



Minutes

A47 Alliance Steering Group

2-4pm Friday 28 February 2020

Cranworth Room, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2DH

In attendance:

Peter Jermany	Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk
Joe Goldie	Galliford Try
Peter Havlicek	Highways England
Nova Fairbank	Norfolk Chamber of Commerce
Alison Cackett	East Suffolk Council
Carolyn Barnes	East Suffolk Council
Tom Lawman	Highways England
Anna Graham	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority
David Glason	Great Yarmouth Borough Council
Cllr Mick Castle	Norfolk County Council
Richard Perkins	Suffolk Chamber of Commerce
Philip Scotney	Road Haulage Association
Tom McCabe	Norfolk County Council
Ellen Goodwin	New Anglia LEP
Cllr Paul Claussen	Breckland District Council
Cllr William Richmond	Norfolk County Council
George Freeman MP	Member of Parliament
Jerome Mayhew MP	Member of Parliament
Duncan Baker MP	Member of Parliament
Graham Plant	Norfolk County Council
Cllr Martin Wilby	Norfolk County Council
David Cumming	Norfolk County Council
Helen Corina	Norfolk County Council

Apologies:

Andrew Mower	Federation of Small Businesses
Andy Tatt	Peterborough City Council
Andy Watt	Norwich City Council
Anna Graves	Breckland and South Holland District Councils
Brandon Lewis MP	Member of Parliament
Charlotte Palmer	Peterborough City Council
Chloe Smith MP	Member of Parliament
Chris Starkie	New Anglia LEP
Cllr Andrew Reid	Suffolk County Council
Cllr David Oliver	Fenland District Council
Cllr Ian Bates	Cambridgeshire County Council
Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris	Norfolk County Council
Cllr Peter Hiller	Peterborough City Council
Cllr Roger Foulger	Broadland District Council
David Allfrey	Norfolk County Council

Doug Field	New Anglia LEP
Jack Eagle	Cambridgeshire County Council
James Wild MP	Member of Parliament
John Bridge	Cambridgeshire Chambers of Commerce
Lewis Banks	Peterborough City Council
Marie-Pierre Tighe	Broads Authority
Mayor James Palmer	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority
Nina Cunningham	South Norfolk Council
Paul Bristow MP	Member of Parliament
Paul Medd	Fenland District Council
Peter Aldous MP	Member of Parliament
Richard Bacon MP	Member of Parliament
Rowland Potter	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority
Shailesh Vara MP	Member of Parliament
Stephen Barclay MP	Member of Parliament
Steve Gooding	RAC Foundation
Vince Muspratt	Norfolk County Council
Wendy Otter	Fenland District Council
Tracy Reeve	Parliament

1. **Welcome and introductions** Chairperson
 Cllr Wilby welcomed attendees. Introductions round the table. Minutes from the last meeting can be sent out if desired.
2. **Apologies for absence** Chairperson
3. **Last meeting notes and matters arising from 27 September 2019** Chairperson
 Agreed.
4. **Roads Investment Strategy One (2015-2020)** Highways England
 P Havlicek (PH) explained the schemes Highways England (HE) are currently dealing with. HE are experiencing challenges with 2 schemes. P Havlicek then provided updates on each of the A47 schemes as can be seen below:

 North Tuddenham to Easton
 - Statutory consultation currently underway which ends on 8th April
 - Scheme due March 2022
 - DOC end of 2020
 - HE working in good partnership with Gulliford Try
 - Work beginning next week on ground
 Blofield
 - Due March 2022
 - DCO summer 2020,
 - Currently making sure loose ends from the consultation tidied up before inspectorate

- Archaeological trenching work will begin soon

Thickthorn Junction

- Resolving issues from consultation in July
- March 2021 is committed date
- Aim for roundabout and footbridge over A47 in this time
- Planning application hopefully early next year

Guyhirn

- Early 2021 start and on track to start then

Wansford

- Currently resolving issues arising from consultation
- HE now have a good understanding of what scheme should be
- DCO expected in early 2021. This will dictate when the work begins however current aim for early work is March 2021.

Gt Yarmouth

- HE are still waiting for direction on the way forward

M Wilby (MW)

Pleased to see the work taking place at Tuddenham.

G Plant (GP)

Pleased to hear schemes are underway but disappointed with regards to Great Yarmouth.

PH explained that the 3rd river crossing at Great Yarmouth has changed the situation. The traffic on the Vauxhall Roundabout will have changed due to the development. The scheme will change accordingly. PH explained that the Great Yarmouth scheme will definitely happen, it just needs the correct governance in place.

GP explained the A47 doesn't hit the 3rd River Crossing. He stated the 3rd River Crossing changes movement in the town and not Vauxhall Roundabout. GP thought HE use computer modelling to look at traffic flows. GP emphasises that RIS 2 is not just about the building of the road but the funding of it. He asked how is it being dropped from RIS 1 and going to RIS2? GP highlighted that projects worth/cost more now than 5yrs ago. The economic benefits from the RIS 1 have not been seen due to his delay. GP is disappointed that the region is being held back. Great Yarmouth's ability to grow depends so much on the scheme being completed. He feels the problem is being pushed down the road. He wants it to be high on the agenda and not forgotten. Delay is going to cause lots of problems trying to get business into the area.

MW asks PH if the money still there for the Great Yarmouth scheme in RIS 1 for it to be delivered.

PH confirms the money has been committed to. PH states 3rd river crossing does have an effect on traffic flows. The 3rd River Crossing has nullified any data or information collected on Vauxhall and the overall benefits of this RIS1 scheme have been reduced. PH states that HE always make sure there is the correct benefit to cost ratio for every project.

M Castle (MC) feels HE should be reflecting what is expressed in the regions, the LEPs and the MPs. MC stated the Vauxhall roundabout delay in work jeopardises priority of the scheme in next RIS. MC said that HE were told not to do the other roundabouts. MC is worried about the effect this will have on the RIS 2 and that it will detract from the work that needs to be done at Great Yarmouth.

G Freeman (GF) explained to the new MPs what the A47 Alliance have done in the past. He explained the importance of the RIS for investment security. Great Yarmouth has slipped into RIS2 and he is worried RIS 2 could slip to RIS 3. People are waiting to invest and this is holding them back. HE should deliver to the East. GF supports the breaking down of HE to regions/the East. He stated it is not acceptable what is happening. People will not invest if the promises that are made are broken. How can we get people to invest here if promises are broken? HE must be accountable in the East. GF told the Alliance that MPs went to see the Chancellor to press the importance of dualling. The MPs are repeating message with new chancellor next week. Stressed the need to speak with one voice. HE should have been more honest with the East.

N Fairbank (NF) stressed the need to demonstrate we are open for business and the lack of work suggests we aren't. How do we go to the business community and ask them to invest here when promises are being broken regarding getting the work done. NF stated we need to keep up with the rest of the county. Our region is not level. We are prosperous but this is not helping. Business is not developing due to current political uncertainty – dualling work is a key tool in getting businesses to invest. It has to change.

T McCabe (TM) highlighted the need to close the gap in time which has formed.

PH highlights HE are looking to close the time gap as quickly as possible.

TM asks if there is anything NCC can do to close these gaps? He states any timeframe HE can make quicker, we will be happy.

J Goldie (JG) states that HE and Galliford try are working collaboratively now and doing as much as they can to make delivery happen asap.

GP says that is encouraging to hear but states we are still left with a loss. Schemes not delivered have held us back on increasing jobs, productivity, GVA and other economic benefits. The RIS2 is not great sums of money but it is big for the area and leads to a lot. No one is talking about GVA uplift and it is not being delivered despite being very important for the area. Locally we don't have the power to chase this up. GP wants to work with MPs to ensure we get the investment we need.

J Mayhew (JM) highlighted it is about delivery not just lobbying. HE decide when things get slipped into RIS 2 due to own inactivity. HE have had a reasonable schedule. JM stated the delivery body have inexplicably refused to deliver their side of bargain. HE not fit for purpose as they are insulated from political pressure which is undemocratic.

D Baker (DB) asks who is accountable? The delay is holding the county back. It's a disgrace.

MPs will knock on DfT doors and new Chancellor on Wednesday

GP proposes all get together to meet minister as was done for RIS1. GF volunteered to organise this.

NF stated higher powers at HE should be invited as they need to be there.

GP – the head of HE and all 7 MPs should be there.

ACTION – GF to consider minister visit with all

GF highlighted we need to get together the cost that has been lost – eg. Poverty, the cost of deprivation.

GP agrees headline figures should be shown.

NF says should talk to Julia Nix from DWP to do this (JULIA.NIX@DWP.GOV.UK)

A Cackett (AC) highlighted the knock-on effect the work has on Suffolk. Lowestoft look to Great Yarmouth for Hospitals. Connection very important. Highlighted increased traffic. MPs to talk to Peter Aldous. Disappointed no further on. Where is the money?

5. Roads Investment Strategy Two (2020-2025)

Norfolk County Council

D Cumming (DC) highlighted that there has been an announcement delay for RIS2 and that the announcement is now expected to be part of the budget announcement. DC stated the achievements of the A47 Alliance and how it is a positive force, representing all interests across the corridor. Norfolk County Council are writing to ministers and meet with HE regularly to ensure scheme delivery and benefits from it to locals. RIS 2 announcement is unknown therefore the next steps need to be discussed to prepare and react to whichever result. If it is positive result should we be working with HE to make sure schemes have a smoother delivery. If it is not positive what shall we do? Should the Alliance offer to help to HE? What shall we do to push schemes over the line? Our strength is bringing people together to make the case. DC prompted discussion on this matter.

GF stated we should prepare to step up to 2010 levels and make the case again. Clearly a problem with to whom HE are accountable. The Alliance could play a helpful role working with HE to transmit important information and progress back to the alliance. Need someone to tell the Alliance there is a problem and then able to act on this. GF stated we should think about being more ambitious. We should develop business plan with private finance. GF highlighted that people are seriously interested in investing in the UK, particularly in the East. Lots of money is being held back by government structures. There is a risk that all the money from government will go to the North. The Alliance should be more ambitious.

MC asked whether can we get yes or no from HE whether they will do design work on how the Acle Straight will align with Vauxhall roundabout? Wants this to remain a high priority.

PH can only answer as engineer. Would not build scheme that needs to be dug up for another a few years later on. Need to make sure it is future proof. Not under his control at the moment.

MC asked how do we put pressure on this to get done?

PH cannot comment and does not know what is in RIS 2.

TM supports a smooth delivery of RIS 2 and working with HE to map out critical timelines and understand the delivery mechanisms. If the RIS 2 announcement is positive TM suggests the Alliance should quickly move onto RIS 3, fully dualling the A47 from Peterborough to Lowestoft. TM highlights this is not just getting done for a nice road but there are a host of benefits which come from the road for the region. If the RIS 2 announcement is negative, we need to understand why and work extra hard to ensure we can get back in at as early stage as possible. We should work with DfT and understand what infrastructure we need in the future and future proof for 30/40yrs time.

PH announced that design suppliers are being awarded for RIS 2 schemes soon. These are then handed to delivery who take preferred option through to traffic. Could be WSP.

GP wants to look at business plans now. Look at how RIS 1 fits into RIS 2. Thinks we are stepped up already.

GF wants to make a business consortium.

GP wants to see a business case. GF wants investment beside this.

R Perkins (RP) supports GF concerns re push of money to the North. Believes we need to go back to the drawing board. Forget what we've done already. So many changes of personnel in decision making locations and changes in government. Need to shout louder as change of approach in Westminster. Aware of organisations eager to invest in the East and we should do something about this. May need to adopt different approach to the strategy.

GP states it is important what RP says. We are now out of our comfort zone. It is a learning curve. Need more talking on this. How are we going to do this and when?

GF is happy to speak to investors and help put together how we may do this.

MW states we need to up our game and maybe look differently at this.

ACTION – Investigate financing options with a view to setting up working group GF (lead), LEP, NCC, Cams, Peterborough, Norfolk and Suffolk Chambers of Commerce.

6. Other updates

All

- LEP
- Combined Authority
 - o Update on A47 dualling Peterborough to Guyhirn. They are working with tech partners and HE.
 - o Stage Gate review – achieved green status so able to move to next stage.
 - o Met with DfT to see if scheme included in RIS2.
 - o Scoping what next stages will be – programme and cost
- Norfolk Chambers of Commerce (NF)

- Written to MPs highlighting A47 and other infrastructure priorities
- Round tables with MPs
- Suffolk Chambers of Commerce (RP)
 - There is extra traffic on A47. Energy related businesses having to use the A47 – lots more vehicle movements and stress especially at Yarmouth.
- Local Authorities
- GF highlighted rat running at Honingham (north of A47) and now coming south. Looking into the villages worst affected. Want to make sure there is mitigation when the A47 works are occurring controlling where the lorries go. County Council and HE should work together on package of mitigation. MW states the council are aware.

7. Any other business

Chairperson

8. Future meetings

Chairperson

Will decide future meeting after RIS 2 announced.