

Bedfordshire Group - Transcript

Meeting #8 - Details

Date: Tuesday 07 February

Time: 7:00-9:00 PM

Type of meeting: Virtual

Attendees:

EWR Co attendees

- Hannah Staunton, EWR Co lead.
- Mark Foster, Traction Strategy Subject Matter Expert.
- Andy Bagguley, Freight Subject Matter Expert.
- EWR Co production and support team.

Parish Council representatives

- Cllr Mike Barlow, Brickhill Parish Council
- Cllr Sarah Walker, Clapham Parish Council
- Cllr Pat Onley, Oakley Parish Council
- Cllr Bernadette Russell, Ravensden Parish Council
- Cllr Nicola Gribble, Renhold Parish Council
- Peter Norris, Renhold Parish Council advisor
- Cllr Justin Griffiths, Roxton Parish Council
- Cllr Gordon Johnston, Wyboston, Chawston and Colesden Parish Council

Local authority councillors

- Cllr Phillippa Martin-Moran-Bryant, Great Barford, Bedford Borough Council
-

Apologies

- Biddenham Parish Council
- Bolnhurst and Keysoe Parish Council
- Bromham Parish Council
- Cardington Parish Council
- Colmworth Parish Council
- Cople Parish Council
- Great Barford Parish Council
- Milton Ernest Parish Council
- Shortstown Parish Council

- Staploe Parish Council
- Stevington Parish Council
- Thurleigh Parish Council
- Turvey Parish Council
- Willington Parish Council
- Cllr Wendy Rider, Brickhill in Bedford
- Cllr Charles Royden, Brickhill in Bedford
- Cllr Jonathan Gambold - Bromham and Biddenham, Bedford Borough Council
- Cllr Roger Rigby - Bromham and Biddenham, Bedford Borough Council
- Cllr Jane Walker – Clapham, Bedford Borough Council
- Cllr Sarah Gallagher – Eastcotts, Bedford Borough Council
- Cllr Stephen Moon – Great Barford, Bedford Borough Council
- Cllr James Weir - Great Barford, Bedford Borough Council
- Cllr Jonathan Abbott – Oakley, Bedford Borough Council
- Cllr Martin Towler – Oakley, Bedford Borough Council
- Cllr Doug McMurdo – Riseley, Bedford Borough Council
- Cllr Tom Wootton – Sharnbrook, Bedford Borough Council

Documents discussed in this meeting

The following documents were discussed during the meeting and these are available on the Group's dedicated Community Hub site – [here](#):

- Agenda
- Slides
- Video recording

Key points, actions and outcomes

NB The recording was started part way through this meeting following running through the agenda and housekeeping rules.

[0:00:00]

Hannah Staunton (HS): Are you?

Sarah-Jane (EWR Production Team): I'm not the host, it's down as Mark as the host.

Mark Foster (MF): Yes, I'm hoping you can see my screen?

Tabitha (EWR Production Team): It is recording now.

MF: Tell me if you can't?

HS: I cannot see your screen.

Gordon Johnston (GJ): No, but we are recording.

Slide 2 – Housekeeping

HS: Ah yes, so we are recording, and we can see the screen, wahey!

MF: Apologies, I'm not great with using Zoom!

HS: That's fine!

MF: If it had been on Teams, I think I would be fine.

HS: I know, I know.

[0:00:25]

[...] So, please do put your camera on if you do feel comfortable doing that. It's nice to see who we're talking to but understand that but some people that's not always comfy and some of the team may take their camera off because it's a little bit distracting because some of the team here Tabitha and Sarah Jane are mainly here to kind of do the admin side of things and it's helpful to know who's sort of actively involved. Please do feel free to use the raise hand function or as I said, do dip in, we're all adults, and I think we know how to have respectful conversation. Can you ping forward to the next slide?

[0:00:59]

1. Today's agenda

Slide 3 – Today's agenda

[...] So today's agenda to confirm we'll do a quick review of actions from the last meeting and then we'll get into the meat of this LRG sandwich. We will talk about traction strategy and then we'll talk about freight, we'll have a discussion around future topics, AoB and closing remarks. For absolute avoidance doubt, I don't have an update for you today as in like the main update that we're working towards. I think everyone here will have seen Beth's email from before Christmas, saying we're working towards that as quickly as we can.

[0:01:35]

[...] That remains what we're doing, we're working to make sure that we get sort of the next stage announcement out as fast as we can. I don't have a date for that for you today and I don't have any information about that today. Although if you have any sort of direct questions, I'll do my very best to answer them, but I think the position that Beth laid out in that email is probably still where we are. So, before I move forward into a review of actions any thoughts questions, feelings, suggestions from anyone in the group?

2. Review of actions from previous meetings

Slide 4 – Review of actions from previous meetings

Slide 5 – Closed actions

[0:02:01]

[...] Fabulous thank you so much in that case, Mark if you wouldn't mind... review of actions from previous meetings. We said that we continue to think about doing polls, whether or not we met in person or was hybrid, this one obviously is an online meeting which I think is a good approach for this one.

[0:02:27]

[...] We also said we continue to look at the audio technical difficulties that was mainly around in person meeting so that hasn't come up, yet, so far. I think Mike might be trying to join the call, so I think we'll carry on but I think we'll welcome him when he arrives if that's all right. We agreed to recirculate the form on the format of meetings to LRG members. I don't think we had any additional responses to that, so I think we'll probably regard that one as closed out for now... we've tried a couple of times on that one and I think maybe that hopefully shows that you're comfortable with the format of meetings as they are, but if anything additional comes up please let us know.

[0:03:09]

[...] As I said before we were open to change we just have to make sure it's sort of sits in the... that there's some sort of process around it so everyone's comfortable with that. We also said that we would reshare the link to more information on our Accessibility Advisory Panel and send a copy of the poster with group members, which we have done.

[0:03:32]

[...] A little quick update on that if it's helpful, we had 34 applications to join the Accessibility Advisory Panel, which we shortlisted down to 16 and we'll be doing informal interviews in February. Those people have come from across the route. I haven't met them, I don't know who they are, but I think we're quite interested to meet as many people as we can and make sure that people with a range of accessibility issues and experiences are taken into account as we go forward.

Slide 6 – Outstanding actions

[0:04:02]

[...] And then action number seven, we agreed that we'd go away and look at some examples of what's been delivered under the banner of active travel in CS1 and outline the difference between funding and supporting local authorities to achieve these aims were

available. I can give a quick verbal update today on some of that, but I would probably suggest that we look at that as a future topic for discussion.

[0:04:33]

[...] I think the key thing there is that I had probably misunderstood how advanced some of the conversations have been. So we're still in a position where those conversations are ongoing with local authorities. I just, I wonder whether it'd be helpful to get a quick verbal update or whether we should put that in the conversation later on, I'm happy to go with the consensus of the group.

GJ: Whichever suits, I'm easy either way.

Sarah Walker (SW): I think a quick verbal update would be great Hannah.

[0:05:03]

HS: Wonderful! Give me one second to find my wonderful verbal update.

GJ: There's a message from Nicola, she was having difficulty hearing, I think.

HS: Yes, I think she's going to try a different method to join. So, the kinds of things that we're looking at on CS1 include enhanced cycling facilities at stations, so, to make sure that storage is secure and safe and accessible for everyone, and we will be considering how that storage needs to be varied to meet the specific customer needs and abilities of everyone that wants to use them.

[0:05:43]

[...] We're taking quite a close look at signage and wayfinding as well, which is something that's often forgotten in terms of active travel and specifically accessibility. So, we need to make it very easy for people to navigate their way to the station and around the station as well. So, we work...we are working closely with district and county councils already but there's a specific conversation to be had around physical signage, but also things like digital solutions and apps, so there's some questions and conversations being had in that space including the cycling, slash wheeling, so that could be anyone using any form of wheeled transport and walking routes.

[0:06:23]

[...] Much of what we do there will come down to the funding and we'll certainly be able to make improvements around the stations directly. I think there's a question about how far out we can be involved. We're considering quite a lot of things, it's not just about the ways themselves, it's things like lighting, it's segmenting pavements from other users, vegetation removal, if that's needed and the maintenance of that, and resurfacing and those kinds of opportunities so there's quite a lot of practical nitty gritty things going into those.

[0:06:57]

[...] The funding element that we were talking about, where funding isn't within what they would call a cost envelope, which is effectively the amount of money available directly already. We are working and will work with local authorities, but also businesses and local community groups to unlock required funding because there may be pots that we can kind of tap into that can help us achieve some of those wider aims around accessibility and active travel.

[0:07:23]

[...] So some of those would be sort of Active Travel England and the section 106 screens of various projects. Justin, you've got your hand up?

Justin Griffiths (JG): Yeah, I think it was myself that may have asked you for that. I think what's really important for the community on this side of the fence if you like, was understanding what you've delivered, probably more in terms of access to stations, as opposed to things in and around stations, because that's all taken as a given, you know, cycle storage and wayfinding in and around station, you've got to do that anyway.

[0:08:07]

[...] What we're trying to understand is how far you're looking to employ people's means to get to, let's call it last mile, the last mile in a sustainable fashion.

HS: Yeah, that's really fair actually Justin and I think the conversation we had last time from memory did touch on the idea that because the section being delivered at the moment was consented under an entirely different scheme. It was consented under the TWAO.

[0:08:29]

[...] The way those decisions would have been made would be different from the way that they're made on our scheme. So it might be that we prefer to have a conversation about what it is that you're looking for from that first mile last mile activity than it is specifically around what's been delivered on CS1, because although it's a very good indication of where we'd start from, it probably won't be where we end up [inaudible] parts of the project. Does that make sense? Because I think I'm quite interested because you've got quite a lot of views and ideas in that space, so I think I'd be quite interested to have that conversation.

[0:09:05]

JG: I think effectively what we're trying to get at, here in February 2023, is just a sense of how well East West Rail has performed on CS1, to give us a benchmark for what to expect, because it's all well and good having desires and aspirations, but if you've not been able to deliver it...the mechanism of how you deliver is irrelevant, it's what you've actually

physically delivered through CS1 gives us a good baseline for comparison. You know it's about managing expectations from our side and our parishioners side.

[0:09:47]

HS: I think that's fair. I think I'd gently push back on the idea that, sort of the method of consenting isn't relevant because it is, because TWAO was submitted by Network Rail and not by us, it was sort of a different world and we are trying to push things as far as we can.

[0:10:07]

[...] So I'll tell you what, can we, should we come back to that later when we get to topics a future discussion, because I feel like there's quite a rich vein of thought to tap into there and it's not my area of expertise so we probably need someone better than me to talk to you through it. Fantastic. Can I just check Nicola, can you hear us okay now?

[0:10:30]

Nicola Gribble (NG): Yes, I can, Hannah, thank you. I left my laptop and have joined on my iPad, so...

HS: Excellent, you're not the only one with microphone issues on your laptop.

NG: It kept telling me I have to update, and I updated about three times and it just... whatever

HS: So frustrating isn't it.

NG: Anyway, I'm here!

HS: Very good to have you. Thank you so much.

NG: Good evening.

HS: Justin, you've still got your hand up which is fine, but oh no, it's gone now. Cool, so, before we move off actions any thoughts, feelings, questions and suggestions about actions before we move off? Wonderful, okay. Well, in that case, I'll stop talking for a bit which will please everybody and go to Mark and say Mark, could you please tell us about traction strategy?

3. Traction strategy

Slide 7 – Traction strategy

[0:11:14]

MF: Yes, I'll just quickly introduce myself. I'm Mark Foster, I'm the Operations Executive for rollingstock at EWR Co and to just give a bit of context about what that role means. It means

I'm in as a subject matter expert for rolling stock, but specifically looking at how that rolling stock is going to be used by our future customers and as you'll see going through some of the slides, a lot of my role sits in the fleet that we're going to start EWR operations with and then moving into the future fleet that we're going to have.

Slide 8 – EWR Initial Fleet

[0:11:55]

[...] So moving into the initial fleet, when EWR opens up between Oxford and Milton Keynes we are going to have an initial fleet which will be a fleet that we are subleasing from another operator, which is a two-car diesel fleet. Now, the reason that we've had to go for a diesel fleet initially is so that we can open the service earlier than we could otherwise and this is purely a fleet that will allow us to operate between Oxford and Milton Keynes. It's not intended and nor is it a sufficient number of trains, for us to operate a service beyond Oxford to Milton Keynes, so is an initial opening fleet that we will use for a period of time whilst the railways only between Oxford and Milton Keynes.

[0:12:47]

[...] It's a modern fleet that's been built in the last four years. It has engines that meet the, not the absolute current but make the EU Stage IIIB emission standards which were relevant when this fleet, in the first year, obviously this fleet were built in 2020 and it also uses an additive called Ad Blue in the exhaust system which some of you who have diesel cars, particularly if you've got BMW, you might be very well aware of.

[0:13:17]

[...] It is an additive that's put in which reduces nitrogen oxide NOx emissions from the train in exactly the same way as it does in a BMW car for those of you who've got one and have to put Ad Blue in those as well.

[0:13:30]

[...] These trains have, are, fully accessible, they have an accessible toilet, there's a modern passenger information system throughout these trains and something that's a little bit unusual for a two-car train is that these use, actually have three dedicated space, space for three bikes, and it's a dedicated space, it's not a wheelchair space where you can also put bikes, this is a completely separate space to the two spaces that are available for passengers in wheelchairs or other mobility scooters. So, it tries to remove that element of, often friction that you can get between cyclists and people who require a space for accessibility reasons.

Slide 9 – Use of different types of traction

[0:14:17]

[...] Moving further from our initial fleet, we've spent a lot of time looking at different types of traction for the remainder of the route. And as I say, the initial use of diesel only trains is only a temporary solution. It's the only fleet that we could use that will allow us to open the services as quickly as we are intending and that allows us to unlock the benefits between Oxford and Milton Keynes much earlier.

[0:14:47]

[...] We are still under consideration with electrification and that's waiting for a government decision, and I think some of that was really discussed in the sort of preamble before we started the meeting, but we are awaiting a decision on government about whether there will be electrification and to what extent that will be. Part of the reason for using diesel trains now and using a temporary fleet, it gives us a lot of flexibility in what our future options are and our options remain in line with the government's commitment to removing diesel only services by 2040.

[0:15:24]

[...] Now, yes, it's not ideal that they are diesel only, but this is a temporary solution, it's not intended as saying it will be diesel only for the rest of EWR, but I'll go onto that a little bit more. We are also investigating a range of alternative traction power options and the two pictures on the slide from the Porterbrook HybridFLEX project and that was a project which is converting an old train into hydrogen which we went and visited. We also looked at battery power options. Mike, I'm conscious you've got your hand up, do you want to ask a question or raise a point?

[0:16:05]

Mike Barlow (MB): Yeah, just on that 2040 point. So does that mean that assuming we are go in 2030 or shortly afterwards, does that mean up until 2040 it could be all diesel trains? All diesel only trains on it?

[0:16:24]

MF: So the government commitment is that services will be operated...can be operated by trains that can only operate under diesel until 2040 and beyond 2040, any trains where diesel is part of it must have an alternative method of power as well. For EWR Co and for Oxford to Milton Keynes, we don't intend for the diesel trains to be running right the way through till 2040 because as soon as the railway opens beyond Milton Keynes and we start running services through to Bedford and onwards to Cambridge, the initial fleet of six trains that we have isn't sufficient. Both two-car trains we believe won't provide the capacity required as the demand grows but also with six trains, we'd end up being able to only offer a service once every two hours because there just simply aren't enough trains.

[0:17:19]

[...] So, it is a temporary solution, and we aren't looking at the next fleet that we need, which gives us that additional capacity both in numbers and trains and passengers that can get on them, to be a diesel only train. Hopefully that answers your question. I will answer it, I think, a little bit more on one of the next slides as well.

MB: Okay.

[0:17:41]

MF: Peter?

Peter Norris (PN): Yes, can you hear me alright?

MF: Yes.

PN: What you've got in your presentation is clearly going to major on the tractive effort for your fleet of trains. Which won't extend to any power that a freight operator might use for a freight pass that's he's using along your lines, but that's intimately linked with what the future solutions gonna be in terms of electrification. I wonder what case are you making to the government for electrification and how are you dealing with the freight aspects?

[0:18:34]

[...] I know freight will come in separately but its relevant at this stage, because there seems to be very little information, very little progress towards an electrification solution and that's critical to your deliberations to whether you want to go for traction which is assisted by battery, how it's going to be recharged or whatever. So how are you pressurising the DfT to embrace full electrification?

[0:19:12]

MF: So, I think on the power requirements for freight, I know Andy is coming up next, Andy Bagguley, and he'll be covering some of those elements through his presentation, so if it's okay, I think it might be better to pause that part of the question until Andy goes through.

[0:19:26]

[...] In terms of the case for electrification, and I will go through this slightly more on the next slide, we are looking at and we have spent quite a bit of time investigating what parts of, or to what extent, the full railway would need to be electrified in order to deliver alternative solutions to a diesel only train. And I think if you permit me, if I can go through the next slide, and I'll try and answer your question through the presentation of that next slide because I think it quite neatly fits with what your question is, if that's okay.

[0:20:04]

PN: Yes, okay. Just before you go to the next slide...when, two years ago, when Maria Cliff was the Operations Executive, she was talking about the long-term fleet solution which was going to be three car trains and either 12 or 14 sets of them. Are you still thinking in terms of the same numbers?

[0:20:31]

MF: No, it was very much our intent and we out to the market to look for a fleet of 12-14 three car trains. Now, part of that was because we intended for a fleet that could operate both the Oxford to Milton Keynes initial service and Oxford through to Bedford, although we always knew at the time that the 12 to 14 unit would not be enough to fulfil the full service through to Cambridge.

[0:20:56]

[...] Now because some of the impact of COVID, alternative options became available, which is why we were able to get hold of a very small fleet of 6 two car trains, which were intended for some of the passenger growth within the West Midlands, which because of COVID have become temporarily surplus, because they were built and procured prior to COVID for growth that has been impacted by COVID. Now, to reduce overall rental costs across the industry, we are sub leasing those trains which would already have been leased for the remainder of the West Midlands franchise, were subleasing those from them.

[0:21:41]

[...] So it's an alternative solution to that original intent for EWR to have its own separate fleet of 12-14 trains. Now it doesn't fulfil the long-term plan, it does mean that we need an alternative solution once we continue services through to Bedford and continue services there on to Cambridge, but by effectively changing strategy there, that will allow us to unlock a non-diesel only train earlier that we could have otherwise. Otherwise, we'd have had 12-14 three car diesel trains for the services through to Bedford.

PN: Thank you.

Slide 10 – Long-term rolling stock options

[0:22:25]

MF: Okay, in terms of the long-term fleet. I'm conscious there's a number of options on this slide and I don't intend to go through this line by line, but it's to give an indication that we've spent quite a long time looking at various options from a pure diesel only train to a tri-mode mix of energy sources for the train, in terms of what we will use for the long-term fleet.

[0:22:54]

[...] Now, some of them we know are ones that we can't count on them, so diesel only is included on here to show where that sits amongst the carbon impacts, the cost, and the complexity impact, it's not one that we intend to take forward but it's useful as a comparator for others. We are aware that we'll need to look at a fleet which uses a source other than diesel as the primary source, and some of the ones on there, for example, the battery electric hybrid, a BEMU, are ones that we have spent quite a lot of time working with the market, and with suppliers, and with other customers, to look at what the possibilities are in the market for a long term fleet.

[0:23:43]

[...] Now, that's one, where if any of you have seen this slide before, you've seen that we'd have had complexity as red but we're actually doing quite a lot of research into what can be provided and the market is very much moving towards a train that can be both a pure electric train, wherever there is overhead wire and electrification, and could operate on battery when that electrification is not there. And we've been modelling various options as to the extent between Oxford and Cambridge that would be required to be electrified in order for a battery electric hybrid train to be suitable to provide that service.

[0:24:27]

[...] Now there are alternatives, we've looked at hydrogen, as both a pure hydrogen train or a mixture of a hybrid hydrogen electric train. We at the moment, are conscious that whilst there are some hydrogen trains on the continent, there are no hydrogen trains that are ready for UK in terms of being production ready and nor ones that provide us with the range that we need, because a relatively fast service between Oxford and Cambridge on a relatively high frequency, results in trains that are doing a very high number of miles per day and providing that level of hydrogen capacity is very difficult.

[0:25:17]

[...] Whereas a battery electric train or anything where you are mixing other modes, you have opportunities to utilize the electrification where it is and the battery where it isn't, so that you can marry those two and we can charge throughout the day.

[0:25:37]

[...] Now, we haven't, and we aren't at this point, making a definite proposal as to one option. We're continuing to work with both suppliers in the market out with other rail operators in the UK to look at what would be the preferred option and those will go into our overall electrification strategy is across the road. Whether that is full end to end electrification or whether that is partial electrification and if that is partial electrification, exactly where along the route it is.

[0:26:14]

[...] I hope that has sort of answered your question Peter on electrification, as to where we are at the moment?

PN: Well, yes, but it still does seem to me that the electrification question has been driven on your passenger fleet requirements, rather than giving due consideration to the heavy power requirements that freight trains will require when they use it.

[0:26:40]

MF: I think the answer really, and I am conscious that Andy will cover this a little bit more, is that we are a passenger railway, and we are building a passenger railway with freight capability a that is driving where we are in terms of selections, and in terms of the level of electrification that we require. I'm looking at Andy and just making sure whether he's going to cover it afterwards. If not, I'll try and cover it a bit more but...

Andy Bagguley (AB): Yeah, I'll talk about it, yep.

PN: No, I am fine to leave it to Andy. Thank you.

[27:24]

Slide 11 - Case study: B-DEMU Hybrid – Class 168 HybridFLEX”

MF: Thank you. Just to give you a couple of examples of what we have been looking at, one which could be a more short-term option and one which is definitely a more long-term option. We have looked at something called the class 168 High hybrid flex train. And this is something which has been developed between Chiltern Railways, Porterbrook and Rolls-Royce to develop a Hybrid concept train so, this is a train that is a primarily diesel train but has regenerative braking which provides a small amount of battery power which can be used at very low speeds and during stations. This is very much a diesel train with batteries in the way that a Formula One car has some electric power, but it's powered through braking.

[28:18]

[...] It does have benefits that because it's taken an old train and it's replaced engines with newer ones and newer ones combined with batteries, there are definite fuel consumption, CO2, and other emission reductions. And we've looked at the feasibility for this for an interim fleet and for a very short-term diesel fleet, but it is something that is on the fringes of the market at the moment and it is something which the drive for removing diesel only trains by 2040 it does impact on the realistic feasibility of doing this for fleets for a relatively short period of time. Given that the benefits versus a modern DMU, which we are using, are relatively small in comparison to the both cost and complexity that this adds.

[29:17]

Slide 12 - Case study: Battery EMU Hybrid – Class 379 IPEMU

[...] In terms of another option that we're looking at, and I've talked quite a bit about the use of a Battery EMU Hybrid train, this is one that was actually tested back in 2015 in the UK, and this is a train that had the ability to both operate on electrification but also operate purely on batteries. And this was done as a partnership between Network Rail, Bombardier (who've since been bought by Alstom), the owning group, the operator Greater Anglia which at the time was Abellio, Future Railway and the Department of Transport and it was all looking at the viability of a train that could operate with both battery and electric power.

[30:05]

[...] There were traction batteries fitted for relatively high-speed running, but not full speed of the train, on one of the vehicles and they were designed so the train could operate at 30 kilometers on batteries, and then were charged from the overhead electrification for the remainder of the journey. And this was done relatively successfully and demonstrated that you could combine the two. Since that has happened, there is now a train which you'll see coming in later this year on Merseyrail, which very much is the same style, which is a train that's operating, and because Liverpool is primarily third-rail electrification on Merseyrail, that will operate on third-rail for the majority of services, but there's a small extension where that will convert onto battery power. So very much showing that this is not just a testbed, but it's something that is going to be used long term.

[31:04]

[...] Peter

PN: you said that it can run for around 30 kilometers on battery and then we recharge and the rest of the trip. What overall trip length was that based on?

MF: I'm not entirely sure and I'll admit that this was a demonstrator train so it's not really representative of what we've seen from the market in terms of the mix both of capability of batteries and capability of charging so, the 30 kilometers for this train was really just a demonstrator. We've worked with the market and we've seen that you can get both significantly higher range and very different opportunities for charging, both charging while the trains moving and particularly when the train's stationary.

[31:52]

MB: once you order a train, so once you've made the decision and ordered it, what's the lead time on them? How long does it take to get them delivered?

MF: So roughly, it does depend a little bit exactly what specification and train and where it is in terms of if it's a train that's already in use by other operators in the UK. There are examples of, for example, the Aventra platform, which is both what's used by Crossrail trains, but it's also now has a fleet with Greater Anglia, there is fleets with Southwestern Railway and will very soon be a fleet with both West Midlands Railway and London

Northwestern Railway. Where because it is a already existing platform that you can order a train within a three-to-five-year lead time from placing an order to having a train carrying passengers.

[32:52]

[...] On the whole if it is a new type of train to the UK you add a couple of years onto that both for getting the trains compliant with the UK, because often there'll be modifications needed to trains that are used in Europe, in continental Europe, primarily because the size of our railway network means that trains can't be as large as they can, which requires quite a lot of redesign to fit the same systems into a smaller, a smaller overall width and height train.

[33:26]

[...] You're looking at somewhere between four and six years in that in those cases. Some of those will change depending on whether it is something that we can, whether EWR can, be part of a larger order that might be being ordered for other fleets. And there are other operators that have, and there are other parts of the country, both in England and in Scotland, that are looking at replacement fleets that are to be built over the next five to ten years. And those might offer very good opportunities for East West Rail to buy the same type of trains or something that's a very similar variant to what they're using.

[...] As I say we do spend quite a lot of time working with other industry bodies. So we have met with Transport Scotland, for example, and we have met with Northern Rail recently to discuss what their intentions are and where there are benefits because the passengers in the North and passengers in Scotland will have many of the same requirements and desires as passengers across the Arc.

[34:36]

Slide 13 - Bedfordshire

[...] On to where we are for Bedfordshire, and I've covered quite a bit of this, which is that the diesel fleet that we're going to operate is only to be used between Milton Keynes and Oxford. Now there is an hourly shuttle which ran up until December between Bedford and Bletchley, which was operated by London Northwestern Railway. Now we are aware that currently that service is curtailed because of the administration of their maintainer, Aviva Rail.

[35:12]

[...] I don't have any details on what they are doing to bring back that service but it is and would continue to be that the local service will be run by London Northwestern Railway. We are looking at what the options are for the Marston Vale Line long term, including whether

we can make partial or full provision for electrification, but because we haven't yet made full decisions on traction powers that, on traction power for the route, that's still under consideration.

[35:45]

Slide 14 – Ongoing Work

[...] In terms of our ongoing work, we are still having active engagement with rolling stock manufacturers, with owning groups and with other train operators. We know that there are other people who are looking at relatively novel traction types and we are expecting that by the time we are operating from Oxford to Milton Keynes uh sorry Oxford to Cambridge, there'll be options for us that are used elsewhere across the UK. But there are there is definite potential for EWR Co to lead innovation in future Rolling Stock, both in overall type, but also in other elements such as accessible boarding or provision of passenger information. So, there are areas where both at a large level with the train, but also with systems within it, we are looking at possible innovations to improve and meet the customer needs.

[36:42]

[...] Electrification is still being taken into account we have put passive provision into designs on the Oxford to Milton Keynes section where it's appropriate to do so. Our plans for Bletchley through to Cambridge continue to take that into account. And we are engaging regularly with the Department for Transport to ensure that we're in alignment with the decarbonisation agenda, and that we meet the Williams-Shapps Plan for rail. Uh Justin I can see you've got your hand up

[37:14]

JG: Could you just give me an example of a passive provision?

MF: where we've made passive provision, that's where we've looked at, for example, on one set of sidings where we've made designs for where we're going to put infrastructure on those sidings, that we've ensured the areas that would be needed for OLE, for Overhead Line Electrification, that we've not gone and installed equipment which would clash with where we would need space for electrification. So for example, in that design, we are fitting or we have a design for fitment of water supplies both for putting clean water onto trains but also for extracting wastewater from train toilets.

[38:02]

[...] Now we've made sure where we are routing those utilities, those wouldn't clash with where you would need to put in a statute for overhead line electrification. So that's where we're putting passive provision. So we're not actively putting in the sanction or any, any

base or anything like that, but what we what we're doing is making sure that where we're putting something new in, it wouldn't be something we then have to remove or would clash, unless there is no clear and obvious way to change it at the moment.

JG: future proofing. Okay. Understood, thank you.

[38:43]

Slide 15 – Questions or comments

MF: Okay, I know I've taken questions or comments as we've gone along, but is there any other questions or comments? Phillippa

Phillippa Martin-Moran-Bryant (PM-M-B): Hi, thank you. Sorry, if you've covered this, but when will the decision about the electrification actually be taken? I wasn't clear on that.

MF: So, I don't have an answer for when, when that will be. So we are putting together the case for electrification and the options both for partial or full electrification but that would be tied up, sorry that's the wrong word, but that would be included in the overall decisions for the route and the investment across the route. So, I don't know an exact date. I don't know whether Hannah you've got a more full answer?

[39:34]

HS: No, I don't I'm afraid. We don't have currently a decision kind of timetable from the Department for Transport. So I'm not able to share the date. I'm aware that the date issue is causing frustration and if it's any consolation, which I don't expect it to be, it's causing a bit of frustration with us too, so we will continue to push for answers as Mark continues to make the case.

[40:05]

PM-M-B: Thank you, I think, well I guess what I was really wondering is that that decision will absolutely be taken before you submit the DCO, you won't try and, excuse me, try and build electrification afterwards., it's all part of the application, is it?

HS: is that one for you Mark or is that one for me?

[40:25]

MF: I can take it. It is something that would have to form part of the DCO submission because we'll need the space and the requirements around provision of that electrification. So that would have to be included within our DCO.

HS: I think, I think correct me if I'm wrong, but I think there could be a world in which you allow for, again using that lovely phrase, passive provision. So, you could say that if it was seen that we would need a slightly larger land take for OLE, or for similar if there were visual

impacts that we wanted to be aware, we would include that in the DCO submission, but I think my understanding is that we would aim to put everything into the DCO submission.

[41:10]

[...] I don't think, I think effectively there is not a sort of a hard and fast rule, but we would aim to put everything that we possibly could into the DCO submission so it's very, very clear, I think is the position.

PM-M-B: Okay, thank you.

HS: We can definitely pick that up over email if you need something kind of a bit more.

PM-M-B: thanks

MF: thank you Hannah. Uh Peter

[41:29]

PN: would you have um because your DCO is going to be preceded by a Statutory Consultation, isn't it?

HS: Uh-huh

PN: which presumably is when you hope to present the final package to the communities and organisations. So, I think there will be an expectation that you knew by then what you to what extent this this line would be electrified. I think the term passive provision is something that always irritates me. I think the contractual requirements on you to build a railway assume that it will be built with the ability to be electrified and therefore the size of the bridges that you, the height of the bridges and the width of gaps that you have to go through, it's a given that you're not going to constrain it too much so it doesn't have to have a major rework to put electrical overhead lines in.

[42:36]

[...] So, it's a bit of a teaser, isn't it?

HS: I think I think that's a really fair comment Peter. And I think just to make a slight delineation I suppose between Mark's expertise and the expertise of someone who I'm yet to introduce you to, called Simon Gill, who's coming into my team to lead some of the DCO aspects. I think Mark is, is really looking at the power itself. I think I'm beginning to understand that there are some specific questions about what impacts the power would have for design, and if that's something that we wanted to pick up again, either over email or future meetings, I think we can absolutely do that. I think I wouldn't like to put Mark or me on the spot unless Mark you are working on that and I wasn't aware? Okay, in which case, I think let's whoever's running actions at the moment. Let's just take a note to that

we'll catch up with Peter and maybe we'll come loop back to this at the end of the meeting and work out the best way forward for that because I think I'm sensing a theme.

[43:37]

PN: Well, we still have to get Andy's perspective on power for freight trains. So that's very important.

HS: Absolutely. Lots to come to.

MF: I think that's probably quite a neat point if I hand over to the Andy Bagguley to talk about freight.

[43:51]

Slide 16 - Freight

AB: Thank you, Mark. Thanks. Yeah, good segway into the freight piece there. So as introduction, my name is Andy Bagguley, I'm head of Systems for Rolling Stock, so I cover a lot of the work working with Mark looking at the long-term fleet for East West Rail. But I also work closely with our sponsorship team on our freight development and what that means for East West Rail and how we move forward. So, if you can move us on a slide please Mark?

[44:16]

Slide 17 – Main types of rail freight

[...] So, this just a few of the outline basics around rail freight just for those that aren't aware. So, if this is if this is obvious to you, I apologise. I'll go ahead relatively quick just give the background, but when we talk about rail freight the two main areas we consider, which is Intermodal, which is containerised, which are your Tesco trucks and scope wagons, and others that you maybe see going up and down the main lines, and bulk freight, which largely refers to aggregates and that's very different in many ways. And the reason to highlight that for us considering the design of the railway, the amount that the type of railway we build is normally based on the gross Tonnes per Annum. So how much how much traffic is actually going to run over the piece of railway and that can change the design of the permanent way and the depth of balance that you put in there. So, understanding the growth of freight and what type of freight we want to consider is actually fundamental in our design process to get the right railway built from beginning.

[45:18]

Slide 18 – National Value of Rail Freight

[...] So, moving on, thanks, Mark. So just to talk about national the value of rail freight. Again, you'll probably all be aware of these numbers, they're quite well publicised, but £30 billion of goods, the last update was 2020, is transported every year. This probably grew through COVID as well as we all know the good news around the challenges that the freight rail freight it helped out during the COVID period. An estimated £2.45 billion annual benefits to the UK and that's only growing all the time. All of the forecasts show this is only going in one direction, which is which is great for us as an island as an economy that rail freight is going to play a big part in the growth hopefully out of this rut, we're in, let's say economic rut.

[46:02]

[...] and it plays a big part of the decarbonisation because as Peter you've alluded to a couple of times we've talked about the I mean even putting a diesel locomotive with a full load of the railway is a huge significant benefit from running trucks carrying the same tonnage. And if we can move those freight trains to electric there's another step change in benefits there. So just getting freight onto the railway even with diesel tracks there's a huge big decarbonisation positive and we shouldn't lose focus on that. But then there are there is the next step to how do we make that even cleaner as an industry.

[46:42]

Slide 19 – Rail Freight is growing and forecast to double in 20 years

[...] Goes on Mark. So, as I've mentioned, all of the forecasts and a lot of these forecasts were pre-COVID but they're running reviews again of them now to look at the figures again. It's it is going in a real positive direction that freight growth. It's constrained by the network at the minute so to we certainly talk to a lot of freight operators operating out to Felix, Southampton, London Gateway. The constraint is capacity. That they could run more trains if the capacity of the railway allowed and this is where we as East West Rail, obviously are part of that picture now for the UK. If you move onto the next slide, please.

[47:18]

Slide 20 – Current freight on EWR

[...] There is an amount of freight that currently operates on the existing network, so there's a lot of freight that currently comes in around Bicester, which is around the military site there, and Banbury Road, there's a lot of aggregates going there and supporting works there as a significant storage area that they put these lot of aggregates. There's also freight coming down the Midland Mainline onto the Marston Vale Line. After that comes through Bedford, you'll be well aware of that, and then carries on down from Bletchley.

[47:52]

[...] And then there's a lot of aggregate work coming up supporting HS2 and others up via Aylesbury at the minute so the network is already quite well utilised for freight and these continue as we are now. Yes Mike.

MB: can we just step back a slide. You raised the point there you said that you've been engaging with Felixstowe, Port of London. etc, etc, etc. Why was none of that included when we have the route consultation? In fact freight was very much downplayed, it was only mentioned twice in two consecutive paragraphs in the whole consultation and it was almost ignored because it was going to be a predominantly passenger railway, 100 miles an hour. You know.

[48:51]

[...] I don't understand how we've got to a decision on the route when you were looking at when you when everybody knew that freight was going to be in consideration, but it was so clearly omitted from the previous consultation.

AB: So it's a good question and I think what I'm talking about now is more rail freight holistically in the UK. So, I'll come on to the East West Rail relevance. I just this is more of an overview of rail freight in the UK and where it's going like to, so apologies if I wasn't quite clear on that. We are predominately a passenger railway. Our objective is to open up that growth between Oxford and Cambridge and that remains our focus. What what this is highlighting is that rail freight is growing in the UK and we can't be we can't keep our head in the sand and ignore that as an industry and as a group of rail people then building this railway. So let me come onto the East West Rail relevance to it.

[49:41]

MB: I think that's exactly the point in that you actually did ignore it in 2019 consultation, whereas everyone else were saying what's happening with freight. While EWR basically almost brushed it under the carpet.

HS: So, Mike I think what's happening here is as Andy's said he's presented the overall picture for freight in the UK, as you said we did mention freight very, you know, in limited terms but we have mentioned freight. We've always been clear that, as far as I'm aware, that our objectives set by government for the railway are to maintain the existing freight already on the network and to not do anything to preclude freight in future.

[50:23]

[...] What we're doing here because you asked us to, which I think is completely fair enough, is to have a little look more deeply at what Andy as Andy has said is a relatively small part of the holistic whole that we're looking at as a business. So, if by having this presentation, it gives the wrong impression that freight is the thing we are focusing on then I think we just kind of need to address that. It is not, we are looking at running passenger services and

freight is one thing, but it would, as Andy said, be very foolish for any rail company not to acknowledge that there may be demand for freight and it should be something that any responsible organisation looks at. So, I think let's, let's try and keep this in perspective. I think this is a really interesting topic and I'm glad we're covering it, but it shouldn't be taken as any indication that freight is somehow the priority for East West Rail. So, I think let's, let's let Andy get to as you said, East West Rail, sort of relevant pieces, and then we can kind of see where it goes from there.

[51:24]

MB: Thanks.

AB: Thank you. Yeah. Apologies. So, this actually slide talks about this. So as Hannah very eloquently put there, our objective is not to not to constrain the traffic that needs to use the East West Rail route and not to preclude any future growth that may need to, accepting that we need to consider we are our passenger demand is going to be is going to be set. Freight paths that may be available will be reviewed on their merit and their impact on the railway and that comes into electrification bit that we can talk about from Peter's perspective as well, but you know, who uses this railway? So, if you move us on a slide please Mark.

[52:06]

Slide 21 – Rail Freight potential for EWR

[...] And again, this, this just demonstrates that some of the points I spoke about, some of the constraints around this, that actually East West Rail being across that link there that is quite clearly missing in terms of how do we connect some of these pieces? That we are a piece of the puzzle and we're considering what that means.

[52:25]

Slide 22 – Working out the right approach to freight is not straightforward

[...] So, this is and this is I think then summarises the bit your points Mike and some of Hannah's points back it's not straightforward. We won't be a freight to operator. We won't we there is no direct East West Rail benefit for freight, but we the route is an enabler for freight operator companies who are not franchises you well know like freight passenger operators, they fight for routes and they have to make their money based on an open access approach to freight.

[52:52]

[...] We are considering how we fit in that National strategy and the strategy has probably changed since 2019 from the UK Government as well as East West Rail so I think that was looking at it, as Hannah says to your point Mike, is responding to the changing dynamic of government as well as the UK use of rail freight.

[53:13]

[...] We're looking at the possible demand and there are varying degrees of forecasts so there are some very pessimistic, some overly optimistic and then everything in between and we just we are trying to understand what that means for us when we do our design points. Coming back to the points about we've got we've got one real chance to get this railway correct from a design perspective. We don't want to design it incorrect to preclude future growth, but it's got to be in line with the objectives and the requirements set by government.

[53:44]

Slide 23 – Questions or comments

[...] The electrification point it is not in here specifically, but I can talk about it. It's so we spoke to a lot of freight operators in terms of what it means and it's not just electrification it's also a signaling system for example, and what that means for freight operators because they are open access and everything they do comes out of their own pocket. There is a move towards decarbonisation of freight locomotives, so there's been some new Trimode locomotives that were ordered in recent times. There are looking at how they can use the electrification system that is in the UK, as well as utilise and accepting the fact that normally the last mile for all freight needs to be on itself powered. So, there's work going into not by us by the market looking at bimode and trimode locomotives. They could end up using our railway if it was electrified. I think back to the point that Phillipa raised about when do we know and your question Peter about all the power issues and all of that. We're take we're trying to understand the implications of all of that from the freight market, but there is this famous chicken and egg they're looking at going well what are you what are you going to provide? And then we'll understand what that means.

[54:54]

[...] So, we don't have an answer. We are considering the impact of it. I think as freight decarbonises itself, we're a part to play in that if we open up those additional paths that may be available once we once we build this railway. So, it is a complex jigsaw. I feel like it's I feel like sometimes we're trying to build a jigsaw without a picture without half the pieces and so we feel internally so can imagine how that feels for some of you guys as well.

[55:21]

PN: Andy,

AB: Yes.

PN: I think it's quite heartening, in fact, to hear your presentation on freight because it's rather than more positive than we've ever experienced before. My recollection of the East

West Rail's approach to freight was they hung their hat on the specification requirement that they weren't to do anything which prejudiced the use of existing freight. And they were to encourage or embrace potential freight opportunities. And what East West Rail did in the first place, they said well there is no freight between Cambridge and Bedford because there is no railway line, but there's a bit of freight operating at The Cambridge end, there's a bit of freight operating between Bicester, in the Bicester area and those were very small amounts which were clearly weren't going to really impinge on your railway.

[56:32]

[...] But what was what was missing was a totally missing was a willingness to embrace and go out and encourage the use of this line as a strategic railway with a capable freight capacity.

[57:01]

[...] And this goes all the way through to the power of how you're going to power the system. You're presumably aware of various studies that have been carried out into how strategic freight may develop over the years. One such study was done for Network Rail in 2020 which identified the Golden Triangle as a potential very useful strategic link between the West and East, East and the West.

[57:40]

[...] And they saw that it could possibly offer with a minor modification at Bicester to go north, up to 25 freight paths in each direction per day which is quite significant amounts. Your there was an assumption that most of the freight if it was used its route is going to be intermodal freight, ferry – like Amazon with their parcel service and very little use of heavy-haul freight, aggregates and the like. But we are seeing the East Coast ports being developed as the freeport status for Felixstowe and Harwich has just been approved.

[58:38]

[...] That will bring with it a great capability for freight to be accepted in there and distributed by rail. Another potential heavy use of freight could be from dredging aggregates from the sea surface from the sea seabed, which is an attractive way of getting hold of aggregates rather than digging up the countryside and that lends itself to heavy haul freight.

[59:15]

[...] So, it's all the more difficult to see why the specification was relaxed from what Network Rail were originally specified looking for an easily achievable gradient limit, 1 in 125, down to what's effectively a passenger service limiting gradient of 1 in 80. And within the space of

time that it took to carry out the consultation for the route, the 1 in 80 was written into the specification as a limiting gradient.

[1.00:06]

[...] You'll probably be aware that good practice is defined by the RSSB as going for a greater no steeper than 1 in 100 if there is a freight involvement. So, there is still uncertainty as to how this might develop and I agree that it's not for you to say how much freight is going to use it, it's for the Department for Transport to say how much freight they want to see going over it and developing the things providing power accordingly.

[1.00:47]

AB: I think Peter you've very articulately very eloquently put some of the points across and the challenges and you seem to understand them very well. What we're trying to consider, the difficulty and the sensitivity around this is for every person that understands the benefits of freight there are there are people who are concerned about the freight and this is what we have to come to we are treading a very careful line in terms of people who don't understand the economic benefit or let's be frank care about the economic benefit because this line runs near their land and are as against freight, large freight trains running that do this line as others. So, we are we've got we've taken we're looking at all these elements I think all we can do, and what we're trying to do, is get as much information to ourselves to allow us to inform the Department on what we what we believe the right options are.

[1.01:41]

[...] A lot of stuff to talk on about freight. Two years ago, I did dissertation my Masters on freight in the UK so hopefully I've got a bit of extra knowledge to East West Rail with me and this is why we're looking at all of this in terms of the impact, the growth and that but it is as I'm sure you can appreciate that and I know it sounds like you do appreciate the fine balance we're trying to we're trying to get to in terms of what is the right solution. Well, when we build this because again, we've got one shot really to build this railway correct and design it correct and we don't want to get it wrong, but it is a challenge.

[1.02:14]

PN: I saw that you've given this presentation to Central Beds. and Marston Vale LRG. Obviously, you did a good selling job on them because they started to raise at the end of the meeting questions or worries about the possible excessive involvement of freight, which was sufficient for a post meeting clarification statement to be issued which says well you're looking at the overall national picture and then coming out to say well, we are really looking for a passenger service and your focus is includes maintaining the current capability again for freight, rail freight and making appropriate provisions for anticipating future growth.

[1.03:06]

[...] So, it's right back to the statement that was made right at the beginning of this project and we need to break out of this because it's the elephant in the room.

AB: Noted. Thank you. Justin.

JG: Yeah, just two questions related to freight.

[1.03:33]

[...] Historically, we were told that the East West Rail route would take something like one freight train per hour, is that still the case?

AB: The output the PWOS requirement were on the eastern section sorry, the western section was one train per hour per direction, yes.

JG: Right ok. Question number two. Forgive me I'm not as technically informed as Peter or yourself, but I understood the logic of 1 in 80 being a maximum gradient for a passenger train and 1 in 125 the maximum gradient for a freight train. What gradient are you assuming the line will take from Bedford to let's say Tempsford Station, which is the geographic area that this group is interested in?

[1:04:26]

AB: We're not assuming anything yet. I would that that level of design is the work we're going through at the minute to understand that's why this freight piece is plugging into this design. So, what would what, back to my point about we've got one shot to design this right. There's no good designing a railway from a gradient perspective that can't function in the future and then trying to retrospectively change it. So that is a major consideration for the design. That we're going through at the minute.

JG: Okay.

AB: so, we don't have an answer yet, but we're not we're not assuming anything we're working with the we're looking at the regulation, looking at the all the case in that plug into that.

[1.05:00]

JG: So, if there is national guidance that stipulates recommended gradients, then surely those are the gradients?

AB: Well, yes, I think that

JG: It's one thing, you know, a 1 in 120 versus 115, 110 might be marginal but 1 in 80 to 1 in 110 or whatever. Those are quite different. So, I would have thought this if you're obliged to deliver a railway line, that doesn't compromise the ability to be used by freight, then that there must be a gradient that you're working to. Now, I'm interested to know and I can't

believe you don't know today what the range of that gradient is, and I expect it to be something a smaller range than 1 in 80 to 1 in 125.

[1.06:02]

AB: Yeah, I don't have the information. I'm not part of the design and infrastructure team, just nothing. I think let's take an action on that.

JG: Yeah, let's take an action on that, and you can note that and maybe get an answer for that please because

HS: I think, Justin I think what

JG: I'm sorry Hannah, what I'm getting at here is we want to understand for our parishioners how high embankments and viaducts are going to be and that's very different on a 1 in 80 versus a 1 in 110 or 125 or whatever that range is. That's why we need that answer. You may not have designed your scheme, but you must have a criteria to which you're designing to.

[1.06:48]

HS: I'll just jump in real quick and I'll say that there are in terms of all of the different things that the design team are looking at the moment, they're taking inputs from a range of requirements from government and a range of information across the business, our consultation feedback, our environmental studies, our economic studies, all of those different things and they are working on finding the most satisfactory balance that they can out of all of those. So I think if I think going down the path of specific gradients as a means to divine the overall design is probably not, when you stand back from it, as helpful as maybe it is.

[1.07:30]

[...] I think that you know, it's interesting to talk about gradients there's no doubt, but I'm not sure that it's the direct conduit.

JG: sorry, I'm sorry Hannah but that is so fundamental. You're telling my parishioners they're going to be looking at a 12 metres high embankment or a 15 metres high embankment or a 6 metres high embankment. Gradients have an impact on that.

[1.07:54]

HS: They absolutely have an impact. I think what I'm trying to say is that that detail will be released in due course as the design progresses, releasing a specific gradient won't help you to divine-

JG: but the range. You've said, tonight you've said, and repeatedly, that the service you're designing has to facilitate freight. Freight has recommended gradients, what gradient range for freight are you looking to accommodate? It's a very simple question.

[1.08:27]

HS: I mean we can go away and look at that, but what I just want to be really clear about is the overall design. The gradient is only useful if you understand the distance over which that gradient to divine heights

JG: we know

HS: of your distance over which that gradient will be used. So until we have a design and until we understand the alignment, you won't get the height out of it. That's as far as I'm aware. That's how triangles work. So I think I think we, we just I just don't want to give the impression that we're going to be able to give you the height and embankments until a more thorough analysis has been done.

[1.08:59]

JG: I'm not asking you, I've only asked you one question, what gradient are you designing to?

HS: Great, well let's take that away and we'll see if that's something that is as Andy said, neither of us are experts in that specific thing so we'll take that away.

JG: Thank you.

PN: Hannah, I can help you with this. I can be quite precise about this because at the time of the last consultation, the horizontal long drawings were issued. They were a presumably a computer-generated assessment of the whole route and how you're going to get across all the topographical obstacles on the way

[1.09:43]

[...] wherever you needed to change height, a gradient of 1 in 80 was imposed, without exception.

HS: Great.

PN: So the design if it is following work that was done then presented then, says your limiting gradient is the gradient that we're going to go up at in order to get over, or over and down, an obstacle. That ties in with the incorporation in the specification of 1 in 80 being the limiting gradient, no mention of anything cycle in that.

[1.10:26]

[...] I think Andy you'll probably accept what I'm saying that the design for Route E was basically set at the time of the consultation. Out of that came the set of cuttings, the extent of embankments, the heights of cuttings, uh sorry, the depths of cuttings and the heights of embankments, and that was presented. Now something might change out of that along the way, but at the moment, I don't see any reason why you would want to slacken the gradient from 1 in 80 from what you've already designed.

[1.11:10]

HS: Just to jump in on two quick points and then let's move on from this one. The point of the last consultation was to put some designs out and see what people think and to take into account people's comments and all the other things I've mentioned. So yes, I don't think just to be really niggly about it, I don't think the design was set. I just want to pick up that that's not what consultation is for. Consultations say this is where we've got to and you know designs will continue to evolve as we go through. That's the nature of consultation.

[1.11:45]

[...] The other thing is that the designs you put out specifically, the engineering drawings that you're talking about, were I guess the widest, deepest, longest, biggest envelope that we understood might be needed at the time. So that's, again, you know, these things change. So, again, I just want to be really clear that I think you know there is room for change, but I thank you very much for clarification that at least the gradient that we're working to was consistent across the piece on that one.

[1.12:22]

MB: Yeah but I think the point that we're making Hannah is that it might have been consistent, but it's consistent for passenger trains not for freight.

HS: Yes, and I think that's obviously something that we're we're kind of working on behind the scenes. Let's have a conversation Andy.

PN: and the bottom line, that drops out of that, is that that gradient is used to the extent that up to one quarter of the whole of the whole route is at that gradient whether it is up or down which is quite significant. And that will have an implication for freight usage particularly when the length of these gradients exceed the actual length of the longest freight train that you might use. Which means that the whole of the freight train is subject to that to that gradient. It's not as if the engine's going over the top and the job's getting easier.

[1.13:10]

HS: Yeah, that's absolutely fair Peter. Um okay then I will take that away as a question because as with Mark, I think the impacts on the design are probably a specific question to

answer and having a specific expert in the meeting might be useful for that. So, let's take that away as a potential future topic. Any other questions for Andy on freight?

[1.13:37]

PN: Andy you must be probably sympathizing with my with my concern over the lack of a 100% adoption of electrification as being the method of traction?

AB: I think we understand the challenges we understand the challenges from government, from Treasury, from a design perspective and the cost, and I think we're trying to take it all into account to kind of come up with the right solution for the railway, but I think there will be a good solution. We just need to figure out what that is still.

PN: Yeah.

[1.14:09]

AB: was that a diplomatic enough answer?

PN: Yes, it was a good try, but the different traction options that you're going towards, you know, whether it's hybrid, battery or hybrid solutions. They're all going to be pushed to get to the power to weight ratio you get from a diesel locomotive. It's nice and heavy and it's very powerful and it's got lots of cooling power. If you if you you're going into sort of compromisers when you go to when you're going to split between battery power and maybe diesel to top it up, or a battery to carry between sections of overhead line, but it's unlikely that your solution is going to be with bags of power at the end of it. So, it's going to be, the gradient aspect is going to is going to come through even more in the future.

[1.15:21]

AB: Yep, which is why it's vitally important we get the modeling right, we look at this and we take a systems approach to this, so we look at the infrastructure design with rolling stock design, which is what I think the big benefit East West Rail Co offers. That we are an integrated organisation looking at all these things together because if we just designed the infrastructure then we go and try and find some trains that we can't actually operate on it, we've failed miserably and likewise if we get trains, we buy trains first and the infrastructure doesn't suit, fail again. So I think I'm confident we'll find the right solution of designing track and train together as we go.

[1.15:54]

PN: Okay, thank you.

AB: Okay, thank you everyone.

HS: Great stuff, thanks so much.

[1.16:03]

Slide 24 – Future topics

[...] I'll pick up again then. So future topics. Let's have a chat around that, what topics you want to hear about in the future

Slide 25 – Topics for future discussion

[...] I think will take us read that you would love a lovely update on what's coming next. And as I said before, as soon as we do have an update on design progression and those kinds of things you will be absolutely in the know about that. We have had a suggestion that the next topic should be our approach to developing construction management plans and examples of mitigation measures that could be used, depending on the alignment and route eventually chosen. Is that still the preference for the next meeting?

[1.16:39]

MB: I think given the given the headlines in Buckinghamshire this week, that'd be really valuable

HS: Absolutely. Just to say that we're losing Andy because he's going to put his children to bed so we'll say bye.

MB: Thanks Andy.

PN: Thanks Andy. Thank you.

AN: Thanks everyone. Apologies.

HS: Always interesting to hear from you. Thanks very much sir, see you soon.

[1.17:04]

[...] Yeah, okay, cool. So, we'll talk about that. Just to be really clear, we did say in the minutes of last time that went round that we can talk in general terms, but obviously until we've got an alignment, the specifics of how you might deal with any particular area. You know, I think it'd be helpful for us to understand what your pain points are, what your kind of key concerns are and that that'd be really helpful for us.

PN: Come on Hannah that excuse is getting a bit weak now because you've known for a couple of years exactly how the route is going to go from the turnout from the Midland Mainline to get up to the start of Section D. There's no other options.

[1.17:45]

HS: I think you just need to understand how projects like this are kind of put together. We don't start doing those kinds of plans until we have until we have an agreed alignment. Those don't get created until there is alignment

MB: The alignment won't change from Bedford to Clapham.

HS: Whether or not that's whether or not that's sort of factually correct, I think there is just a wider point that you don't start building out. You know, we need we need a construction plan for the whole line. And because we need an alignment for the whole line, we need a lot of stuff for the whole line.

[1.18:22]

[...] So those plans it's not that we have a bunch of plans in our back pocket that we're not sharing, it's that those plans, at this stage in the project, they don't the detailed plans of how exactly you would build something like this don't get developed at this point in the process. So, we can we can definitely have a conversation and apart from anything else, we need to go through a very clear process of working with the local authorities and with people like yourselves to work out what it is that you prefer. There are some very specific things to be talked through; HGV movements, that kind of stuff; there are noise mitigation measures that you might want to suggest or that we might want to suggest. It's a very sort of broad topic and it's something that comes up as part of the DCO submission, the Statement of Community Consultation and also a, I can't remember the name of the other one – Simon will know, but there are documents we go through to help create that, the delivery plans. So then-

[1.19:17]

PN: when you get to the Statutory Consultation, by then the decision will have been made as to which alignment which of the alignment options is the favorite one and then the detailed design will start to go into place for that and you're going to end up with final drawings, aren't you, at that stage for the Statutory Consultation?

[1.19:43]

HS: Well, I mean no consultation, any consultation anything you go out to consult on you have to be very clear that there are things that are still open, because otherwise why would you consult you have to go out with things that you need, you'd like more input on. So yes, we would have preferences. Yes, we would have. Yes, thank you, Sarah. Oh, gosh, thank you. That's really kind. Yes, the Code of Construction Practice, I think is what I was kind of thinking about, but also Statements of Community Consultation, and ... it's going to really annoy me.

[1.20:17]

[...] So that's the final consultation. What we would want to do is to be publishing a scheme that's as close to final as we think it could be, bearing in mind all of the information that's come in we need to consult on and if changes come up in that consultation, then there is scope obviously to change or that that's how that's the purpose of a consultation, I suppose.

[1.20:42]

PN: Yeah, but you would want at that stage for consultation to be almost a rubber stamp because the project

HS: I mean any project would love it if we put some ideas out and said and no one said anything terrible about it you know that would be absolutely amazing if we put something out and saying it was perfect. So yes, that's the goal we're supposed-

[1.21:04]

PN: The goal should be that the public have been brought along through the process and they understand the issues that are coming up and what sort of mitigation is being included to make life continue to continue to be tolerable?

HS: Yes. It strikes me then that we might, it might be one of the topics of future and again, I don't want to kind of start talking about the topic in this section, because this is sort of to decide on which experts, we need in the room to dive in. So, it definitely feels that there's a question there around the process leading into the DCO and what kind of information and what kind of engagement happens at different points in that process? Does that feel like something that might be helpful?

[1.21:53]

GJ: we've had a discussion on the DCO in the past and, basically, we were led to believe that we would not get any more information until the DCO was submitted.

HS: Sorry?

GJ: We on previous meetings, when there was a discussion on the DCO we tried talking about routes, it was intimated that we would not know anything about the route, the alignment, it would all be packaged as the DCO was submitted.

[1.22:34]

HS: No, so there's a Statutory Consultation, which would have to happen before a DCO was submitted and in that Statutory Consultation, you would want to be putting in as much detail as you possibly could because you want that consultation to take account of as much detail as you can put in there. There's no specific requirements within the DCO about what needs to be in there but as a promoter it works in your favour to put as much detail in as you're able to.

We would then take that back and again, look at all the feedback we receive, continue with a surveying that we're doing: environmental survey, traffic surveys, all that kind of stuff, make any changes that needed to be made to the scheme before we submitted it to the Secretary of State and then they would submit it to PINS for review.

[1.23:21]

[...] before a public examination and that public examination again is sort of I think it's **18 months** of submissions and questions and answers so that PINS can be entirely satisfied that the scheme that you're putting forward is the best possible scheme that could be put forward. So, there are ample opportunities coming up for further interrogation of designs as they progress. The challenge the position that we're in at the moment is we don't have an update to give when there is an update to give, obviously we'll be able to give more detail of what the thinking's gone in terms of the design.

Post Meeting Clarification: The DCO Examination process is 6 months rather than **18 months**.

[1.23:55]

[...] so, I'm not quite that concerns me that that was the impression given because it's the reverse. There are opportunities that are baked into the process. Absolutely just baked into the process.

GJ: Right.

HS: I hope that helps Gordon. That there is a sort of a five stage, I think we call it the Route to Construction on our website, which kind of lays this out. So, if you want to have a look at that and if it doesn't look familiar, then that's maybe something we need to pick up. What there was another meeting we had which is around the Statement of Community Consultation, and what that involves in terms of engagement. That is a sort of a specific process that you go through with key consultees, specifically Local Authorities, to understand what they would expect in terms of consultation going into a Statutory Consultation. And we'd also have Statements of Common Ground that was it. Statements of Common Ground with sort of key stakeholders where we agree, some kind of key aspects moving forward.

[1.24:55]

[...] So, there are quite a lot of baked in moments into the process coming up where there's a need for us and ample opportunities to have those conversations. Sorry, that was just a bit of a thing because I was terrified that

PN: no that's alright

HS: I'm so sorry to jump in Peter, but Justin's had his hand up rather patiently for a second so I'm just going to check

JG: no that's okay, I'll defer to Peter.

HS: okay, thanks, Peter.

[1.25:28]

PN: Alright yeah, okay then, we'll go back to the matter in hand. Talking about meeting number nine. Where we well, it was I think it was a fairly general approach that we want to get some positive views from East West Rail as to how they will manage a project of this vast magnitude. It is vast and a lot of the vastness is actually in Bedford Town.

[1.26:06]

[...] Are you happy that that's an area that you can have a crack at for the next meeting?

HS: So, I think as long as we're very clear about the kind of conversation we can have at the next meeting, because as I said, what we are not going to be able to do is to prevent to present to you delivery plans and say this is how precisely we're going to be delivered in this area. I think what we are what we are able to do is just talk in general terms, get someone very experienced from our team in and say this is how construction management plans are genuine generally created so that you can understand where the opportunities are to feed into it and examples of some mitigation measures that have been used before so that you can see where they are and what kind of things we're talking about.

[1.26:51]

[...] And then I think there's definitely opportunity in that conversation for you to say well, actually that bit sort of worries us we wouldn't want that but, we'd want more of that, we want less of that kind of thing. So, I think we should regard this as sort of like an opening conversation about some of that stuff. Because as you say, it's very complicated. It's got to go the whole route. And we need to understand the implications of some of the choices still to be made, the decision still to be made.

PN: I think we want, we want to prepare the communities for the magnitude of what's coming down the line, so it's ready for East West Rail to open up and say this is the sort of thing that will be involved with a project of this nature. Like we need to sort of the swathes of land on either side of the railway line that you'd have to operate over whilst during the

construction and in particular the logistic support for this enterprise, which is going to be really considerable.

[1.28:05]

[...] a village, a town of workers, all their kit and areas to deposit stuff, areas to put great piles of stuff you've dug out of the ground until you've got somewhere else to put it.

HS: The key thing to understand is that when a project like this is being developed, as I'm sort of sure you're aware, as we go through design and as we talk to local authorities, as we talk to PINS they will help us refine a lot of that stuff. And that is in the process still to come. So, while we can have initial conversations based on people's experience on other projects, I think probably a really helpful way to start that conversation will be to set the scene of where we are in defining that process. Because I think I don't want to give the impression that by the end of this year or something we're going to have some sort of full delivery plan for the whole route.

[1.29:01]

[...] I think it probably would be very helpful to get someone in to understand how those delivery plans are formed. And then, you know, by all means challenge us on that, but I think it would be probably helpful to set the scene that way.

PN: Fine I'll defer to the other three hands now.

HS: Thank you. Justin.

JS: Alright, so just building on a little bit of nuance there, in the presentation for the next meeting I think it would I think it will be very possible for you to give us examples of mitigation measures which are comparable to the rural aspect of the route from Bedford to Cambridge.

[1.29:53]

[...] You will have had examples of that. I appreciate that you're building a new line where between Oxford and Milton Keynes, you've not necessarily been building on a new line, but I think understanding what you've done when you're plowing through X number of 100 metres of green fields, so you'll be able to give us some real-world examples of mitigation measures there. I think the exception in and through Bedford maybe it'll be unique, but I really would like to see, and I don't necessarily want the whole meeting hijacked by that particular topic, but just I think some real-world examples of where you're building through hundreds of metres, or whatever it is, through rural landscape.

[1.30:36]

HS: Again, I think the reason I'm nervous about this, and you can see that I am nervous about it, the reason I am nervous about it is because what I don't want to do is to present things and for it to be taken as an absolute. I think what what we are at the moment we are at the beginning of a process and while we I think we're really happy to talk to people's experience, probably from other projects, and from other things that we see in the industry, that isn't an indication that those are specific things we're actively working on.

[1.31:06]

[...] If we're happy to have the conversation in that bounce, then I'm very happy to arrange it.

JG: East West Rail, I mean I drove through it today ironically through Oxfordshire and past a number of junctions of East West Rail construction, so you're building stuff now, you're on the ground with diggers

HS: it is a separate organisation, that's the East West Rail Alliance and although we work closely and we the building methodologies they are using you can definitely talk to them that's fine, but I think it's again, it's important to understand that that it's a different system and I need to find a better way to.

[1.31:46]

JG: But are you saying that you're going to do it in a better way than them?

HS: I think what we would always hope to improve on other projects

MB: Okay so why don't we have a look at that and then things can only get better from there can't they?

HS: If that that is that if that's the envelope in which we can have a conversation then I think that's fine.

JG: It's exactly like I said to you about the other subject that we talked about, it is just that understanding what you've done so far gives us an indication of what to anticipate.

[1.32:15]

PN: To be honest, though, what is being done on the CS1 is you're just basically putting some railway lines back down on where they used to be. The track bed is there, it might need widening and strengthening a bit, but that's quite different to what's going to go through the uh round the north of Bedford.

HS: I think Peter's entirely right and I think it makes me nervous because I understand why it should feel directly comparable, but that there are significant differences and if we can have

that conversation with that understanding, that's fine. But I'm very keen to ensure that we contextualise any conversations we have in this area.

[1.32:57]

MB: I guess you showing us something practical is better than you showing us nothing Hannah.

HS: Okay, cool. If we can go ahead with that that's absolutely fine. Let me talk to some colleagues and make sure we've got the right people in the room.

JG: Cool. Alright, thank you.

HS: Thank you.

PN: When can we do it?

HS: Apologies, sorry?

PN: when, when will we have that meeting? During that uh?

HS: So, I think we will send out a poll after this meeting, as we always do for the next meeting. A poll will come out as soon as possible. I'm just getting a little note from Tabitha saying they'll go out I think within the next week or so for the next meeting.

[1.33:34]

MB: Okay, we'll need to get it in before purdah, right?

HS: that's the goal to get it in before purdah. I think we are-

MB: six weeks from now is the 21st of March and purdah doesn't start till the 27th so we should be alright.

HS: that's the goal Mike, we need to make sure that we can get the right experts on our side and make sure that we've got quorum on your side so no, you're a cheeky one Mr Barlow, but no I can't commit.

MB: I've got faith that you'll be able to rally your troops.

HS: Sorry?

MB: I've got every faith that you'll be able to rally your troops.

[1.34:06]

HS: I'll try my very hardest. I can't stop people from taking leave and having other commitments. That's not something-

MB: well, have it a week earlier then, have it after five weeks instead of six then. Look let's just get it in, let's get it in. This one was late.

HS: Mike, you have to understand that in order to make sure that you've got people with sufficient experience to talk to things you've asked you, that's a limited number of people in the business who have other commitments as well. That's not to say that this isn't high priority, but there are a number of priorities across the business. We will do the absolute best we can and I think it's again worth pointing out that we've absolutely accommodated this group's wishes to have you know, more meetings and other groups have, that's absolutely fine with us. We are absolutely trying our best to accommodate. What I won't do I'm afraid, is make a promise on someone else's behalf because-

[1:34:56]

MB: No, I understand that

HS: We will do the best we can Mike, we'll do the best we can.

MB: You'll have to rally it. This one was late remember.

HS: We will do the best we can Mike. Gordon?

[1:35:06]

GJ: Hannah would it be possible at if there's five minutes spare on the next meeting at the end of the next meeting to give us an update on the 2021 consultation that raised 9000 questions, 160,000 individual issues? Erm I personally would like to know where those 9000 odd responses to the consultation came from i.e. what percentage were in the area Bedford to the East Coast Mainline as against the East Coast Mainline and onto Cambridge.

[1:35:50]

[...] because to be quite honest, this group is not interested in anything the other side of the East Coast Mainline.

HS: Sure, so there are a lot of questions

GJ: It would be nice to have a breakdown, was there sort of 800 from this area and 9000 from the Cambridge shire lot because that 9800 responses came from the whole area. It would be nice to know what the mix was and what the location was. I mean, we don't want to know individual villages and things like that. But how many in this area? How many in that area? And

[1:36:31]

HS: So, there is already a lot of questions in that, if I can just jump in and try and answer some of them?

[...] The, responding to the consultation we'll is expected to be erm to form a part of the next announcement. So that that is the announcement that we're trying to work towards at the moment is the response to the consultation. So and that's that will be a formal response document with summary and all that kind of stuff you can have a look at.

[1:37:01]

[...] That means that the information within that and the stuff that we're working towards won't be available before then because it's a draft and it's draft in progress. Specific locations of where people are. I'm scratching my head. I know, I think that's something we've discussed before, potentially in another forum. Frankly, not not everyone gave addresses and it becomes very unreliable when large proportions of people don't give addresses. So I'll take that away and I'll have a look, and I'll see where we can get to with that. I understand that that would be interesting. But I think we need to caveat with that's also quite, it can be quite unreliable, depending on how many people did actually give addresses and stuff. So let's let me take that away and have a look at it. And sorry that then then you have a supplementary question?

[1:37:46]

GJ: Yeah, the other thing is of that 9800 that raised 160,000 separate issues

HS: 190,000 yeah

GJ: Oh, that's gone up then?

HS: Well it depends how you carve it. It's, it's 190,000 I believe individual comments. It might just be that I've

[1:38:06]

GJ: It's 160,000 with

HS: Oh apologies that's my

GJ: different issues. Can you give us some idea of the range of the issues and what they might have been?

HS: So yes.

GJ: Think about it.

[1:38:27]

HS: On different issues, we need to be quite careful. It's not different issues. It's individual comments. So it might be that 200 people said, please paint the rails purple. That will be one issue. That will be one issue, but that's 200 comments. So we had 9000 however many responses and within those responses, we had individual comments. Which when you break them down, you will have the same comment being made more than once because it's it's unlikely that someone's going to have something that's entirely unique. Although that does happen, that someone could say something entirely unique.

[1:38:57]

[...] So what the team are doing at the moment and why this is such a long process and why it's something that we need to really give the time that it needs is, those responses are looked at each one individually. When the same question has been asked, obviously you can kind of sort of bundle it together. But if there's a difference between those questions you have to. So it's not just everything gets lumped together. It's I like bats, I hate bats, more bats, less bats. That's the whole section on bats. And every single comment needs to be taken into account.

[1:39:29]

[...] Now what that means is not that we take every suggestion on board, because that would be logically impossible, because suggestions are often conflicting. But we have to look at each suggestion and see whether or not there is something in that which would cause us to rethink something, to change the design, to progress the design, to do more work in a specific area, the range of comments, I don't think will surprise you, there were lots of comments around environmental issues, lots of comments around preferences as to alignment, preferences as to you know, we asked specific questions around specific parts of the route. We asked questions around some of the operating questions that we had.

[1:40:14]

[...] We also narrowed the questions by specific area. So we can look at just the responses involved with your area particularly. I think that will be area D from memory and then kind of look at those and then you sort of have to look then come back and look at the whole lot holistically and see what that does for the scheme holistically. So there's there's quite a lot in there, that needs to be looked through, sorted through and packaged up in what we would call the CFR, which is the Consultation Feedback Report, which is something that would be published, as I say we expect that to form part of the next announcement.

[1:40:44]

GJ: Any ideas when that announcement might be?

HS: No, as I said at the beginning we're we're working that's that's the update that Beth was talking about before Christmas. So that's something that we're working quite hard to try and get a date on at the moment. We are that's not solely within our control, that's something that sits with the Department for Transport and others. As soon as we can update for that, you know when we are able to talk about it, I'll make sure this groups up to speed.

[1:41:12]

PN: Hannah, the the questionnaire, the consultation questionnaire was pretty highly structured I think about 35 about 37 particular questions? And would it be the intention of the analysis will take that question by question, and indicate the response around those individual questions?

HS: So the

PN: Reason I asked that is that the questions tended to locate where the answerer might be. Some of them were down at the Oxford and some of them were at the Cambridge end.

[1:41:48]

HS: So I understand that as part of the CFR a report that will be broken down into the responses to specific questions. I don't think we're intending to publish every single response that we had in. It will be we had questions about X we have questions about Y. But also there were both qualitative and quantitative questions asked in that. So the quantitative questions, I think we asked people to rank things or there were specific yes, no type questions in there.

[1:42:13]

[...] Then there were qualitative, where we left sort of blank space for people to write whatever they wanted. Or they just wrote letters, submissions from local authorities and other groups, for example, tend just to be in their own in their own format, so they don't fit the format of the questionnaire so there's quite a lot to go through. And yes, Peter, I understand at present, I'm not directly involved with writing that report, but from my experience they do tend to be structured along the same lines as the questionnaire was structured.

[1:42:44]

[PN] Can I, can I ask a question from from something that was said earlier on in the presentation, which was the shuttle service running between Bletchley and Bedford will be maintained by whatever company may survive to actually provide that. I thought that the

options that options for the service between Bletchley and Bedford fell into two categories? You either had basically an express every 10 or 15 minutes of an express service, maybe going to fewer stations, or another option was to have a stopping service. And I thought that that would probably take over from?

[1:43:29]

MF: I think I could answer this quite easily and just clarify my point earlier. My point earlier talking about the Marston Vale Line service was to say that when EWR commences services between Oxford and Milton Keynes, we are not intending at the same point as taking a starting service between Oxford to Milton Keynes for that to have any impact on the existing Bletchley to Bedford service at that point in time. So it was a reference to the commencement. It's not and as you say, there are lots of pieces of work going into what that the long term service will be between Bedford and Bletchley, and how that will fit with the remaining EWR services once EWR is operating between Oxford and Bedford and onto Cambridge.

PN: Ok.

[1:44:24]

HS: Excellent, thank you. I'm aware we're sort of coming up on time at the moment. So are there any other. Oh, thanks very much Mike. Do my best Mike, promise.

MB: Thanks guys, got to go. Cheers, bye.

Slide 26: AOB and closing remarks

HS: Ah haha, ah always adds a bit of spice, love it. Are there any other questions that we want to run through before we just click through closing remarks?

JG: Nope, Nothing for me.

HS: Brilliant, thank you! And I think Gordon, you're you're required to throw a ball I think, so let's get through closing remarks fairly quick.

Slide 27: Creating meeting notes

[1:45:03]

GJ: Hector wants to go for a walk.

HS: Hector's a darling. Look at that schnoz. That's a lot of a lot of what's the word? Restraint you're showing not going off with that.

Slide 28

[1:45:21]

[...] So thank you very much for today. We will turn around our meeting next on our side in 10 days as per. Just to say that I'm taking a couple of days leave so if there is any delay in that was probably my fault. So I'll work very hard to make sure there is no delay. But also if you're trying to hold me in the interim, and you can't that's why. We will share the notes with attendees to provide feedback on, and we will publish the slides once we've turned them around in groups so you'll get some updates on that. We will send out a meeting note, meeting poll as soon as possible. Very much noted Mike's comments there and I think Nicola sent me an email with some comments on in the week. So we'll do what we can to make sure we get the meeting before purdah. We are obviously trying to get meetings in with people across the entire route. I'm aware that's not your problem, but it is our problem and it's something we're trying to work on at the moment.

[1:46:11]

[...] So thank you in advance for for your assistance with that. Any other thoughts or questions then before I close the meeting? Thank you so much. Um, you know, it's always very helpful to have the meeting and understand what the what questions are, you're asking. I hope you managed to answer some of them. And the others, I think I'll go through the transcript and see what we can pick up at future meetings and what kind of people we might need at future meetings to answer some more of these questions in detail.

[1:46:45]

PN: Just one final thing Hannah, are we the only group that has a video record of our meetings?

HS: Yes, yep

PN: And that's a video record that generates the transcript as well

HS: Yep

PN: And then finally the distillation into meeting notes?

HS: Yep.

PN: I'm surprised actually to see that none of the other the none of the other meetings had a video record particularly as they are largely virtual.

HS: And we went through the same process, as we did with you. You were the only group that wanted that. And the only group that wanted to be six-week frequency.

PN: Ok

HS: That's the unusual, that's the unusual, actually the only one I think that has a regular attendee that is not a parish or ward councilor. So you are unique in so many ways, guys.

JG: Cream of the crop

HS: Yeah, certainly you're the funnest group. Thank you so much, everyone. And I will see you all very soon.

GJ: Thank you folks

HS: Thank you, have lovely evenings. Thank you.