

TfSE Partnership Board
17 March 2025 – 14:00-17:00
Minutes - draft
ICE, Council Room

Partnership Board Members

Cllr Keith Glazier (Chair) Leader East Sussex County Council	Cllr Trevor Muten Cabinet member for Transport, Parking and Public Realm Brighton & Hove City Council	Cllr John Ennis Lead Councillor for Climate Strategy and Transport Reading Borough Council <i>(representing BLTB)</i>
Cllr Lulu Bowerman Executive Member for Highways and Waste Hampshire County Council	Cllr Joy Dennis Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport West Sussex County Council	Geoff French CBE Chair Transport Forum
Daniel Ruiz Business Representative <i>(Business Advisory Group co-chair)</i>	Cllr Matt Boughton Leader Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council <i>(jointly representing District and Borough Councils)</i>	Tim Burr Deputy Chair South Downs National Park Authority <i>(Representative from Protected Landscapes)</i>
Tom Cornwell National Highways <i>On behalf of Richard Leonard</i>	Dan Taylor Department for Transport	

Apologies:

- Cllr Simon Curry, Medway
- Cllr David Robey, Kent
- Cllr Peter Candlish, Portsmouth
- Cllr Eamonn Keogh, Southampton
- Cllr Matt Furniss, Surrey
- Cllr Sophie Cox, Worthing
- Ellie Burrows, Network Rail
- Richard Leonard, National Highways

Officers attended:

- Rupert Clubb, Transport for the South East
- Sarah Valentine, Transport for the South East
- Keir Wilkins, Transport for the South East
- Mark Valleley, Transport for the South East
- Jessica Lelliott, Transport for the South East
- Jaimie McSorley, Transport for the South East
- James Boyes, Transport for the South East

- Charles Field, Brighton

- Chris Maddocks, Reading

Item	Action
1. Welcome and Apologies	
<p>1.1 Councillor Keith Glazier (KG) welcomed Members to the meeting and noted apologies.</p> <p>1.2 Apologies were noted from Cllr Eamonn Keogh, Cllr Peter Candlish, Cllr Simon Curry, Cllr David Robey, Cllr Matt Furniss, Cllr Sophie Cox, Richard Leonard and Ellie Burrows.</p>	
2. Minutes from last meeting	
<p>2.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.</p> <p>2.2 Cllr Glazier provided an update on the outstanding actions from the previous meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Freight – Mark Vallely has provided an update to Councillor Simon Curry on the Freight workstream. Technical call off contract – a note was added to the minutes noting that Sarah Valentine had checked with the accountable body procurement team who confirmed that the contract was procured under an ESPO Framework which was procured under the Public Contract Regulations 2015. Intermodal rail freight study – Mark Valleley provided further information to Councillor Sophie Cox in relation to the study. 	
3. Declarations of Interest	
<p>3.1 Cllr Glazier asked Board Members to declare any interests they may have in relation to the agenda. No interests were declared.</p>	
4. Statements from the public	
<p>4.1 Cllr Glazier confirmed that no statements from the public have been made.</p>	
5. Report of the Audit and Governance Committee	
<p>5.1 Councillor Joy Dennis (JD) highlighted that the Committee heard the announcement of TfSE's funding allocation decision from the Department for Transport (DfT) which saw a 4.7% increase on 2024/25. JD explained that the Committee were given the opportunity to provide views on where to allocate the increase from funding and came to an agreement for the increase to be split equally across Centre of Excellence and Analytical Framework.</p> <p>5.2 JD also raised that the Committee reviewed the finance position to the end of January. Following their meeting a further update was requested on the finance position at the end of February. JD also highlighted that the Committee sought assurance on the carry forward.</p>	

<p>5.3 JD highlighted that the Committee reviewed their forward programme of work for 2025/26 highlighting a particular piece of work the Committee have requested on assuring the value for money that TfSE provides including through its external suppliers.</p> <p>5.4 The recommendation was agreed by the Partnership Board.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION: The members of the Partnership Board are recommended to comment on the discussions and actions arising at the meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee.</p>	
<p>6. Financial Update</p>	
<p>6.1 Keir Wilkins (KW) set out the financial position to the end of February 2025.</p> <p>6.2 KW highlighted the revised forecasts for the Year End, noting that year end spend will be less than forecast in January, because the accountable body's finance system SAP is being migrated to Oracle which has therefore meant payments ceased on 7th March. KW highlighted that this means that our carry forward will be higher than expected, but that all the additional carry forward is committed carry forward for technical work that is underway and will be finished early in the 2025/26 Financial Year.</p> <p>6.3 Cllr Trevor Muten (TM) asked for a break-down of what work will be invoiced in March and what work will be invoiced early in the new Financial Year. In response to this KW confirmed that these forecasts on when we expect work to be completed and invoiced are broken down within the finance paper. TfSE will continue to update the Board and Audit and Governance Committee.</p> <p>6.4 Daniel Ruiz (DR) asked how TfSE will ensure quality of work, where funding has been committed and will carry forward to the next Financial Year. In response to this KW reassured DR that work will not be paid for unless it is completed to a satisfactory standard.</p> <p>6.5 The recommendation was agreed by the Partnership Board.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION: The members of the Partnership Board are recommended to note the current financial position for 2024/25 to the end of February 2025.</p>	
<p>7. Responses to Consultations</p>	
<p>7.1 Rupert Clubb (RC) provided an overview to the five consultation responses we have responded to.</p> <p>7.2 Tim Burr (TB) raised in relation to the Blue Bell Hill response that it comes across the rationale for this scheme is accommodating future increases in traffic.</p>	

7.3 Cllr Matt Boughton (MB) raised also in relation to the Blue Bell Hill scheme noting that a particular footpath has been referenced and asked for something to be included referencing a particular bus stop that should remain.

In response to this RC agreed amend the response to recognise the point made.

Following the meeting, this response has been edited, and updated specifying public transport priority.

7.4 TM raised in relation to the Integrated National Transport Strategy call for ideas how did the timing of the response align with the event held recently in Brighton by the DfT.

In response to this RC explained the consultation was in addition to the roadshow.

7.5 TM asked in relation to the EV report specifically around question 15 how we can progress this further, specifically around trading in old vans / cars.

In response to this Mark Valleley (MV) emphasised the importance of the second-hand market in the transition to zero emission vans.

Following the above questions, members had a good discussion on electric vans and some key points raised were:

- Availability of the second-hand market and whether the Government should incentivise this
- Big distributors moving to EV
- Barriers with cost and availability of charging infrastructure
- The need to consider the potential for internal combustion engine lorries to be converted to battery operation
- Need to differentiate between different sizes of commercial vehicles when talking about fleet electrification.

7.6 Cllr John Ennis (JE) raised in relation to the rail response there is a real opportunity for the rail industry. Agrees with the points set out within the consultation response. Frustrations and opportunities with Reading having eight stations on a National and Regional line, we acknowledge we can't act in isolation, but we could act regionally and called for an integrated ticketing approach.

7.7 JD asked about export productions which Rupert will take away and find out.

7.8 Cllr Lulu Bowerman (LB) asked about whether TfSE could have a role in the performance of rail, monitoring, capacity and feeding back into franchises and GBR.

In response to this RC explained the potential is there, paper later in the agenda on the Wider South East Rail Partnership and opportunities through consultation on devolution arrangements which are currently live which have specific references to rail.

<p>7.9 DR raised a point on the consultation responses of the need to emphasise end-to-end journeys at a strategic level not coming through as strong as it could.</p> <p>7.10 The recommendations were agreed by the Partnership Board.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATIONS: The members of the Partnership Board are recommended to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Agree the draft response to Western Gateway: Draft Strategic Investment Plan Consultation; 2) Agree the draft response to Transport Select Committee’s call for evidence on Rail Investment Pipelines: ending boom and bust; 3) Agree the draft response to Kent County Council’s A229 Blue Bell Hill Improvement Scheme Consultation; 4) Agree the draft response to the Integrated National Transport Strategy call for ideas; and 5) Agree the draft response to the Department for Transport’s – Phasing out sales of new petrol and diesel cars from 2030 and supporting the ZEV transition. 	
8. Business Planning 2025/26	
<p>8.1 KW highlighted that DfT have approved our Business Plan for 2025/26 and provided us our funding settlement for the year ahead. The letter in appendix 1 sets out the Transport Secretary response to the submission of our business plan. The allocation for 2025/26 is £2,161,666.</p> <p>8.2 KW highlighted that our funding has been increased by 4.6% compared to 2024/25, which is an extra £96,666. The DfT expressed a preference for us to allocate this additional money to our Centre of Excellence and Analytical Framework. The Business Plan has been updated to reflect this.</p> <p>8.3 KG noted his thanks and was pleased we have received this allocation earlier on in the year and commended to all that help behind the scenes.</p> <p>8.4 TM welcomed the uplift in funding and asked for clarification on the additional bus work that will be delivered through the Centre of Excellence. In response to this KW confirmed that the key for the Centre of Excellence is to provide advice and support to our Local Authorities to make whatever case is most appropriate for their area. We can convene, provide tools and support where possible.</p> <p>8.5 The recommendation was agreed by the Partnership Board.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION: The members of the Partnership Board are recommended to approve Transport for the South East’s updated Business Plan for 2025/26, following the announcement of Government funding.</p>	
9. Warehousing Provision and Viability of Waterborne Freight Studies	
<p>9.1 Mark Valleley (MV) provided an overview of the paper, along with the key findings and next steps.</p>	

9.2 DR noted the interesting piece of work and asked what we might do next for the work.

In response to this MV explained we want to share the Warehousing Study with DfT to take forward some of the recommendations, first thing is to speak to DfT about the study., Also taking forward the recommendations about how the , the partnership brings together planning authorities, what we then need to do and the recent changes to the NPPF.

DR also asked where would we need to apply the incentives to make a step change to build momentum to make a bigger change and could we make recommendations for where policy change / investment / interventions may be helpful?

In response to this MV highlighted the issue with the lack of data we need to better understand the freight sector.

9.3 JD explained this could be useful for District and Borough's in terms of a planning perspective in their areas.

Asked in relation to waterborne why we included smaller ports for commercial movement .

9.4 TM raised what change are we trying to drive with warehousing referencing motorways and connections with rail.

In response to this Mark explained there is a further update on intermodal of freight in the technical programme agenda item. In our area there is the potential with a number of our ports being well connected to rail.

9.5 JD raised in relation to warehousing provision and local plans not looking at provision for bus garages / stations.

9.6 TB noted one planning authority missing from the study, the South Downs National Park Authority. TB also raised the need for all to have regard to the purposes of protected landscapes when making land use decisions.

9.7 LB highlighted a new site for Amazon which has a lot of movement, employs local people but the perception on the impact of local roads / residents. The perception is being key, moving forwards the strategic authority having the overall plan for the area is key.

9.8 MB raised the success within Kent, with logistics companies employing local people and societal trends all reliant on brands we are buying goods from. Good piece of work undertaken, realistic where we are at present, identifying issues. Good way to localize economic growth on a national footprint.

9.9 The recommendation was agreed by the Partnership Board

RECOMMENDATION:

The members of the Partnership Board are recommended to agree the study reports for the Warehousing Provision Study and Viability of Waterborne Freight Study.

10. Wider South East Rail Partnership – Position Paper	
<p>10.1 MV provided an overview of the paper noting that a good discussion took place at Senior Officer Group, with additional items we want to add:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasis on making better use of existing infrastructure as well as investing in improvement schemes. • including more specific information about freight and integration with London. • Emphasising the importance of rail links to airports in the region. <p>A revised version will be updated and shared.</p> <p>10.2 KG asked if this Position Paper is positively received in the other STB areas MV confirmed it is.</p> <p>10.3 MB highlighted happy with the additions, please the other two STB's are on board. Key thing that has not been drawn out within the paper is the milestones and turning the ambitions into reality particularly with scheme delivery, interested to see this come back.</p> <p>10.4 Dan Taylor explained that all three STBs are committed to this model as are their members, good example of cross STB working. Agree it will be good to revisit but to allow this some time, with rail not moving as fast. DfT are committed to this partnership, evolution over time too with this partnership with devolution.</p> <p>10.5 LB asked about the performance monitoring and enhancement in relation to rail and if we could introduce this here? In response to this RC outlined a number of bodies oversee the performance. RC noted the desire from the partnership to have an oversight on performance as we move into these newer relationships. RC also noted the fare box that the partnership rail raises and the relationship with London.</p> <p>10.6 The recommendation was agreed by the Partnership Board.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION: The members of the Partnership Board are recommended to comment on the contents of the STB's Wider South East Rail Partnership draft position paper and agree the objectives and delivery activities as set out in the draft Position Paper</p>	
11. Scheme Development Support 2025-26	
<p>11.1 Sarah Valentine (SV) outlined the purpose of the paper is to set out the process we have used to identify which schemes should receive scheme development support this year and to agree the schemes that will receive funding this year.</p> <p>11.2 SV noted that criteria for receiving support. SV highlighted following feedback from Partnership Board members, and our local authorities, along with reduced funding available this year, the process for selecting schemes is different than previous years. SV explained there have been two sessions of engagement with Transport Strategy Working Group and Senior Officer</p>	

<p>Group to talk around the process we should use and for comments on those schemes selected.</p> <p>11.3 JD asked those with the work for the next three years is this for the development or deliverability of the scheme itself. SV explained it is for work that is planned on development within the next three years. However, the two are linked, with the current financial situation authorities are not bringing forward schemes.</p> <p>11.4 RC discussed the challenges with a number of authorities not being ready which has slowed us getting the funding out of the door, which has led to us identifying schemes that could move at pace. The two identified are sensible ones. Moving forwards business case development should be considered to enable us to take more schemes through the process.</p> <p>11.5 TM asked about the valuation and cost benefits. In response to this SV explained we don't have the cost benefit analysis in the SIP to inform decisions, it is more on deliverability and all schemes have been taken as a priority.</p> <p>11.6 LB raised the benefits and triggers to the two schemes identified for the various modes of transport. In response to this SV explained that once a scheme is finished a questionnaire is sent to identify the benefits to it. SV also raised that its not just the funding that is needed it is the other benefits through our Centre of Excellence which is also supporting schemes moving forwards.</p> <p>11.7 The recommendations were agreed by the Partnership Board.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATIONS: The members of the Partnership Board are recommended to: 1) Comment on the progress and approach to Local Authority Scheme Development work; and 2) Agree which schemes are to receive development support in 2025-26 (as set out in Table 1).</p>	
12. Regional Active Travel Strategy and Action Plan	
<p>12.1 MV outlined the purpose of the paper, and the amendments that have been made following comments made at the October Partnership Board meeting. A further opportunity was provided to allow for further comments to the strategy and map via a technical note. MV explained the strategic active travel network map is to design and compliment work being undertaken by local authorities, it is not a blueprint but is to act as a guide for local authorities to use. MV explained we had comments from nine authorities and a meeting with Tonbridge and Malling on specific concerns they raised, the changes and comments are identified in Appendix 2, the revised map is set out in Appendix 3 and the revised RATSAP document is in appendix 4.</p> <p>12.2 TM raised welcome this and the amendment, noted the cross boundary being vital to developing cycling and walking routes.</p>	

12.3 JD raised the joining up across the boundaries is useful and outlined some of the issues.

JD also raised the pictures on the cover of the RATSAP, most pictures being of cycling, all in the city and no pictures of walking in the country / pavements – feels disproportionate. In terms of the cycling, useful to understand the age profile of those cycling for different purposes including, commuting, leisure, family leisure and those using for local travel i.e. popping to the shop and for traveling to schools.

Another issue, multi-use paths, rights of way with footpaths and bridleways – limitations with this. How we can improve walking routes

12.4 MB raised grateful for the revised version taking into account the comments raised previously. Highlighted the principal issue from a district and borough perspective with future developments and opportunities, looking at aligning the local plan with the local active travel strategy. Concerns with it colliding at a local level, with active travel being built up at a local level rather than a south east basis.

12.5 TB queried the aspirational picture, with the south downs way not being included, but there is an east – west path which follows a track to the North of where the south downs way is. Unsure if this exists on the ground, as it is aspirational. When we have a well known east west path in place end to end not against more paths, can't understand the rationale on a path which parallels the existing end to end path.

In response to this MV explained that the intention is not to map existing routes; it is a guide for someone approaching the introduction of new cycling infrastructure identifying the places that need joining up. It is not a blueprint dictating where infrastructure should be introduced, and additional text has been added into the document to explain this.

The additional work we can undertake to implement the strategy could include, first mile – last mile connectivity and the additional breakdown of data on cycling. We have just completed a travel survey which could provide us the information to see how these facilities are being used and adding ferries to be added to the map.

12.6 Following the discussion the Chair asked for a vote on the revised version of the Regional Active Travel Strategy and Action Plan. The Chair asked for a show of hands, the majority of Partnership Board members agreed the Regional Active Travel Strategy and Action Plan.

12.7 The recommendations were agreed by the Partnership Board following the majority vote.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Members of the Partnership Board are recommended to:

- 1) Comment on the changes to the Regional Active Travel Strategy and Action Plan that have been made following the Partnership Board meeting on 28 October 2024; and
- 2) Agree the revised version of the Transport for the South East Regional Active Travel Strategy and Action Plan.

13. Transport Strategy Refresh	
<p>13.1 MV highlighted consultation on the draft strategy which closed on Friday 7 March, with a range of engagement activities to support the consultation. A good response was received with 860 responses compared to 2020 when 601 responses were received.</p> <p>13.2 MV noted that we have worked hard to get responses from all our constituent authorities and key stakeholders and organisations represented on our Partnership Board. Responses from, a few authorities are outstanding which are being chased.</p> <p>13.3 MV outlined the next steps, the consultation report will be formulated analysing the responses and making recommendations about any changes that may be needed to the strategy following the comments received, which will come back to the Board in July. The final strategy will be agreed in October by the Board.</p> <p>13.4 The recommendation was agreed by the Partnership Board.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION: The Members of the Partnership Board are recommended to comment on the progress being made with the development of the Draft Transport Strategy.</p>	
14. Business Advisory Group	
<p>14.1 DR provided an overview of the recent meetings of the Business Advisory Group. DR highlighted that the Wider Business Advisory Group will be taking place on 09 July, the format is currently being finalised and the organisations identified that will feed the most value.</p> <p>14.2 DR raised some of the opportunities and challenges that members of the group have identified for businesses. This has led to progress being made with Heathrow Western Rail access challenge; TfSE are supporting an economic analysis of the ferry service to and from the Isle of Wight.</p> <p>14.3 LB asked about the certainty on funding for buses and operators. In response to this KW explained this is for the bus fare cap, and the need for multi-year funding settlement for local authorities following a particular conversation on EV / hydrogen buses complications.</p> <p>JD raised the challenges with Hydrogen that West Sussex have faced. KW explained that these challenges will be raised with the DfT and through our Centre of Excellence we can look to support our local authorities also facing this challenge.</p> <p>As a general point the health and safety and issues raised in relation to EV / hydrogen will be looked into.</p> <p>14.4 The recommendation was agreed by the Partnership Board.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION:</p>	

<p>The members of the Partnership Board are recommended to review and comment on the recent work of the Business Advisory Group.</p>	
<p>15. Advisory Panel and Transport Forum Update</p>	
<p>15.1 Geoff French (GF) provided an overview of the recent meetings and noted that it has now been a year since the Transport Forum review took place, and officers will work with Geoff on the future of the Transport Forum.</p>	
<p>15.2 The recommendation was agreed by the Partnership Board.</p>	
<p>RECOMMENDATION: The members of the Partnership Board are recommended to note the recent work of the Transport Forum and Advisory Panel</p>	
<p>16. Delivery of the Strategic Investment Plan</p>	
<p>16.1 SV took the paper as read and highlighted that comments were received from Cllr David Robey in relation to the Delivery Action Plan, the points raised will be updated and reflected in the final version.</p>	
<p>16.2 The recommendation was agreed by the Partnership Board.</p>	
<p>RECOMMENDATION: The members of the Partnership Board are recommended to comment on the progress of a range of workstreams that support the delivery of the Strategic Investment Plan.</p>	
<p>17. Technical Programme update</p>	
<p>17.1 MV took the paper as read.</p>	
<p>17.2 The recommendations were agreed by the Partnership Board.</p>	
<p>RECOMMENDATION: The members of the Partnership Board are recommended to: 1) Comment on the progress with the ongoing implementation of the Centre of Excellence; 2) Comment on progress with the work to implement the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy; 3) Comment on the progress with the delivery of the Freight, Logistics and Gateways Strategy; 4) Comment on the progress work on rail; and 5) Comment on the progress with work on decarbonisation.</p>	
<p>18. Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Update</p>	
<p>18.1 James Boyes (JB) thanked members following the request for local authorities comms teams to promote the consultation on the transport strategy refresh - after the last board we received over 100 responses. JB outlined some of the activities undertaken on the Transport Strategy Refresh consultation including pop up events covering most of the region that saw around 150 people attending, social media and a radio interview.</p>	

<p>18.2 JB highlighted MP engagement, with four meeting requests to be diarised. A meeting has taken place with Peter Swallow, MP for Bracknell.</p> <p>18.3 JB outlined some of the events TfSE have attended and noted that our communications assistant recruitment is underway.</p> <p>18.4 The recommendation was agreed by the Partnership Board.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION: The members of the Partnership Board are recommended to comment on the engagement and communication activity that has been undertaken since the last Partnership Board meeting.</p>	
<p>19. AOB</p>	
<p>19.1 TM asked how members of the public can join the meeting. In response to this RC explained members of the public can attend as this is a meeting in public and is streamed live via YouTube to our website. Members of the public are unable to participate.</p> <p>19.2 KG also apologised for the size of the Board Pack and noted that officers will look at reducing the size and explore whether we can create virtual members room with documents that members will need sight of.</p>	
<p>20. Date of Next Meeting</p>	
<p>19.1 KG noted that the next meeting will take place Monday July 21st 14:00-17:00, ICE London.</p>	