

MINUTES OF THE 16TH MEETING OF THE UK LIGHTING BOARD

25 May 2005, Room H2, Great Minster House, London

Present:

Roger Elphick	CSS/ Durham CC
Mike Smith	Highways Agency
Jim Milne	SCOTS
Colin Payne	CSS/Leeds City Council
Alan Houston	Roads Service, Northern Ireland
Jake Dempster	Scottish Executive
David Johnson	Transport for London (TfL)
Lee Evans	Caerphilly CBC
Patrick Baldrey	Lighting Industry Federation
Jim Gallagher	Highways Agency
Anne Stanford	Highways Agency
Andrew Oldland	DfT RLTSF (Secretariat)

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Terry Felstead, Matt Williams, David Williams, Vivien Collins, Dave Coatham, Ian Holmes, Edward Bunting, and Chris Hudson.

2. Minutes of last meeting of UK Lighting Board

A question was raised about the progress of the Numelite Report. Roger Elphick reported that the draft report has now been produced and arrangements for distribution need to be checked.

Otherwise the minutes were accepted.

3. Gershon Review - Presentation by Anne Stanford of the Highways Agency

Anne Stanford gave a presentation on the work of the Highways Agency as a change agent following the Gershon Review.

The main points arising from this were:

- As a result of the Gershon review, every Department and local authority will be expected to make an efficiency gain of 2 ½% annually.

- The Highways Agency have set up an advisory group with the participation of IHT, CSS, TAG and the 4Ps and regional Centres of Excellence. The Group intends to facilitate the sharing of best practice with local authorities, especially with regard to procurement (e.g. joint contracts) and the measurement of efficiency gains.
- HA will release a press notice in mid-late June this year which will set out the progress made so far towards achieving the objectives of the Gershon review.
- The recommendations of the Gershon review apply UK-wide. Although the HA has no remit outside England, HA are willing to share their expertise with the devolved administrations.
- A general discussion took place on the need for greater standardisation of procurement procedures and specifications.

4. RLG Feedback

The following issues arose at the last RLG:

- Energy Prices (on Agenda for this meeting)
- Terms of Reference (on Agenda for this meeting)
- Maintenance of Traffic Signals (this issue has now gone back to the Traffic Management Board)
- LTP issues - on Agenda for this meeting
- Lighting Code of Practice - this has been well received
- Research - on Agenda for this meeting
- BV96 - RLG members were not content that they had not been consulted about the proposal to remove texture from the calculation. It has now been agreed with the Audit Commission that the 2004 BV96 result would not be included in the CPA assessment. This has been explained in the letter to local authorities signed by Matthew Lugg (Roads Board Chair).
- RLG members requested the circulation of a copy of the Roads Maintenance Code of Practice, and the report by Garry Sterritt (Atkins) on asset valuation.

5. Increased Energy Charges

The Board approved the letter and spreadsheet on which authorities are requested to enter their increases in energy charges. This now needs to be circulated quickly, with an appropriate return destination (RLTS3/DfT) on the letter.

Colin Payne and Andrew Oldland will agree final details of the letter. The letter and spreadsheet will then be circulated by DfT via the Government Offices. It will also be circulated to the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

It was noted that there seemed to be difficulty in ensuring letters were fully distributed, particularly in Wales and London.

Action - Colin Payne/Andrew Oldland

6. Strategic Plan for the RLG and its Boards

LB 71/05 covers the main points that should be included in a TOR. The Board proposed the following changes to the document:

- Include reference to the Scottish Executive (this had been omitted from LB 71/05)
- Where the document refers to “Highways”, change to “Lighting”.
- In the standing priorities section, include references to “advice on lighting and crime reduction” and “advice on visual impact of lighting”. Also include a reference to “continuous improvement in energy management”.

Colin Payne mentioned the debate about the effectiveness of lighting in crime reduction. The Home Office figures supporting the argument, produced by David Farrington, had been challenged by Paul Marchant (statistician and astronomer). However, other independent statisticians had stated that the Home Office figures were correct. Patrick Baldrey agreed to send the Home Office figures to Colin Payne.

Action - Patrick Baldrey

7. LTP Issues Update

APR Guidance (Inventories and Condition Indicators).

It was agreed that authorities would not be requested to submit an update of the Appendix A inventory in 2005/06 and in future returns would be requested bi-annually.

DfT statisticians are still working on the figures from last year's update of Appendix A. The Board requested that this analysis should be produced by the end of September 2005 for incorporation in an updated ILE 'Protecting a Vital Asset' leaflet that would cover national data for the first time.

LTP2

In the Regional Maintenance Seminars, DfT is reminding authorities that they should complete their Appendix B (full lighting inventories) by early 2006. This will allow the column condition indicator to be introduced as an LTP indicator in 2006/07 as planned. A letter will be sent out by the Board outlining the proposals when the CSS Research Project has been completed.

APPLG update

It was noted that some members of the All Party Parliamentary Lighting Group (APPLG) had lost their seats in the recent General Election. The APPLG needs at least 50 MPs in order to operate, and the Board hoped some new members representing constituencies in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland could be included to ensure that the Group has UK-wide membership.

It is understood that Joan Walley MP still wishes to be involved with the Group.

Patrick Baldrey agreed to ask Ernest Magog (Lighting Industry Federation) to consider arranging another meeting of APPLG as some new issues had arisen such as increases in energy prices and the introduction of a national condition indicator.

8. Code of Practice Feedback

The Board considered the cost of a paper copy of the Code (£8) to be good value. It was also mentioned that the descriptions of the column conditions 1, 2 and 3 (good, not so good and poor) could have been worded more clearly.

9. Competition in Connections

Lee Evans had met local authority representatives the day before the Lighting Board meeting. Local authority champions from each area reported on the uptake of the Service Level Agreement (SLA).

The DNOs insisted that the start of the SLA, originally planned for 1 January 2005, was delayed until 1 April 2005. However, the local authorities reported that some DNOs are still unable to gather relevant information for the SLA trial.

Some local authorities are also not taking up the SLA trial. In Wales, every authority has taken it up, but in London and Scotland the take-up has been very poor. It is essential that local authorities insist on taking up the trial which has been agreed with the DNOs.

Lee Evans will let DfT have details identifying the areas of low take up. He will also e-mail authorities who have not taken up the SLA.

Action - Lee Evans

Some DNOs are re-drafting the SLA (although they signed up to the standard SLA). The DNOs are trying to make local authorities sign up to the re-drafted SLAs. Modified documents are not acceptable and not in the spirit of the trial.

Lee Evans has spoken to OFGEM about this and intends to show OFGEM the modified SLAs. He is also meeting with the DNOs in two weeks' time.

It was reported that EDF are delaying the trial and do not intend to report until October. Because of this, other DNOs are holding back.

Because of the above issues, the Board are in favour of extending the SLA trial period by another three months after the initial six months. Lee Evans will report to the next Lighting Board on the position regarding the SLA trial.

Action - Lee Evans

10. Asset Management Framework Update

Inventory and Condition Assessment

See Item 7 above.

Asset Valuation

The Asset Management document (prepared by Garry Sterritt, Atkins) will be launched at the Surveyor conference in Nottingham on 6 July. The CSS Asset Management framework document has already been published.

The guidance on asset valuation in the Atkins document could be used to analyse the results of the new lighting indicator on column condition, due for introduction as an LTP indicator in 2006/07. However, it was noted that devaluation and deterioration (degradation) profile curves could be different.

The ILE conference in December this year will include sessions on asset valuation and condition assessment.

11. Light Pollution Issues

a. Update on revision of ILE guidelines

A draft of the ILE guidance on light pollution was released 6 weeks ago. There are now only relatively minor issues to decide. A document is also being produced by the Scottish Executive.

b. Letter to Rt. Hon. Alun Michael MP of 21/2/2005

In this letter, the Board recognises the consensus that further guidance on light pollution should be issued. The Board would favour the promulgation of this through the Code of Practice and design guidance.

c. Reply From Rt. Hon. Alun Michael MP of 05/03/2005

This letter points out that street lighting is not specifically excluded from the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Bill but, depending on location, may fall outside the definition of statutory nuisance.

ILE Proposed Guidance

The ILE intend to publish a document by Dr Chris Badley which plays down the polluting effects of street lighting. The Board think that this document could be seen as too "one-sided" and that it may not be a good idea to publish this in connection with guidance on light pollution.

Campaigners against light pollution have visited the Highways Agency. Their main concerns have been lighting at out of town shopping centres and "do-it-yourself" security lighting on private premises.

12. Passive Safety (TA 89/05)

A presentation was made by Jim Gallagher from the Highways Agency. A summary of this is as follows:

- Passive safety is a way of minimising impact to vehicles.
- Structural standards in EN 40 allow the use of passively safe lighting columns.
- To be approved for use, columns need to be crash tested in accordance with EN 1767.
- There is no requirement for a Highway Authority to install passively safe columns. However, there was concern that, when issued, local authorities would be obliged to follow the same guidelines and they had only latterly been consulted.

- HA have produced a draft guidance note on the use of passively safe columns. This has been circulated to CSS and ILE but local authority requirements need more consideration.
- It was noted that this is a developing market and HA's note will stimulate the market. When this happens, local authorities could feel pressured to install passively safe columns. However, they may not be suitable for all locations.
- There are two types of passively safe column - "low energy" which fold in front of the vehicle, and "high energy" which fold over the vehicle.
- The HA are trialling some low energy columns on the A34 Peartree Interchange.
- Mott McDonald is running a seminar on passive safety on 23 June. A copy of the HA draft document has been circulated to them.
- The consultation period for the HA document is still running. Responses are now needed as soon as possible.

13. Research Update

Lighting Column Risk Assessment Review and Condition Indicator Development

A progress report has been issued. (LB 76/05) The final report is due in August.

Circuit Wattage of Discharge Lamps - see Terry Felstead's note of 27 April UMSUG meeting (circulated with Board papers).

Effect of Road Surface Materials - no progress report yet

Passive Lighting Column Proposal - this could be re-considered at the next RLG research meeting, but arguments for funding may need to be stronger in the light of other developments e.g. HA guidance.

Better Streets Projects Update - this project will be managed by DfT Traffic Management Division, but has not yet been let.

Term Maintenance Contract Documentation - this project is being taken forward by the ILE independently of DfT.

Research Bids (LB 75/05) - Board members would have liked some more Lighting projects to have been approved for 2005/06, but realised that the Board were already overseeing several projects approved in earlier years.

14. Best Value Performance Indicators

The Board would like another letter to be sent out from DfT to local authorities, explaining BV215.

Action - DfT.

15. 3G Networks

The Board is aware of public concerns about safety issues relating to this type of mast. BT has provided more information, but it is not yet in the public domain. Colin Payne agreed to go back to BT to request that the Lighting Board be given sight of this information.

Action - Colin Payne

16. December ILE Conference.

This could now take place in November or in February/March.

17. Training

Concern was expressed regarding the Sector Scheme for Traffic Signals. Local authority staff working on the maintenance of traffic signals will need to obtain NVQ training if they want to continue doing this job, unless they can claim "grandfather rights" before the September deadline.

The HA have given the Board the name of Lance Williams as a contact for the training issues.

18. Any Other Business

EU Directive on Recycling Lamps/Luminaries

Some local authorities are confused about how this Directive should be applied. Guidance on the Directive is on the DTI website.

The part of the Directive relating to the recycling of lamps will take effect in two months. The implementation of the part relating to the recycling of luminaries has been deferred.

Disability Discrimination Act

The Royal National Institute for the Blind have informed local authorities that they regard stainless steel lighting columns as dangerous for partially sighted

people, as their colour makes them difficult to see. Local authorities may need to consider placing brightly coloured bands on columns.

Date of Next Meeting

5 September 2005, at the Scottish Executive Offices, Edinburgh. (with possible optional visit to the Scottish Parliament).