

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

Date of meeting: **13 March 2023**

By: **Chair of the Transport Forum**

Title of report: **Transport Forum Update**

Purpose of report: **To summarise the Transport Forum meeting of 28 February 2023 and inform the Board of the Transport Forum’s recommendations.**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The members of the Partnership Board are recommended to:

- (1) Note the recent meeting of the Transport Forum; and**
 - (2) Note and consider the comments from the Forum.**
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1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Partnership Board on the most recent meeting of the Transport Forum.

1.2 The meeting took place virtually on Tuesday 28 February 2023 and was attended by more than 30 members of the Forum.

2. Transport related social exclusion

2.1 Tom Jarvis, Senior Evidence and Analysis Officer at Transport for the North gave a presentation to the Forum on the work TfN have undertaken to set out the causes, consequences, and extent of transport-related social exclusion (TRSE) in the North of England and the subsequent creation of a data tool that measures the risk of TRSE across England (which TfSE has access to). This tool combines accessibility analysis with a range of socioeconomic and demographic indicators to provide a systematic comparison of the risk of TRSE. (Applying layers to mapping software to show the level of vulnerability of an area and also their access to transport). It then becomes clear where the high levels of risk are (and where potential improvements could be made) and if there are any patterns.

2.3 The Forum found the work undertaken and the tool that has been developed really interesting and understood how this could be utilised by TfSE in the course of future work.

3. Improving the underlying data for active travel route planning

3.1 Dr Simon Blainey, Associate Professor at Southampton University’s Transportation Research Group gave a presentation to the Forum on the work he is involved in to improve the underlying data for active travel route planning.

3.2 The intention of this work is to fill the gap between the ambition for walking and cycling to be a first choice of travel mode for shorter journeys and be better integrated with public transport for longer journeys and that no comprehensive map data is available to give people the best route for their active travel journeys.

3.3 The team also looked at accessibility of routes, so identifying pavement widths in the data to ensure appropriate routes were mapped out for a user needing at least an average width of paving (wheelchair users for example).

3.4 Dr Blainey confirmed the intention is for this piece of work to continue (dependent upon securing further funding) with the development of an automated methodology, provision of a working demonstrator and then development of methods for enhancing this with other parameters e.g. pavement surface types, street lighting etc.

3.5 Again, the Forum were interested to learn about this piece of work as this could be a brilliant tool in the future to help people make conscious active travel choices.

4. Monitoring and evaluation framework and “State of the Region” baseline report

4.1 Sarah Valentine explained where TfSE are in the development of the monitoring and evaluation framework including the “State of the Region” annual report (which will monitor the ‘health’ of the region against a number of key metrics which are linked to the outcomes and impacts the Strategy and SIP are seeking).

4.2 The Forum advised TfSE to be careful with targets and how they are phrased, as they can mean actions taking place for the sake of the target rather than what is actually required or have unintended consequences.

4.3 The Forum expressed their willingness to assist in the creation of the monitoring and evaluation framework and it was confirmed further information on how the forum can be involved in the work will be provided at the next meeting in June.

5. Technical programme update

5.1 Mark Valleley gave a brief update on all strands of the current technical work programme including the work to assist local transport authorities with the delivery of their Bus Service Improvement Plans; and the development of a decarbonisation assessment tool.

5.2 In addition, they were informed that the final draft of the electric vehicle charging infrastructure strategy will be presented to the Partnership Board for review and approval at the meeting on the 13 March 2023.

5.3 It was confirmed that the SIP final draft will be presented to the Partnership Board at the 13 March 2023 meeting, however, although the original intention was to also submit the SIP delivery plan alongside the main SIP document, it has become clear more work is required to ensure this is a useful and robust document. Work is underway to develop this plan with numerous delivery partners. It will involve a prioritisation process which needs further consideration as TfSE has a place based approach to schemes, but the Government fund schemes modally. It is important to

balance how TfSE can make the case for change but also prioritise in a way schemes can succeed with securing funding.

5.4 Forum members confirmed they are looking forward to seeing the final version of the SIP when it is published and working with TfSE on the next phase of this work. The Forum will be updated at the next meeting in June as to how they can and will be involved in the process.

6. Future technical work programme

6.1 Mark Valleley confirmed a brief has been drafted for the regional active travel strategy and WSP are preparing specifications for three future mobility-related technical work and studies identified as priority work areas in the future mobility strategy.

6.2 It was also confirmed that specifications are being drawn up for further technical studies that will take forward the implementation of the freight strategy. Initial work will also commence to identify what a transport strategy refresh would encompass, the timeline and level of resource required.

6.3 Forum members sought (and received) confirmation that electric charging (and hydrogen fuelling) for freight vehicles features as part of the electric vehicle infrastructure strategy and the work following on from the freight strategy.

7. Summary of forum comments for the Board

7.1 A member of the Forum did comment that the group were given lots of information but rarely consulted or involved in the development of TfSE's work. The Forum were advised that this issue had been identified and a review of the working of the Transport Forum is about to commence. With the evolution of TfSE, it is only right to review TfSE's stakeholder meetings and how they are best utilised. The Forum were reassured that they will be involved in the review process with a workshop on this subject taking place in the next meeting.

7.2 The Forum advised TfSE to be careful with targets and how they are phrased when developing the monitoring and evaluation framework to ensure they are reasonable and achieve the desired outcomes.

7.3 The Forum expressed their willingness to assist in the creation of the monitoring and evaluation framework and they will be provided with further information on how they can be involved in the work at the next meeting in June.

7.4 Forum members confirmed they are looking forward to seeing the final version of the SIP when it is published and working with TfSE on the next phase of this work. The Forum will be updated at the next meeting in June as to how they can and will be involved in the process.

8. Conclusions and recommendations

8.1 It is recommended that the Board note the meeting of the Transport Forum and the important communication link this provides TfSE with its key stakeholders.

8.2 It is recommended that the Board note the comments provided by Transport Forum members.

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