

Transport Planning Society

Meeting Date	7 September 2023
Report Title	Item 5.1 - 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.

The period since the 13 July Board meeting has been relatively quiet, due to the summer holiday season and Parliamentary recess.

Board Engagement

I have continued to have useful engagement with members of the Board, including with the Treasurer around developing a year-end financial forecast for the current financial year (see item 5.3); with the Company Secretary on a number of issues around governance; with the Policy Director on how to get the maximum benefit from the excellent work done by the Policy Group; and with the Skills Director on engagement with other professional bodies on the skills agenda (see item on CIHT below).

Officer's Meeting 27 June 2023

I met with the Board Officers on 23 August. Key items discussed were:

- **Review of the 7 September Board meeting agenda Board** – TPS officers to ensure their Board papers for the 7 September meeting are sent to Kath Coldwell/uploaded to Sharepoint by the usual deadline;
- **TPS financial information** – review of the new financial forecast produced by the Treasurer (see item 5.3);
- **Transport Planning day** – update on sponsorship and the need for the Board to decide at the 7 September Board meeting whether TPD2023 should proceed;
- **TPD Strategy Day and Business Plan** - update on planning for the Strategy Day on 12 October

TPS Board Strategy Day and Business Plan

We have now confirmed Friday 12 October as the date for the TPS Board Strategy Day. The aim of the workshop is to set out some long-term goals for the TPS and generate a draft/outline Business Plan for development and adoption for the 2024 financial year. An update on the day will be provided under item 5.2 on the agenda.

Events and engagement

Edinburgh event – 7 September

Planning is well underway for a TPS event in Edinburgh in the evening after the 7 September Board meeting, on “Meeting the Challenge of Scotland’s Transport Strategy”, hosted by Stantec. An update will be provided at the meeting.

Transport Planning Day 2023 – 13 November 2023

Planning continues for TPD2023. The TPD steering group has continued to meet and invitations have gone out to the keynote speakers for the day, including Chris Skidmore MP. Securing sponsorship has emerged as a key issue as potential sponsors are under significant financial pressure and subject to sponsorship requests from multiple organisations. I contacted the Board to ask for help and advice around sponsorship and met with the Business Manager to agree what targeted short-term actions we should take to secure sponsorship. Offers of sponsorship have started to come in, which is encouraging, but we need to keep up the efforts in the early autumn to ensure we have covered as much of the cost of TPD as possible. A number of supporting events are also in development, including an “Introduction to Transport Related Social Exclusion”. An update on TPD (including finances) will be provided under item 5.7 on the agenda.

Engagement with CIHT Chief Executive

I had a very productive meeting with Sue Percy, CEO of the CIHT, on how to build on the positive working relationship between CIHT and TPS for the mutual benefit of both organisations. We agreed there was scope for productive collaborative engagement around issues such as the skills agenda and joint work on key policy issues (e.g. engagement with DfT/DLUHC, joint policy statements). We agreed to have a follow up meeting with the TPS Skills Director and the CIHT skills lead.

Engagement with former TPS Chair.

I had a very useful meeting with Stephen Bennett (former TPS Chair) to understand his perspective on the role of Chair and get his insights on previous TPS Board strategy development (including previous Strategy Away Days).

Policy Developments

Letter to the Prime Minister on local environmental improvements

I wrote to the Prime Minister on 7 August on behalf of the TPS to state our support for local highway improvements (such as LTNs) designed to encourage walking and cycling. Such improvements have significant benefits around air quality, road safety and mode shift. The letter was in response to press reports that the Prime Minister regards such investments as “anti-car” and his consequent commissioning of a review of LTNs and other similar measures. Our letter argued that schemes like LTNs support a number of the Government’s strategic priorities such as tackling the Cost of Living Crisis, decarbonisation, local economic

regeneration and cutting NHS waiting lists (by improving public health). The letter got coverage in the trade press, including Local Transport Today.