

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: Transport for the South East – Governance Arrangements

Purpose of report: To agree the appointment of the Chair, Vice-Chair, and co-opted Board Members to the Transport for the South East Partnership Board.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The constituent members of the Partnership Board are recommended to:

- (1) Nominate and elect a Chair and Vice-Chair for the period of one year;**
 - (2) Agree to co-opt the following roles for a period of one year to the Partnership Board:**
 - a. The Chair of the Transport Forum;**
 - b. Two people nominated collectively to represent business.**
 - c. A person nominated by the National Parks and other protected landscape designations;**
 - d. Two people nominated by the district and borough authorities; and**
 - e. A representative from National Highways, Network Rail and Transport for London.**
 - (3) Allocate voting rights of one vote each for the two Business Advisory Group representatives, the Chair of the Transport Forum and the nominated representatives of the district and borough authorities and the protected landscapes;**
 - (4) Appoint for a period of one year the Chair for the Transport Forum;**
 - (5) Appoint a Chair and agree membership of the Audit and Governance Committee for a period of one year; and**
 - (6) Note the request for members to return completed register of interest forms.**
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1. Introduction

1.1 The Partnership Board agreed the constitution for Transport for the South East in its shadow form in June 2017 and a revised constitution in December 2019. The

constitution set out proposals for the structure and composition of the Partnership Board. It was agreed that the arrangements should be reviewed on an annual basis.

2. Appointment of the Chair and Vice-Chair

2.1 The constituent authorities are recommended to nominate and elect a Chair and Vice Chair.

2.2 As agreed in the constitution for the Partnership Board, the Chair and Vice-Chair's term of office will be for a period of one year, when they are either reappointed or another member elected.

2.3 The Chair presides at Partnership Board meetings if they are present. In their absence, the Vice-Chair presides. If both are absent, the secretariat will start the meeting and the Partnership Board will appoint, from amongst its member, an Acting Chair for the meeting in question.

3. Co-opting additional Partnership Board members

3.1 The constitution for the Partnership Board allows for persons who are not members of the Constituent Authorities to be co-opted onto the Partnership Board and affords the Partnership Board the power to allow them voting rights.

3.2 In June 2017, it was agreed that a number of organisations should be co-opted to the Partnership Board. These arrangements have ensured that businesses, district and borough councils and protected landscapes are represented on the Board and are involved in the decision-making process.

3.3 The proposed arrangements for co-opted members reflect the structures for the Partnership Board as set out in the constitution. If agreed by members, they would reflect a continuation of the arrangements in place since June 2017. It is proposed that the Partnership Board give consideration to co-opting the following organisations and representatives:

- The Chair of the Transport Forum – the Transport Forum has been in operation since September 2017 and has recently undergone a review. The Forum brings together representatives from user groups, operators (bus, airport, ports, train and ferry), Government agencies, business members, district and borough authorities and the potential supply chain. Following the review an Advisory Panel was established to provide advice and guidance to the Partnership Board. The Forum and Advisory Panel is independently chaired by Geoff French.

It is recommended that the Partnership Board co-opt Geoff French as the Chair of the Transport Forum with allocated voting rights.

- Following the dissolution of the LEPs in 2024, the Partnership Board agreed to establish a Business Advisory Group, to capture the views of business and advise the Board. The group is co-chaired by Vince Lucas and Daniel Ruiz.

It is proposed that two co-chairs are co-opted to the Partnership Board to continue to represent the business voice in our region. It is recommended that voting rights of one vote be allocated to each of the two co-chairs.

- District and Borough (non-unitary) Authorities – it is proposed that the collective views of the district and borough authorities should be represented on the Partnership Board through two co-opted Board members, with one representing the east of the TfSE region, and one representing the west of the TfSE region.

As agreed at the Partnership Board in July 2018, it is proposed that the district and borough representatives should be allocated voting rights.

It is proposed that officers will engage with all five county areas to confirm their representatives and then fill the vacant position on the Partnership Board.

- National Parks and other protected landscape designations – the environmental impact of the Transport Strategy and proposed interventions will need to be considered by the Board. It is recommended that a representative from the South Downs National Park be co-opted to the Partnership Board to represent the collective interests of the National Parks and other environmental and protected landscape designations. The position is currently filled by Tim Burr, Deputy Chair of the South Downs National Park.

3.4 As agreed at the Partnership Board in July 2018, it is proposed that the representative for the National Parks and protected landscape designations should be allocated voting rights.

3.5 In June 2019 the Partnership Board agreed to co-opt the following organisations, on a non-voting basis:

- Network Rail – TfSE has a key role in influencing strategic investment decisions in the rail network. Engagement with Network Rail at the Partnership Board will support this objective and it is proposed that the Dave Hooper, Managing Director, Southern Region, is co-opted to the Board.
- National Highways – this arrangement would be similar to the one proposed for Network Rail and would support the aim of TfSE to influence investment on the strategic road network through the Road Investment Strategy (RIS) programme. It is proposed that Richard Leonard, Network Development Director, is co-opted to the Board.
- Transport for London – the relationship between the TfSE area and London is an important aspect of our economy, particularly in relation to transporting people and goods. It is proposed that Gary Nolan, Strategic Engagement Lead, Transport for London, is co-opted to the Board.

4. Audit and Governance Committee

4.1 As previously agreed by the Board, TfSE has established an Audit and Governance Committee. This recognises the increasing responsibilities that TfSE holds for fiscal management of government grant funding.

4.2 As set out in the TfSE constitution, the Audit and Governance Committee will ensure an independent, high-level focus on audit, assurance and reporting issues underpinning financial management and governance arrangements for TfSE. It will provide independent review and assurance to Members on governance, risk management and control frameworks. It will oversee financial reporting and audit, to ensure efficient and effective assurance arrangements are in place and will assist the Partnership Board in providing leadership, direction and oversight of the overall risk appetite and risk management strategy.

4.3 The Committee met for the first time in April 2023. Due to changes in the composition of the Board, it is necessary to consider the membership of the Committee.

The current membership of the Committee is:

- Cllr Joy Dennis, West Sussex County Council, Chair
- Cllr Trevor Muten, Brighton and Hove Council
- Geoff French, Chair of the Transport Forum
- Daniel Ruiz, Business Advisory Group Co-Chair
- Vince Lucas, Business Advisory Group Co-Chair

4.4 Members are asked to agree membership of the Audit and Governance Committee. As agreed in the TfSE constitution, the Committee will comprise at least five members, including at least two representatives of the constituent authorities. At present, there are only two local authority representatives, and the board are recommended to agree the replacement of the third constituent authority representative for the 2025/26 Financial Year.

5. Register of Interests

5.1 TfSE maintains a Register of Member's interests in accordance with section 29 of the Localism Act 2011.

5.2 Members of TfSE must within 28 days of their appointment to office notify TfSE's secretariat in writing of the details of their disclosable pecuniary interests arising in respect of the TfSE area (including, where required, interests of their partner) and their personal interests.

5.3 Where a Member of TfSE is present at a meeting and has a disclosable pecuniary interest or, an interest that would be a personal interest under the provisions of the Code in any matter to be considered at the meeting, they must disclose the interest to the meeting.

5.4 Where a member of TfSE has a disclosable pecuniary interest or an interest that under the provisions of the Code would be a prejudicial interest in any matter being considered at a meeting, they must not participate or vote on the matter and must withdraw from the room of the meeting while the matter is being considered.

5.5 A copy of the Register of Interest form will be circulated to all members following this meeting. The completed register of interests will be published on the TfSE website.

6. Conclusions and recommendations

6.1 The constituent authority members of the Partnership Board are recommended to agree the arrangements set out in this report for the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Partnership Board, Chair of the Transport Forum, the appointment of the co-opted Board members and the allocation of voting rights. They are also asked to agree the membership of the Audit and Governance Committee.

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