

Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership

Bus Working Group Meeting
Thursday, 15 November 2007, 10.30 to 14.00
Energy Saving Trust, 21 Dartmouth Street, London, SW1H 9BP

BWG-M-07-11

MINUTES

Attending

Bob Bryson (chair) – ADL
Greg Young – Cummins Westport
David Martin – Ecovector
Malcolm Noyle – STS
Paul Honey – TfL
Andrew Leadbetter – Mersey Travel
Bob Davis – SMMT
Adrian Wickens – Volvo Bus
Alan Ponsford – Capoco Design
Gerry Walker – Cummins
Myles Mackie – Coventry City
Jonathan Murray – LowCVP
Lucy Ahad – DfT
David Lemon – STS

Apologies

Mike Winter – TfL
James Rossen – Traction Technology
Allan Edmondson – ODA
Maurice Perl – Wright Bus
Phil Margrave – Go Ahead
Chris Walsh – Cenex
Colin Copelin – CPT
Rayner Mayer – Reading University
Paul O’Sullivan – DfT
Roy Collins – DfT
Andrew Everett – TSB

1. Welcome & apologies

The Chair welcomed members of the BWG and noted apologies.

2. Minutes and Matters arising

The minutes of the last meeting, detailed in paper BWG-M-07-07, were accepted. The Chair reviewed matters arising and it was requested that the Partnership’s final response to the Low Carbon Vehicle Procurement Programme discussion paper be made available to the BWG.

Action: LowCVP’s response to the Low Carbon Vehicle Procurement Programme has been placed on the LowCVP website and can be accessed via “LowCVP Viewpoint” in the public area.

2.1 Euro Bus Expo 2008

Jonathan Murray presented a proposal for the LowCVP to participate in Euro Bus Expo 2008, detailed in paper BWG-P-07-14. The members agreed with the proposal to have a presence and to input to a seminar, but not to accept the invitation to host the BWG meeting at the event.

Proposed the seminar should be limited to a maximum of 2 hours and that the BWG meeting should be held the following week.

Action: Secretariat to co-ordinate with Mark Griffin of Expo Management.

3. Secretariat Update

Jonathan Murray provided an outline of the Secretariat's activity since the last BWG meeting, this is detailed in paper BWG-P-07-15. The following highlights are identified:

- The LowCVP Board approved the Strategy to 2010.
- The Partnership's activity at the Party conferences focused on a series of debates on the issue "Biofuels – more good than harm?" which generated vigorous debate.
- LowCVP had organised a series of seminars for King Review team.
- The RTFO Carbon & Sustainability Reporting consultation and piloting was completed successfully.
- LowCVP had responded to HMRC's consultation of Approved Mileage Allowance Payments focusing on bringing them into line with Company Car taxation. However, indications that HMRC will not be making amendments to AMAP.
- The Partnership and Secretariat had provided significant input to the development of Low Carbon Vehicle Procurement Programme, but had concerns as to how this would be implemented.
- The Commercial Vehicles Working Group meetings are to be discontinued and replaced by bi-annual seminars.

3.1 Strategy & Membership fees

Jonathan Murray reported that the Board had agreed the Strategy to 2010 and had asked the Secretariat to survey members regarding views on membership fees, this is detailed in paper BWG-P-07-16.

There was a discussion regarding the level of fees for different organisations. It was noted that for Local Authorities no matter what the level of fee the decision to join would likely be a political one. It was noted that the SMMT were against fees, and that although Volvo were not they did question the level of the fee. It was felt that a mandatory scheme would not be appropriate and that recognition of in kind contributions was important to take into account.

A survey of members' views was underway at the time of the meeting and Jonathan Murray confirmed that this would be presented to the Board in December and would help inform their decision on fees. The outcome of the survey will be available from the LowCVP website in the Members Area.

4 Government Update

4.1 Technology Strategy Board

Andrew Everett was unable to attend and sent apologies immediately prior to the meeting however he provided a paper BWG-P-07-17, which detailed the current activity of the TSB and the Low Carbon Vehicle Innovation Platform (LCVIP). Currently this focuses on a first call for proposals to fund collaborative R&D on a range of vehicle technologies and the development of a Strategy for the LCVIP.

Bob Bryson noted that he had attended the information day for the LCVIP first call for proposals and that there had been interest from other bus manufacturers and component suppliers who were represented at the event.

4.2 Low Carbon Vehicle Procurement Programme – update

Lucy Ahad, from DfT, provided an update on the Low Carbon Vehicle Procurement Programme which was recently announced by the transport minister, Jim Fitzpatrick. The programme was announced as a £20m programme over two years to assist public sector fleets procure and demonstrate low carbon vehicles starting in April 2008. Currently DfT are in the process of appointing managing agents.

It has been decided that initially the procurement will focus on low carbon vans, electric vans, minibuses and plug-in hybrid cars. Buses were considered a lower priority due to the proportion of carbon emissions they account for.

Initially only public sector fleets would be able to participate until State Aid approval has been secured. A formal approach to the EC for State Aid approval has yet to be made.

Action: Secretariat to follow up with DfT regarding minibus procurement.

4.3 Bus Review update

Paul O'Sullivan, DfT, was unable to attend the meeting and sent apologies. However he provided Jonathan Murray with a verbal update which was relayed to the BWG. Proposals regarding BSOG will be placed before Ministers shortly and it is expected that a discussion document will be issued by DfT around Christmas. Paul O'Sullivan agreed to come to BWG in January to present the proposals in the discussion document and take questions.

5 Forward commitment feasibility study update

Jonathan Murray reported that although the Low Carbon Bus Procurement Project had been on hold over the summer due to other priorities, resource had now been secured to employ three consultants to help deliver the project. A revised project plan was presented, detailed in paper BWG-P-07-18, the final report would be completed in February 2008 and interim results presented at the next BWG meeting in January.

The consultants working on the project were introduced and outlined their areas of work, which is detailed in paper BWG-P-07-19.

5.1 Local authority powers

David Martin, STS, will lead on reviewing the policy levels which local authorities can use to create a demand for low carbon buses and engage local authorities to assess the level of interest in encouraging the up take of low carbon buses. He has conducted a policy review and will be undertaking discussions with stakeholders in the coming weeks, the main focus of this will be via a workshop, the date of which is yet to be arranged.

5.2 Low carbon bus specification

David Lemon, STS, will be leading on the development of a common specification for low carbon buses with input from TfL, Mersey Travel, the TRUS project and the COMPAR project in Europe. He will also be undertaking manufacturer and component system engagement to determine appropriateness of spec for the basis of an ITT. He will be undertaking discussions with stakeholders in the coming weeks, the main focus of this will again be via a workshop, the date of which is yet to be arranged and will hopefully be co-ordinated with policy workshop above.

It was proposed that the 30% reduction used in PFV might not be appropriate and that lower reductions might be more cost effective. It was also proposed that the specification should be

flexible enough to cope with the reduction in CO2 coming from well-to-wheel rather than just tailpipe.

It was noted that the Darwin Group in East Lancs were interested in hybrid and electric bus demonstrations.

5.3 Forward commitment bus procurement

Malcolm Noyle, of STS, will be leading on the contractual structures required to operate a Forward Commitment in the bus market and the financing of procuring innovation. He will be undertaking interviews with key stakeholders in the coming weeks.

It was proposed that he contact John Birch of CPT who deals with operators and Volvo offered to provide input.

SMMT and Volvo in principle offered to host the workshop, subject to availability.

Action: Secretariat to follow up with Volvo and SMMT regarding offers to host workshop.

6. TRUS Project update

Rayner Mayer was unable to attend the meeting, however Myles Mackie who is involved in the TRUS project provided a short update. There will be a meeting of the TRUS group in Dusseldorf on the 29 November 2007, to discuss progress. They are still awaiting a formal response from the EC on their proposal under FP7 however, as a contingency plan the UK and Dutch elements of the project are making proposals for national funding in case the FP7 proposal is unsuccessful.

7. AOB

7.1 SMMT loading factors

It was reported that the SMMT are looking at loading factors of buses verses cars to try to develop an agreed position.

7.2 Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting is the 23rd January 2008. The venue is to be confirmed.

Action: Offers to host meeting are welcome and should be directed to the Secretariat.