

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

Date of meeting: **22 July 2024**

By: **Chief 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 and seek agreement on the draft Missions that the strategy should seek to address.**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The members of the Partnership Board are recommended to:

- (1) note the progress with the work to refresh the transport strategy;**
 - (2) agree the draft Missions that the strategy should seek to address.**
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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 timeline for 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 the previous update to the Board in May 2024. It sets out the outcomes from the scenario planning work that has taken place, the findings of the Need for Intervention Report, and work with Socially Excluded Groups. The report also seeks the Board's agreement on the Missions that the strategy should seek to address.

2. Progress with technical work

2.1 Since this last update there has been significant progress with the technical work to develop the strategy. This has involved the development of a Need for Intervention Report, setting out the outcomes of the work with socially excluded groups, the completion of the work on the Your Voices survey and the development of future scenarios.

Need for Intervention Report

2.2 Following on from the review and updating of the evidence a Need for Intervention Report was produced. The key findings from this report are set out in Appendix 2.

2.3 The overall message that the Need for Intervention Report points towards is that there are a number of significant challenges to which transport plays a significant role in tackling (e.g. decarbonisation) or is a significant transport issue in

its own right. Many of these are challenges for which there has been relatively little meaningful action taken outside of some best practice case studies. This points towards the need to be much bolder in the transport strategy to ensure they are addressed.

Socially Excluded Groups

2.4 Specific work has been undertaken with socially-excluded groups to identify a number of key challenges that they face when travelling. This focussed specifically on those with one or more of the protected characteristics as defined under the Equalities Act 2020. The challenges faced by these groups were explored through a number of workshops which also sought to identify potential solutions. This was supported by data analysis and a summary of previous research on these issues. This work revealed a number of interesting findings relating to social exclusion and transport being faced across the South East. These includes the following:

- A number of areas of the Transport for the South East being at high risk of Transport-related Social Exclusion¹, notably areas of North Kent, the English Channel coast (especially in Kent and Sussex) and the Isle of Wight.
- People living on the coast often living with one or more medical conditions, much more than those in other areas of the TfSE area.
- Digital exclusion varying significantly across the TfSE area according to availability of high-speed internet, physical and mental barriers and lack of digital skills.
- Coastal areas of the South East having a comparatively higher concentration of people aged 65 years old and over, and who have at least one disability which inhibits their movement.
- Larger urban areas, areas of Berkshire, and areas around London having a comparatively higher proportion of people aged 19 years old and younger.

2.5 A key finding of this work is the interrelated aspects of both the barriers to inclusion and the solutions to these issues. Many of these characteristics “intersect” with one another. For example, a person who is both disabled and economically disadvantaged could potentially experience the combined difficulties of both of these characteristics and consequently experience worse outcomes. Whilst our research does not indicate which issues intersect the most across the TfSE area, the analysis undertaken and the workshops indicates that such intersectionality does exist across the area.

Your Voices Survey

2.6 Between April and June 2024 Transport for the South East ran a ‘Your Voices’ survey, with the purpose being to establish how residents across the South East felt key priorities from our existing strategy had grown or lessened in importance. It was primarily an online survey undertaken over the course of three months. In all, there

¹ Defined as a combination of areas with high levels of deprivation (as defined by the Indices of Multiple Deprivation) and with poor access to key services to public transport (as defined by Journey Time statistics published by the Department for Transport)

were 1501 responses to the survey providing a great deal of insight into the key challenges and priorities facing those who responded.

2.7 Those responding to the survey were asked to indicate the level of priority they thought should be given to the social economic and environmental priorities for the existing Transport Strategy. In response, 48% of respondents ranked the social theme as the highest priority, 32% said environmental issues should be the top priority and 20% ranked the economic theme first. A summary of the results of the survey are set out in Appendix 3.

Scenario planning work

2.8 Since the update at the last Partnership Board meeting, we have now completed work on the identification of four scenarios that will be used to test the robustness of the of the strategy under different plausible futures. A number of workshops have taken place with members of the TfSE Senior Officer Group and Transport Strategy Working Group to develop and refine four plausible (but not necessarily desirable) future scenarios. An outline of the methodology that was used to develop the scenarios along with their key characteristics and the way they are going to be used to develop the strategy is set out in Appendix 4. In outline the four scenarios that have been developed through this process are as follows:

- **Make-do and Mend** – a big state fixes things and makes best use of limited resources
- **Planned Prosperity** – A big state drives economic growth through investment in public projects
- **Frontier Freedoms** – residents are given increased freedoms to deal with economic volatility
- **Exclusive Excess** – state steps aside stimulating growth, investment and inequality

2.8 The purpose of these scenarios is not to predict the future. They will be used to test the robustness of the policy route maps that are going to be developed to deliver the Missions that the strategy will seek to address. This process will involve testing how these policy road maps perform under each of the four future scenarios to see which elements are robust in the greatest range of future conditions. This will enable the policy road maps to be refined, as appropriate.

3. Identification of draft Missions that the strategy should seek to address

3.1 At the previous Partnership Board meeting, it was agreed that the strategy should be structured around addressing a number of Missions. This will ensure a focus on the issues that TfSE could have a role in helping to deliver and incorporate a place-based framework to identify how these missions would be addressed spatially across the TfSE area. The process that has been used to develop the Missions is set out in Appendix 5.

3.2 To continue with the pace of the development of the Transport Strategy Refresh, the Partnership Board is requested to approve a list of draft Missions, that have been developed through workshops with members of TfSE's Senior Officer Group and Transport Strategy Working Group and discussed with the Partnership

Board at a workshop on the 22 July 2024. These five missions are set out in Appendix 6.

3.3 The Partnership Board is advised that the wording of these Missions is likely to be subject to further refinement as a result of the Policy Road Map work and any other supporting technical work. But by agreeing these Missions now, the Partnership Board can provide the Project Team with a clear steer on its priorities for the Transport Strategy Refresh.

4. Financial considerations

4.1 As reported to the Board in May 2024, the total cost of the transport strategy refresh is forecast at £724,000. This cost is being met from the Department of Transport grant allocations for 2023/24 and 2024/25.

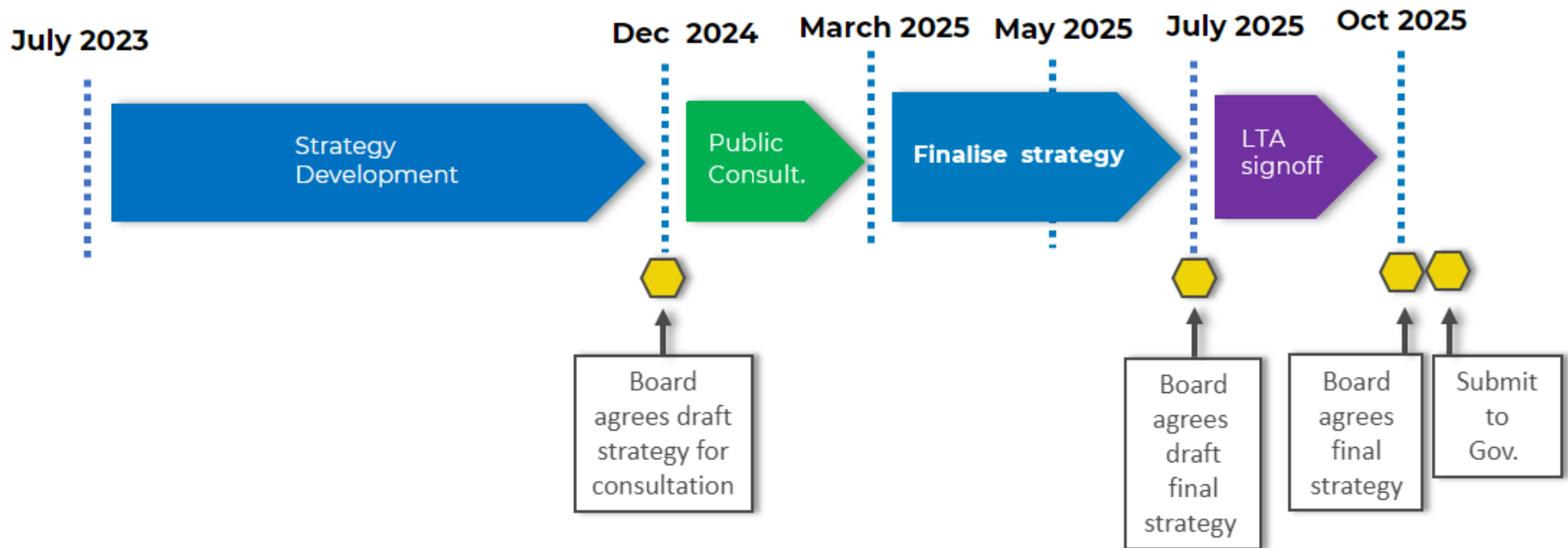
5. Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 In conclusion, work on the transport strategy refresh is progressing well, with significant 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 and note to work that has taken place with socially excluded groups, on the 'Your Voices' survey and on the development of future scenarios. They are also recommended to agree the draft Missions for the Transport Strategy Refresh.

RUPERT CLUBB
Chief Officer
Transport for the South East

Contact Officer: James Gleave
Tel. No. 07958 350159
Email: james.gleave@transportforthesoutheast.org.uk

Appendix 1 – Timeline for delivery of the transport strategy refresh

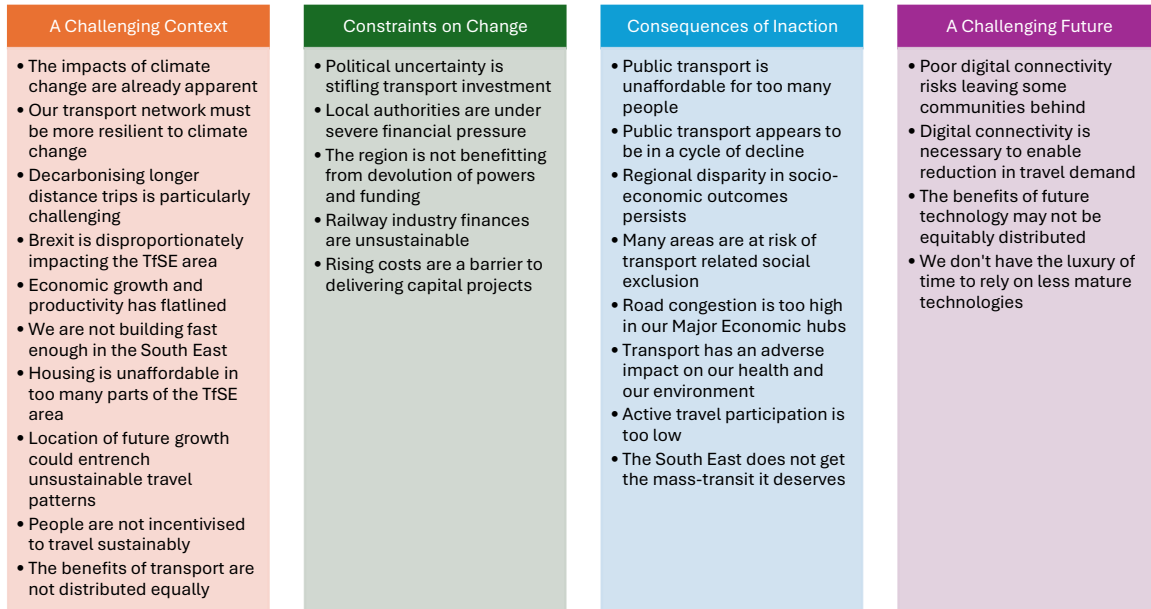


Appendix 2 - Summary of the Need for Intervention Report

1. The purpose of this Appendix is to set out the main Findings of the Need for Intervention report that was produced following a review and updating of the evidence base for the existing Transport Strategy and the Strategic Investment Plan.
2. A Draft Need for Intervention Report was produced and shared with partners on in May 2024. Some 100 comments on this report have been received. While changes are being made in response to this report, and a final report will have been adopted by the time of the July Partnership Board, the key messages of the report remain unchanged. The overarching narrative of the report can be summarised under four themes that prompt the need for intervention.
 - a. **A Challenging Context.** Transport sits within a politically and economically challenging context, with mounting environmental pressures. The TfSE area in-particular faces challenges of affordability and the distribution of opportunities. This manifests itself in a number of ways, ranging from transport networks increasingly facing disruption from extreme weather, to economic and productivity growth being a significant challenge.
 - b. **Constraints on Change.** The ability to deliver significant transport change by National Government and Local Transport Authorities is hampered by economic and political uncertainty; changing strategic direction, and the rising costs of funding and delivering change. This includes challenges such as political uncertainty, local authorities being under significant financial pressure, and the rising costs of capital projects.
 - c. **Consequences of inaction.** The transport sector is not on track to decarbonise, sufficiently improve public health, or achieve equality aims. Residents continue to be subject to potentially avoidable negative impacts of transport while positive impacts could be better optimised. This includes challenges such as a cycle of decline in public transport, active travel participation being too low, and traffic congestion affecting the strategic road network and our major urban areas.
 - d. **A Challenging Future.** Current trends point towards further exacerbation of transport issues with mounting environmental, social and cost pressures. Meanwhile, emerging transport technology offers no credible silver bullet for resolving many of the issues. Such challenges include rolling out of digital connectivity, unequal distribution of the benefits of new technologies, and the time to deploy emerging technologies.
3. Although these general descriptions summarise a number of challenges, the Need for Intervention Report describes 27 in all. These are listed in Figure 1, and the Need for Intervention Report goes into the evidence behind these in more detail.
4. The overall message from the Need for Intervention Report is that there are a number of significant challenges which transport plays a significant role in tackling (e.g. decarbonisation) or that are transport issues in their own right (e.g. resilience). Many of these are challenges for which there has been relatively little meaningful

action taken, outside of some best practice case studies. This points towards the need for the transport strategy being bolder in seeking to address these challenges.

Figure 1 - Challenges identified in the Need for Intervention Report



Appendix 3 - The results of the ‘Your Voices Survey’

1. The purpose of this Appendix is to set out the main findings of the Your Voices Survey that was undertaken between April and June 2024. The purpose of the survey was to establish how residents across the South East felt key priorities from our existing strategy had grown or lessened in importance. It was a primarily an online survey undertaken over the course of 3 months. In all, there were 1501 responses to the survey providing a great deal of insight into the key challenges and priorities facing those who responded.

2. The key finds of the survey were as follows:

- Amongst the three themes from the existing transport strategy: economic, environmental and social, 48% of respondents ranked the social theme as the highest priority, 32% said environmental was the top priority and 20% ranked the economic theme first.
- Amongst the economic priorities, the need for joined up thinking between transport planning and housing and employment needs emerged as the area which had grown most in importance. A total of 86% of respondents stated this was more or much more important than 5 years ago.
- Responses across the environmental priorities were similar with improving biodiversity as part of new infrastructure schemes emerging as the one with most respondents stating this had got more or much more important (71.4%).
- 85% of respondents said an accessible and affordable transport network was now more or much more important than 5 years ago, this was the highest amongst the social themes.

Figure 1 - Rank of themes of previous Transport Strategy in the Your Voices Survey (percentage of respondents)

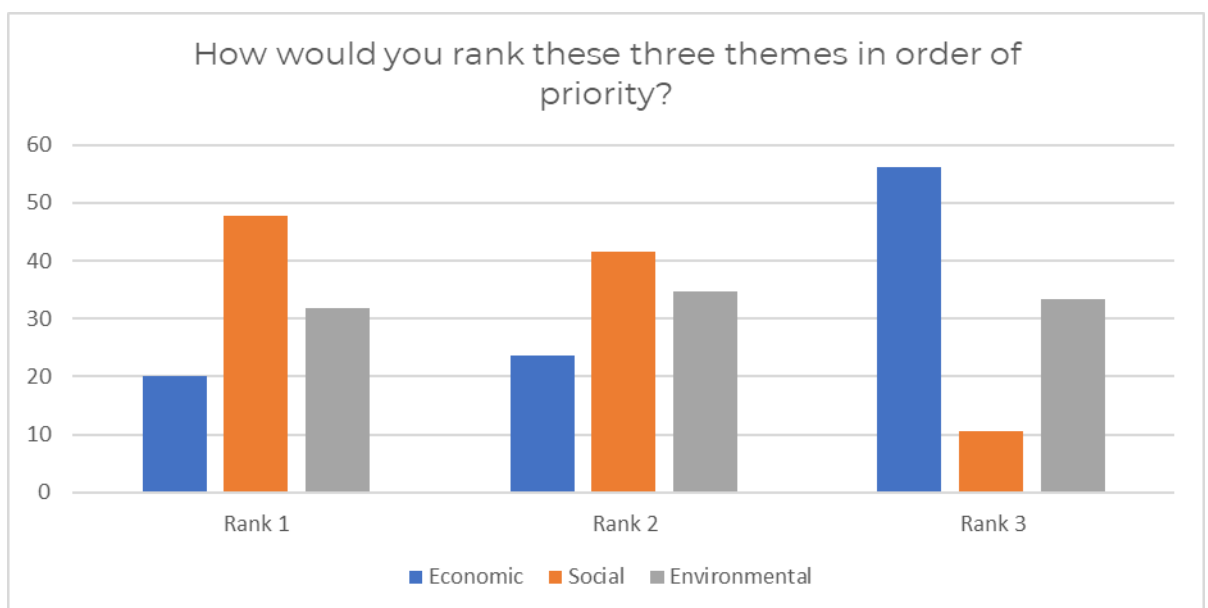


Figure 1 - Changes in importance of the last 5 years of different economic priorities (percentage of respondents)

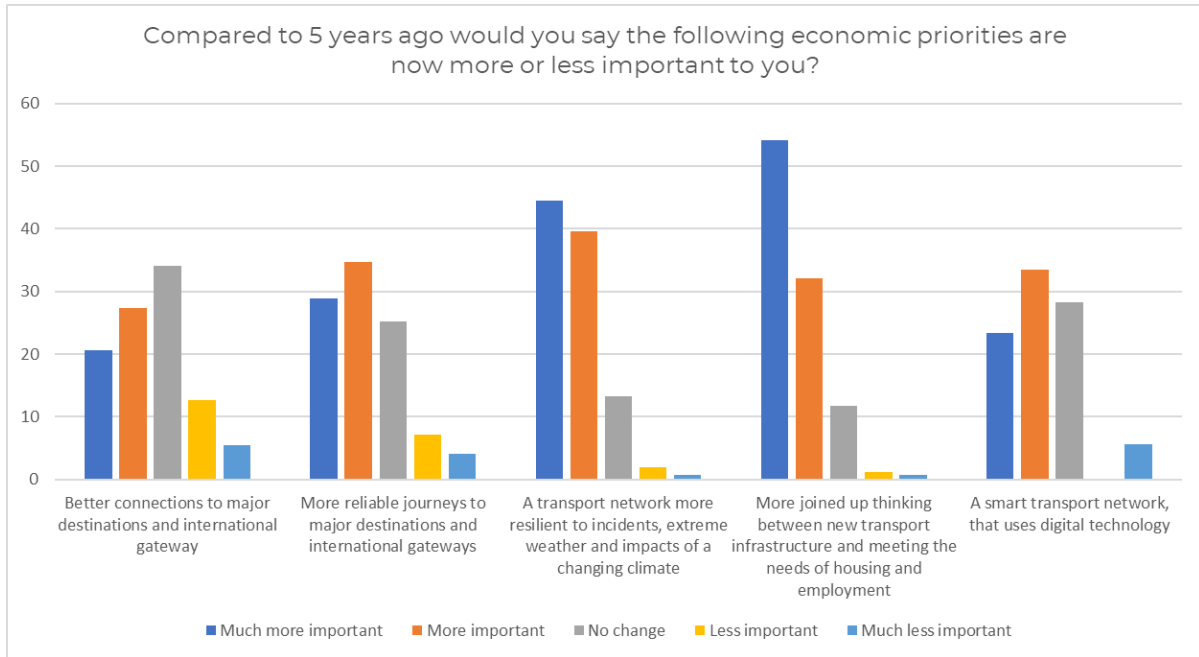


Figure 2 - Changes in environmental priorities of the Transport Strategy over the last 5 years (percentage of respondents)

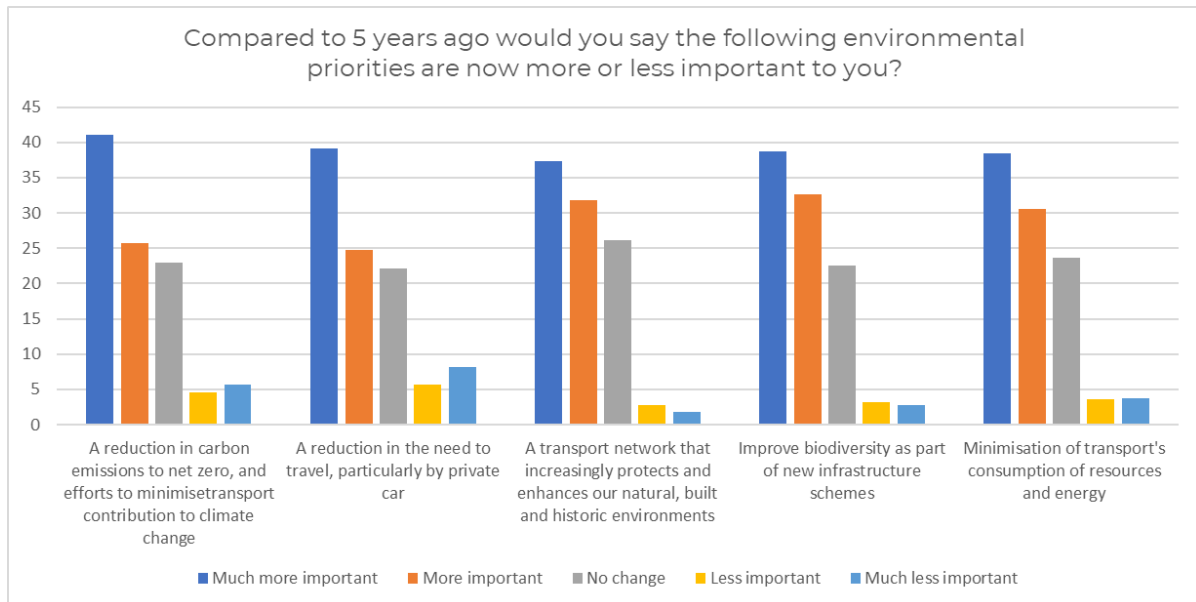
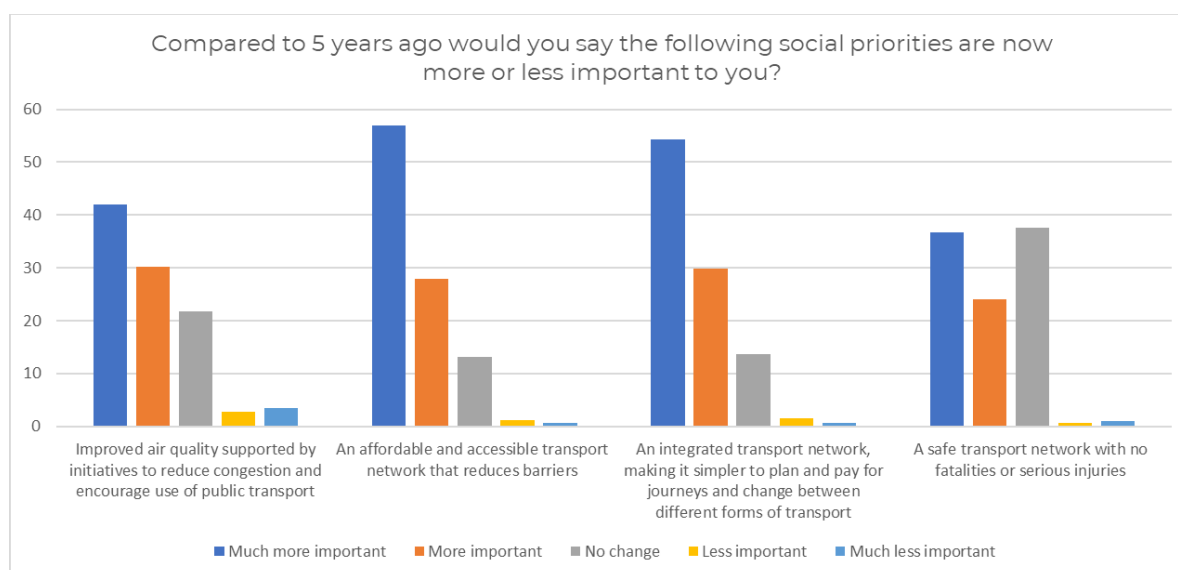


Figure 3 - Changes in social priorities of the Transport Strategy over the last 5 years (percentage of respondents)



3. An Analysis of the comments received as part of the survey was also undertaken. All of the top 6 themes that were raised in the free comments related to public transport, particularly focussing on affordability of public transport. There were also specific mentions of the Isle of Wight Ferries (Table 1).

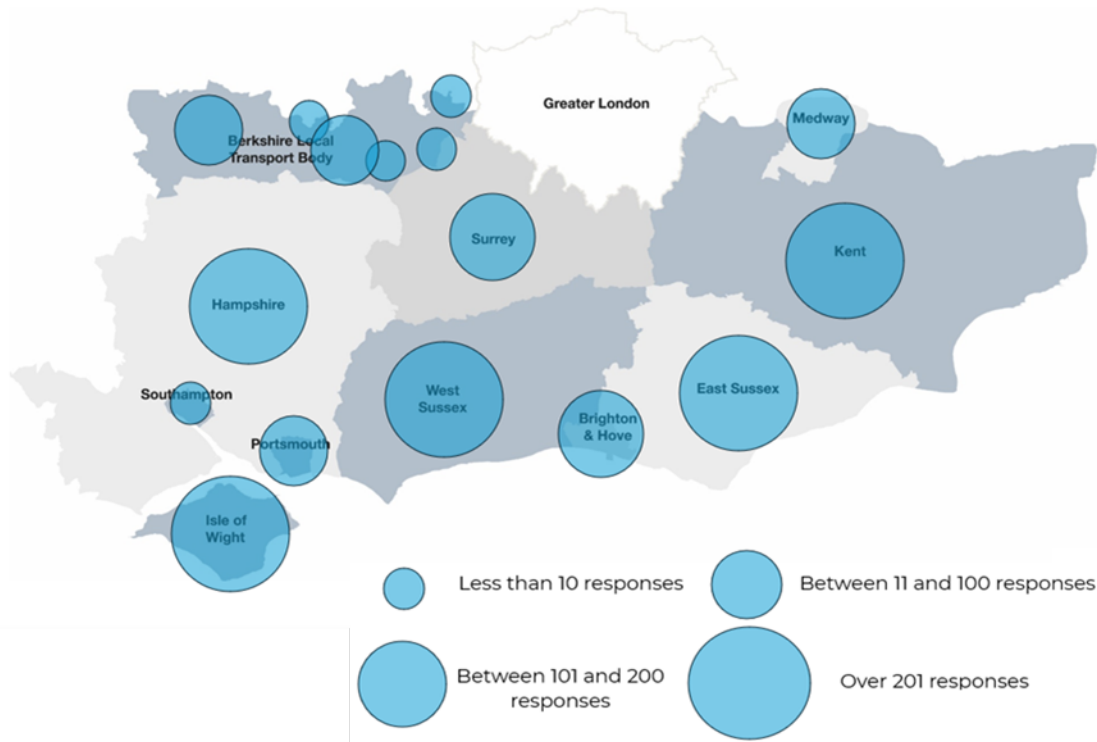
Table 1 - Priority Areas mentioned in free comments section of the Your Voices Survey, including specific mentions

Priority Area	Specific Mentions	Number
More affordable public transport	Isle of Wight Ferries	108
	Train fares	23
	Bus fares	10
More frequent PT services / services than run later in the evening / run at weekends/ restore cut services	Bus services	60
	Ferry services	20
	Rail services	19
Improved public transport for rural areas / car journeys currently only option for key journeys / communities are cut off, promotes inequality and creates barriers to essential services	Isle of Wight	33
More reliable PT services / less strikes / more information	Isle of Wight Ferries	52
	Rail services	16
	Bus services	11

4. In terms of how representative the survey was of the population, we assessed this by comparing the characteristics of the sample data to basic demographic data (gender, age, ethnicity, disability) of the population across the South East. From the data we collected, we found that the profile of survey respondents aligned well with the population of the South East overall, with the exception of those over the age of 45 years old formed disproportionately more responses than those of younger ages, and disability where those with some kind of disability formed disproportionately

more of the responses. The geographic distribution of responses is shown below in Figure 7.

Figure 7. Distribution of responses received to the 'Your Voices' survey



Appendix 4 - The development of future scenarios

1. The purpose of this Appendix is to outline of the methodology that was used to develop four future scenarios along with their key characteristics and the way they are going to be used to help develop the strategy.
2. Since the last Board meeting in May 2024 work has taken place to develop four future scenarios. The purpose of this exercise was to identify a number of different plausible and possible futures that can be used to test the robustness of the strategy.
3. A series of workshops with members of Senior Officer Group, Transport Strategy Working Group and other key stakeholders to help develop these scenarios. The first workshop took place in April 2024 and was focussed on identify a number of drivers of change, these being the key things that are likely to affect the future of transport across the TfSE area.
4. The drivers of change are the key building blocks of the future scenarios, and consequently, developing consensus on what these drivers are, and their relative importance was an important part of the process. The outputs from this workshop were used to identify the two drivers of greatest importance and highest uncertainty to form the two axes of a grid in which form the basis for generating four future scenarios. The two key axes that were identified were the volatility of future economic growth (ranging from volatile growth to stable long term growth and the level of intervention from the state (ranging from interventionist to laissez faire). These two axes and the scenarios that were developed in each of the four quadrants they create are shown in Figure 1 below.

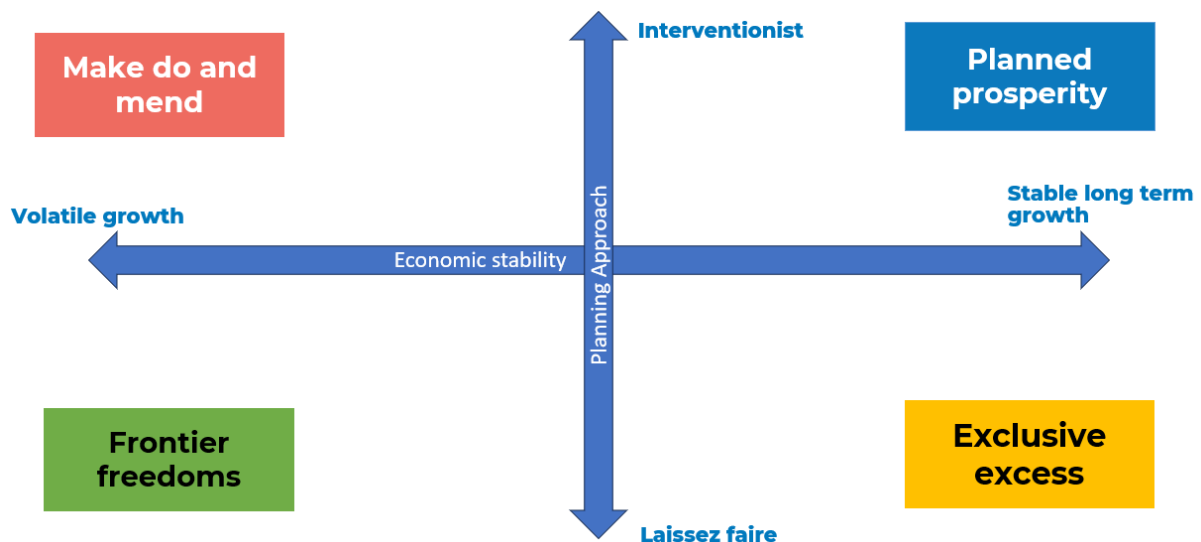


Figure 1 - The TfSE Scenario Matrix

5. For each of the scenarios, a scenario narrative has been developed to describe the future world that would occur in that scenario if TfSE took no action (Figure 2). At a further workshop, members of Senior Officer Group, Transport Strategy Working Group, and key stakeholders reviewed these narratives, and the impact of each scenario would have on a range of criteria (e.g. transport demand, land use development, access to digital services and new technology).



Figure 2 - Scenario Narratives

6. Resulting from this work, the South East Economy and Land Use Model (SEELUM) will be used to model each of the scenarios to identify what the implications of each are on a range of characteristics if there was no action by TfSE in each scenario. Such characteristics include economic growth, population growth, carbon emissions, car use, public transport use and active travel use. As the Policy Road Maps are developed, these can be tested against the different scenarios to identify how the road maps perform under each scenario in achieving the missions. This will enable us to identify which road maps provide are the most robust under different future scenarios.

Appendix 5 - The identification of the draft Missions that the transport strategy should seek to address

1. The purpose of this Appendix is to outline of the methodology that has been used to identify the Missions that the strategy should seek to address and set out how they are going to be used to develop the strategy.
2. An approach to the development of the strategy based on Missions will enable well-defined direction of travel to be identified with each Mission having a clearly defined outcome or end point. This will enable the co-ordinated action that will be needed to achieve the Mission to be identified.
3. Since the May Partnership Board meeting, the Project Team has been working to identify and shortlist these missions, building upon the foundation of co-creation with our key partners.
4. The Missions are to be structured around a set of cross cutting topics. Each will have a single, coherent narrative and set of objectives addressed by a range of interventions. A workshop was undertaken with members of TfSE's Senior Officer Group, Transport Strategy Working Group and other key stakeholders in early July to identify and shortlist the potential Missions .

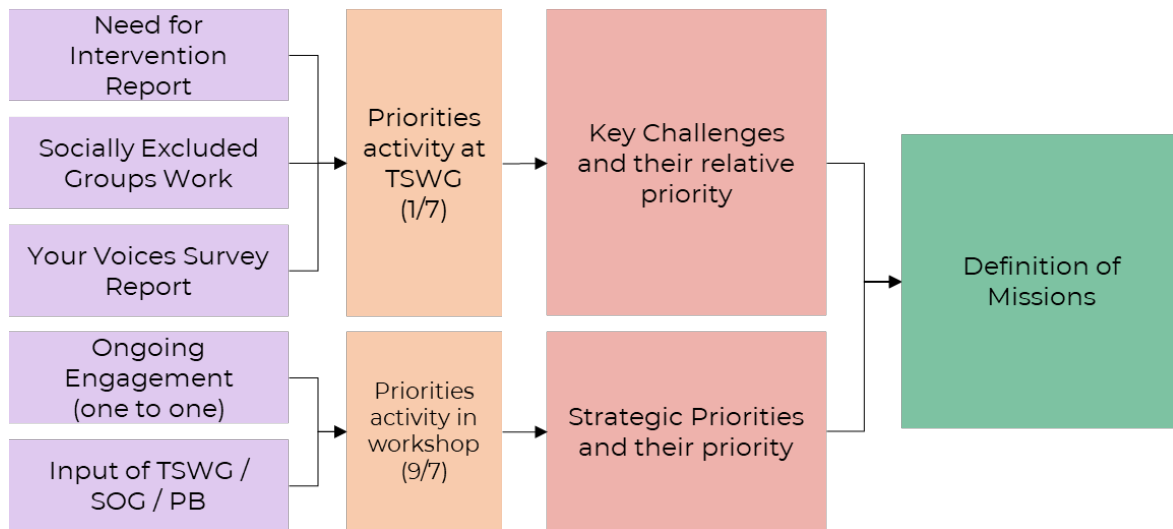
Work to date on the missions

5. The Project Team has worked with the Transport Strategy Working Group and Senior Officer Group, building upon the evidence base from the Need for Intervention Report (Appendix 1), Socially Excluded Groups Report (Appendix 2), and Your Voices Survey (Appendix 3) to identify the priority challenges and strategic priorities that should form the basis for the Missions. This has involved two activities:

- The prioritisation of the challenges identified in the Need for Intervention report undertaken as part of the July meeting of the Transport Strategy Working Group with further feedback received subsequently;
- Prioritisation of strategic priorities, based upon how challenging they are to achieve, as part of a Missions workshop with members of Senior Officer Group and Transport Strategy Working Group in early July

This process is summarised in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 – Process of prioritising challenges, strategic priorities, and distilling into missions



6. Through this exercise, a long list of potential missions was identified (Table 1),).

Table 1 - Long List of potential Missions considered

Potential Mission
Delivering a resilient and reliable transport system
Enhancing our natural and historic environment
Decarbonising transport and travel
Unlocking our international gateways and facilitating more trade
Boosting strategic connectivity between the south east and rest of the UK
Enhancing business and labour market connectivity
Increasing the safety of the transport network
Delivering an integrated transport network
Providing an inclusive and affordable transport network
Ensuring our transport network facilitates access to key services
Transport enabling sustainable development
Better connecting our coastal communities
Better connecting our rural communities
Transforming east – west connectivity
Resilient radial corridors

Potential Mission
World class urban transport systems
Delivering devolution
Building institutional capacity
Securing funding for our transport infrastructure
Health / Healthy Streets

7. The missions shown in Table 1, were reviewed as part of the workshop with Senior Officer Group and Transport Strategy Working Group and a prioritisation process was used to refine them down to a shortlist of potential missions. This prioritisation was based on the degree to which TfSE could have a meaningful role take in achieving a Mission. The Missions to be taken forward as a result of this process are shown in bold in Table 2. This table also sets out how those that are not shown in bold will be addressed.

Table 2 - Shortlisting of Missions

Potential Mission (those in bold taken forward)	Notes for missions not taken forward
Delivering a resilient and reliable transport system	
Enhancing our natural and historic environment	To be captured in overarching strategy – better led by national organisations and local transport authorities
Decarbonising transport and travel	
Unlocking our international gateways and facilitating more trade	
Boosting strategic connectivity between the south east and rest of the UK	
Enhancing business and labour market connectivity	
Increasing the safety of the transport network	Captured in overarching strategy – better led by local transport authorities
Delivering an integrated transport network	
Providing an inclusive and affordable transport network	

Potential Mission (those in bold taken forward)	Notes for missions not taken forward
Ensuring our transport network facilitates access to key services	Captured in overarching strategy – better led by Local Transport Authorities
Transport enabling sustainable development	
Better connecting our coastal communities	Captured in overarching strategy – likely to be an outcome of other missions
Better connecting our rural communities	Captured in overarching strategy – likely to be an outcome of other missions
Transforming east – west connectivity	
Resilient radial corridors	Captured in overarching strategy – captured under <i>Delivering a resilient and reliable transport system</i>
World class urban transport systems	
Delivering devolution	
Building institutional capacity	
Securing funding for our transport infrastructure	
Health / Healthy Streets	Captured in overarching strategy – better led by Local Transport Authorities

The Missions that have been identified to be taken forward have been grouped into the different thematic areas shown in Table 3 to enable them to be combined.

Table 3 - Mission themes identified

Mission themes	Component missions
Resilience	Delivering a resilient and reliable transport system
Decarbonisation	Decarbonising transport and travel
Strategic Connectivity	Unlocking our international gateways and facilitating more trade
	Boosting strategic connectivity between the south east and rest of the UK

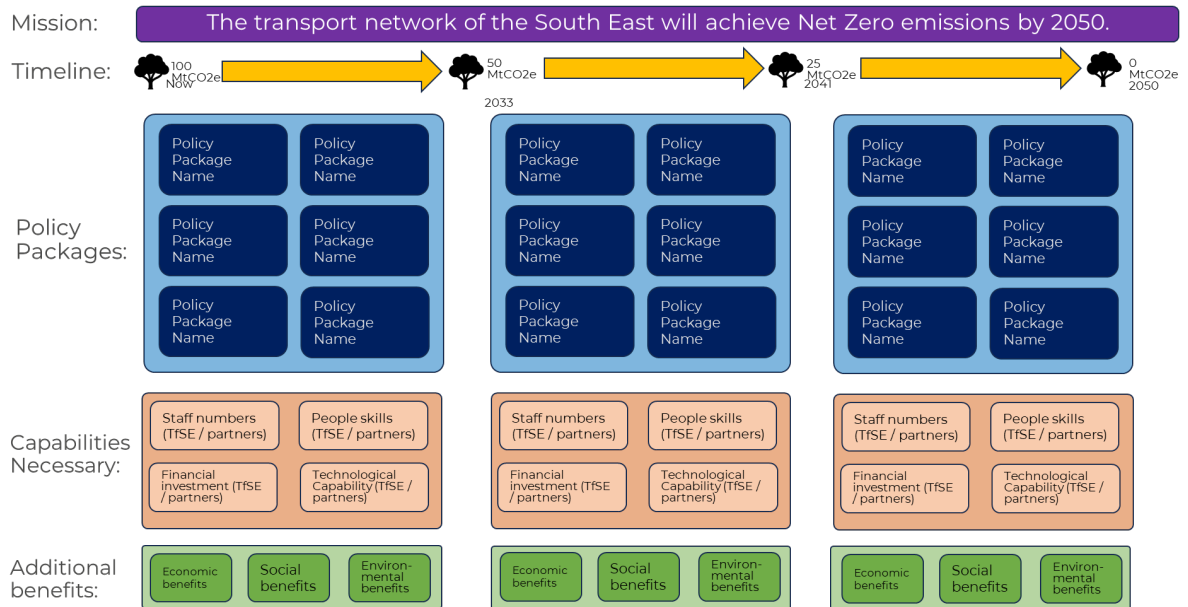
Mission themes	Component missions
	Enhancing business and labour market connectivity
	Transforming east – west connectivity
	World class urban transport systems
Integration and inclusivity	Delivering an integrated transport network
	Providing an inclusive and affordable transport network
Transport enabling sustainable development	Transport enabling sustainable development
Delivery	Delivering devolution
	Building institutional capacity
	Securing funding for our transport infrastructure

8. Based upon these thematic areas identified in Table 3, one consolidated mission for each thematic area was then identified. These are set out in Appendix 6 as the Partnership Board is being asked to agree them. The wording of each of the Missions will be subject to further refinement as the strategy is developed over the coming months, and consequently should not be considered as the final wording at this stage. The components identified under the Delivery theme have not been presented as a Mission in Appendix 6, as they constitute supporting actions that will be needed to enable TfSE to deliver all of the other Missions.

Development of Policy Route Maps

9. Once the Missions have been agreed by the Partnership Board, Policy Route Maps will be used to identify packages of interventions that are needed to achieve a mission or series of missions, including supporting work and capabilities needed to deliver them. These road maps will identify a series of policies needed to deliver each mission. Figure 1-2 below illustrates how this process will be applied. This will be supported by analysis work to test different options and road maps against the future scenarios that have been developed. An update on the development of these policy route maps will be presented to the Partnership Board at their meeting in October

Figure 1-2 - Illustrative example of a mission and associated route map (working example)



Appendix 6 – Draft Missions for the transport strategy

1. The purpose of this Appendix is to set out the draft Missions that the strategy should seek to address. The methodology used to develop the Missions to this stage is described in Appendix 5.
2. The Partnership Board is advised that the wording of these Missions may be subject to further refinement as a result of the Policy Road Map work and any other supporting technical work. During the development of these Missions it was identified that there would need to be supporting work to ensure their delivery including building the institutional capacity and skills needed as well as the devolution of powers and responsibilities and the funding the region needs.

Draft Missions:

Mission 1: Enhance connectivity to and between economic centres, international gateways and the rest of the UK

Mission 2: Enable sustainable development and economic growth

Mission 3: Decarbonise transport and travel

Mission 4: Create an integrated, universally accessible, and affordable transport system that is inclusive of difference

Mission 5: Improve the resilience and reliability of the transport system