

Report to: **Partnership Board – Transport for the South East**  
Date of meeting: **30 October 2023**  
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 deliver the technical work programme set out in the 2023/24 business plan**

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***RECOMMENDATIONS:***

The members of the Partnership Board are recommended to:

- (1) Note the progress with the development of TfSE’s Centre of Excellence;**
  - (2) Note the progress with the work to refresh the transport strategy;**
  - (3) Note the progress with the work to implement the regional electric vehicle charging infrastructure strategy;**
  - (4) Note the progress with the delivery of TfSE’s future mobility strategy;**
  - (5) Note the progress with the delivery of TfSE’s freight logistics and gateways strategy;**
  - (6) Note the progress with the joint work on decarbonisation; and**
  - (7) Note the progress with the work to develop a regional active travel strategy.**
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**1. Introduction**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a progress update on delivery of the Transport for the South East (TfSE) technical work programme.

**2. Centre of Excellence**

2.1 In March 2023 the Partnership Board approved a route map for the development of a Regional Centre of Excellence.

2.2 Following the successful procurement of the call off contract, work has been able to commence to implement the roadmap. Currently, TfSE are working with Arup to establish the governance for the project, identifying stakeholders who will be involved both in the co-creation of the platform, and the development of a prioritised list of support for the short, medium, and long term.

2.3 TfSE and Arup hosted a workshop with constituent authorities on 11 September 2023 to review the roadmap, to ensure it remained fit for purpose, and to further establish the focus and components that the Regional Centre of Excellence should feature. We have since reached out to all local transport authorities to identify the most suitable officer to attend future workshops and meetings, setting out the expectations on resource, to assist attendees in getting the most value.

2.4 Moving forward, we will be establishing a steering group and user group and will reach out to all nominated attendees with an outcome driven plan for the diarised meetings for the subsequent 12 months, so that there is a clear vision of what is to be achieved.

2.5 The current contract is in place for 36 months, during which the Regional Centre of Excellence will go 'live', with a launch, followed by extensive training and handover to TfSE, so that it can be wholly managed internally.

2.6 Further updates on progress will be provided to the Board on an ongoing basis via the quarterly Partnership Board meetings.

### **3. Refresh of the Transport Strategy**

3.1 In July 2023, the Partnership Board approved a comprehensive refresh of the transport strategy. Support work on the refresh of the transport strategy is to be undertaken by Steer via the call off contract. TfSE has been working with Steer on the necessary scoping work to define the methodology for the refresh and Steer have produced a proposal setting out the work needed to deliver the transport strategy refresh. A verbal update on this work will be given at the Partnership Board meeting.

3.2 A number of internal workshops have taken place to help develop the methodology for the refresh. Two of these workshops focussed on the co-creation approach to development of the transport strategy. These two workshops primarily focussed on identifying working groups that will need to be created to inform the development of research and policy ideas associated with outcomes of relevance to the transport strategy. Working groups on adapting to a new normal, enabling inclusive choices, planning for places and embracing the future will be established. Some of the key questions that each working group will seek to answer have been identified, along with potential members of each group, and the interfaces between these groups and the Transport Strategy Working Group, Senior Officer Group, and Partnership Board. This has also included further work on scoping wider engagement and communications activities associated with the transport strategy refresh.

3.3 Another workshop focussed specifically on the data collection activity that will be necessary to refresh the evidence base for the strategy. This workshop focussed on data collection methods, potential data sources, and critical research questions to answer in areas such as future mobility and decarbonisation amongst others.

3.4 The final workshop focussed on the scope of the review of the future scenarios that were used to help develop the current transport strategy. The workshop focussed on the approach that needs to be taken to refresh the future scenarios, how stakeholders will be involved in this process and how the outcomes will be used to help refine the 2050 vision for the refreshed transport strategy.

3.5 Further updates on progress with the transport strategy refresh will be provided to the Board on an ongoing basis at forthcoming Partnership Board Meetings. However, members of the Board should note that their attendance may be required at transport strategy refresh workshops over the coming months.

#### **4. Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy**

4.1 In March 2023, the Partnership Board approved TfSE's regional electric vehicle charging infrastructure strategy. Following on from the publication of the strategy and accompanying action plan, TfSE has identified a number of tasks to commence delivery of the action plan.

4.2 As part of the commission for developing our electric vehicle charging infrastructure strategy, Arcadis developed a web-based application that aims to support local transport authorities with the future rollout of EV charging infrastructure within their respective areas. The 'EVCI Locate' application will help officers identify and prioritise suitable locations to expand EVCI networks through an assessment of a range of different parameters including location of terraced housing, areas of deprivation and parking restrictions. In July 2023 TfSE facilitated a formal training workshop for local transport authorities in order to rollout the platform to officers from across the south east. A meeting will be held with local transport authority officers in early 2024 to capture feedback on how the tool can be further developed.

4.3 The most recent meeting of TfSE's regional EV Charging Infrastructure Forum took place in September. Guest speakers from Portsmouth City Council, the British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association (BVRLA) and MHTech, (a Norwegian Engineering Company) delivered presentations to attendees which provided regional and national insight regarding the rollout of EV charging infrastructure. This forum has been a successful platform for developing strong working relationships between members and has allowed attendees to share best practice with one another on how potential issues regarding EVCI rollout can be mitigated.

4.4 Work has also commenced on the development of future forecasts for EV charging infrastructure demand resulting from the electrification of vehicle fleets across the TfSE area. This work will involve the use of existing data sources on fleet operations and will be supplemented by additional data collection and interview surveys to understand the likely conversion rate to electric vehicles and the additional demand this could place on the publicly available charge point network.

4.5 A further update on the progress of the work will be given at the Partnership Board Meeting in January 2024.

## **5. Future Mobility Strategy**

5.1 The last Future Mobility Forum meeting was held on 18 September 2023. The theme for the meeting was 'integration of modes and services'. There was a presentation from Solent Transport on the recent launch of their Breeze Mobility as a Service (MaaS) application covering the Solent Transport area. England's Economic Heartland presented on their Mobility Hub Business Case Guidance which was published early this year. The meeting also featured a workshop session on mobility hubs in the south east which utilised breakout rooms to facilitate discussions between representatives from the public, private, and third sectors.

5.2 We are currently in discussions with England's Economic Heartland and Transport East to explore the possibility of joint working on some of our upcoming workstreams. These include the Mode Propensity Tool and Mobility Hubs Strategy.

## **6. Freight, Logistics and Gateways Strategy**

6.1 As reported to the Partnership Board meeting in July 2023, TfSE has been working with consultants, AECOM, on a study to quantify the shortfall in the provision of lorry parking and driver welfare facilities on the Strategic (SRN) and Major Road Network (MRN) in the TfSE area. The final technical report has been completed and is currently being finalised in consultation with members of the Transport Strategy Working Group. Consideration is being given as to how TfSE can take this work forward. We will present the key summary findings of the report and proposals for taking this work forward to the Board in January 2024.

6.2 Our work with a number of other Sub-national Transport Bodies (STBs) to produce a mapping tool for current and future alternative recharging and refuelling sites for HGV vehicles along the strategic and major road network was due to be completed in June 2023. Unfortunately, due to technical delays the completion of the project has taken longer than anticipated. As soon as the tool is completed, we propose to roll it out to our partner local transport authorities after some initial testing. An update on the progress of this work will be given at the Partnership Board Meeting in January 2024.

6.3 As reported to the Partnership Board Meeting in July 2023, we are in the process of re-establishing a freight forum in partnership with England's Economic Heartland (EEH) and Transport East (TE) to take forward common actions identified as part of the freight and logistics strategies that have been identified in the three areas. Unfortunately, due to a delay in the appointment of consultants, this project will now begin in November 2023. We have appointed Steer and their partners Future City Logistics and City Science to take this work forward through the call off contract. The work will involve identifying suitable participants, setting up and supporting the forum meetings and providing direction to the forum in consultation with all three STBs. A number of freight related studies and a programme of work will also be undertaken and will cover one, two or all three STB areas. These studies will investigate the potential for short sea shipping, review the level of warehousing provision in the region, both due to be completed by the end of March 2024. A programme of work to address public sector freight blindness will be initiated in early

2024 and a study on the potential for greater intermodal transfer of freight from road to rail will commence in April 2024. An update on the progress of the establishment and first meeting of the freight forum, and the study work will be given at the Partnership Board Meeting in January 2024.

## **7. Decarbonisation**

7.1 As reported to the Board in July 2023 the Government's Transport Decarbonisation Plan (TDP), published in July 2021, places a requirement on local transport authorities to identify how their Local Transport Plans (LTPs) will deliver ambitious, quantifiable carbon reductions in transport to achieve net zero emissions.

7.2 TfSE, Transport East (TE) and England's Economic Heartland (EEH) are working collaboratively to develop a decarbonisation assessment tool. This will identify baseline carbon emissions and trajectories to net zero in each of the LTAs in the three STB areas. Each LTA will then be able to assess the carbon reduction potential of the proposals to be included in their local transport plans. Work on the development of the tool is largely complete and pilot testing on a working version of the tool took place in September 2023. This identified the need for a number of refinements which are now being implemented. The tool is due to be completed for release in November 2023. All STBs have now agreed to adopt the tool and additional work will be undertaken to prepare for the release of the tool into these other STB areas once work on the TfSE, TE and EEH version has been completed.

7.3 There is currently no firm date for the release of the draft guidance on the development of Local Transport Plans, which will incorporate guidance on how LTAs should assess the carbon reduction impacts of their proposals. STBs have been approached to help the DfT deliver regional seminars to launch the guidance. A verbal update on any developments with this will be given at the Board meeting.

## **8. Regional Active Travel Strategy**

8.1 Following a procurement process initiated in April 2023, City Science Corporation Limited were appointed to undertake the development of TfSE's Regional Active Travel Strategy. They began work in July 2023, with the work due to be completed by July 2024.

8.2 The aim of a regional active travel strategy is to make walking, wheeling, and cycling an attractive, accessible, and realistic choice for more journeys undertaken across the TfSE area. It will seek to meet a number of the strategic priorities set out in the transport strategy by reducing carbon emissions through modal shift, delivering liveable communities, achieve better health and safer travel for all, and reduce inequalities through improved access to jobs, health, and leisure activities for those using active travel modes. The strategy will complement the work being undertaken by the local transport authorities through the delivery of their Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans.

8.3 During the last 3 months the project team has developed a Stakeholder Engagement Plan for the duration of the project and established the Regional Active Travel Steering Group. This is comprised of representatives from each of the 16 LTAs within the TfSE region, as well as national and strategic partners including Active Travel England, Homes England, National Highways, Network Rail, Sustrans,

and Transport Action Network. The project team has also worked with all 16 LTAs to gather data for the strategy's evidence base.

8.4 In the coming months, the project team will produce the Evidence Base Report. Two other technical reports will be produced as part of the development of the strategy. These are the Strategic Network Identification Report and Scheme Prioritisation Report. An Engagement Summary Report will also be produced as part of this project.

8.5 A further update on the development of the strategy will be presented to the Partnership Board at their January 2024 meeting.

## **9. Financial considerations**

9.1 The electric vehicle charging infrastructure strategy, decarbonisation, and local capability work have been funded from the additional in-year funding awarded to TfSE in January 2022. The future mobility strategy, freight strategy, electric vehicle strategy implementation work, regional active travel strategy development and work on the transport strategy refresh are being funded from the DfT grant funding for 2023/24.

## **10. Conclusions and recommendations**

10.1 The Partnership Board is recommended to note the progress that has been made with the various elements of the TfSE technical programme set out in this report. A further progress update report will be presented to the Board at their meeting in January 2024.

### **RUPERT CLUBB**

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