

BUS WORKING GROUP MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, 2nd February 2010, 10:30 – 13:30
LowCVP, 83 Victoria Street, London, SW1H 0HW

BWG-M-10-01

Attending

Adrian Wickens – Volvo
Alan Martin – Scania
Bob Bryson – ADL
Bob Davis – SMMT
Colin Copelin – CPT
David Lemon – Consultant
Frank Thorpe – Go-Ahead
Helen Pritchard – DfT
Jonathan Murray – LowCVP
Maurice Perl – Wright Group
Mike Attfield – Energenics

Mike Winter – TfL
Neil Fulton – Millbrook
Phil Margrave – Go Ahead

Apologies

Andrew Leadbetter – Mersey
Travel
David Martin – Ecovector
Greg Archer - LowCVP
Michael Bratcher – Scottish Exec
Dan Lord – DECC

1. Welcome and apologies

BB welcomed members to the Bus Working Group (BWG) meeting and the apologies were noted.

2. Appointment of BWG Chair

The current Chair of the BWG, Bob Bryson, was reappointed as the Chair of the BWG unopposed and with the full support of the group.

3. Minutes and Matters arising

The group agreed the minutes of the BWG meeting in February, detailed in paper BWG-M-09-11.

It was noted that there was an outstanding action from the previous meeting which was for CPT to present to the LowCVP Fuels Working Group bus operators concerns over biofuel quality.

4. LowCVP

4.1 Membership of LowCVP

BB reminded members of the BWG that as agreed by the LowCVP Board, that the LowCVP was migrating to a fee paying membership, and that from April 2010 only owner-members would be able to participate in the LowCVP.

JM outlined the details of owner-membership and how to become an owner-member to the group as detailed in paper BWG-P-10-01.

AM noted that the details for Scania were incorrect on the LowCVP website and asked that be corrected. JM pointed out that all owner-members have control over their own entries on the LowCVP website and could update these at anytime.

4.2 LowCVP activity update

JM provided an outline of the activity of the LowCVP during the last quarter as detailed in paper BWG-P-10-02. The key points raised to the attention of the group were;

- LowCVP held its first elections for Board of Trustees, which saw the Chairman, Neville Jackson, reappointed and Antonia Roberts of Carplus join the Board.
- The LowCVP Technology Challenge Winners were announced at a successful event chaired by Richard Parry-Jones and before a packed audience of senior automotive executives.
- The Green Bus Fund, which LowCVP has actively supported, was oversubscribed at the first call for proposals.
- The LowCVP was renewing its focus on shifting to Low Carbon Heavy Commercial Vehicles at the request of the DfT.
- LowCVP published a major study which shows strong potential for biomethane in heavy duty vehicles.
- LowCVP provides evidence to DECC Select Committee and Carbon Connect Inquiry.
- Used-car fuel economy labelling scheme was successfully launched in November.
- The LowCVP MD and Chairman meet with Transport Minister.
- MD chairs international seminar on biofuels sustainability and Economist debate and presents at a EU/JRC Event at Copenhagen Climate Change Conference.
- LowCVP Owner-Membership is continuing to grow and is expected to exceed 150.

5. Green Bus Fund

5.1 Allocation of funds and next steps

Helen Pritchard, DfT, provided a verbal update on the Green Bus Fund and the results of the first call for applications. She reported that Ministers were very pleased with the response to the first call in terms of geographic spread, range of technologies and quality of applications. Only one bid was restricted and one other was not compliant. All the £30m were allocated to support the purchase of 349 buses, the first batch of grants are due to be paid out in the coming months.

HP confirmed that the vehicles must be used as specified in the GBF application, which required the vehicles to be operated in England. If not the DfT had the power to reclaim the grant. If funds were reclaimed then funds would be reallocated with existing bidders getting first claim.

HP confirmed that DfT were bidding for additional funds for a further round of the GBF. DfT also looking at alternatives including a retrofit programme, and an Ultra Low Carbon Emission Bus programme.

It was confirmed that bioethanol fuelled buses could participate in the GBF and that Ministers were being asked to confirm whether bioethanol should benefit from the low carbon BSOG supplement.

It was requested that full details of vehicles going into service be placed in the public domain.

5.2 Monitoring

JM presented a proposal for the monitoring of buses funded through the Green Bus Fund. This was proposed to be based upon the monitoring scheme for the TfL trials, with modification to allow a wider number of fuels and technologies to be incorporated.

There was a discussion of the proposed scheme and it was generally agreed that the monitoring scheme should be simplified and not elaborated to cope with different fuels and technologies unless necessary. It was noted that as most vehicles funded under GBF are hybrids the TfL system should be adopted.

Action: LowCVP to prepare a brief proposal on monitoring to be agreed by the BWG at its next meeting.

6. BWG Work programme

6.1 PCWG Work programme 2010/11

JM presented the initial proposal for the BWG work programme ideas for FY 2010-11, as detailed in BWG-P-10-05. In order to ensure the work programme is responsive and flexible to cope with changes in priorities, the LowCVP Board agreed that the work programme should be developed in detail for the first 6 months and in outline for the second 6 months. The initial BWG work programme ideas for 2010-11 are listed below:

2010-11 Q1 & Q2 – to be worked up in detail in current FY

- Monitoring and disseminating results of LCBs procured through GBF
- Policy development for follow up to GBF to incentivise more new LCBs
- Policy development for incentivising retrofit low carbon technologies
- Implications of long term BSOG reform for LCBs

2010-11 Q3 & Q4 – to be worked up in detail in Q2 of next FY

- Review LCEB definition to ensure it continues to be relevant
- Evaluation the effectiveness of the GBF programme

- Encourage local transport authorities and PTEs to encourage the uptake of LCEBs in their region
- Promoting LCEBs in the UK and Europe

There was a discussion of the various items of the proposed work programme which resulted in broad agreement to the proposed work programme. No additional proposed projects were identified.

JM informed the group that the next step would be for the Members Council to consider the combined work programme for the whole LowCVP and to prioritise the proposed projects prior to presentation to the LowCVP Board and funding Government Departments.

Action: LowCVP to report back to BWG on proposed final work programme.

Please note that due to funding restrictions imposed by the funding Government Departments after the BWG meeting, the work programme of the BWG and the Partnership as a whole had to be constrained and reprioritised significantly.

6.2 LA Toolkit

JM noted that there had been limited progress with the Local Authority Toolkit project as a direct result of pressures on the Secretariat's resources and in particular work relating to low carbon HGVs. As a result it is proposed that this project should be reviewed as part of the work programme for FY 2010-11.

7. TfL Hybrid Trials results

Mike Winter, from TfL, kindly presented the results of the TfL Hybrid trials to the BWG. This was the first public presentation of the results before the first monthly report is published. Details are to be circulated via the LowCVP website as paper BWG-P-10-06 and on the Low Carbon Emission Bus microsite.

Action: Post TfL Hybrid Trial results on LowCVP and LCEB microsite.

The report covers the 56 vehicles in service which have been monitored for 9 months. The reports are provided at two levels; the first is at route level and is intended for the public domain, the second is at bus model level and is intended for management purposes. MW noted that it was TfL's intention to monitor the buses they received GBF funding for through their existing monitoring system.

MW extended an offer for LowCVP to participate in the TfL hybrid working group meetings.

8. Communications

8.1 BRT Conference

JM informed the group that the Partnership has been approached by Terrapinn Ltd which is mounting Bus Rapid Transit Congress 2010 in London this year. LowCVP has been requested to assist them in putting together the part of the agenda on the environment and buses because of our role in encouraging the introduction of LCEBs. The Partnership agreed to endorse the event and assist in its marketing, on the basis of members receiving a 15% discount. The details of the event are provided in paper BWG-P-10-07.

8.2 LCEB microsite

JM provided an outline of the second phase of the Low Carbon Emission Bus microsite which has been developed as part of the LowCVP website. The second phase includes market updates and a map of the location of LCEBs in operation in the UK. This was provided for information and details are provided in paper BWG-P-10-08.

9. AOB

Next meeting:
Venue and date tbc