

BRIDGE OWNERS FORUM

MINUTES OF THE MEETING BOF 52: WEDNESDAY 15 MARCH 2017 AT THE JAGUAR ROOMS, RICOH ARENA, COVENTRY

PRESENT

Nick Burgess	London Underground
David List	Large Span Bridge Group
Rob Dean	Network Rail (Chairman)
Henry Dempsey	SCOTS
Andy Featherby	Canal and River Trust
Richard Fish	Technical Secretary
Tomas Garcia	HS2
Keith Harwood	ADEPT
Jason Hibbert	Welsh Government
Wayne Hindshaw	Transport Scotland
Neil Loudon	Highways England
Jacqueline Mynot	CSS Wales
Paul Thomas	Railway Paths Ltd.
Paul Fidler	CUED
Stephen Pottle	WSP Parsons Brinckerhoff (Guest)
Adrian Tatum	Hemming Group (Part – Observer)

1. Introductions and Apologies

Rob Dean welcomed members to this specially arranged meeting which had been facilitated by the Hemming Group as part of the Bridges 2017 conference. He reported that BOF Chairman, Professor Cam Middleton, was still poorly following recent surgery and was unable to attend. The meeting wished the Chairman a full and speedy recovery.

The full list of apologies was as follows:

Cam Middleton	CUED
Graham Cole	ADEPT
Nicola Head	TfL
John McRobert	Transport Northern Ireland

2. Hemming Group's role in the meeting

Richard Fish explained how this additional meeting had been facilitated by the Hemming Group, publisher of Surveyor magazine and organiser of their annual bridge conference. It was hoped that this in turn might provide a platform for publicising BOF and especially the Grand Challenges work. Hemming Group's Adrian Tatum attended part of the meeting as an observer and later offered encouragement to BOF in pursuing the Grand Challenges initiative.

Richard Fish agreed to maintain contact with Adrian to monitor opportunities.

ACTION 1: Richard Fish

Richard also clarified how he had prepared the agenda for this shorter meeting so that most of the meeting could concentrate on Grand Challenges discussions. Although there were no specific Matters Arising items, he had included an opportunity for updates on some of the more important aspects from BOF 51.

Rob Dean noted that BOF 53 would be the chance to draw together any remaining matters arising from BOFs 50, 51 and 52. Richard Fish agreed to liaise with the Cam Middleton in preparing the BOF 53 agenda such that all outstanding actions could be dealt with efficiently.

ACTION 2: Richard Fish

3. Grand Challenges – Status Report

Stephen Pottle gave a presentation which outlined progress to date on the Grand Challenges initiative. He described the purpose of Grand Challenges as:

- To support Bridges Board research requests
- To support industry needs
- Fill gaps in guidance
- Act as a strategic roadmap for any incoming proposals

He repeated the point from previous meetings that Grand Challenges had to answer the big question:

‘How to obtain a better understanding of new and existing structures assets in order to reduce cost, minimise risks and improve whole life performance using dynamic asset management’

BOF 51 had defined six Grand Challenges as:

- Preventing structural failures
- Extending the life of existing structures
- Building bridges that will perform better

- Embracing innovation and embedding technology
- Securing a competent, diverse workforce
- Sharing knowledge and best practice

Richard Fish noted that he had introduced these at the recent UKBB meeting by defining the first three as “what” we should do and the last three as “how” we should do it.

Stephen had also produced a Grand Challenges summary paper which Richard Fish agreed to issue.

ACTION 3: Stephen Pottle/Richard Fish

It was agreed that the Grand Challenges paper plus the figures and diagrams, could be uploaded onto the BOF website.

ACTION 4: Stephen Pottle/Paul Fidler

4. Grand Challenges – Next Steps

Stephen invited the lead on each theme to give a short progress report, briefly summarised as follows:

Theme	Lead	Key points
Data	Jacqueline Mynot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General inconsistency in data collection and use. • Many smaller authorities have no overall strategy on data management. • This theme includes CDM, BIM and Research issues • Stephen Pottle comment: BIM needs to differ for new build and existing structures. • Very helpful paper on collection and use of bridge data. • Cost/benefit issues must be considered. Good data management must have a net saving. • Wayne Hindshaw comment: From 1st April, all projects (>£2m) must be assessed for BIM compliance. • Rob Dean comment: biggest data issue is to ensure that everything is issued to the client at hand-over.
People	Nicola Head	Not present
Process	John McRobert	Not present

Customer	Andy Featherby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed Institute of Customer Service website • Links to transport organisations and utility companies. • Also overlap with BIM issues.
Standards, Codes & Guidance	Nick Burgess	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Useful source “Specifying Successful Standards” • Key issues: outcomes not inputs; industry should be empowered to contribute; benefits from standards must be measurable. • Standards currently driven by clients not users. • The fewer the standards the better. • Standards tend to grow/creep. • Risk of duplication and contradiction.
Procurement	Wayne Hindshaw	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed BOF 50 workshop outputs. • Main issues: policy, process, people and contracts. • Favoured simplified and flexible procurement processes. • Procurement led by Treasury (and similar devolved governments) with little engineering input. • Risk sharing preferred. • Incentivise time, cost and quality. • Contract rationalisation? • Links to CIPFA? • Suggested questionnaire to industry. • Suggested link to National Infrastructure Commission.
Communications	David List	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overlap with Customers theme. • Biggest communication issue is with customers. • Latest best practice thought to be FRB closure and Queensferry. • Suggested output: guidance document. • Rob Dean noted ORR role and suggested “Network Rail Challenge Statements” as a good source.
Design	Henry Dempsey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief discussion – not recorded.
Materials and Components	Keith Harwood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted excessive volume of sensor technology and guidance needed. • Neil Loudon noted that Highways England are committed to this. • Stephen Pottle’s view: need to distinguish between existing and new build structures.

Construction	Tomas Garcia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief discussion – not recorded.
Inspection & Monitoring	Paul Thomas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BICS is a move in the right direction. • Monitoring technology is growing. Lots on offer on the market. • Stephen Pottle: suggest we look at <i>need</i> rather than what is available. • Strong links with Bridge Deterioration Modelling research project as initiated by BOF.
Assessment	Graham Cole	Not present
Intervention	Neil Loudon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief discussion – not recorded.
Safety	Rob Dean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief discussion – not recorded.

Stephen Pottle expressed his thanks to all theme leads for the work to date but recognised that there was still much to be done and that all themes needed to be challenging. It was noted and agreed that the issue of capacity in working up the various themes was a challenge in itself, both for individuals and their organisations.

5. Grand Challenges – Discussion

Stephen Pottle suggested that an important next step would be to engage with all industry sectors, for the following reasons:

- Industry can contribute towards development ensuring that themes are relevant and meaningful
- Obtain “buy in”, generate discussion and ideas
- Provide funding and resources
- Peer review of proposals
- Identify existing projects, research and other relevant work
- Undertake research and delivery of projects for BOF
- Test and trial new products, materials, processes etc.

Bearing in mind the huge volume of information already gathered, discussion centred on how best to present the Grand Challenges concept and strategy in order to effectively engage with industry. Rob Dean noted that it was important to provide headlines as well as the detail and, with Stephen Pottle’s assistance,

agreed to work up a diagram to illustrate how the themes fed into the Challenges and over what timescales.

ACTION 5: Rob Dean/Stephen Pottle

As part of the process of engagement, Wayne Hindshaw suggested that BOF could raise its profile especially in terms of a PR strategy, possibly using social and professional networking sites such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter etc. Richard Fish agreed to consider this and report at BOF 53.

ACTION 6: Richard Fish

Adrian Tatum, observing this part of the meeting, suggested that Hemming Group may be able to assist in this not only by helping to publicise the Grand Challenges work but also by allowing access to their various contact lists, databases etc. This might even extend to a Grand Challenges conference. Adrian's offer was welcomed by the meeting and Richard Fish agreed to contact Adrian to discuss.

ACTION 7: Richard Fish

Stephen noted the reality that Grand Challenges work would have to be funded and a budget identified. Discussion centred around whether certain industry sectors would help to fund Grand Challenges or the reverse, i.e. would they expect payment for their input. Stephen noted recent successes in crowd funding initiatives, often for unlikely causes, and questioned whether this would be worth exploring. He agreed to investigate this, and other, funding sources.

ACTION 8: Stephen Pottle

Paul Thomas reflected on the success of the BOF 50 workshop and suggested that this should be repeated at future meetings. Rob Dean agreed and suggested that each BOF meeting could consider, say, three themes in more detail. He accepted, however, that Grand Challenges would take time to develop if it was going to be done properly. It was agreed that this should be raised with the Chairman.

ACTION 9: Rob Dean/Richard Fish/Chairman

Keith Harwood suggested that we should concentrate on bridge specific issues; for example, procurement was a wider subject and it was doubtful that BOF could influence national policy. Stephen Pottle accepted this point and agreed to separate the themes between those which BOF could lead and those which we could influence. He will recirculate the themes on this basis.

ACTION 10: Stephen Pottle

Discussion moved on as to when BOF should invite industry specialists to contribute to the Grand Challenges strategy. Neil Loudon felt that more preparatory work was needed before this happens. Rob Dean questioned how BOF could select who to choose without giving certain companies an advantage over others. He also expressed the desire to emphasise the bridge *owners* needs.

Tomas Garcia suggested that we should open discussions with top universities to align research needs. Neil Loudon recalled that this had been attempted a few years ago as part of the Future Infrastructure Forum (FIF) work which had been linked to EPSRC funding allocations.

It was agreed that the link to the UKBB Business Plan was coincidental and had not been central to the timing of the Grand Challenges review. It should therefore be reported as work-in-progress at UKBB and the next session would be at BOF 53 when each theme could be “pitched”. Jacqueline Mynot’s suggestion was also accepted, that theme leads could consult within BOF and with other parties ahead of BOF 53.

ACTION 11: All

Stephen Pottle agreed to produce a standardised theme pro-forma/template ahead of the next meeting.

ACTION 12: Stephen Pottle

6. Key Issues arising from BOF 51

Richard Fish repeated that he had selected some key issues to be discussed at this meeting and that all other remaining matters arising would be taken at BOF 53.

a) Highways England Review of Bridge Inspections (Action 5)

Neil Loudon reported briefly on quality concerns in terms of people, process and product following a review of recent inspections. He agreed to give a full presentation at BOF 53.

ACTION 13: Neil Loudon

Wayne Hindshaw noted that Transport Scotland staff review every inspection report but a variation in quality remained. He noted that some basic requirements were not being applied, citing examples where scour assessments to BD 97 had not used the required flow chart and decision tree.

Rob Dean referred to a recent retaining wall collapse in Leicestershire which had been subject to an increased frequency of inspections. This supported the view that any additional examination had to have appropriate trigger points at which intervention was essential. He agreed to report in more detail at BOF 53.

ACTION 14: Rob Dean

Rob Dean also noted that Network Rail were looking at a review of examination frequencies on a risk basis, although the Regulator had asked for evidence to justify increased frequencies. Keith Harwood expressed an interest in this matter as it may allow Local Authorities to increase Principal

Inspection frequencies from 6 to say 10 year intervals. As well as examination frequencies, Rob reported that Network Rail were considering automating report reviews so that any changes in condition could be identified and highlighted.

b) Unit Cost Information (Actions 6 & 7)

Richard Fish noted that this had been a long-standing action, carried forward over a number of meetings. After discussion, which noted the difficulties in keeping information up to date, the need to take local and geographic issues into account and the fact that this subject was not central to Grand Challenges, it was agreed that this issue should be dropped.

c) CIRIA Flood Impact Research (Action 8)

Wayne Hindshaw understood that the work on the CIRIA report had finished but that it had yet to be published.

d) Proposed Independent Review of Bridge Failures (Actions 15 & 16)

After discussion, it was agreed that this issue should be supported and efforts made to encourage the establishment of a similar mechanism for highway bridge failures as RAIB in the rail sector. Keith Harwood reflected on a similar discussion at ADEPT Bridge Committee. He noted that there had been no feedback on the sudden arch bridge failure at Tenbury Wells, Worcestershire, since the collapse in May 2016, despite the ADEPT network of Area Bridge Conferences. There was no requirement for information to be shared nor any formal mechanism to request it. Similarly, it was not known whether HSE had been involved nor whether the issue had been referred to SCOSS. It was also noted that the regular SCOSS attendance at BOF and UKBB had declined and hence opportunities for such discussions restricted. It was agreed that future SCOSS engagement with BOF would be reviewed.

ACTION 15: Richard Fish/Chairman

It was also noted that this issue could be incorporated within the Grand Challenges communication theme.

e) CIRIA: Hidden Defects in Critical Bridge Components (Action 23)

Neil Loudon noted that there had been little apparent progress since BOF 51 and that the report was as yet unpublished.

f) BOF Subscriptions (Action 32)

Richard Fish noted that only one invoice for 2016/17 had yet to be paid and that invoices for 2017/18 had recently been issued by CUED. He asked members to check receipt and monitor payment progress through their respective organisations.

ACTION 16: All

g) Masonry Arch Assessment Guidance Steering Group (Action 32)

Richard Fish repeated the earlier call for representatives on this group, noting that they need not be BOF members but could be representatives from BOF organisations.

ACTION 17: All

7. Feedback from UKBB – 16th February 2017

Richard Fish gave a brief report on the recent UKBB meeting. He referred to BOF 52 agenda items 3 to 5 (in the context of the UKBB Business Plan) and 6d) which had been covered earlier in the meeting. The only other point of note was the lack of understanding from DfT as to the current funding for prioritised and agreed UKRLG research projects which included deterioration modelling and parapets for local roads. All the DfT representative could offer was to make enquiries on the funding situation and report back.

8. Next meeting: BOF 53; 18th July 2107; Cambridge

It was noted that this meeting was later the May date which was usual for the spring meeting. Richard Fish agreed to check and confirm the date.

ACTION 16: Richard Fish

9. Any Other Business

a) Peter Hill

David List noted that Peter Hill, Humber Bridge and former representative on BOF from the large span bridge group was due to retire at the end of March.

b) Chairman

On behalf of BOF, Rob Dean offered to send the Chairman a get-well-soon card. The meeting repeated the good wishes expressed earlier in the meeting.

10. Close

Rob Dean thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

Richard Fish, Technical Secretary

31st March 2017