

# A47 Alliance Steering Group Meeting Note

**Meeting:** 10am-12pm Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2016

**Venue:** Cranworth Room, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2DH

## In attendance:

Andrea Long	Broads Authority
Chris Starkie	New Anglia LEP
Cllr David Ritchie	Waveney District Council
Cllr Graham Plant	Great Yarmouth Borough Council
Cllr Maragret Dewsbury	South Norfolk Council
Cllr Martin Wilby	Norfolk County Council
Cllr Mick Castle	Norfolk County Council
Cllr Roger Foulger (Chair)	Broadland District Council
Cllr Simon King	Fenland District Council
Cllr Tim East	Norfolk County Council
Cllr William Nunn	Breckland District Council
David Glason	Great Yarmouth Borough Council
Davina Galloway	Highways England
Fiona Walker	Office of Elizabeth Truss MP
Jack Eagle	Cambridgeshire County Council
Julian Munson	South Norfolk Council
Lewis Banks	Peterborough City Council
Naomi Chamberlain	Norfolk County Council
David Cumming	Norfolk County Council
Aaron Douglas	Highways England
Nova Fairbank	Norfolk Chamber of Commerce
Nick Atkinson	Working with Amey
Paul Horne	Suffolk County Council
Peter Jermany	Borough Council of Kings Lynn & West Norfolk
Richard Perkins	Suffolk Chamber of Commerce
Tig Armstrong	Norfolk County Council
Tim Mills	Breckland District Council
Vince Muspratt	Norfolk County Council

## Apologies:

Adrian Cannard	Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough LEP
Alistair Cox	Borough Council of Kings Lynn & West Norfolk
Andy Tatt	Peterborough City Council
Andy Watt	Norwich City Council
Anna Graves	Breckland District Council
Caroline Williams	Norfolk Chamber of Commerce
Claire Sullivan	Norfolk County Council
Cllr Colin Law	Waveney District Council

Cllr Gordon Bambridge  
Cllr Guy McGregor  
Cllr Ian Bates  
Cllr James Finch  
Cllr Michael Ladd  
Cllr Peter Hiller  
Cllr Richard Blunt

Cllr Samantha Sandell

Cllr William Richmond  
Hamish Melville  
Jonathan Cage  
Keith Simpson  
Mark Pendlington  
Nigel Allsopp  
Peter Grimm  
Sandra Bush  
Simon Marjoram  
Tom McCabe  
Trevor Ellis

Breckland District Council  
Suffolk County Council  
Cambridgeshire County Council  
Suffolk County Council  
Waveney District Council  
Peterborough City Council  
Borough Council of Kings Lynn &  
West Norfolk  
Borough Council of Kings Lynn &  
West Norfolk  
Norfolk County Council  
Broadland District Council  
Norfolk Chamber of Commerce  
Parliament  
New Anglia LEP  
Highways England  
Suffolk County Council  
North Norfolk District Council  
South Norfolk Council  
Norfolk County Council  
CS Ellis

## **1.0 Welcome and introductions**

Cllr Foulger welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted Highways England's progress with the Roads Investment Strategy (RIS) 1.

## **2.0 Apologies for absence**

As above.

## **3.0 Last meeting note and matters arising**

It was agreed that the July meeting note will be agreed at the next meeting.

## **4.0 Priorities session and Roads Investment Strategy Two**

Tig Armstrong outlined the progress with RIS 1 and timeline for RIS 2. He stated that the objective of this session was for the steering group to agree to the draft RIS 2 priorities.

David Cumming presented to the steering group (presentation attached with the minutes).

He stated that – in the lead-up to the decision-making process on RIS 2 – it was important for the Alliance to turn its focus towards stepping up the activity

for influencing RIS 2. The programme for RIS 2 has started to be developed, with consultations and evidence being gathered across the network, the steering group are hoping to agree the Alliance's priorities to begin developing technical evidence, lobbying and advocacy.

The six schemes agreed in RIS 1 show the success of the Alliance as over £300m was secured through the work of the steering group. Highways England and Government were surprised by how much funding was allocated to the A47, this was partly successful due to the consensus of the Alliance and the fact that so many groups were represented and speaking with one voice. Especially as elsewhere in England other key trunk routes were all asking for different things, with no cohesion.

After agreeing the priorities David stated that he will be able to discuss the activities that have happened since the last meeting and how to step up advocacy for these priorities. Priorities have been suggested by various officers from all districts in Norfolk, Cambridge, Peterborough and Suffolk.

### **Roads Investment Strategy 2 priorities**

The following priorities were presented to the steering group for agreement:

- **Acle Straight dualling**- which is a NCC priority. David attended an interesting workshop about the dyke and snails, some snails have been moved and early results look positive but there needs to be 3-4 years of monitoring. This trial is well timed for decision making around RIS 2 from 2020 onwards, with a successful outcome enabling government to make a positive decision regarding dualling in RIS2.
- **Tilney to East Winch**- dualling near King's Lynn dualling through Middleton and East Winch. There were discussions whether it should include the dualling of the Hardwick flyover and the Borough feel it would be beneficial. Technical work hasn't factored in the flyover but Mouchel will continue to look at this.
- **Wisbech junctions**- this looks at the three main junctions on a single carriageway stretch which struggles with very lengthy queues.
- **Guyhirn to Wisbech dualling**- this stretch runs parallel with the river and offers limited overtaking opportunities.
- **Junctions in Peterborough**- congestion is affecting the strategic function of the dual carriageway.

David Cumming stated that while the Alliance's ambition is for dualling the entirety of the A47 the ask needs to be realistic. Given that over £300m had been achieved in RIS1 and the size of the trunk road budget the above ask – of £350-400m – is not considered to be unreasonable.

At the meeting there were questions about the Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) categories, these are listed below direct from the DfT webtag guidance:

- Poor VfM if the BCR is below 1
- Low VfM if the BCR is between 1 and 1.5
- Medium VfM if the BCR is between 1.5 and 2
- High VfM if the BCR is between 2 and 4
- Very High VfM if the BCR is greater than 4

### **Discussion on the draft RIS 2 priorities**

Tig Armstrong stated that we need to agree on the priorities as the Alliance, so technical and lobbying work can continue. Cllr King and Cllr Bates stated concerns regarding the Guyhirn to Wisbech dualling as devolution and a proposal for a garden town could change the BCR rating. David Cumming stated that developments such as garden towns can be factored into refined business cases as the work continues into each scheme.

Richard Perkins stated that Suffolk businesses would appreciate further work to develop a possible business case for the Cucumber Lane junction (Brundall).

Cllr Plant also suggested that the Great Yarmouth Third River Crossing should be included in the campaigning along with other strategic links, along the entirety of the A47. Cllr Plant was also disappointed that the A47 had not recently been mentioned at Westminster and encouraged an increase in communications with MPs to promote the A47.

Cllr Nunn stated that the A11 had struggled for years, but the business community stood alongside MPs and constantly pressured government, the collective force helped secure funding for the A11 improvements.

Cllr Nunn stated that Breckland hadn't seen the RIS 2 priorities, and wished to see improvement of the stretches within Breckland included. David Cumming suggested that the BCR work that Norfolk County Council had commissioned could be circulated.

**Action: David Cumming to circulate the BCR evidence for dualling sections along the whole length of the A47. (attached)**

Chris Starkie stated that the Cambridge to Oxford trunk route has been given billions in funding and questioned whether the Alliance are being ambitious enough? Maybe we could go for a bigger envelope, he also stated in the Autumn Statement there were funds for pinch points and that some of the smaller projects could be funded from funds such as this.

The steering group agreed the RIS 2 priorities as set out in the presentation and that further work should be done to examine Cucumber Lane junction, and the dualling between Dereham to Swaffham.

There was also agreement that supporting evidence for improvements in and around Wisbech should take account of devolution and the garden town, and that the case should also note the importance of the Great Yarmouth Third River Crossing.

**Post-meeting Note:**

A communique will be sent from the Chairman requesting agreement of the final priorities following investigation of the additions suggested at the meeting.

Cllr Foulger informed the steering group that he had written to the Secretary of State (SoS) on 11 October 2016. The steering group felt that any future letter to SoS should be signed by all members of the steering group and MPs.

**Action: Write a letter to SoS asking for support for the RIS 2 priorities, signed by all members of the steering group and MPs.**

It was suggested that future steering group meetings should be held on Fridays and the next location should be either Great Yarmouth or Lowestoft.

## **5.0 A47 Alliance activities**

David Cumming outlined the actions proposed to ramp-up lobbying activity to influence decision-making. In the coming months the A47 Alliance website will be refreshed along with the brochure and a newsletter will be circulated to all who have signed up to the A47 Alliance website. There will also be increased MP engagement to vocalise the A47 Alliance activities in government.

## **6.0 Highways England – Progress on A47 Delivery**

Aaron Douglas from Highways England updated the steering group on the RIS 1 schemes.

The A12 renumbering scheme is expected to commence in January 2017 and be completed prior to Easter 2017.

Cllr Plant stated his concern over the A12 currently not being sign posted between Gorleston and Bradwell. Richard Perkins stated that the delay to this is in connection with a section 106 agreement. It was noted that renumbering is a key issue for businesses who advertise as being located off of the A12.

Acle Straight progress – currently Highways England are commissioning a four year snail relocation trial. The snails at the Acle Straight are Lesser

Whirlpool Ramshorn Snails and are protected by European and National policy. The trial is currently progressing well and 800 snails have been relocated and appear to be thriving in new locations. If this trial is successful then future dualling projects of the A47 will be able to go ahead. A number of safety improvements on the Acle Straight will commence early 2017.

**Action: Highways England to circulate snail trial slides to group.**

David Glason stated that the A47 improvements could be cited in the Broads Authority development plan, and the steering group should write to the Broads Authority. Andrea Long from the Broads Authority welcomed a letter from the steering group and stated the A47 is already stated in the DPD.

Currently RIS 1 schemes are at stage 1 in Highways England's schedule of major schemes, and will be commencing stage 2 in January 2017, there is expected to be a 9 month public and officer consultation, the preferred routes will also be announced and section 85 notices will be issued. Highways England is planning to commence work on the schemes in 2020.

The RIS 1 construction is planned for 2020 but the construction of each scheme will be staggered. Development Consent Orders (DCOs) are likely to be required at all six sites due to environmental constraints, however Highways England could submit a single DCO.

All members of the steering group and MPs will be invited to all the events and are welcome at the consultation events due to commence in 2017.

Highways England are aware of all strategic infrastructure projects in Norfolk which could impact on the A47 schemes.

Members stated that they would like to re-invite the planning inspectorate to the next meeting.

**Action: Invite PI to next meeting.**

## **7.0 Other updates**

- LEPs, HE pinch point funding may be used for schemes
- Norfolk Chamber of Commerce, businesses are happy to help. The Chamber has a website and newsletters issued to all members.
- Suffolk Chamber of Commerce, would like to see some progress with regard to the A47.

## 8.0 Items for the next agenda

None suggested.

## 9.0 AOB

Peter Jermay – public consultation on east Wisbech urban extension, public event on Monday 12th December all welcome attendance.

David Glason explained that the Great Yarmouth Third River Crossing public consultation is now online <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/major-projects-and-improvement-plans/great-yarmouth/third-river-crossing/public-consultation-on-third-river-crossing>

Cllr Castle said that there is no other organisation similar to the A47 Alliance and that we have got to make it work and by working with MPs and LEPs, we all want it to be successful.

**Action: David Cumming to circulate a communication strategy to the steering group.**

Cllr Castle suggested that MPs should be invited to the next meeting. He suggested a launch of the revised priorities with MPs in March but before April.

Nova Fairbank suggested that the group should co-ordinate its communications activities including sending a fully signed letter to SoS, releasing a newsletter and putting out a press release.

## 10.0 Future Meetings

**Action: To try to arrange the next Alliance meeting for a Friday in March in Great Yarmouth and ask that the Planning Inspectorate attend.**

Suggested schedule (Dates and locations to be agreed):

- March 2017 – On a Friday in Great Yarmouth or Lowestoft
- June 2017
- September 2017
- December 2017