

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

**Date of meeting:** 28 October 2024

**By:** Co-Chairs, Business Advisory Group

**Title of report:** Business Advisory Group

**Purpose of report:** To update the Partnership Board on the Business Advisory Group

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***RECOMMENDATION:***

**The members of the Partnership Board are recommended to note the recent work of the Business Advisory Group.**

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**1. Introduction**

1.1 The Partnership Board agreed at their recent meeting in July to the formation of the Business Advisory Group (BAG). Vince Lucas and Daniel Ruiz co-chair the meeting and represent the BAG at the Transport for the South East (TfSE) Partnership Board.

**2. First meeting of the Business Advisory Group**

2.1 The first meeting was held virtually via Microsoft Teams on Tuesday 1 October and was co-chaired by Vince Lucas and Daniel Ruiz.

2.2 The attendees represented chambers of commerce within the region and local authority economy board representatives. Officers are also seeking representatives from the Department for Business and Trade, Federation of Small Business, Airports and Port within our region to join the BAG.

2.3 In the meeting, the BAG recognised the importance of transport connectivity in facilitating trade at a regional, national and international level. The BAG also discussed the importance of speaking with one business voice to Government on the priorities for the South East. The next meeting will offer the group an opportunity to input the business voice into our forward programme of work.

2.4 It was agreed that the BAG has a valuable, complementary role to play alongside other business and economic growth organisations and governance bodies in central government and across the region. A key action for the BAG is to capture the value in order to maximise contributions by participants and engagement by key stakeholders.

2.5 The BAG have agreed to meet again in the first week of November to ensure the momentum is kept following the first meeting and ensure the actions from the first meeting are picked up in a timely manner.

### **3. Wider Business Advisory Group**

3.1 The BAG discussed the Wider Business Advisory Group membership and purpose.

3.2 Whereas the BAG is, in effect, a steering group to optimise engagement and input from business, the Wider Business Advisory Group (working title) will draw from across the whole business demographic across the region.

3.3 The BAG agreed that it would be essential to have at least one annual face to face meeting of the Wider Business Advisory Group, to provide an opportunity to network, help to increase TfSE's influence, and act as a venue for discussion on how TfSE can help to address issues facing businesses for the commercial, economic and social benefit of the region.

3.4 There may be additional Wider Business Advisory Group meetings to focus on specific issues, capture individual sectors, or address different sizes of businesses, as and when necessary. Examples raised include specific meetings for larger businesses, and meetings for specific sectors, such as sports and hospitality. Output from these meetings will be processed by the Business Advisory Group and channelled to the Partnership Board.

### **4. Conclusions and recommendations**

4.1 The Partnership Board is recommended to note the progress of the Business Advisory Group.

**Daniel Ruiz and Vince Lucas**  
**Co-Chairs – Business Advisory Group**  
**Transport for the South East**

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