p>Will Gallagher will reach out to Transport East about coast-to-coast narratives.</p>

	<p>Will Gallagher agreed and said once the route is announced they will follow up with more in person engagement.</p>	
<p>5</p>	<p>Ely Adam King gave an update on making the case for Ely junction improvements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The board has been consistent on how improving the Felixstowe to Midlands corridor is the overwhelming priority for getting more freight on rail. Key to this is improving the track in and around Ely. • Network Rail found that Ely improvements would lead to 2900 more freight services every year from Felixstowe. It would cause 100,000 less HGVs which would cut congestion by around 5.6 million hours and 1.7 million tonnes of carbon over 60 years. It would lead to 277,000 more passenger journeys and has an impressive benefit cost ratio of £4.89 for every one pound spent. All these benefits for under £500 million. • Ely had been expected to be funded by government, but recent correspondence has suggested cooling on the prioritisation of Ely by government. As a result, the Ely taskforce met and asked for a brochure to be produced which highlighted the case for Ely. EEH has done this in house with support from Transport East. • The brochure, 'Keeping Trade on Track' highlights reasons for investment in Ely, including its importance to the Midlands and the North. • There is overwhelming support from across the country for the scheme, it is mentioned in the transport strategies of Transport for the North, Midland's Connect, Transport East, EEH. And supported by all the trade bodies – rail freight group, Logistics UK, CILT and the freight line companies. • The brochure contains quotes from business leaders, politicians, and industry, including from Cllr Nicoll as the chair of the Eastern section board. • The brochure was completed last week and has been sent on to relevant stakeholders such as MPs and government. It will be formally launched in early summer or late spring. <p>Cllr Alexander Nicoll said that in addition to the outlined benefits, the improvement at Ely will support the government's Freeport policy. He said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the major infrastructure pinch points aren't addressed the entire vision for the East West Railway from the East Anglian coast through to the Midlands and Bristol and Wales will be impacted. • It is important to reach out to MPs and other stakeholders beyond the east. <p>Steve Broadbent said he was supportive of this suggestion, and it is important to follow it up.</p> <p>Naomi Green said we endorse that and will look to do a parliamentary event in the summer to support the actual formal launch of this.</p> <p>Cllr Phil Smart drew attention to a piece on Politics East on promoting the need for Ely. [Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dc6ukqjTofU]</p>	
<p>6</p>	<p>Eastern Section update Cllr Alexander Nicoll gave an update on the Eastern Section Board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Eastern board meets relatively close to this meeting, delighted getting regular attendance with the diversity of local authorities and other stakeholders, it adds a further legitimacy to the project. • At the recent Eastern Board meeting Adam King presented work being done on Ely and Haughley Junction. • Had a presentation from Andrew Hudson (NR) looking at the routes which expand from our area which are important for passenger services and how they can be enhanced for net zero initiatives. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussed how frequency can be increased between Cambridge, Ipswich and Ipswich, Peterborough for freight and passengers, reducing congestion on roads. • Discussed what smart wins could be achieved • Raised the point of not defaulting to silos in terms of individual area schemes. <p>Andrew Summers gave an update on the work Transport East (TE) is doing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TE have submitted transport strategy to secretary of state which set out that rail is a fundamental component of our future transport network. • Transport East has completed phase one of its rail work that comprises the publication of our State of Rail Report [Link: https://www.transporteast.org.uk/transport-east-sets-out-clear-need-for-rail-investment-to-government/]. This sets out the current condition of the rail network across the east from Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex down to Southend and Thurrock. It sets out a range of challenges that needs to be address if it is going to be adequate or better for delivering transport outcomes. • Held a parliamentary reception to launch the report which Huw Merriman, Rail Minister attended and gave a speech about the work that is being done on rail. • Entering stage two of the rail work, after purdah there will be a widespread engagement programme to secure the aspirations across the region’s stakeholders, businesses, and communities about what rail does for them. • There will be a lot of information coming out to provide case studies and anecdotes for how rail will support businesses and communities going forward. Want to use this to create a vision for rail in the east and set out evidenced investment priorities. So what can we do over the short term, the medium term and the long term and how we integrate that rail with other transport? And the production of LTPS at the same time <p>Questions Cllr Susan Glossop asked if Ely does get funded when could we expect the work to be completed? Cllr Phil Smart answered it will take at best six years, but somewhere between six and ten years.</p>	
7	<p>AOB Fiona Foulkes said that the membership subscription has not been paid by everyone. Will email those with outstanding contributions.</p>	<p>Fiona Foulkes will email those with outstanding membership contributions.</p>
8	<p>Future Meeting Dates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 June (11-1.30pm) (Online) • Future meetings to be confirmed <p>Potential to have one meeting a year in person. Current working idea is to have the meeting after June (potentially in Sept) in person, potentially with a site visit included.</p>	