

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

Date of meeting: **29 January 2024**

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

Title of report: **Transport Strategy Refresh Update**

Purpose of report: **To provide an update on progress with the refresh of the transport strategy**

RECOMMENDATION:

The members of the Partnership Board are recommended to note the progress with the work to refresh the transport strategy.

1. Introduction

1.1 At the July 2023 meeting, the Partnership Board agreed that a refresh of Transport for the South East's (TfSE) transport strategy should be undertaken. The overall timeline for the delivery of the refresh is shown in Appendix 1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the work that has taken place since July 2023 and the work that is due to take place over the next three months.

2. Progress with technical work

2.1 A main focus of the ongoing technical work has been the development of an overall work programme for the refresh, a copy of which is included in Appendix 2. The activities that are being undertaken to complete the initial tasks set out in this work programme include the following:

- updating the evidence base that underpins the strategy;
- refreshing the Economic Connectivity Review that was undertaken as a precursor to the existing transport strategy;
- collecting evidence to inform the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal;
- convening Working Groups to identify the key questions that need to be answered if the outcomes that the strategy is seeking to achieve are to be realised; and
- undertaking the first scenario planning workshops.

2.2 Updating the evidence base will involve reviewing existing evidence collected during the development of the Area Studies and the Strategic Investment Plan. This will include updating key indicators to reflect new data from the 2021 Census such as revised demographic projections. The work to refresh the Economic Connectivity Review will update the evidence base on the economic profile of the TfSE area.

2.3 We have recruited suitably qualified experts to join four Working Groups that will be focussed on identifying the key questions that need to be posed to realise the outcomes that the strategy is seeking to achieve. The four Working Groups are as follows:

- Realising economic opportunities;
- Delivering a just transition;
- Planning for healthy and connected places;
- Embracing the future.

2.4 The Working Group meetings will take place in January, February, and March 2024. An update on the outcomes of the Working Group meetings and ongoing technical work will be presented to the April 2024 Partnership Board meeting.

2.5 Looking forward, a number of important tasks are due to be completed before the next meeting of the Board in April, including the following:

- the development of a 'Need for Intervention' report based upon the updated evidence base and the feedback from the Working Groups;
- commencement of the Scenario Development Workshops, to which Board members will be invited;
- development of an initial revised vision and goals for the transport strategy; and
- commencement of work to engage with socially-excluded groups.

3. Update on engagement activity

3.1 As set out in the report to the Partnership Board on the Transport Strategy refresh in July 2023, the approach to engagement during its development will be based on the principles of 'co-creation'. This involves working openly and collaboratively with stakeholders, subject matter experts and other interested parties to help develop the evidence base and priorities for the strategy.

3.2 Whilst much of the planned engagement on the transport strategy refresh is taking place through existing TfSE Working Groups and Forums, the need for more focused engagement work with a number of specific groups was identified during initial scoping work.

3.3 Specific engagement with representatives of socially-excluded groups will be undertaken using a 'social model' approach to exclusion that focusses upon how the way our strategic transport network can operate in an exclusionary way. For example, rather than someone in a wheelchair facing exclusion because of this, it is a lack of level access across the transport network that is exclusionary. This work will recognise that the effects of this exclusion can work in different ways for different people.

3.4 A Communications Plan for the Transport Strategy Refresh has been produced. As part of this we will be using TfSE's existing media channels and means of engagement to share key messages throughout the year. We also plan to attend

speaker events to raise awareness of the transport strategy refresh and to encourage key stakeholders to participate.

3.5 Finally, an online platform 'Engage 360' has been procured that will provide the capability for online engagement through bespoke surveys and feedback requests from website visitors on questions that we may wish to pose during the development of the strategy.

4. Financial considerations

4.1 In the July 2023 Partnership Board report on the transport strategy refresh the total estimated cost of the work was forecast to be £646,000. Since then, Steer consultants have been engaged to undertake the refresh through the call off contract and have provided costs for undertaking each of the required tasks. Based on this updated information and the outcomes of initial scoping work the total outturn cost of the refresh is now estimated at £724,000. The main reasons for the uplift in the total cost are the additional costs associated with undertaking the public consultation and the consultancy framework management costs that were not included in the original estimate. The total projected cost will be met from the Department of Transport grant allocations for 2023/24 and 2024/25.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 In conclusion, work on the transport strategy refresh is now well underway, with progress on a number of elements of technical work and on consultation and engagement activity. Members of the Partnership Board are recommended to note the progress on the transport strategy refresh.

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Lead Officer

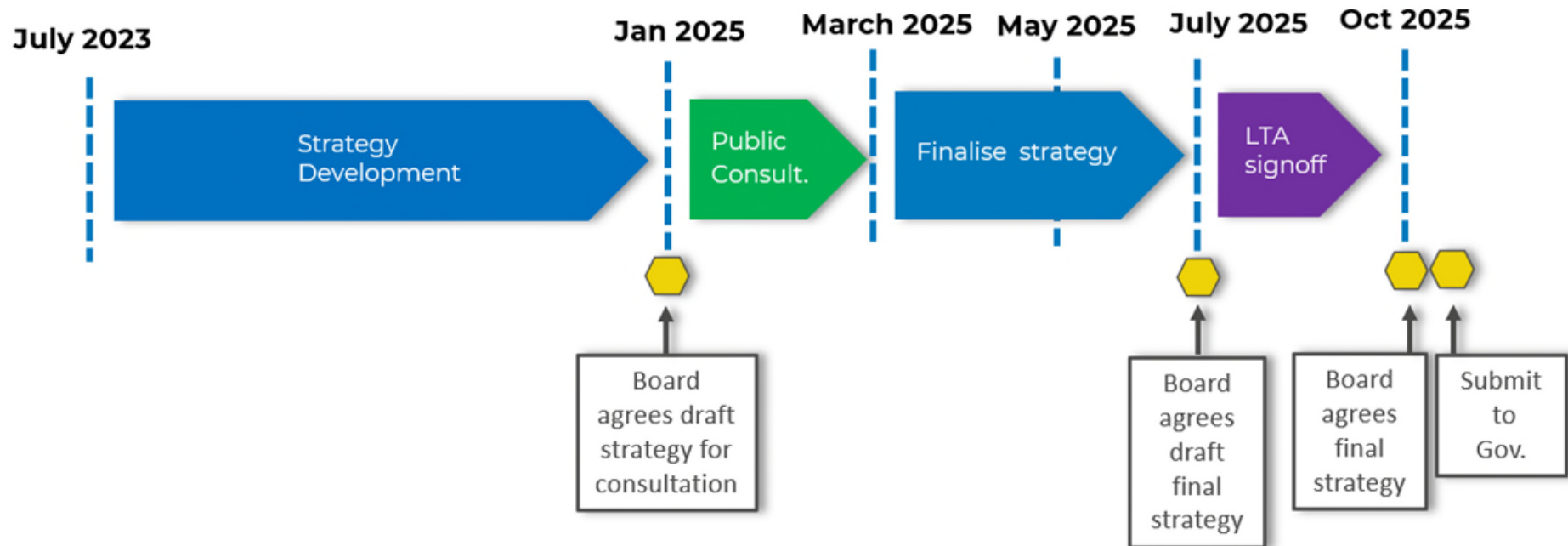
Transport for the South East

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Appendix 1 – Timeline for delivery of the transport strategy refresh



Appendix 2 – Work programme for the transport strategy refresh

