

**Berkshire Local Transport Body – Meeting held on Thursday, 14th November, 2013.**

<b>Present:-</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Authority</b>
	Councillor Page (Chair)	Reading Borough Council
	Steve Capel-Davies (Deputy Chair)	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
	Councillor Bale	West Berkshire Council
	Councillor Brunel-Walker	Bracknell Forest Council
	Melvyn Hale	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
	Robert Lynch	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
	Councillor Munawar	Slough Borough Council
	Councillor Sleight (deputising for Councillor Baker)	Wokingham Borough Council
	Philip von Heydebreck	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
	<b>Deputy Member In Attendance</b>	
	Councillor Harrison	Bracknell Forest Council
<b>Apologies for</b>	Councillor Baker	Wokingham Borough Council
<b>Absence:-</b>	Ian Frost	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
	Councillor Hill	The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead
	Kathy Matthews	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP

**PART 1**

**8. Declarations of Interest**

None were declared.

**9. Minutes of the Meeting held on 18th July 2013**

**Resolved –** That the minutes of the meeting of the Berkshire Local Transport Body held on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2013 be approved as a correct record.

**10. Progress on the Prioritised Schemes**

Ruth Bagley, Slough Borough Council, introduced a report setting out the progress of each of the eight schemes given Programme Entry status at the Berkshire Local Transport Body (BLTB) meeting in July 2013.

It was recognised that the total funding required for the schemes prioritised of £63.1m exceeded the £14.5m confirmed for Berkshire for four years from April 2015, however the list provided a pipeline of schemes which may be able to access other funding streams. Members were informed that the Department for Transport (DfT) had confirmed that this financial allocation was guaranteed to Thames Valley Berkshire (TVB) LEP as part of the emerging Growth Deal and would be exempt from the competition for Local Growth Fund allocations.

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LEPs would have local discretion to rescind LTB prioritisations in favour of other priorities identified in the Strategic Economic Plan, however TVB stated that it did not intend to use this discretion.

The BLTB discussed a number of issues including whether schemes needed to be completed during the four year funding window and how the funding was profiled across the period. Members were advised that the detailed funding profile was a matter to be discussed and agreed with DfT and that all prioritised schemes were envisaged for completion in the four year period. The BLTB emphasised the importance of progressing schemes without undue delay to ensure they were ready for delivery as funding became available and that continued efforts be made to identify alternative funding sources in order to progress as many prioritised schemes as possible. Officers confirmed that scheme promoters were exploring other funding opportunities both to reduce the LTB funding requirement for prioritised schemes and to progress non-prioritised scheme where possible through alternative funding mechanisms. In response to a question about potentially adding schemes to the programme if some of the prioritised schemes were not deliverable, officers commented that deliverability had formed part of the assessment criteria and progress would be closely monitored with scheme promoters. It was also highlighted that a 'reserve list' was included in the programme and that other funding sources made available could open up the programme to new schemes in the future.

The BLTB reviewed the progress of each of the prioritised schemes in detail and the following points were noted:

- West Berkshire – Kings Road Link Road: progress report noted.
- Reading – Green Park Station: risk that that the 'Train Operating Company (TOC) does not agree to stop trains at the new station' was discussed. Discussions were ongoing and there was a high degree of confidence that the TOC were committed and it was also hoped to include in the next franchise specification.
- Reading (with Wokingham) – Eastern Thames Valley MRT: funding for the scheme was still not resolved as BLTB funds alone were not sufficient to proceed. The deliverability of the scheme would continue to be tested and officers were satisfied with its progress at the present time.
- Bracknell Forest – Coral Reef Roundabout: low risk scheme could be delivered relatively quickly once funding was available. It was agreed to add the approximate timescale from approval to delivery in future updates.
- Slough to Heathrow MRT – Western and Central Sections: progress report noted, including the status of local funding from Section 106 contributions and the Council.

- North Wokingham Distributor Road: progress report noted and agreed to add a more detailed programme timetable to future reports.
- South Wokingham Distributor Road: the risk of developers failing to reach agreement with Network Rail on the new bridge over the railway was noted. Discussions with Network Rail had started. It was noted the scheme was slightly behind schedule.

Following discussion, the BLTB agreed to note the updates provided on the progress of the schemes and confirmed its support for the eight prioritised schemes.

**Resolved –**

- (a) That the progress of each of the schemes be noted.
- (b) That the continued support of BLTB for each of the eight schemes be confirmed.

**11. LTB Funding Update and Relationship to Growth Deal**

Tim Smith and Richard Tyndall, TVB LEP, gave an update on the funds currently available to the LTB and the relationship to the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP), Growth Deals and Local Growth Fund.

Members noted the letter from DfT dated 16<sup>th</sup> July 2013 which formally set out the funding allocations and provided an update on the Growth Deals and a range of other related matters. It was confirmed that the allocation of £14.5m for Berkshire between April 2015 and March 2019 would move into the Local Growth Fund. TVB LEP welcomed the detailed work that had been done by the LTB and the Berkshire Strategic Transport (Members) Forum in developing and agreeing the prioritised list of schemes and confirmed that this would be reflected in the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP).

The BLTB was updated on the current progress of the SEP and noted that a consultation draft was due to be published in December 2013 and would be subject to a period of consultation. This would be followed by negotiations with the Government regarding the Growth Deal. Members attention was drawn to the 'pressing needs' which would be included in the SEP as detailed in paragraph 13 of the report which included improving surface access to Heathrow; north-south links between the M40, M4 and M3; investing in enabling infrastructure that supported Strategic Development Locations; increased network capacity in existing urban areas; and the inclusion of schemes with a strong sustainable transport element.

Members discussed a number of issues including the relationship between economic need and infrastructure development and the linkages between neighbouring LEPs about which discussions were planned in January. The BLTB welcomed the inclusion of transport infrastructure as a key pillar in the

emerging SEP and felt that the merger of the LTB programme into the activities of the LEP would be positive in view of the close collaboration between the BLTB and LEP to date. It was felt that this put Berkshire in a strong position to compete for resources via the Local Growth Fund.

**Resolved –** That the report be noted.

## **12. Procurement of Independent Assessment Consultants**

Richard Tyndall introduced a report which sought approval to make some further amendments to the BLTB Founding Document and provided an update on the procurement of independent assessors.

Members noted that Parts 1 and 2 of the BLTB Assurance Framework, the Founding Document, had been approved by DfT and the report set out the proposed response of BLTB to address the matters in Part 3 which included the LTB assessment of scheme appraisals; VfM statements; sign off; monitoring and evaluation; quality assurance; and the review and publication of evaluations. Following consideration, Members agreed the proposed wording of Part 3 of the Founding Document as set out in the report. Members were informed that the BLTB would work with Buckinghamshire LTB to jointly procure the services of appropriate consultancy, independent of the transport authorities, to conduct independent assessment of scheme proposals and post-delivery evaluations. TVB LEP procurement procedures would be undertaken for this purpose.

**Resolved –**

- (a) That the proposed amendments to part 3 of Berkshire Local Transport Body's Assurance Framework be adopted.
- (b) That the intention to jointly procure independent assessors with Buckinghamshire LTB be noted.

## **13. BLTB Forward Plan**

Members considered the Forward Plan for the period to March 2014 and a list of provisional dates for BLTB meetings were proposed. In addition to the confirmed BLTB date of 13<sup>th</sup> March 2014, the following programme of dates for 2014/15 were agreed:

- Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> July 2014, 4.00pm.
- Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2014, 4.00pm.
- Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2015, 4.00pm.

**Resolved –**

- (a) That the BLTB Forward Plan be noted; and
- (b) That the programme of BLTB meeting dates for 2014/15 be agreed.

**14. Date of Next Meeting**

It was confirmed that the next meeting of BLTB would be held on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2014 at 4.00pm at The Centre, Farnham Road, Slough.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 4.00 pm and closed at 4.55 pm)