

Report to: Partnership Board –Transport for the South East

Date of meeting: 21 July 2025

By: Chief Officer, Transport for the South East

Title of report: Strategic Investment Plan Refresh

Purpose of report: To advise the methodology to update the SIP

RECOMMENDATION:

The members of the Partnership Board are recommended to consider and approve the methodology and plan for the periodic update of the SIP.

1. Introduction

1.1 This report sets out the rationale for and planned methodology proposed to update the Strategic Investment Plan (SIP).

2. Background

2.1 Transport for the South East (TfSE) adopted its current SIP in 2023. The SIP detailed and made the case for investment priorities across the TfSE area and beyond, over 30 years, that collectively were required to deliver the outcomes set out in our first Regional Transport Strategy (adopted in 2020). The SIP built on the strategy and was underpinned by a comprehensive evidence base developed through the Area Studies programme. Engagement with TfSE's constituent authorities, along with central government, the public, local businesses, and other key stakeholders was integral to developing the SIP.

2.2 A key role for Sub-national Transport Bodies (STB's) is to provide advice to Ministers on the transport investment priorities for their regions, and the SIP is the primary way in which TfSE undertakes this function. As TfSE and its partners conclude the refresh of its Regional Transport Strategy, it is important to ensure that the SIP reflects the new strategy and so continues to provide the best advice to Ministers.

2.3 Additionally, the change of central government in July 2024 brought a 'new' policy and funding landscape that the SIP should be aligned with. Local government reform and devolution are also changing the sub-national landscape. Having an up to date and relevant SIP that reflects the national policy direction will be integral to supporting existing and emerging authorities as they seek to secure transport investment in the region.

2.4 Given previous work in developing the first SIP, the current strategy refresh, and their associated evidence bases, the development of the refreshed SIP can be conducted in a materially more efficient manner than previously.

3. Technical work

3.1 The first SIP was the culmination of over two years technical work through the detailed area studies programme, supported by extensive analytical and modelling work, which was well regarded by the Department for Transport (DfT). We will maintain the technical integrity we established through the area studies and first SIP and use our increased analytical capability to build upon that earlier work, ensuring alignment with DfT's Transport Appraisal Guidance for early stage development.

3.2 Schemes will be categorised into National Strategic, Regional Strategic, Local Strategic, and Local to provide focus for the new SIP and to help define the roles of TfSE and our delivery partners. The schemes and interventions long list will be reviewed, including consideration of new schemes meeting strategic criteria for addition and those no longer supported for removal. There will also be a call for new schemes and interventions that deliver on resilience and inclusion & integration, aligned with the new missions in the Strategy.

3.3 The area studies programme will not be repeated, but the evidence from them will be built upon, whilst using the new transport strategy missions to provide focus. This will include a review of the multi-criteria assessment framework (MCAF) used for assessing schemes and interventions, ensuring alignment with the new missions and government policy.

3.4 The refresh will include SEELUM modelling of the anticipated outputs and outcomes the SIP would deliver, presented by mission across the region (and in total). As with the transport strategy and first SIP, an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) will be carried out.

4. Stakeholder Engagement

4.1 A programme of targeted stakeholder engagement with our Tier 1 stakeholders at officer and member level, will be developed, alongside engagement with other key delivery partners and the DfT. This will ensure that there is the opportunity for input and feedback which will be reflected as the SIP is developed.

4.2 Engagement will also be carried out through TOG, SOG and with the DfT to seek their feedback on both the general approach as well as on the technical/analytical underpinnings.

4.3 This approach is considered appropriate because of the extensive public consultation undergone by the strategy, and the targeted engagement planned during the SIP development. The SIP is the articulation of how the strategy will be delivered, and individual schemes will undergo appropriate consultation through their future development.

5. Timeline

5.1 A key role for an STB is to provide advice to Ministers on the transport investment priorities in their area, and although there is an existing SIP, with the refreshed transport strategy and changes in both the national, regional and local policy and funding landscapes, it is important that the SIP remains up to date and relevant, ensuring the best advice can be provided to Ministers.

5.2 There would be significant benefit to having a refreshed SIP for the region prepared

in advance of the 2026 Mayoral elections, and subsequent local government reform, to provide the best support to emerging authorities (as well as existing authorities) in securing transport investment for the region.

5.3 Given the work will build upon previous technical work, the refresh of the SIP can be carried out significantly more quickly than was the case the first time.

6. Financial implications

6.1 The technical work to refresh the SIP is estimated to cost £98,000. There will also be some proportionate costs in analysing the targeted engagement responses. These amounts are planned for within the TfSE 2025/26 Business Plan.

6.2 We will allocate publication costs as part of the 2026/27 Business Planning process to include the graphic design and digital content elements of the proposal. As they draw on the same digital data sources, this would be integrated with work to update the delivery action plan and strategic prioritisation tool to monitor progress with delivery, focus scheme development support and facilitate prioritisation within the SIP schemes.

6.3 Work to undertake the SIP refresh would be commissioned through TfSE's Technical Call off Contract.

7. Conclusions and recommendations

7.1 The proposed scope of the SIP refresh is included at Appendix 1. This sets out in more detail the proposed technical work and stakeholder engagement required to deliver a refreshed SIP by March 2026.

7.2 The members of the Partnership Board are recommended to approve the plan and methodology for the SIP refresh.

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Appendix 1 – Proposed methodology for the Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) Refresh

1. Introduction

1. This appendix sets out the detailed rationale for refreshing the Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) and explains the scope and methodology for the work. It also provides context on the constraints under which the project is being delivered and sets out the benefits that the refresh will bring to Transport for the South East (TfSE) and its partners.

2. Rationale for a Refresh

2. The current SIP, adopted in 2023, remains valid in many respects. However, a number of significant changes have taken place that prompt the need for a refresh:
 - **Change in government (2024):** A new administration has brought with it updated national priorities, including a renewed focus on ‘missions’ and strategic policy objectives such as decarbonisation, place-based investment, and support for economic productivity.
 - **Updated Regional Transport Strategy (2025):** TfSE has recently completed a refresh of its Transport Strategy, introducing a mission-based framework that the SIP now needs to align with.
 - **Devolution and Local Government Reform:** The Devolution and Community Engagement Bill has had its first reading. In the South East this is likely to mean two new Mayoral Strategic Authorities in addition to proposals for local government reform. A refreshed, credible pipeline of regional significant interventions supports leaders from day one.
 - **Evolving funding landscape:** A shift towards fewer, larger, competitive funding streams, with an increased focus on maintaining existing infrastructure, alongside more constrained funding availability makes it essential for TfSE to have an agile and prioritised investment plan for the region to influence central government decisions.
 - **Regional relevance:** As the SIP becomes an increasingly important tool in articulating regional priorities, the clarity and strategic focus of the document must be updated accordingly.

3. Key Changes Since the Last SIP

Category	Previous Context (2023)	Current Context (2025)
National Government	Conservative-led government	Labour-led government with new policy missions and strategies
Transport Strategy	Based on 2020 vision	Refreshed Transport Strategy with mission-based approach
Devolution	No South East combined authorities	Two planned mayoral county combined authorities
Funding Landscape	Strong focus on MRN/LLM, RIS2	Greater competition, more alignment with mission outcomes, increased focus on maintaining infrastructure
Technical Evidence	Built through area studies (2018–2022)	Increased evidence base developed through extensive technical programme and strategy refresh
Stakeholder Input	Extensive engagement via area studies	Targeted engagement via workshops and SIP officer/member groups

4. Project Objectives

3. The SIP Refresh will:

- Align the SIP with the refreshed Regional Transport Strategy and its Missions.
- Reflect the new national policy environment and associated funding routes.
- Provide an updated assessment of schemes in the light of progress, changes in local priorities, and funding conditions.
- Support new devolved authorities to secure funding for the region with an up-to-date regional investment pipeline.
- Deliver this within budget and timescales.

5. Scope of Work

4. The development of the SIP Refresh will:
 - Capture the need for the SIP Refresh including changing policy context and alignment; what the document is and is not; and why invest in the TfSE area.
 - Maintain the technical integrity of the first SIP by building on existing evidence, aligning with Stage 1 of the Department for Transport's Transport Analysis Guidance (TAG) process for scheme/programme development, and making appropriate use of the analytical framework available.
 - Integrate with other recent and emerging plans and studies (e.g. TfSE Rail Strategy) and identify the key interventions – projects, programmes/initiatives, policies, and inferences for ancillary policy areas – to deliver the Regional Transport Strategy and define TfSE's 'space.'
 - In identifying these interventions, reopen the long-list and amend the Multi Criteria Assessment Framework (including any reassessment) applying robust processes and aligning the interventions with the 'challenges' that would be addressed. This notes that in giving advice to ministers an intervention may best be articulated at an early stage as the challenge being addressed, rather than a 'named' scheme.
 - Have a lighter touch Integrated Sustainability Appraisal, for new interventions only or in line with changing legislation/designations, to inform the SIP.
 - Targeted engagement with key stakeholders at member and officer level, recognising the Regional Transport Strategy has undergone extensive engagement and consultation, and the SIP is the articulation of how the strategy will be delivered.
 - Produce a document that can be both printed and hosted online, as well as a plain text version; as well as producing a 'digital-first' version to help communicate the strategy (e.g. with [StoryMap](#)). It is noted that the production of graphic design, printed, and digital content is subject to a further commission next financial year, following business plan agreement, and costs presented are indicative only.

6. Tasks

Task 1: Inception and mobilisation

5. We will hold Project Inception Meeting (PIM) to clarify the scope of the project, activities, timings, deliverables, governance arrangements, stakeholder engagement and client communications approach, change management process, assurance process, and next steps.

6. We develop a Project Delivery Plan (in line with the Framework Delivery Plan) to record the assumptions agreed at the PIM and share this with the Client and project team members. We will update this document if there are material changes in the scope of the project throughout the course of the project and detail the process for commissioning new stages of work (i.e. production of Stage Specification Proposals). The Project Delivery Plan will also contain a high-level stakeholder engagement plan.
7. The analytical approach will also be confirmed and summarised as a high-level Analysis Specification Report, and we recommend engaging with both TOG and the Department for Transport to seek their feedback on the general approach as well as on the technical/analytical underpinnings.

Task 2: Confirm strategic narrative and structure for the SIP

8. The Regional Transport Strategy update included extensive data analysis and evidence base development, informing a compelling 'need for intervention' report containing 26 'Challenge Statements'. We intend for this to form a major part of the evidence base and 'case for change' underpinning the SIP. There are several other live sources of data, analysis and insights that we will draw upon to review the supporting Challenge Statements:
 - **other studies and strategies:** such as the Regional Active Travel Strategy & Action Plan and the soon-to-commence Rail Strategy.
 - **Regional Travel Survey:** an extensive household survey providing insights into travel patterns and behaviours – especially valuable for understanding pre- and post-Covid travel behaviours.
 - **mobile phone data:** accessible via an agreement between Network Rail and sub-national transport bodies to understand travel patterns at a high-level between MSOAs; and
 - **highway delay data:** INRIX data from 2021 to 2024 made available via the Department for Transport to best identify 'pinch points' on the network.
9. It is not our intention to reproduce large segments of narrative from the new Regional Transport Strategy. As concise a summary as possible will be produced to capture:
 - The need for a South East SIP refresh.
 - Why invest in the South East.
 - Outlines the changing policy and funding context; and
 - Align to government missions / department strategic priorities, policy hierarchy, and updates of the refreshed Regional Transport Strategy.
10. In addition, the structure of the SIP will also be agreed at this stage. This will help to facilitate as efficient a process as possible.

Task 3: Long-list optioneering

11. It will be necessary to re-open the list of interventions currently informing the SIP. This will include:
 - Identify if existing schemes are still supported (or not), including if they can be found in the policies, plans and strategies of LTA and other delivery partners (e.g. LTPs, RIS). Alongside this, the current stage of their development; any planned/committed next steps and timings; any other useful information such as costings and interdependencies. This will build on information that TfSE already holds and updates annually.
 - Identify new schemes that have resulted from a) new technical work and planning; b) new priorities from local communities (e.g. as articulated by local politicians and business leaders); and/or c) in response to emerging ideas / requirements for the delivery of the new Regional Transport Strategy and its 'mission' based approach.
12. These will be collated in a Multi Criteria Assessment Framework similar to those previously used for the Area Studies and the Strategic Prioritisation Framework tool. We will ensure a consistent approach is taken that can be more readily used efficiently for possible future purposes.

Task 4: Analysis, prioritisation and modelling

13. The Multi Criteria Assessment Framework and broader assessment and prioritisation process needs to consider the following, the process and detail of which will be agreed as part of the mobilisation phase of work:
 - Stratification: identifying if interventions are Nationally Strategic Infrastructure Projects (or candidates or similar); Regionally Strategic, Locally Strategic, or Local. Criteria for each will be developed and agreed, before being applied. The categories of intervention that will be assessed further for inclusion in the published SIP will be agreed with TfSE and key stakeholders.
 - Missions: alignment of interventions to their contribution in meeting Missions' statements developed as part of the Regional Transport Strategy refresh.
 - Challenge Statements: alignment of interventions to their addressing of Challenge Statements developed as part of the Regional Transport Strategy refresh.
 - Corridors: alignment with strategic corridors.
 - Stage of scheme development: alignment with standard stages of scheme development and if the intervention is contained within a 'pipeline.'
 - Scenarios: the extent to which the scheme would still be advisable and changes to the risk profile of the scheme under the different alternative future scenarios developed as part of the Regional Transport Strategy refresh.
 - New criteria: identify and agree if new criteria are relevant since the last use of the TfSE Multi Criteria Assessment Framework ((e.g. embedded carbon).

14. Following a re-running of the assessment, a single Options Assessment Report will be drafted identifying interventions for either selection as part of the SIP or for 'pausing.'
15. Engagement will be necessary to review/feedback and secure buy-in to the outputs of the assessment.
16. Options Assessment Reporting will be supported by up to 10 SEELUM model runs (two per 'mission') with a further run, if required, to help 'optimise' the package. The model runs are to assess the transport outcomes and wider impacts of shortlisted packages, including place-based/spatial impacts. It is assumed there will be up to two packages per mission (e.g. a road and a rail package). We have not assumed additional costs for aggregating these at a mission or regional level.
17. All other assessment/appraisal will be qualitative based on professional judgement and experience. Detailed appraisal and production of Strategic Outline Cases (or similar) will not be produced at this time and will be subject to the business plan.

Task 5: Integrated Sustainability Assessment

18. Development of an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal is good practice, despite the SIP not being a statutory document. It also aligns with likely stakeholder expectation given an ISA was developed for the last SIP and has been developed for the most recent Regional Transport Strategy.
19. The ISA would not include a scoping phase as this has been conducted as part of the strategy. It would screen and assess new interventions only or in line with changing legislation/designations, to inform the SIP.

Task 6: SIP drafting

20. As per the last SIP, it was efficient to provide chapters in draft format for review, rather than wait till a full first draft of the SIP had been produced. We propose the same approach this time.
21. The structure will be agreed earlier in the SIP Refresh process, but it is currently envisaged that following a concise introductory section(s), a section will be presented for each Mission of the Regional Transport Strategy with a supporting cartography and 'headline' model outputs.
22. Implementation will be covered through sections covering:
 - Delivery profile; lead organisations; costings.
 - Funding and financing.
 - Governance including roles and responsibilities.
 - Monitoring and evaluation, potentially including targets; and
 - Next steps: how TfSE will support the delivery of the sip.
23. The Implementation plan will draw on materials from the last SIP, updated accordingly where there are new interventions and where material changes have occurred (e.g. funding landscape).
24. Any price rebasing will use a standard metric across all schemes, unless information is provided at a disaggregated level for different scheme types or cost components that is accessible and easy to apply to existing costings.

25. Intervention costs, both capital and for operations, maintenance and renewals will be based on a high-level categorisation of price 'bandings' (e.g. £0-10m, £10-£20m, £20m - £50m, £50m - £100m, £100m - £250m, £250m - £500m, £500m - £1,000m, £1,000m - £2,500m, £2,500m+) and/or make sensible use of published prices, estimates provided by scheme promoters or discussed in engagement with LTAs/delivery partners, or benchmarks. The largest of schemes may need a bespoke approach, especially where interventions cross regional boundaries (e.g. Bakerloo Line Extension, Lower Thames Crossing).

Task 7: Engagement

26. Engagement will focus on a six-to-eight-week process. This will have three 'tracks':
- Fireside Chats: conversations with Delivery Partner leaders / portfolio holders or senior officers in the TfSE area and key stakeholders (DfT, NR, NH etc.) in advance or early during the consultation phase.
 - Written representations: provision of draft SIP and an online survey or optional email response.

Task 8a: Post engagement analysis and reporting

27. A comments log will be produced with proposed actions/amendments from the feedback for Tier 1 Stakeholder representations.
28. This will be accompanied by an engagement report – an analysis of consultation responses in a short technical note, including:
- Tier 1 stakeholders: key themes and levels of support; and

Task 8b: Post engagement analysis and reporting

29. Accompanying the engagement report will be recommendations for amendments to the SIP.
30. Amendments will be made; engaged upon with TfSE officers; then through working groups, and then through TfSE's governance groups to the TfSE Partnership Board for approval. We do not propose additional 'fireside chats' at this point.

Task 9: Graphic design and digital content [TBC]

31. Task 9 supports the communication of the SIP – to increase engagement by making it accessible in additional format and a more compelling read/experience.
32. Following approval of the SIP, we will graphic design the SIP for both web hosting and for print. We have assumed up to three iterations of the graphic designed version. Exact numbers for printing and corresponding budget will need to be confirmed at the time.
33. We will also update the online StoryMapper. This is an interactive web-based tool that contains a summary of the core narrative of the SIP along with spatial representation of the interventions and basic information about each one. Subject to detailed specification and agreement of budget and timescales, it would be possible to allow for different segmentations of interventions (e.g. by mission, by sub-geography, by corridor, by constituency, by mode, by stage of scheme development, by cost, by impact type).

Engagement

34. TfSE's officers will work closely with the Consultant throughout the development of the SIP and seek early buy-in from key stakeholders of the engagement plan, SIP refresh approach, and timescales.
35. As the SIP develops, we will present emerging findings to meetings within TfSE's governance structure: TOG, SOG and Partnership Board at key milestones. These will be scheduled to ensure strategic alignment and buy-in, and to allow for early feedback prior to final drafting.
36. A structured programme of stakeholder engagement will be delivered throughout. This will include:
 - SIP Officer Working Group meeting approximately monthly.
 - SIP Member Task and Finish Group meeting approximately monthly.
37. LTA/Delivery Partner workshops
 - Small group or 'one-to-one' engagement sessions during:
 - o 1) Long-listing.
 - o 2) Short-list / Draft SIP phases.
38. Fireside Chats'
 - 1 to 1 Fireside Chats with Delivery Partner leaders / portfolio holders or senior officers in the TfSE area and key stakeholders (DfT, NR, NH etc. as per Transport Strategy refresh) in advance or during consultation phase.
39. Briefing materials will be drafted to synthesise inputs in a way that supports transparency, consensus-building, and policy relevance.

6. Benefits of the Proposed Approach

- **Cost-effectiveness:** Maximises the impact of the budget by leveraging existing tools and data.
- **Timeliness:** Delivers a refreshed SIP in time to support the Devolution Priority Programme outcomes and potential Mayoral elections in May 2026.
- **Strategic clarity:** Focuses TfSE's voice on regional and national priorities without overstepping local authority functions.
- **Political relevance:** Ensures TfSE is ready to provide advice to Ministers and aligns with new central government narratives.
- **Engagement:** Targeted engagement ensures buy-in without overburdening stakeholders.

7. Risks and Mitigations

Risk	Mitigation
Budget limits technical depth	Prioritise mission-based analysis and leverage SEELUM modelling efficiently
Engagement fatigue	Combine SIP engagement with parallel activities (e.g., Rail Strategy) to streamline contact with LTAs
Delays impacting alignment with establishment of MSAs	Front-load tasks and use digital-first formats to compress production timelines

8. Programme

SIP Refresh timeline

[illegible]