

Report to: **Partnership Board - Transport for the South East**

Date of meeting: **24 January 2022**

By: **Lead Officer, Transport for the South East**

Title of report: **Technical Programme Progress Update**

Purpose of report: **To provide a progress update on the ongoing work to identify the future ambition for bus services in the TfSE area, implementation of TfSE's Future Mobility Strategy and TfSE's current work on decarbonisation.**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The members of the Partnership Board are recommended to:

- (1) Note the progress with ongoing work on defining the future ambition for bus services in the TfSE area;**
 - (2) Note the work that has been initiated on the implementation of TfSE's Future Mobility Strategy; and**
 - (3) Note progress with TfSE's ongoing decarbonisation work.**
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1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the work taking place to support the development of Bus Service Improvement Plans, the work that has been initiated on the implementation of TfSE's Future Mobility Strategy and TfSE's ongoing work on decarbonisation.

2. Bus Back Better

2.1 The national Bus Back Better strategy, launched in March 2021, required local transport authorities (LTAs) to submit a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) to the Department for Transport by 31 October 2021. The purpose of a BSIP is for each LTA is to set out its vision for delivering the step-change in bus service provision that is being sought by the national strategy.

2.2 The intention is that BSIPs will help the DfT identify the funding requirements that will be needed in future years to deliver these ambitions and to assist them in making the case to the Treasury to secure these funds. At the time of writing this report LTAs were still waiting to hear about the level of funding they had been awarded.

2.3 The TfSE Transport Strategy identified the key role that the bus will need to play in delivering its 2050 vision. Bus patronage will need to more than double if this vision is to be achieved. The ongoing work on the area studies is confirming the enhanced role that buses will need to play in realising this vision. TfSE has commissioned Steer to undertake technical work to produce a regional evidence base to identify in more detail what future bus service provision might need to look like. This work will be available to support the second round of BSIPs and development of TfSE's Strategic Investment Plan (SIP). The technical work is ongoing and monthly progress updates are being provided at Transport Strategy Working Group meetings. The work is due to be completed

by the next Partnership Board meeting on 21 March 2022 when the outcomes from it will be reported.

2.4 Further work is being planned to support LTAs with the implementation of their BSIPs and development of their Enhanced Partnership's with bus operators, as part of the additional in year funding that has been identified by the DfT for STBs. The scope of the work that is going to be taken forward using this funding is set out in agenda item 8.

3. Future Mobility Strategy Implementation

3.1 In July 2021, the Partnership Board agreed the TfSE future mobility strategy and action plan. WSP, who developed the strategy, are in the process of being commissioned to commence work on a number of the elements of the action plan. In the longer term, funding is being sought through TfSE's Comprehensive Spending Review bid to appoint a member of staff to lead on this work.

3.2 The further work that is to be undertaken during the remainder of this financial year will include:

- undertaking workshops with local authorities to present the future mobility strategy and identify their roles, responsibilities and potential actions;
- holding further meetings of the future mobility forum to guide the implementation of the action plan;
- identifying potential locations and partners for further piloting of future mobility interventions;
- scoping the possible development of a future mobility tool that would enable local authorities to identify which future mobility interventions were most appropriate for the different types of places in their areas.

3.3 An update on the progress with this work will be given at the next Partnership Board meeting in March 2022.

4. Decarbonisation

4.1 In July 2021 the Government published its Transport Decarbonisation Plan (TDP) setting out a path to net zero transport in the UK by 2050 and the principles that underpin the approach to delivering it. The strategy identifies a key role for local transport authorities in delivering place-based approaches to transport decarbonisation. The TDP also identifies a key role for STBs in supporting the Government's decarbonisation objectives "*by joining up local plans across a wider geography, to capitalise on economies of scale and ensure coherence across local authority borders*".

4.2 In June 2021 TfSE established the South East Regional Transport Decarbonisation Forum for local authority officers to share best practice, identify areas for joint working and oversee TfSE's work on decarbonisation. The forum has met three times and bi-monthly meetings have now been scheduled throughout 2022.

4.3 TfSE have commissioned Steer to undertake the technical work to identify a carbon budget for the TfSE area and pathways to achieve zero emissions for surface transport in each of the constituent authority areas as well as an assessment of the effectiveness of existing and future policies that would need to be pursued to follow the identified pathways. The work is due to be completed by the next Board meeting on 21 March 2022 when the outcomes from it will be reported.

4.4 Further work is being planned on decarbonisation as part of the additional in year funding that has been identified by the DfT for STBs. The scope of the work that is going to be taken forward on decarbonisation using this funding is set out in agenda item 8.

5. Financial considerations

5.1 The costs of the work to identify the future ambition for bus services (£42,500), the future mobility implementation work (£20,000) and the carbon budgeting and pathways work (£42,500) are being met from the 2021/22 DfT grant settlement.

6. Conclusions and recommendations

6.1 The Partnership Board is recommended to note the progress being made with the work on defining the future ambition for the bus network in the TfSE area, the implementation of the future mobility strategy and TfSE's work on decarbonisation.

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