

Transport Planning Society

Meeting Date	10 March 2022
Report Title	Chair's Report
For Decision or for Information?	For Information
Decision Sought	N/A
Report Summary	This report summarises the activity of the chair since the last board meeting.

Much of my time since my last report given at our 13 January board meeting has been spent supporting further scoping for TP Day 2022; undertaking annual 1:1 meetings with board members; developing further proposals for the use of the new innovation fund in conversation with working group chairs and the TPS officers group and; preparing for the AGM.

This report also summarises other engagements I've undertaken in the capacity of chair.

Officer group discussed the proposal for use of the innovation fund at the meeting on 23/02.

In principle the following areas have been agreed.

- a. Development of a video to support promotion of the society and industry. Membership group to provide a full proposal. (£3k)
- b. Online support for events (£3.5k)
- c. Seed funding to explore development of a children's book around Transport Planning, which may then be developed into a wider STEM Curriculum resource (£1.5k – with further sponsorship)
- d. Review of State of the Nations to understand developments in this space over last 12 months, and in particular divergences in transport policy between different parts of the UK (£10k, University of Hertfordshire to provide support, further scoping study to be discussed at board)
- e. Support for mentoring proposition (£1k, to be scoped by membership group).

We welcome further comments from board members on this.

In addition we discussed the AGM, board membership, business plan and sponsorship of TP Day.

Board 1:1s

Thank you to everyone who provided their time for a 1:1 with me post January board. I'll be looking to arrange meetings with those I haven't yet spoken to yet through March and April. These sessions are helpful in getting some informal feedback on the Society's work over last 12 months, and what our priorities should be for the coming year or so, to the end of my term. I'm also interested in whether there is any appetite amongst existing board members to step into the chair's role for March 2023.

18/01 and 15/02 – Transport Planning Day Steering Groups

These meetings helped hone our approach to TPD 2022, and have given rise to the draft campaign plan produced by JFG, provided as appendix 1 which I welcome comments on.

19/01 Meeting with Trudy Harrison, Minister of State for Transport

Following up from our response to the Transport Decarbonisation Plan, I met with Trudy and senior civil servants to explore opportunities for collaboration around pushing the dial of carbon reduction in the sector. It was a useful conversation which I used to highlight our long running concerns around appraisal approaches and their reliance on small journey time savings; the great opportunity we see in the new local transport plan guidance in empowering local authorities to deliver on this agenda and; the need to move away from competitions to access funding.

26/01 and 03/03 Meeting with DfT, CIHT and RTPI on Transport planning

This is a new series of meeting between institutions and the team at the Department who are responsible for planning and transport. These are useful 'Chatham house' rules sessions where the department can voice their initial thinking on different issues and take flash feedback from the institutions. There is a lot of really good work happening in this space and it is very promising that these meetings have been set up (credit to Lynda Addison for flying the flag on this).

31/01 – Initial scoping on Children's book idea.

I held a meeting with Jo Field and John Dales to discuss the idea of a children's book around transport planning. It was a useful way of fleshing out the concept and led to the call for support being put in the members bulletin. Further meetings are planned.

28/01 – Transport and Mobility Community Advisory Board

I chaired this meeting on behalf of Rand Watkins who was unwell. We discussed the setting up of new Knowledge Networks (that will replace the community of practice) and the new approach to progressing Knowledge Insight proposals. There are a number of knowledge networks that TPS members may wish to apply to join (no need to be an ICE member), including:

Walking & Cycling

Getting more people cycling and walking plays a critical role in reducing emissions, decreasing congestion on roads and improving air quality and health for all. We need better cycling and walking infrastructure networks and a more holistic approach that embeds active travel across other areas, such as net zero and planning policies. This Knowledge Network specialises in the construction, design and management of infrastructure which facilitates human-scale transportation including walking, cycling, scooters, e-scooters, and emerging active and personal transportation.

Inclusive urban planning & development

More than half the world's population lives in cities, and this proportion will reach 70% by 2050. Engineers have a critical role to play in creating a safe and inclusive urban built environment. This Knowledge Network specialises in development of the urban environment, including municipal engineering, masterplanning, regeneration, inclusive cities, Stakeholder engagement, and consultation.

Highways infrastructure asset management

The UK's Strategic Road Network is the backbone of the road network in England, supporting almost 40 million vehicles annually. Entire sectors and communities depend on it for continued prosperity, meaning that upgrading and maintaining the network is essential. Similarly, our local road networks are equally as important to effectively move people and goods. Although the vast majority of travel happens using the nation's road network, recent years have seen a steady decline in maintenance and increase in the number of roads in urgent need of attention. This Knowledge Network specialises in the management, maintenance and development of our local and strategic road networks.

Aviation

Our air transport hubs exist as vital infrastructure to maintain and open our economies to tourism and global markets. This Knowledge Network specialises in the development of airports infrastructure, with a strong emphasis on how we achieve this sustainably and zero carbon.

Passenger Transport (moving people)

This Knowledge Network specialises in the design and planning of infrastructure required to move people in and between towns and cities. This includes innovations in engineering and technology, increased user demands for connected services, Automation of transportation; issues of inadequate or aging infrastructures, pollution, congestion; and tackle the challenge of aging or obsolete vehicle fleets, and systems that lack interoperability with emerging technologies.

Freight Transport (moving goods)

Freight transport refers to the total movement of goods using inland transport on a given network. Road, rail and air are the current common methods of movement, but new modes are under development. This Knowledge Network specialises in the development of our freight transport networks, in alignment with its decarbonisation toward net zero by 2050.

Knowledge insight process

The new approach to their knowledge insight process was particularly interesting (see next item). In effect this is their budget for thought leadership and there is a possible opportunities for TPS to put forward our own ideas around for project, and collaborate on these. As well as ideas around appraisal, I also suggested road user charging and demand management which was well received.

28/02 APPG Walking and Cycling – Introduction to Active Travel England (ATE)

I attended this meeting of the APPG where Chris Boardman and Brian Deegan presented on the current status of ATE (nascent!), and their plans for the coming months and years. The focus of the messaging was very much on the role of the organisation as a ‘critical friend’, and celebrating achievement rather than ‘bashing’ poor performance. I asked questions around:

- the extent to which their remit will apply to London (TBD).
- how they may seek to influence wider funding allocations for authorities that don’t engage with the agenda, as was mooted in the initial communications about the setting up of the agency. They again sought to play this down as the focus of the approach, though acknowledged that it was an area which was within their remit.
- The extent to which they would interact with the planning process. On this the focus in the short term is intended to be on influencing individual planning applications, rather than the plan making process. I think this could be a missed opportunity that needs to be kept under review.

09/03 – ICE knowledge insight on Transport and Mobility (See Attachment xxxx)

This meeting is to discuss the knowledge insight piece around appraisal and business cases, provided as attachment 2. I welcome comments on this from board members.

07/03 TPD Operations group with JFG

This meeting is to confirm and track actions being undertaken as part of TPD 2022.

Report ends