

LowCVP BUS WORKING GROUP MEETING

Wednesday 8th December 2004, 10.30-12.30
EST, 21 Dartmouth Street, London SW1H 9BP

BWG-M-04-12

Minutes of the Meeting

Attendees

Adrian Wickens – Volvo Bus/Chair
Alan Irving – DfT
Anna Rickard – London Buses
Bob Bryson - Alexander Dennis
Bob Davis - SMMT
Colin Copelin - CPT
David Lemon - London Buses
David Martin - Clear Zones
Gerry Walker – Cummins
Greg Archer – Low CVP
Helena Hennessy - LowCVP
Ian Calvert - British Sugar
Kerry Vitalis - DTI
Kevin Middleton - Travel West
Konstanze Scharring - LowCVP
Marcus Allard - ETS
Maurice Perl - Wright Bus

Phil Margrave - Go Ahead
Richard Atkinson - ETS
Rosalind Wall - DfT
Simon Rowlands - Millbrook
Steve Bell – EST

Apologies

Alastair Dick - Newbus
Chris Dyal - First Group
David Richards - Evobus
Dennis Priddy - Allison
Emily Robertson - DfT
Myles Mackie - Coventry City
Council
Philip Hosken - Trevithick Society
Stephen Hart - EST
Terence Davies - UWE Sciotech

1. Matters arising

The BWG adopted the minutes subject to one correction – query on 4.1: 2010 Route Map should read 2012.

2. LowCVP Update

Greg Archer updated the group on on LowCVP's AGM which has been re-branded as an annual conference and is being held on 10th February 2005 at Gaydon Motor Heritage Museum. The event is being held in tandem with the launch of a new Green Vehicle Exhibition at the museum.

The planned programme is a full day of presentations, with UK and international speakers in the morning. Secretary of State Alistair Darling has been invited to speak. The afternoon focuses on presentations on the main LowCVP achievements of the last 12 months and an overview of plans ahead, followed by workshop activities and a drinks reception at the end of the day. Other parallel events include a children's day. Low carbon vehicles from

LowCVP members will be available for a test drive outside the building. Conference attendants will be transferred by low carbon bus from Banbury Station to the Gaydon Motor Heritage Museum and back.

2.1 Working Groups

Further progress has been made on the car labelling scheme with preliminary agreement from SMMT. The label will be launched in the summer 2005.

The Passenger Car Group is conducting research on both fleets and the buying motorist, looking into how to stimulate the market which will begin early in 2005.

The Fuels Group is working on a Board paper on biofuels and how to best advance the accreditation of biofuels. Discussions with the British Standards Institute (BSI) to develop a suitable standard have commenced.

The Centre of Excellence launch team, led by Geoff Callow, is working on the prospectus of services that the centre will be undertaking. Funding for the Centre to run a Knowledge Transfer Network has been approved by DTI. The Centre will be launch in late February or early March 2005.

LowCVP held its annual meeting with Ministers of the Low Carbon Ministerial Group. The director emphasised among things the Partnership's disappointment at the lack of progress on the low carbon bus programme.

Communications - LowCVP supported a dinner with Transport Minister David Jamison, arranged by SERA, to talk about opportunities for low carbon vehicles. The Director spoke at the Cardiff EAST conference, talking about the opportunity to promote low carbon vehicles through exemptions in congestion charging schemes.

3. Low Carbon Bus Programme Update

The letter sent from DfT to the Group was discussed at length. Alan Irving (Department of Transport) briefed the group about the current state of play of the Low Carbon Bus Programme. To obtain the State Aid clearance, DfT would notify the European Commission of the programme at the earliest opportunity in 2005. On the basis of existing precedence and EU case law, DfT was optimistic to achieve the necessary clearance for the programme. Once the notification has gone out, the timetable was outside DfT's control as the Commission could require further clarification.

The Group expressed its disappointment that DfT had not involved the subgroup formed at the last BWG meeting in its discussions and the development of the grant notification to the Commission. Members asked for a meeting of the subgroup with DfT before the notification was made. EST should urgently inform the consortia that had bid for the original programme of the situation and whether other routes of support are available (e.g. Powershift). Alan Irving gave permission to EST to send the letters.

ACTIONS:

- LowCVP to arrange meeting between the subgroup and DfT
- EST to send letter to 11 consortia to inform them of the situation
- All members to send any further comments on the LCBP to Alan Irving (alan.irving@dft.gsi.gov.uk - copy to LowCVP)

4. LowCVP Strategy

Greg Archer presented a draft strategy for the LowCVP for 2005/06, which built on 1:1 meetings and workshops he held over the past two months to see what direction the Partnership should take. Key elements are a reinforcement of the LowCVP mission, focus on high quality deliverables giving the partnership credibility and added value, the move to a cross-sectoral project based working structure along four key partnership themes, abolition of the working groups. The proposal will be discussed more fully at the Steering Group scheduled for 9th December 2004.

The BWG agreed that more 'cross-fertilisation' of ideas between working groups was desirable but not at the expense of specialisation. The group was unanimous in its wish to continue as a Working Group to deal with the bus specific challenge (bus market works under specific regulatory environment & has a specific target, level of special and technical expertise of BWG members, effective working in subgroups, great level of commitment, only forum that engages all key actors on this agenda).

In 2005 the Group wants to focus its work on establishing the Low Carbon Bus Programme (finance), the accreditation of low carbon buses (technical), and how to get to the UK 2012 low carbon bus target (route map).

5. AOB.

Testing paper – The BWG agreed to finalise the testing and accreditation protocols for Low Carbon buses through review by two subgroups (general & technical).

Volunteers for the general review subgroup are Maurice Perl, Adrian Wickens, Phil Margrave, SMMT, Kerry Vitalis. Volunteers for the technical subgroup are Bob Bryson, Gerry Walker, Simon Rowlands, and David Lemon.

ACTION: Steve Bell to finalise testing paper by convening and/or communicating with the two subgroups as soon as possible.

Next BWG meeting:

Thursday 3rd March, 10.30-12.30

London Buses, Room 508, 172 Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1