

NOTE OF THE 12th MEETING OF THE UK BRIDGES BOARD.

Meeting held in Salisbury House, Manchester

Present:

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|----------------|---------------------------------|
| David Lynn | Warwickshire CC/CSS (Chair) |
| Awtar Jandu | Highways Agency |
| Ronnie Wilson | DRD (Northern Ireland) |
| Bill Valentine | Scottish Executive |
| John Collins | Welsh Assembly Government |
| Graham Cole | CSS/Surrey County Council |
| Steve Tart | Manchester City Council |
| Brian Bell | Network Rail |
| Frank Paine | LOBEG |
| Rod Howe | British Waterways |
| Greg Perks | CSS/Northumberland CC |
| Darren Thomas | WATO |
| Andrew Oldland | DfT Traffic Management Division |

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Dana Skelley, Jim Moriarty, Jim Irons, David Yeoll, Steve Pearson, Ian Holmes, Edward Bunting and Chris Hudson. Dave Ambrose was represented by Darren Thomas.

2. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

Government Response to the Transport Select Committee

The Board acknowledged the section in DfT's letter to the Select Committee, which explained that a bridge backlog figure could not be produced until a local authority bridge inventory system has been introduced.

Disability Discrimination Act in relation to Bridges (Paper BB 57/04).

The Board considered that this issue should be addressed by the Code of Practice sub-group. This may require the Sub-Group meeting with disabled groups and agreeing a strategy.

Action - Graham Cole is to take this issue to the Code of Practice Sub-Group.

Tunnels Directive

A working group has been formed to take this forward. This will consist of representatives from various Government bodies including the Highways Agency (HA) and the Welsh Assembly. It is also intended that Kent County Council should be represented as they have a tunnel which falls within the scope of the Directive.

Traffic Management Bill

This received Royal Assent on 22 July and is now the Traffic Management Act 2004.

Network Rail Agreements

Graham Cole and Tony Norfolk (CSS) have been negotiating with Network Rail to produce a standard agreement covering the funding of strengthening work on Network Rail bridges which carry local authority highways. CSS have produced a commentary showing how the agreement was arrived at.

The intention is that the agreement should be the standard contract between local authorities and Network Rail.

The CSS Bridges Group need to agree how they will endorse the agreement. A meeting will be held for this purpose in September 2004.

This agreement does not include ownership transfers or committed sums. Kent CC have a model agreement for these purposes which most authorities accept as fair, and is acceptable to Network Rail.

Highways Agency document on the function of Technical Project Boards

The document is not yet ready for publication, but the HA will circulate it when it has had the necessary amendments (this may need consultation with other interested organisations).

Action - HA to circulate this document when amended.

3. Last meeting of the Roads Liaison Group, 9 June 2004.

Suggestions for various alternative names for the Roads Liaison Group have been circulated. These will be considered at the next RLG meeting.

4. Research

Progress with current research projects:

Masonry Arch Bridges

Brian Bell reported that the project would be delayed for three months due to a problem with sub-contractors. DfT and the Bridges Board have agreed to this delay.

The September steering group meeting for this project has now been cancelled.

Performance Indicators (See paper BB 58/04)

Awtar Jandu of Highways Agency introduced a paper, which gave a progress report on current work by WS Atkins, on performance indicators for highway structures. The next stages of implementation are as follows:

Stage 1 ~ Trial Implementation ~ September 2004 to March 2005.
Launch completed documents. Parts 1 to 5 reports to be recommended for use by CSS members and made available on CSS website as soon as available. In-use feedback to be monitored by Atkins and steering group.

Stage 2 ~ Full Implementation ~ March to September 2005, giving earliest potential for first reporting of data on indicators for year ending April 2006. This will rely on take-up and availability of resources.

Atkins will be asked to provide a cost estimate to support CSS requirements under Stage 1 and Stage 2. For HA work after 31 March 2005 additional funds would have to be secured and the contract extended.

Letter of 16 July from Ian Holmes

DfT's letter to Board Chairs sets out the 2004/05 position. i.e. that only UKPMS research will be funded.

The point was made that £250k of CSS research funding for 2004/05 was still unallocated, and there was a possibility that this could be used to fund the dry stone wall research project that was recommended by RLG for DfT funding in 2004/05.

This will need to be considered by the CSS Engineering Committee which meets in September. By December, CSS will be in a position to inform the Bridges Board whether they have approved funding for this project.

The Welsh and Northern Irish devolved administrations may be able to contribute funding towards this project. It has been recognised that a problem with dry stone walls exists in Wales.

The Board decided that the other project recommended by RLG for 2004/05 funding (research into metal bridges) should be re-submitted to RLG for the 2005/06 funding round).

Bridge Owners' Forum proposals for 2005/06 (see paper BB 56/04)

The Bridge Owners Forum had its meeting on 8 June, started to consider the selection of bids for presentation to UK Bridges Board in the autumn of 2004. The Forum considered a number of proposals but the first choice in order of priority was the revision of BS6779 part 4, which relates to masonry parapets. This is likely to be a large project, which could be funded over a two-year period. Brian Bell of Network Rail will work with others to produce a note to be considered by the Board.

Board members noted that the BOF list included a project that had already been started by the Highways Agency (remote NDT techniques for assessing delamination failures of concrete bridges).

Action - the Board will ensure that they put a marker down to raise the BS6779 revision project (as a candidate for DfT funding) at the November RLG meeting.

5. Bridges Code of practice

A report on the progress of the Code of Practice was considered by the Board. Stage 1 of the commission has included a review of current practice, workshops throughout the UK to capture requirements/opinions of various highway and bridge authorities and an initial outline for the Code of Practice has been produced. Stage 2 will involve the development and drafting of the Code of Practice and is scheduled to be completed by December 2004.

The steering group is proposing that the members of the Bridges Board should nominate individuals from within their respective organisation to act as reviewers and provide advice on the developments of the code during Stage 2. These reviewers will effectively be a sub-group reporting to the steering group. The majority of input, in terms of reviewing the code, is likely to be during September to December 2004.

Action - each Bridges Board member to nominate an individual for the review group. Nominations should be made to David Yeowell, in time for the next Code of Practice sub-group meeting this August.

6. Asset Management

WS Atkins had produced an Asset Valuation Model for local authority highway structures for consideration by the Board. This was considered very much a draft document and it was agreed that it should be referred on to Matthew Lugg's CSS team for consideration as part of the overall consideration of Asset Management.

7. Any Other Business

Brian Bell informed the Board that this would be his last meeting. A strategy engineer from Network Rail will take Brian's place on the Board. The Board thanked Brian for his contribution.

Brian will still attend the Bridge Owners' Forum.

8. Presentation on Oldham Retaining Walls

After lunch, Paul Jackson, of Oldham MBC, gave a presentation on Oldham retaining walls and this was followed by a tour of various sites in the Oldham area to view the construction of retaining wall projects.

9. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Board will take place on 10 November 2004, in Great Minster House, London.

UK Bridges Board Secretariat
30 September 2004