



Transport Knowledge Hub South East Event
Monday 26 March 2018
10.00am – 2.00pm, Transport Systems Catapult, Milton Keynes

NOTE OF EVENT

Event chair **Hilary Chipping, Acting Chief Executive of South East Midlands LEP and Chair of the Transport Knowledge Hub** welcomed delegates to Milton Keynes, and outlined the format for the event. Hilary said that people from across the whole of the South East are thinking about the area as an 'economic heartland'. She said this was about conversations and discussion and asked attendees to share ideas and ask questions.

Paul Campion, Chief Executive, Transport Systems Catapult welcomed everybody to the Transport Systems Catapult venue. He said that Transport Systems Catapult is one of 10 catapults set up by the UK government. He outlined the role of the Catapult – that the UK has some of the best universities in the world, and there is extraordinary amount of world-leading research in the UK, but that the research hasn't always been brought through to commercialised innovation. He said for example that between 2012 and 2016, London was the biggest destination for capital investment (more than double that of Berlin) but London was only ranked fifth in Europe for investment in transport. He said the Transport Catapult Systems is designed to help better spend taxpayer's money and to assist organisations in breaking down barriers and challenging market failures.

Paul said that billions of dollars have been invested into autonomous vehicles. He said that in a rapidly changing market, we should always be ahead of where the market is not simply meeting it. He said he believed there were three main market opportunities which must be focused on. Firstly, asking how connected and autonomous transport can be used to harness better transport outcomes. He said that 14 per cent of consumer spending is on transport, the second biggest after housing, and that transport was linked to every part of our lives. Secondly, we should think about how we can improve accessibility to transport. He said transport is moving from traditionally being about concrete railway lines and vehicles to a service economy, and the 80 per cent of the UK's economy is services, meaning that we can take global leadership on how transport assets are used to deliver outcomes. Thirdly, he said that new mobility services is important and is a focus of the Industrial Strategy. Paul said it was important that partners across the South East work together to deliver better transport outcomes.

Claire Haigh, Executive Director, Transport Knowledge Hub thanked Paul Campion for hosting this event in the fantastic cutting-edge venue. Claire outlined the aims and goals of the Transport Knowledge Hub. She talked about how technology is having a profound impact on how we travel. Claire set out how the three events held so far had a unifying theme of transport technology and she looked forward to delegates in the South East building on this.

Simon Amor, Head of Planning and Development (East) at Highways England addressed delegates by outlining the principal role Highways England has in maintaining strategic road networks to ensure road users have safe and reliable journeys. He said Highways England also do much more and have a strategic aim to support economic growth. Simon outlined how traffic had grown by 50 per cent on motorways since 1993, and that every major Highways England scheme has delivered £3 to the economy for every £1 invested.

He said that Highways England was currently halfway through RIS1, and that they have delivered £4 billion through 15 schemes under construction and 18 already completed. He said Highways England has helped to deliver 36,000 new homes through the housing growth fund. He said in the East, Highways England have £2 billion to invest to modernise roads. He listed a number of important roads that have been improved in recent years, including the A14, the biggest project of



its kind in Europe. In addition, Simon mentioned the M1 smart motorway which has become a key part of what they are trying to achieve.

In terms of RIS2, Simon said that they had finished the research phase and heard from a number of partners. He said the key things that their strategic road report set out included operation maintenance and renewal and developing more smart motorways. Simon alluded to the expressways which are being built. He said it is important that the next generation of transport investment is a balanced programme. He said that safety is a big priority as traffic increases, and also maintained the importance of protecting the environment and introducing sustainable methods.

Event chair **Hilary Chipping** then invited delegate to ask the panel questions. **Tim Smith, Chief Executive of Thames Valley Berkshire LEP** asked how 'smart' smart motorways were. **Simon Amor** responded by saying that there is more to be done to make smart motorways smarter. He said that Highways England do a lot of work with manufacturers regarding how information gets to cars through new technologies, and that smart motorways work on complex algorithms and sometimes that doesn't always work perfectly – so there is more that can be done to make that smarter.

Cllr Yvonne Constance, Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport at Oxfordshire County Council said that we need to start getting smarter now in regard to what time meetings are arranged. She added that we need to start thinking about how we use our roads, and let's get smart about meeting times. Event chair **Hilary Chipping** agreed that meeting times were sometimes early, and said that east-west connectivity in the South East is an issue we should discuss today. **Paul Champion** responded by saying that the roads are very busy, but 25 per cent of roads are effectively unused. He argued that there are political and economic opportunities to incentivise car uses to be off the road when people need to get to work and to school.

Ahmed Goga, Director of Strategy, Oxfordshire LEP asked how can we bring private finance into infrastructure. **Paul Champion** responded by saying he welcomed the challenge in terms of private finance. He said that he thought that industry needed to think about how we do things rather than who pays. He said we can think about new business outcomes that provide the same outcomes. He added that we needed new traffic lights in the South East, and that 60 per cent of public sector investment goes in to social services, and henceforth we could incentivise businesses such as Jaguar to build traffic lights in an area in return for helping them sell their products. **Simon Amor** mentioned that Highways England had always made use of private finance, and used the example of one of the motorways that they had been working on in the South East which had been financed privately. He added that Highways England are always open to working with private sector to help building road infrastructure. He reiterated he can't deliver a lot of things on private finance alone.

Chelsea Dosad, Associate Director, Infrastructure Advisory at KPMG, said that the key issue is about monetizing. She said that private finance is only viable if there if there is a funding stream associated with it. She said it is ultimately the user who pays in most cases. **Paul Champion** agreed that this was an important clarification. He said that we needed to talk about the route in which streams of money get to the right places.

Alan Francis from Milton Keynes Green Party said there should be a strong focus on sustainable growth in transport investment. **Claire Haigh** agreed and said investment in local bus infrastructure can deliver massive benefits, up to £8 of net economic benefit for every £1 invested. She reiterated that the Transport Knowledge Hub was very much about sustainable transport.

An audience member mentioned the expressway between Oxford and Cambridge having had some benefits, but asked about the future in five or ten years' time. They asked whether Highways England thought about sustainable roads? **Simon Amor** said that was a good point, and added that when Highways England are building new roads and sections of their network, connectivity is very important. He said the Cambridge network isn't just about building roads; it's about how it interacts



and connects with communities. He added that connectivity and making best use of lanes we have got is a real key thing for highways England.

Event chair **Hilary Chipping** thanked the first set of speakers and welcomed the second set of panellists. She asked each panel members to talk about how transport networks can contribute to stronger economies and the impact of technology on travel plans.

Martin Dean, Managing Director of Bus Development at Go Ahead opened by saying he thought that one of the major issues the South East faced was an increasing population and from that an increase in the number of transport trips. He said that Crossrail and Thameslink will help alleviate that but heavy rail is very expensive and takes a long time to get to fruition. He added that the nature of these projects they take a long time, and in the end it only satisfies a limited number of trips. He said that as a result, bus is a really good solution to meeting travel demands in a sustainable way, and that the bus industry is ready to invest. He added that a good approach is if local authorities support bus priorities in city centre areas and at key junctions outside of city centres. He added that Thornhill Park & Ride in Oxford was a vibrant site with local buses and good interchange and retail facilities.

Martin said that technology has big potential for public transport. He said that autonomous vehicles are really good and that Go Ahead do not see them as a competitor technology but as complimentary. He used Milton Keynes as an example of a situation in which key transport modes are remote from traffic objectives that they are supposed to serve. He mentioned autonomous vehicle pods as a good opportunity to try and bridge gap, and that Milton Keynes had wide pavements which separated them from normal traffic, which you could use to move around town without conflicting with mixed traffic.

Martin Tugwell, Director of England's Economic Heartland Strategic Alliance outlined the role of England's Economic Heartland as a subnational transport body. He said that subnational transport bodies and how it can give a strategic voice to transport investment. He said sharing knowledge and experience is vital, and that whilst subnational transport bodies are a big part of the devolution agenda, when it comes to looking at investment priorities it is local authorities and local partners working together and having a single voice which will get things moving.

Martin added that scale is important. He outlined how England's Economic Heartland is an area of 5.1 million people generating £2.4 billion a year for the economy. He spoke about the importance of ensuring that the money generated comes back in to this area. He added that there is huge economic potential for the South East, and the government in response has said that it is a national economic priority for the next 20 to 30 years.

He said growth had to be delivering betterment, not just for the built environment but also for the natural environment. He talked about the context for the growth and the backdrop of a successful economy and productive LEPS. However he said the region was not as productive as other regions He added that user expectations is also a challenge in transport, and that we all had experience as users of public transport and that we needed to bring that experience and perspective into achieving our goals.

To deliver this, Martin said we need collaboration as neither the public sector nor the private sector had a single answer. He added that as a subnational transport body, England's Economic Heartland needed an evidence base – a single database that combines data across the corridor of the area and across housing and transport. He added that a digital infrastructure also needs to be built as it will fundamentally change the nature and type of travel that we need, which includes electrification.

Cllr Keith Glazier, Chair of Transport for the South East opened his remarks by saying that subnational transport bodies are hugely important, and that it was great that infrastructure was



being brought into place with a single voice. He said that he was pleased that Transport for the South East had been formed, and they now work with 16 transport authorities across the region. He said coming together would mean increased spending power.

He said it was important everyone in the region understood why a strategic overview to transport investment is important. He gave an example of what they have been doing, and said that TfSE them for their opinion on Highways England's RIS2 projects, and that they were able to come up with a single voice across the entire South East area.

He said he was pleased that the Secretary of State had endorsed Transport for the South East, and said that it showed working together is absolutely crucial. He said Transport for the South East are launching of a connectivity review on 8 May which is the first part of the transport strategy for the South East area. He said the main objectives of the review are to improve connectivity, improve travel times and enable firms to access larger labour supplies as well as increasing opportunities for workers. He added that interconnectivity is something that the transport industry must take seriously, as we need to ensure that routes and journey times are as best as they can be.

Cllr Glazier mentioned the importance of addressing coastal deprivation, which is particularly impacted by poor road networks – travelling just 30 miles can take 2 hours. In closing, he said that we cannot build our way out of transport issues, we need to use what we have in a better way – more technology and modern signalling is vital.

Event chair **Hilary Chipping** commented that this really reinforces the need to work together. She then invited **Catherine Folca, Stakeholder Manager, Transport Focus** to talk about customer views on transport as an independent transport user watchdog. Catherine said it was Transport Focus's purpose to help central government, Highways England and others to focus on the needs of users more than they might otherwise. She added that they use regular traffic surveys which target satisfaction scores across all transport modes, enabling them to track and make comparisons. Catherine said their research showed that rail and bus passengers want the same thing – better capacity, performance and value for money. She said road users want better roads, better behaved drivers and less traffic congestion. She said that all of these 'wants' can be addressed through better use of technology, by making public transport more appealing, especially when moving people from the road to other modes of public transport. She said it was crucial that the user had confidence to plan their journey, and technology can help with this if it is properly integrated.

She mentioned that reliable Wi-Fi on board public transport was important and it enabled passengers to engage more. She said that Transport Focus research into young people using buses demonstrated that there is a lot of competition for bus journey apps on young people's smart phones, where they have to compete for space against other apps. Catherine said that smart ticketing, part time season tickets, pay as you go and price cap has been popular with users.

She argued that we need to address changing society, adding for example only 39 per cent of 65s and over use a smart phone, and an even lower percentage use apps. She said we should have workshops to help older people understand new technology so they are not left behind and unable to use travel apps. In addition, Catherine stressed that we are moving towards a 24/7 society, and transport modes needs to reflect this. Catherine concluded by talking about the importance of giving users value for money.

Event chair **Hilary Chipping** said that the panel discussion was fascinating and brought out important topics for discussion. She laid out the four challenges which are found in the industrial strategy. Hilary then invited delegates to ask questions.

Jack Holland, Business Development Manager at Arriva UK asked how local authorities and private businesses can deliver new ideas and meet demands of consumer. **Martin Tugwell** had two points of response. He said that we have to get both sides, public and private, to tackle the issues of



procurement, as at the moment there is good intent but it often degenerates. Martin said we also need to crack the issue of how we balance risk, as too often the public sector want to minimise risk and place it on the private sector. He said this can only be achieved if both sectors work together on innovation – which is what England’s Economic Heartland has as one of its key aims, ensuring that the market is bringing forward innovation whilst public sector look out for public stakeholders. He concluded by saying that it was fundamentally about collaboration.

Phil Southall, Managing Director of Oxford Bus Company challenged the panel on inclusivity. He said that not everybody can afford the train, and that in Oxfordshire we have good opportunities to improve bus and coach. He said he would like to see much more of that when forming transport strategy in the Economic Heartland area, and stressed the importance in having a multi-model transport strategy. He also raised a point about commercial sustainability, and how we can make new technologies sustainable proposition for the future. He said we needed an evolution not a revolution, and that the public sector had a role in this. **Cllr Keith Glazier** said that maintaining what we have is difficult enough, and to actually innovate is going to be a challenge. He said that the key question is how do we make innovation happen, and how to make it affordable. He added sometimes technology changes at such pace it is difficult to pick an option to pursue. **Martin Tugwell** said it is important to think as users of transport, and about what we actually want to see as users. He said that if you offered him the chance to pay monthly fee and get on any form of transport he would seriously think about that. He added that it is about purchasing mobility. **Martin Dean** argued that there was a role for the public sector in some capacity in asking tech giants whether their practices and business model is sustainable for our public transport system. He said that Uber is being increasingly challenged on this, and it could affect mobility of services, which gives a reason for the public sector to get involved.

Ash Wheeler, IoT Business Director at oneTRANSPORT, asked if the panel had an opinion on what kind of information sharing would be the most effective way to achieve economic growth and sustainable improvements. **Martin Dean** responded by saying that data is important. He said that the public sector shouldn’t get involved too much so that data is not manipulated in a heavy-handed way, and the market should lead on that data to ensure most cost effective innovation for transport. **Martin Tugwell** added that this will be an interesting debate in next few months and we should keep an eye on Facebook data scandal. He said one thing about data is that people who hold it are always under pressure to monetize it. He said in a broader strategic remit we need to have the infrastructure in place to be able to create data. **Catherine Folca** said that from the users perspective, it would be great to have access to comparative data like we do when booking flights, and that not being to compare prices make people use public transport less.

Llewelyn Morgan, Service Manager - Localities Policy Programme, Oxfordshire County Council said that they were working with Amazon and found a health care provider who want to work with us to deliver care through eco shows, yet when they looked at 80 people across an area, only two of them had Wi-fi. He added that one thing that they found in terms of park and ride was that at the weekends families were using park and ride and yet there were no toilet facilities. **Cllr Keith Glazier** agreed with Llewelyn. He said that in his county, they can’t get mobile phone coverage in 25 per cent of the county.

Tim Smith, Chief Executive of Thames Valley Berkshire LEP mentioned that Claire Haigh wrote a report about tackling pollution and that it highlighted a conundrum which we needed to solve. He said that Amazon warehouses in Berkshire mean a huge increase in diesel vans delivering goods which then cause serious congestion and pollution. He said that this is a conundrum that we needed to reflect on, a tech giant meeting our demands but in so doing impacting on connectivity. **Martin Tugwell** responded that he was struck by Amazon lockers at railway stations, and said the idea that you have to have vans driving around at a certain time of the day must be challenged. He added that this was not just a transport issue but a place making issue.



Tim Smith said that LEPs are going to be competing with each other to get more investment in areas and will look to invite in new technologies. **Martin Dean** said that Go Ahead had been holding discussions with Amazon about using spare capacity on buses at peak times for deliveries, and how they may be able to integrate bus operators delivering parcels which could transform some of their marginal networks and routes into something a bit more profitable. **Catherine Folca** added that we must question our own demands as consumers, and stop demanding parcels be delivered immediately when we are sometimes not even there to collect them.

Claire Haigh thanked the panel and audience for their participation. She said the joining up of transport and logistics was vital, as online shopping was leading to congestion and slowing down the bus fleet. She said that subnational transport bodies are important and a very useful theme for discussion. She said that we need the right kind of growth, and that autonomous vehicles present opportunities for public transport. Claire closed by saying that it is important to share best practice and build a community of like-minded people.

Event chair **Hillary Chipping** then provided a summary of the event, and said that there was a strong feeling that we need to change the way we behave. She mentioned the challenge facing local authorities in the South East to build 20,000 homes a year, and that to achieve this we needed to make changes, particularly behavioural changes. Hilary closed by saying that it had been a stimulating discussion, and asked the panel to close with a few words.

Martin Tugwell closed by saying that the scale of the opportunity is enormous and that as users we want more demands and more expectations. **Cllr Keith Glazier** summed up by saying that more collaboration will achieve the best results and that they needed to be brave and take risks to make change happen. **Martin Dean** said that his challenge to Highways England was to build more sustainable roads and unlock congestion which will help achieve mobility in a sustainable way. **Catherine Volca** said that we needed to give people options, better information and encourage people to use public transport.

Event chair **Hillary Chipping** closed by saying that we would only meet challenges if we worked together.