

Motorists Forum

Minutes of meeting 24th April 2013

Attendees:

Edmund King (Chair)	AA
John Lewis	BVRLA
Dave Jones	ACPO
Stephen Joseph	CBT
Garrett Emmerson	TfL
David Bizley	RAC Motoring
Theo de Pencier	FTA
Mike Baunton	SMMT

Nick Lester	London Councils
Kelvin Reynolds	British Parking Association

Tricia Hayes	DfT
Miriam Lea	DfT
Haydn Davies	DfT
Catriona Henderson	DfT (Item 5)
Anthony Boucher	DfT (Item 6)
Alan Irving	DfT (Item 6)

Apologies:

Christopher Macgowan
David Quarmby
David Davies
Nick Starling
Graham Dalton

1. Introduction and minutes

Edmund King opened the meeting, welcoming Mike Baunton to the Forum. Members agreed the minutes of the previous meeting, rolling over an action for the HA to report back on how the Route Based Strategy programme is working to provide for more stakeholder input. **ACTION** – Graham Dalton.

Members were asked to consider whether there are additional external guests, as in the January meeting to address the group.

2. DfT Oral Update (brought forward and presented in two parts)

Tricia Hayes began by drawing members attention to a short briefing paper on an upcoming consultation on a new Lower Thames Crossing. She outlined that the Department is keen to hear views and encouraged members to provide a detailed response to proposals.

Members were also asked for views on the recommendation to DfT from the OFT's recent Report on the UK Road Fuel Sector which addressed signage of petrol prices on motorways. There was a group discussion about considerations, historical precedent and experiences in other countries, with membership organisations presenting views/concerns of their members. **ACTION** - Members were asked to respond directly to TH.

3. Roads Minister

The Chair introduced the Roads Minister. Stephen Hammond outlined that he had had a very busy first six months in post. He outlined that work continues on the Roads Feasibility Study and he has been drawing together elements of that and other important reforms with the aim of providing a better deal to motorists. He saw the process as evolutionary, not revolutionary and

expected that reforms would take place in stages. The next stage in the process would be a document setting out proposals on a range of key strategic challenges facing the network, including inconsistency of standards/level of repair across the network, the challenge of future technologies and the role of lower emission vehicles. He was as interested in reforms for local roads as the strategic road network.

Other key issues were the Spending Round settlement and the Minister outlined the pressures the Department was under, and efforts being made to secure a significant capital spending settlement for projects to support growth and housing.

The work being taken forward on Young Drivers was also a significant concern and a key priority for the Department's road safety team was to understand more clearly the relationship young people have with the road network, whether cycling or driving. The Minister anticipated publishing a green paper in the summer.

Road safety marketing remained an important priority, and the Minister highlighted the campaigns that were targeting the most vulnerable road users – last year's THINK! Cycling campaign, and at the ongoing motorcycling campaign. He outlined work being taken forward as priority to look at the issues of HGVs and cycling in cities, and noted that there was work to do on both cyclist behaviour and fleet management.

The Chair thanked the Ministers and took questions. Members asked for more detail on how the piece of work on roads reform/feasibility study would incorporate local roads. The Minister responded that this work was ongoing but he was alive to the very real problems of potholes, and wanted to see money made available for road maintenance being spent to address these problems. The problem of additionality and ensuring there was a net increase in spending on roads maintenance was noted.

The Minister left for another appointment and Oral Updates resumed.

4. DfT Oral Update (second of two parts)

Tricia Hayes reiterated points made by the Minister on the Spending Round and asked members for thoughts on how they felt DfT could address current challenges. There was a group discussion with members outlining support for protecting maintenance budgets rather than extending and enhancing road networks, noting that potholes were no longer confined to local roads. It was noted that the difference between capital and resource spending did not always match closely the split between consumption and infrastructure creation, and that there needed to be some creative thinking on how to better present the benefits of maintaining roads, and acknowledge the links between, for example, maintenance spend and road safety benefits.

Tricia Hayes thanked members for their thoughts and took away a strong consensus about protecting the existing asset base. She provided a brief guide to the Department's resource budgets, and agreed to send on a table of figures following the meeting. **ACTION** – Secretariat.

It was noted that the Roads Reform update was covered off by the Minister in item three.

5. Potholes Review

A short presentation was given covering the current available for maintenance funding; the impact of climate change; an outline of the Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme, sources of statistics/evidence on road condition and an update on progress made since the Potholes Review of 2012. Members asked for further detail on the funding made available for and spending on maintenance. They discussed the extent to which road condition has become an issue in forthcoming local elections and the extent to which social media is raising awareness of maintenance as an issue.

6. Road Safety Update

A short update was presented. It covered primary legislation for the new drug drive offence, which had its last Parliamentary day on the 23rd, and the process now for secondary legislation and consultation. It was noted that forthcoming legislation on drink driving, proposals for young drivers and an announcement on fixed penalty notices/new careless driving offence were due in the coming months. Members were reminded that new web resources were now live and the team had received positive feedback. Mike Baunton updated members about the recently launched SMMT campaign "Minute or Two", which encouraged motorists to perform simple visual safety checks of their vehicles regularly and in particular just before MoT tests to avoid unnecessary failures.

Members were given an update on THINK! activity, notably plans were outlined for a refresh of the educational resources on the THINK! Website for teachers/educational establishment, which will make them easier to find and generally improve user-friendliness. A new drink drive campaign would be launched in the summer. It was noted that other stakeholders were keen to

take part in forthcoming campaigns and to support the road safety observatory. **ACTION** – Secretariat to alert campaigns team.

Members also discussed shared concerns over BBC3's 'Barely Legal' programme. **ACTION** – Chair to discuss with members whether to take this up with programme makers.

7. Parking on Private Land presentations

Kelvin Reynolds of the British Parking Association outlined the scale of the problem in trying to design and operate catch all guidance for operators, under different regulatory regimes, and in trying to implement overarching principles of the Independent Appeals Service. He highlighted the major changes that took place in 2012, outlining how industry has responded and the work now taking place to further standardise practice. Members asked questions around the Code of Practice and how flexibly it was being implemented.

Nick Lester from London Councils gave a presentation on the new Parking Appeals Service (PoPLA), setting out its role, their approach, the appeals process and updating members on what was happening in practice around appeals. Around 3-400 appeals were arriving each week, and around 53% upheld. He set out some ongoing issues and what was being done to resolve them.

It was noted that members organisations were seeing fewer complaints, which was welcomed but there were issues to be resolved on wording on ticketing and decisions on what constituted an 'appropriate amount' in terms of charges applied. An invitation to visit PoPLA was extended to members. **ACTION** – members to inform Secretariat if they would like this to be arranged.

8. AOB

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 12th June.

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