

Report to: **Partnership Board – Transport for the South East**
Date of meeting: **13 May 2024**
By: **Chief 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 2024/25 business plan**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The members of the Partnership Board are recommended to:

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

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

2. Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy

2.1 In March 2023, the Partnership Board approved TfSE’s regional electric vehicle charging infrastructure (EVCI) strategy. Following on from the publication of the strategy and accompanying action plan, work is now underway to implement the action plan.

2.2 In December 2023, work was completed on the development of a methodology that will be used to help assess the future impact on a public charging infrastructure network from vehicle fleets across the TfSE area. Following on from the development of this methodology, TfSE has commenced the process for delivering the series of forecasts that will look to understand the additional demand that vehicle fleet operations could place on the south east’s future publicly available charging network. This work is expected to be completed in summer 2024. A further

update on the development of this forecasting activity will be shared with the Partnership Board at their meeting in July 2024.

2.3 Transport for the North (TfN) are currently in the process of rolling out the EVCI Visualisation Tool that they have developed to other Sub-national Transport Bodies (STB). The tool provides users with localised information on projected electric vehicle uptake and charging infrastructure requirements. TfSE will be the first STB to receive a version of this tool and following roll out, the national data sets that support the tool will be regularly updated by TfN. The process of sharing access to the tool with local authority officers in the TfSE area will take place in the early summer, through a training workshop facilitated by TfSE and TfN.

2.4 The next meeting of TfSE's regional EV (Electric Vehicle) Charging Infrastructure Forum will be taking place on Tuesday 14 May. This forum has been a successful platform for bringing together different organisations from across the south east, providing attendees with the opportunity to develop strong working relationships between members and has allowed participants to share best practice with one another on how potential issues regarding EVCI rollout can be mitigated.

2.5 A further update on the progress of TfSE's work on EVCI will be given at the Partnership Board Meeting in July 2024.

3. Regional Active Travel Strategy

3.1 As reported to the Board in January 2023, work began on the development of TfSE's Regional Active Travel Strategy and Action Plan (RATSAP) in July 2023, with the work due to be completed by July 2024.

3.2 The aim of the RATSAP is to make walking, wheeling, and cycling an attractive, accessible, and realistic choice for more journeys undertaken across the TfSE area. The strategy will complement the work being undertaken by the local transport authorities (LTAs) through the delivery of their Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans.

3.3 To date the RATSAP Steering Group has held three outcome-driven meetings. The Steering Group is comprised of representatives from each of the 16 constituent LTAs, 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.

3.4 During the last 3 months the project team has produced the three technical reports. The first two, 'Evidence Base Report' and 'Strategic Network Report' have been finalised following Steering Group comments. The third report on prioritisation has been drafted and is currently being reviewed by Steering Group members with the final version of the report due to be completed in early June 2024.

3.5 In the next two months, the project team will produce an Engagement Summary Report, as well as draft the Regional Active Travel Strategy & Action Plan.

3.6 A further update on the progress of the work on RATSAP will be given at the Partnership Board Meeting in July 2024.

4. Future Mobility Strategy

4.1 The latest meeting of TfSE's Future Mobility Forum was held on 11 March 2024. The theme for the meeting was Demand-Responsive Transport (DRT) and Community Transport. There was a presentation from Elliott McFadden from Minnesota Department of Transportation on their rural Mobility as A Service (MaaS) pilot which has innovatively incorporated DRT and community transport services. There was also a presentation The Routing Company and East Sussex County Council on their DRT service which was launched last year.

4.2 In March 2024, a Request for Quotations (RFQ) was issued for development of a Mode Propensity Tool. Bidders had until 05 April to submit their tenders. A tender evaluation meeting took place on 30 May and an update on the outcome of this will be given at the meeting.

4.3 A further update on the progress of the work on future mobility will be given at the Partnership Board Meeting in July 2024.

5. Freight, Logistics and Gateways Strategy

5.1 As reported to the Board in January 2024, a mapping tool is being developed jointly by a number of STBs to identify current and future refuelling sites offering both recharging and access to alternative fuels for HGV vehicles. The tool will identify current and potential sites along the strategic and major road network is currently undergoing testing by Midlands Connect who are leading the work. It is anticipated that a final version of the tool will be ready for launch in summer 2024.

5.2 The second Wider South East Freight Forum covering the TfSE, England's Economic Heartlands and Transport East areas was held on 19 March 2024 with attendees from the freight and logistics sector, businesses and local authorities from across the region. This meeting focussed on the challenges of providing additional lorry parking and driver welfare facilities with presentations on TfSE's Lorry Parking Study, the National Highways and DfT role in lorry parking. There were also presentations on two examples of potential lorry parking site developments that show cased the issues faced by operators in getting planning approval for lorry parking sites.

5.3 The DfT informed the Forum that they have established a national Task and Finish group to identify ways to improve the availability of high-quality HGV parking facilities in the UK which would be looking at all these issues. An STB representative will be invited to join the Task and Finish Group.

5.4 The next meeting of the Wider South East Freight Forum meeting will be held in person in London on 20 June 2024 and will focus on the challenges associated with the decarbonisation of the freight and logistics sector.

5.5 The two studies investigating the potential of short sea shipping and the level of warehousing provision in the TfSE area are due to be completed in June 2024. Reports on the key findings and next steps from both will be reported to the Partnership Board in July 2024.

5.6 A further update on the progress of the work on freight and logistics will be given at the Partnership Board Meeting in July 2024.

6. Decarbonisation

6.1 As reported to the Board in January 2024, TfSE, Transport East (TE) and England's Economic Heartland (EEH) are working collaboratively to develop a Carbon Assessment Playbook. 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.

6.2 Work on the development of the tool was completed at the end of 2023 but pilot testing revealed some anomalies in the relative impact that different transport interventions will have on emissions. The DfT also came forward with comments on the tool, requiring further work to address the issues that had been raised. A finalised version of the tool is due to be ready for release to the LTAs by the end of May 2024 with accompanying training workshops. A further update on the progress of the development of the Carbon Assessment Playbook will be given at the Partnership Board Meeting in July 2024.

7. Financial considerations

7.1 The decarbonisation work set out in this report has 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 are being funded from the DfT grant funding for 2023/24 and 2024/25.

8. Conclusions and recommendations

8.1 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 July 2024.

RUPERT CLUBB

Chief Officer

Transport for the South East

Contact Officer: Mark Valleley

Tel. No. 07720 040787

Email: mark.valleley@transportforthesoutheast.org.uk