

SEDEPT Meeting Summary – May 2019

The South East ADEPT branch met on the 17th May on campus at Oxford University –in keeping with the highbrow and intellectual discussion that was had.

The regional meeting is now co-chaired by Sue Halliwell from Oxfordshire and Matt Davey from West Sussex. Unfortunately the meeting was not well attended – a great shame as we had an excellent presentation from Andy Perrin of Proving Services and a discussion with Andy Morrison (AD at DfT) about a number of important and testing issues.

Andy Perrin set out the Future Highways Research Club approach to measuring value for money. Using the tools they had developed a number of authorities are now identifying their priorities for improvement and utilising toolkits developed through the research club to improve specific areas of service delivery. The research club has been so successful it is now going to split into a north and south to better serve the entire country. More information [here](#).

Andy Morrison provided a brief overview of changes within DfT including the retirement of Graham Pendlebury who will be replaced by Stephen Fidler as Director for Local Transport.

Andy briefly mentioned the upcoming spending review that, although not yet formally announced, is expected to be completed by the autumn. Pending progress with Brexit, the aim will be a 3-year spending review, but continued delays with Brexit will result in only a 1-year spending review. The tight fiscal environment remains, with a focus on value for money. Some key issues Andy raised were opportunities for simplifying funding for local transport, taking a more place-based approach and potentially looking at longer term funding (5-year periods).

Top priority for Jessie Norman is local transport issues, in particular walking and cycling. DfT are looking forward to Major Roads Network bids in July with future funds in development including Future High Streets fund, and Stronger Towns fund expected in the summer.

The group had a brief discussion around effective use of the apprentice levy and shared some data from authorities that showed a wide variation in the numbers of apprentices being trained (and therefore the draw down on the levy). It felt like a subject that could be returned to.

Hannah Bartram gave a great update from a very busy ADEPT, demonstrating the breadth of subjects the organisation covers and the level it is working at (giving evidence to parliamentary committees).

Lots of ideas for future meetings and the next one is booked in for 15th July.

The meeting closed with a visit to the Oxford Museum of Natural History where a Hydrogen Roadshow event was taking place (and giving us lunch!)