



East of England Board

Agenda

Date: Wednesday 31 August 2022
Venue: Virtual Teams meeting
Start: 3-4pm
Chair: Steve Cox (SC) (CCC)
Vice-Chair: Grahame Bygrave (GB) (Norfolk)

Attendees: Adele Wearing (AW), Hilary Chipping (HC), Naomi Green (NG), Steve Evison (SE), Patsy Dell (PD), Nicola Monk (NM), Hannah Bartram (HB)

Guests: Steve Blackmore (SB) DfT (Buses)

Apologies: John Burr, Neil Hayes, Paul Crick, Andrew Lewis, Lorna Carver

Welcome			
3.00	1	Apologies for absence, Welcome & Introduction	SC
Standing Items			
3:05	2	Buses (Steve Blackmore attending)	ALL
		<p>It was not anticipated that buses would require more funding. It is not known when funding for buses will be stopped. Money was intended for growth not to prop up buses. BSIPs whole purpose was to ‘get away’ from inventing new funding schemes, and was a fund LA’s had to bid towards.</p> <p>How well LA’s each individual bid does comes down to how well they put together their bids. Herts got access to DfT and gained an understanding on what DfT wanted and put together a bid which ticked all the boxes. Many felt this was an unfair process. BSIP was a ‘shop window’ for LA’s to ‘tell’ DfT what they needed. Some LA’s were better at doing this than others.</p> <p>Those LA’s who did not meet the cut DfT are trying to help them get funding. If we can show how LA’s spend funding using BSIPs an enhanced partnership enables DfT to go back to government to ask if government would consider giving more funding.</p> <p>Discussion on how to complete funding bids and best way of doing this. If LA’s do not include information, then DfT will assume it is not part of the final scheme. Do not assume DfT will know what will be included. LA’s need to be clear in their bid about what they want to do.</p>	

		<p>Is there going to be funding for those who did not receive funding in the first round? Do not know how long it will take, dependent on ministers wanting to give buses more funding.</p> <p>Implementing funding; More LA's can demonstrate this works where the buses improve, partnerships improve, patronage improve, improvement on getting people out of cars onto buses.</p> <p>So much uncertainty on bus funding, LA's cannot set budgets to make improvements. Announcements come too late to set budgets. Helpful if have a three-year funding cycle to be able to make improvements. Government finance all done at the last minute with a lot of political discussion. Politicians not prepared to make funding available unless they are sure things will be delivered at the end of three years.</p> <p>LA want to work with knowing the budget and saying what they will spend it on once they can set the budget. Government does not work that way; they want to know what LA's want to deliver before they allocate funding.</p> <p>This is an issue across all mayoral authorities.</p> <p>Letter from Baroness Spear; it was felt that the tone of letter was 'heavy handed' in that linking bus funding with future funding was not deemed 'helpful'.</p> <p>Comment from SB: The Local Transport team at DfT is looking to gather information from LAs regarding the impact of inflation. We have designed the attached survey, which gives you the opportunity (on an entirely voluntary basis) to let DfT know whether, how and to what extent your (i) capital highways maintenance programmes and (ii) wider local transport projects are being affected by inflation, supply chain issues and labour shortages. Deadline for responses to secretariat@adeptnet.org.uk by 2 September.</p>	
3:25	3	Roundtable updates including Feedback from Existing ADEPT groups	ALL
		<p>SC: All LA struggling with budgets, original gap has now doubled with inflation etc. not finding much savings. (CCC)</p> <p>GB: Gap £60m for next financial year, but this has been known about for a long time, does not include inflation. There is nothing innovative to meet budget gap. Conscious regarding the number of major schemes either under construction or at OBC stage and was approved last year.</p> <p>NM: looking at pressures on projects. In discussions with DLUCH in short to medium term concerning recent news. Breckland Council LUF project in jeopardy, do not want to get rid of this project, but difficult to deliver given inflationary pressure. We have quite a big capital programme, going through it to see what we can delete, pause or have to do. This all impacts on borrowing budget. Worried with pay award on how this tips us over.</p> <p>SE: Same position at ECC, significant gap exacerbated by inflation, capital prioritisation underway (pressure on longer-term, pro growth projects), big pressure for us is on the Housing Infrastructure Fund projects for garden communities now significantly over Budget, discussions with Homes England ongoing.</p>	
3:35	4	ADEPT Update	HB
		<p>Collecting impact of inflation on waste services</p> <p>Planning for Autumn conference</p> <p>Live labs - two open for applications.</p>	

Meeting Close			
3:45	5	Forward agenda plan including suggestions for guest speakers	SC
3.50	6	AOB	ALL
		Greater Cambridge work, congestion charging proposal. City Access may be of interest to surrounding LAs. May be something to revisit in autumn. SC will be leaving CCC at the end of financial year. So a replacement for SC will be needed to Chair ADEPT EoE. Will revisit in future.	

Next Meeting Date(s):

27 September 2022 @ 4pm

29 November 2022 @ 4pm