

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: Centre of Excellence Work Plan for 2025/26

Purpose of report: To provide a progress update on the Centre of Excellence and agree the Work Plan for 2025/26

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The members of the Partnership Board are recommended to:

(1) Note the progress made in developing and delivering the Centre of Excellence to date as set out in the Centre of Excellence Annual Report 2024/25; and

(2) Agree the Centre of Excellence Work Plan for 2025/26 and the eight priority support packages identified.

1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Partnership Board on Transport for the South East's (TfSE) Centre of Excellence (CoE), through the CoE Annual Report for 2024/25 and the Centre of Excellence Work Plan for 2025/26.

2. Background

2.1 The TfSE Centre of Excellence is one of TfSE's set piece projects. The Department for Transport commissioned TfSE to develop a Centre of Excellence, following the Levelling Up White Paper 2022. In the letter confirming our funding for 2025, the Transport Secretary re-affirmed that the Centre of Excellence, and our support for local authorities, is one of TfSE's three core functions.

2.2 TfSE's Centre of Excellence was formally launched in June 2024 following a development phase that began in September 2023. The platform was co-designed with local authority officers and provides access to webinars, training, case studies, and other resources to build capability and capacity, and support delivery across the region.

2.3 To date, the CoE has over 275 registered users, including officers from local transport authorities (LTAs), the Department for Transport (DfT), universities, professional bodies, and national agencies. In June 2025, the CoE was recognised at the CIHT Awards for its collaborative approach.

3 Budget for 2025/26

3.1 Following our end of year figures for 2024/25, we have been able to allocate a total of £251,759 for the CoE in 2025/26. This includes £50,000 originally allocated to

the CoE, £48,333 of additional funding awarded by the DfT, and £153,426 of re-allocated carry forward (in line with the Board's steers to prioritise the CoE).

3.2 To maximise the impact of this investment, TfSE brought management of the website, and project management in house on 31 March 2025, allowing the full budget to be directed towards delivering subject matter expert (SME) support in 2025/26.

4 Centre of Excellence Annual Report 2024/25

4.1 Since its launch, the CoE has delivered target support including:

- Training on business case development
- Policy and strategy development masterclasses
- Modelling and forecasting fundamentals
- Climate change readiness guidance and tools
- Case studies highlighting local best practice

4.2 These activities have been delivered with positive feedback and measurable impact. A full overview of achievements and insights is included in **Appendix 1: Centre of Excellence – Annual Report 2024/25**.

5 Centre of Excellence Work Plan for 2025/26

5.1 To ensure the 2025/26 programme remains responsive to local needs, TfSE issued a capability survey to all officers across the 16 Local Transport Authorities, alongside structured interviews with 13 authorities. This dual approach identified priority skills gaps and broader organisational needs.

5.2 Based on these insights, and following Steering Group endorsement in May 2025, eight support packages have been identified for commissioning in 2025/26:

- AI in transport planning
- Modelling and forecasting
- Understanding national plans and policy
- Emerging technologies in transport
- Network review, design and planning
- Sustainability and net zero
- Scheme prioritisation
- Impacts of devolution on bus services

5.3 Further detail is provided in **Appendix 2: Centre of Excellence – Work Plan for 2025/26**.

6 Conclusions and recommendations

6.1 The Members of the Partnership Board are recommended to:

- Note the progress made in developing and delivering the Centre of Excellence as set out in the Centre of Excellence Annual Report 2024/25, and;
- Agree the Centre of Excellence Work Plan for 2025/26 and the eight priority support packages identified.

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TfSE Centre of Excellence

Annual Report

June 2024 - June 2025

At a Glance

Our Journey	Concept to launch	Areas of Support	Value and Impacts	Looking Ahead

Foreword

Cllr Keith Glazier, TfSE Chair

It is with immense pride that we mark the first year of the Transport for the South East Centre of Excellence—a resource that was shaped by, and exists for, the officers and organisations working tirelessly to deliver better transport outcomes for our communities.



What began as a DfT led initiative, has become a practical, collaborative platform shaped by all 16 local transport authorities (LTAs) and key partners. It is now a trusted hub for tools, training, and shared learning.

In just 12 months, the Centre of Excellence has supported officers to strengthen business cases, improve local transport plans, and boost in house expertise.

With more support planned for 2025, we are committed to keeping it relevant, practical, and focused on what matters most to officers on the ground.

Thank you to everyone who has helped make it a success.

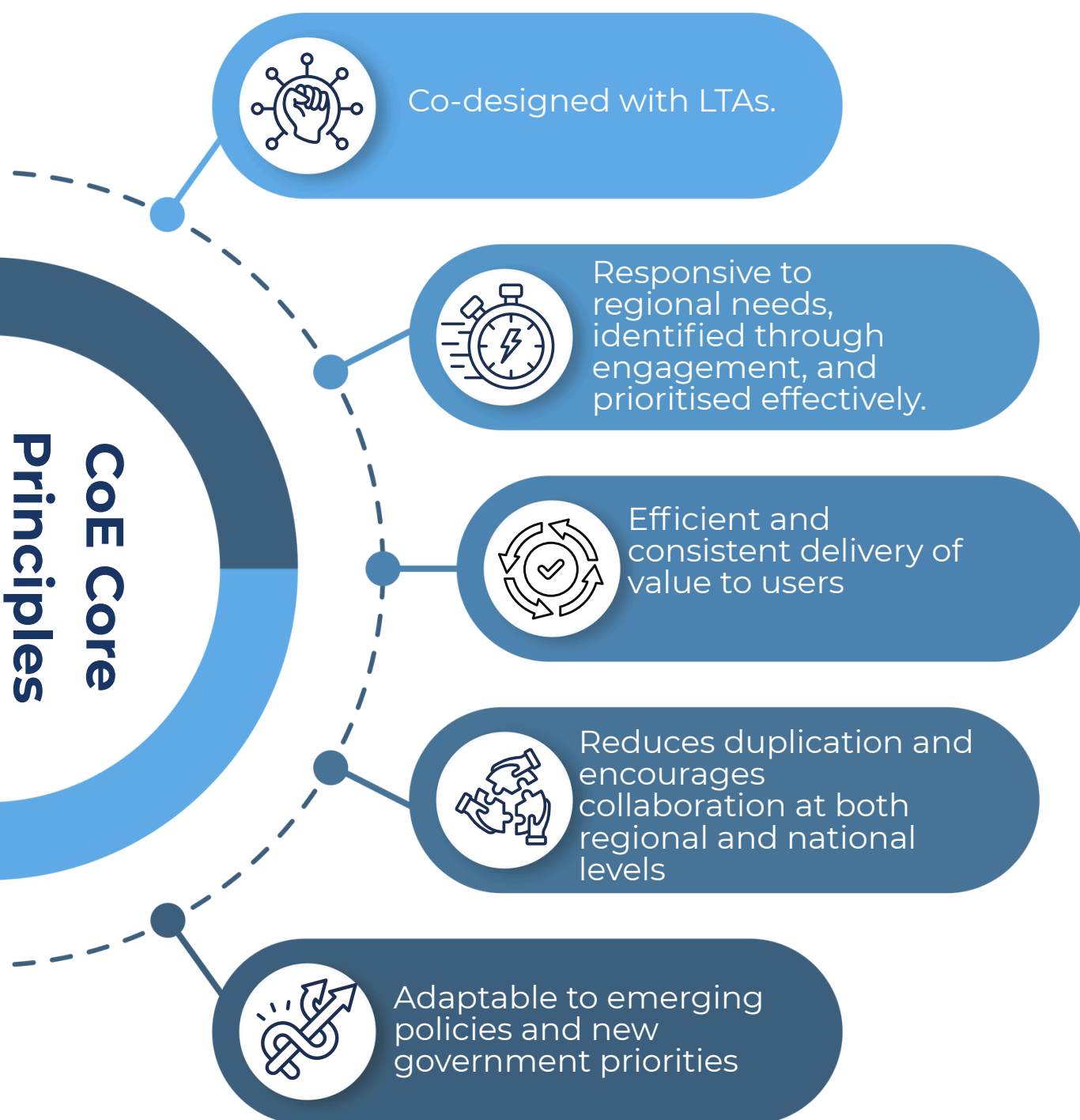


What is a Centre of Excellence?

The TfSE Centre of Excellence was established in response to the Department for Transport (DfT) request for STBs to deliver regional Centres of Excellence, following the Levelling Up White Paper (2022).

While the term “Centre of Excellence” is a common term across sectors, TfSE set out to define what would make ours genuinely valuable, and how it could offer something distinct and practical for the South East.

As a result, TfSE’s Centre of Excellence is guided by these key principles:



From Concept to Launch



Feb-March 2023 - Engagement & Insight Gathering

- TFSE internal workshop – assessed internal capacity and capability to provide a realistic baseline of what could be offered and helped shape the role TfSE would play in facilitating the CoE's development and delivery.
- LTA officer workshop – first engagement with officers to shape vision and priorities, and test feasibility. The workshop was instrumental in establishing a sense of ownership among officers, and informed the priorities in the CoE roadmap.
- Review of best practice in existing Centres of Excellence – review of similar initiatives helped ensure that our CoE was built on proven models, avoided duplication, and was tailored to meet the South East's needs.

TfSE's CoE Roadmap submitted to DfT - 7 March 2023

The insights gathered fed into the development of a formal roadmap which set out TfSE's ambition, delivery plan, and governance model for the Centre of Excellence. The roadmap was approved by the Department for Transport, unlocking £250,000 in funding to move from concept to launch.

April-June 2023 - Co-design with partners

- Extensive collaboration with all 16 Local Transport Authorities – ensured that the CoE was continuously shaped by the regional need. The 2024 capability survey was central to this, informing the initial pipeline of content and establishing a baseline of officer skills.
- Engagement with Network Rail, National Highways, Active Travel England, DfT, professional institutes, and universities – this brought in regional and national perspectives vital to officers' work. Academic input was integrated into the governance model at the request of the users.
- Steering group established - to guide delivery, ensure relevance, and maintain shared ownership, holding the programme to account and keeping it responsive to evolving priorities.

July 2023 - April 2024 - Building and user testing

- A suite of bespoke materials, tools, and resources developed - to ensure the platform would be relevant, high quality, and ready for use at launch.
- User testing – undertaken with local transport officers to refine content structure and review usability, ensuring the final platform met needs and expectations.
- Ready for launch: a practical, accessible Centre of Excellence shaped by its intended users, with content aligned to the priorities identified through the capability survey.

June 2024 - Launch

- Site launches on 18 June
- All users of the site invited to Launch event and training courses

From launch to June 2025

A year in review.



18 June - CoE launch event

Following months of co-design and collaboration, the Centre of Excellence officially launched in June 2024, sparking a major milestone for TfSE. The launch event brought together officers, DfT representatives, and key partners. It also kicked off the start of our business case development training, and a training session from Lucy Saunders of Healthy Streets. We were delighted to have over 20 officers with us on the day.

Since its launch, the Centre of Excellence has seen strong uptake and growing impact.

- Just under 300 local transport officers registered to the virtual platform
- More than 20 bespoke webinars delivered, with over 650 attendees
- 799 unique visits and 2,667 sessions on the site
- Demonstrable cost savings across all 16 LTAs through free access to tools, resources, training, and support

Capability survey – purpose and achievements

The 2025 capability survey shows improvement in 33 of 35 skills since 2024 (when the baseline survey data was received). This is a fantastic achievement reflecting broad capability growth. The two exceptions are in AI in transport planning, now a key focus following survey feedback, and maintaining a pipeline of schemes, which will be addressed through a peer review workshop in July 2025.

This survey remains critical to shaping the Centre of Excellence work plan. It identifies not only skills gaps, but the desired progression level, enabling us to tailor resources effectively to meet user needs and priorities.

Thank you to all respondents. Your input ensures we deliver targeted, valuable support where it matters most.

“I had a good look around the COE website this afternoon and I am impressed with it. It looks really good, the site format really works, and the site itself worked very well.” - Centre of Excellence User Feedback



We were thrilled to be commended for the 2025 Chartered Institute of Highways and Transportation (CIHT) Collaboration Award— a testament to the dedication, and partnership behind the TfSE Centre of Excellence.

This recognition belongs to our local authority officers, partners, and wider network who have shared their time and expertise to build something greater than the sum of its parts. At its core, the TfSE Centre of Excellence is about collaboration, raising capability across the region so every authority can deliver better outcomes. This commendation celebrates that culture.

Areas of Support



In its first year, the Centre of Excellence has become a valued resource for officers across the South East, providing over 300 pieces of content to improve local authority capability and capacity. These include guidance documents, tools, blogs, case studies, recorded webinars, and resources.

Our interactive Chat Forum has also proven to be a vital space for building connections and sharing advice, helping to establish a community of best practice across our 16 Local Transport Authorities and requested partners.

We have committed over £50,000 to bespoke support, commissioning subject matter experts (SMEs) to co-develop resources with us.

‘One of the best presentations I've heard in a long while from a true pioneer being absolutely frank about the challenges involved.’ – Webinar attendee

Business case development training series

Between June and October, we ran a flagship eight-part training series led by SMEs from Arup and Steer, tackling the complexities of developing robust business cases. Each session was built on real world examples, and included lessons learned, particularly from unsuccessful submissions. The sessions received an average rating of 4.2 out of 5, highlighting their value in building confidence and capability across teams.

These sessions were especially useful for officers new to business case development, or those looking to refresh their approach ahead of future funding rounds.

This high-impact workstream combined live webinars with off-the-shelf content, shaped directly by officer feedback. Across live and recorded formats, 239 officers accessed the training. This made it one of the most cost-effective offers of the year, at **£73 per participant**.

“Very engaging presenter, good audience participation. Good to hear that future sessions are being considered” - Training Participant

Areas of Support



Developing Consent Orders

To support authorities' understanding of their role in the Development Consent Order process, a resource was created and backed by regional case studies including the Lower Thames Crossing and Gatwick Runway. This guidance has been accessed 42 times and provided practical insights with regional relevance. The average cost was **£119 per participant**.

Guidance on preparing for climate change

This online resource was designed to help LTAs incorporate climate risk into strategic planning and design. It responded to a high-priority need identified in the 2024 Capability Survey and was launched ahead of the Centre's public launch on 18 June. The guide has been accessed 35 times via the platform (plus more via email circulation) and was heavily supplemented by DfT materials to avoid duplication. The support cost equated to **£142 per participant**.

Policy and Strategy Development

First and foremost, an introductory webinar was held, inviting all users of the CoE, and provided context, and established future areas of support. This was attended by over 50 officers. Follow on training was delivered via a hybrid model—an in-person session attended by 14 officers and a follow-up webinar for 68 officers who required virtual access. This dual format ensured no one was excluded due to time or budget constraints. Supporting slide packs have since been accessed 43 times. With a total of 125 engagements, the support cost came in at just £49 per participant.

"All three facilitators had thorough knowledge and experience of their topics, were good communicators and had a helpful approach to assisting with the workshop exercises." – Training participant.

Carbon Assessment Playbook

Since its launch in August 2024, The Carbon Assessment Playbook (CAP) has **received 111 visits** via the Centre of Excellence platform by local transport authority officers. This figure is particularly notable given that the CAP is also accessible via direct link outside of the CoE platform. The volume of access via the CoE demonstrates the platform's effectiveness in signposting key resources.

Areas of Support



Transport Related Social Exclusion support

In response to the growing demand for more interactive, face to face learning, we hosted an in person masterclass focused on the core principles of policy and strategy development.

This hands on, practical session guided officers through the key considerations in shaping effective transport policy, from aligning with national guidance to responding to local needs and political priorities. It offered a valuable space for officers to test ideas, share challenges, and build confidence in developing strategic plans.

The feedback from the event was overwhelmingly positive, with many calling for further sessions of this nature. We are pleased to confirm that we are exploring opportunities to expand this further in the coming year.

The series saw 157 attendees, achieving great reach at just **£30 per participant**.

Targeted Support on Modelling and Forecasting

Following our April 2024 capability baseline survey, we identified a gap in modelling and forecasting expertise. In response, our in-house Analysis Manager, Dr Joshua Jiao, led the development of tailored resources, including a blog on active travel modelling.

A Modelling 101 session was delivered for early-career officers, and a joint webinar with the Department for Transport was held to support authorities in becoming more intelligent clients - helping to reduce inefficiencies, procurement delays, and avoidable costs during technical commissions.

These highlights represent just a fraction of the wide-ranging support we have delivered - at no extra cost to local authorities - thanks to the commitment and collaboration of our internal experts and wider network.

Over the past year, we have also welcomed contributions from Network Rail, National Highways, Sustrans, Cabinet Office Behavioural Science team, CECA, CIHT, Bus Centre of Excellence, and the University of Kent.

The breadth of expertise, paired with local insight and national alignment is what defines the Centre of Excellence. As we look to year two, we remain committed to evolving our offer in step with your needs.

Value & Impacts



The Centre of Excellence was created to support every transport officer in the TfSE region, regardless of role or seniority. As of June 2025, it has 294 users from all 16 LTAs, demonstrating strong regional reach and demand.

Improving productivity through shared resources

Officers have previously had limited access to data and tools. By centralising key resources, the CoE helped to reduce siloes, and ensure a common, consistent evidence base. This has helped LTAs operate from a single source of the truth.

Flexible training

Feedback on webinars told us that they often clash with meetings they cannot miss. To adapt to this, every session is recorded and uploaded, along with relevant materials to our virtual platform, ready to access anytime. We have made it easier to join too, with direct calendar invites to users' inboxes, and webinar links shared via our bi-weekly newsletter, so no one misses out. Over 650 officers have already benefitted from this flexible approach.

Our in-person masterclasses have boosted officer confidence levels in areas like strategy development, and deliver high impact learning and strong returns on time invested.

Peer learning that saves time

LTAs in our region have valuable insights, and our CoE allowed these to be celebrated and shared more widely. The case studies and chat forum allow officers to share lessons from real projects, helping others build on what works.

Tangible Improvements in Capability

In 2024, we benchmarked regional capability. One year on, 33 of 25 tracked skills have improved, particularly in LTP development and reducing environment impacts. The CoE is helping to drive progress across the board.

We have also seen measurable improvements across all four of the Department for Transport's objectives.



Table 1 - incremental improvements against DfT objectives.

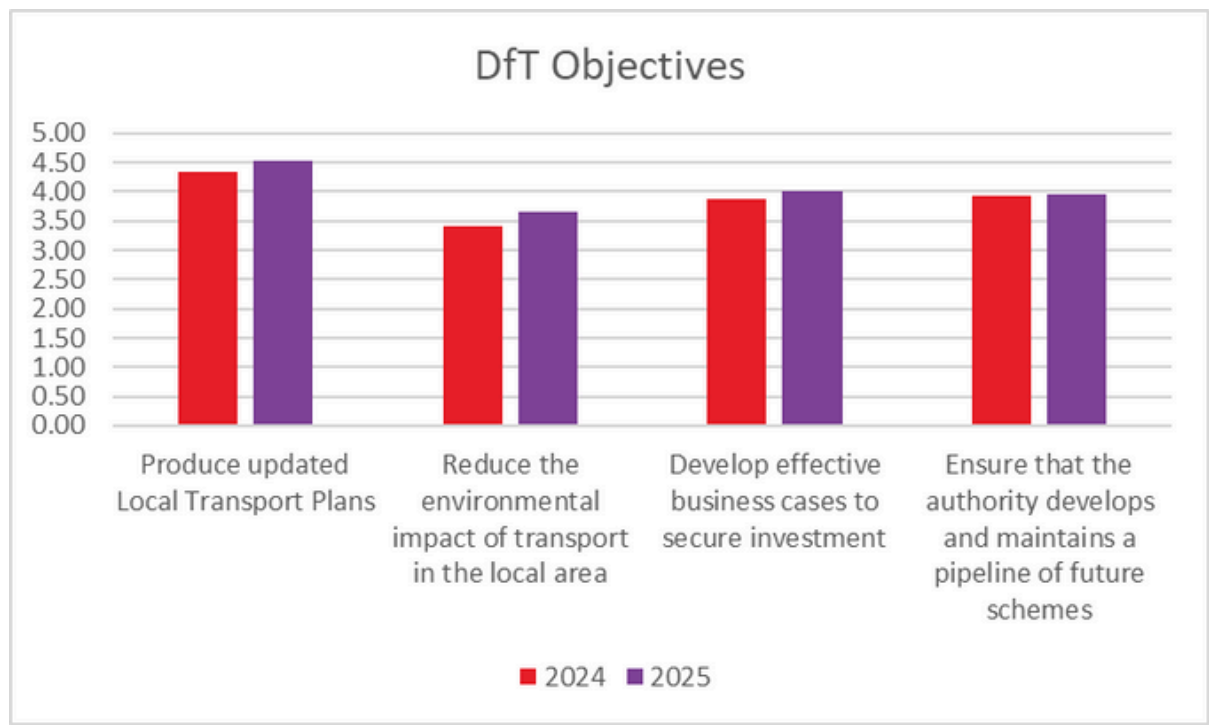


Table 1 alternative text:

- Producing Local Transport Plans: +0.18
- Reducing environmental impact of transport: +0.26
- Developing effective business cases to secure investment: +0.15
- Maintaining a pipeline of future schemes: +0.02

While the ‘maintaining a pipeline of future schemes’ metric saw the smallest improvement, it is important to note this was the only area without dedicated bespoke support. We are responding proactively: in 2025, we will host a region-wide forum to explore how LTAs manage scheme pipelines, culminating in a shared lessons learned report to benefit all.

Tools with impact

Bespoke tools like the Carbon Assessment Playbook are now hosted on the CoE website. Free to access, they are helping to shape LTPs across the region and demonstrating value. We are now collecting case studies to showcase its impact and share practical applications.

Improving engagement

Officers' time is stretched, and we respect their time. Workshop outputs are shared on the Chat Forum and in the webinar section of the site, enabling flexible, meaningful engagement without constraining their diaries.

Value & Impacts



Better Commissioning, Better Value

By facilitating shared learning, hosting data, providing expert guidance, and developing toolkits, the Centre of Excellence is actively reducing duplicated effort and helping authorities save time and money.

Table 2 - Value for Money for LTAs through the CoE

Workstream	Cost to TfSE	Cost per participant	Estimated market value (x16)	Estimated savings
Business case development	£12,500	£73	£200,000	£187,500
Policy and strategy development	£8,550	£49	£136,800	£128,250
Transport related social exclusion	£4,615	£30	£73,840	£69,225
Climate change readiness	£5,000	£142	£80,000	£75,000
Developing Consent Orders	£5,000	£119	£80,000	£75,000
Carbon Assessment Playbook Tool	£100,000	£6,250 (per LTA)	£1,600,000	£1,500,000
EVCI	£0 (facilitated through DfT)	N/A	£320,000	£320,000
Modelling training	£0 (in house SME)	N/A	£5,000	£80,000
Total savings	£2,435,975			

Looking ahead



Between August 2023 and June 2026, the Centre of Excellence was supported by Arup, covering the development and delivery of content and infrastructure. This contract was brought to an early close on 1 April 2025, so that future year's funding will be focused on delivering support, and project management and site management will be brought in-house.

This shift will allow a greater share of the remaining budget to be invested in more bespoke training, tools, resources, and access to experts.

We are entering an exciting new phase, ensuring it becomes more responsive, impact-driven, and shaped by officers' needs.

Priority areas for 2025/26

Based on survey responses from local transport officers, the following capability gaps will be the focus of expert led content in 2025/26.

- AI in transport planning
- Modelling and forecasting
- Understanding of national plans and policy
- Awareness of emerging technologies
- Network review, design, and planning
- Improving sustainability and delivering net zero
- Prioritisation of transport schemes
- Bus devolution
- Policy, strategy, and business case development
- Maintaining a pipeline of schemes

You can find out more about how we intend to deliver this support, and what it entails, in our **TfSE Centre of Excellence 2025/26 Work Plan**.



2025/26 Work Plan

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Support reference list.

 Case Studies	 Funding	 Data Hub	 Chat Forum Join the conversation!
 Resources	 Guidance	 Key Tools	
 Qualifications & Courses	 Consultations	 News & Blogs	
 Webinars	 New to the Sector	 Events	

Areas that are being delivered by TfSE will be indicated by a:



Introduction

Our Centre of Excellence supports local transport authorities (LTAs) to bridge gaps in skills, knowledge and capacity through collaboration and tailored support. Based on insights from TfSE's capability survey, officer engagement, and the evolving government priorities, this Work Plan sets out the Centre of Excellence's objectives for 2025/26.

The challenges the Centre of Excellence addresses is twofold:

- Capability gaps across core areas of business for LTAs, such as modelling and forecasting, developing business cases, and understanding and implementing national plans and policy continue to hinder timely and effective scheme delivery.
- A new political landscape marked by devolution, local government reorganisation, and an evolving funding and policy cycle, requires LTAs to respond with greater agility, confidence, and strategic coherence.

This matters now more than ever. Officers face tight deadlines, national guidance, complex funding bids, and growing demands from local communities and central government. With the right support, authorities can better align their resources to deliver lasting transport improvements.

The Centre of Excellence aligns directly with TfSE's broader mission to grow the South East's economy through a sustainable, resilient, and decarbonised transport system. By strengthening capability, the CoE supports delivery of the wider Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) and complements government priorities.

To guide delivery in 2025/26, the Centre of Excellence will have clear objectives. We will deliver targeted thematic support across eight priority areas aligned to the most pressing capability gaps identified by LTAs, including emerging fields such as AI in transport, decarbonisation, and impacts of devolution on buses.

Each support offer will be measurable, with officer confidence levels, participation, and feedback evaluated before and after delivery. Delivery is both achievable and well resourced, using a blend of internal expertise, subject matter experts, academics, and regional assets. All activity will be developed in alignment with local and national priorities. Importantly, the programme is time bound and structured, with defined outputs.

Our Approach & Budget

Our approach to 2025/26 support is evidence-led, shaped by the findings of the 2025 capability survey and direct engagement with local transport authorities. Officer feedback has highlighted clear priorities and delivery pressures, which we have used to inform the allocation of the budget, targeting resources where capability gaps are greatest, and where support will generate the most impact.

The programme strikes a balance between shared and bespoke provision, combining TfSE led offers such as data access and training, and bespoke resources developed by experts.

This model ensures all authorities benefit from content while retaining the flexibility to meet individual or emerging needs. The overall approach is designed to be responsive, practical, and aligned with DfT ambitions.

Budget

The 2025/26 work programme represents a strategic, data-led allocation of the £251,759 budget. Each thematic workstream has been resourced in line with its priority level, ensuring targeted investment in the most critical areas of need.

While some themes receive lower direct investment, this reflects the ability of TfSE or external partners to deliver relevant support outside our framework of subject matter experts, ensuring value without duplication.

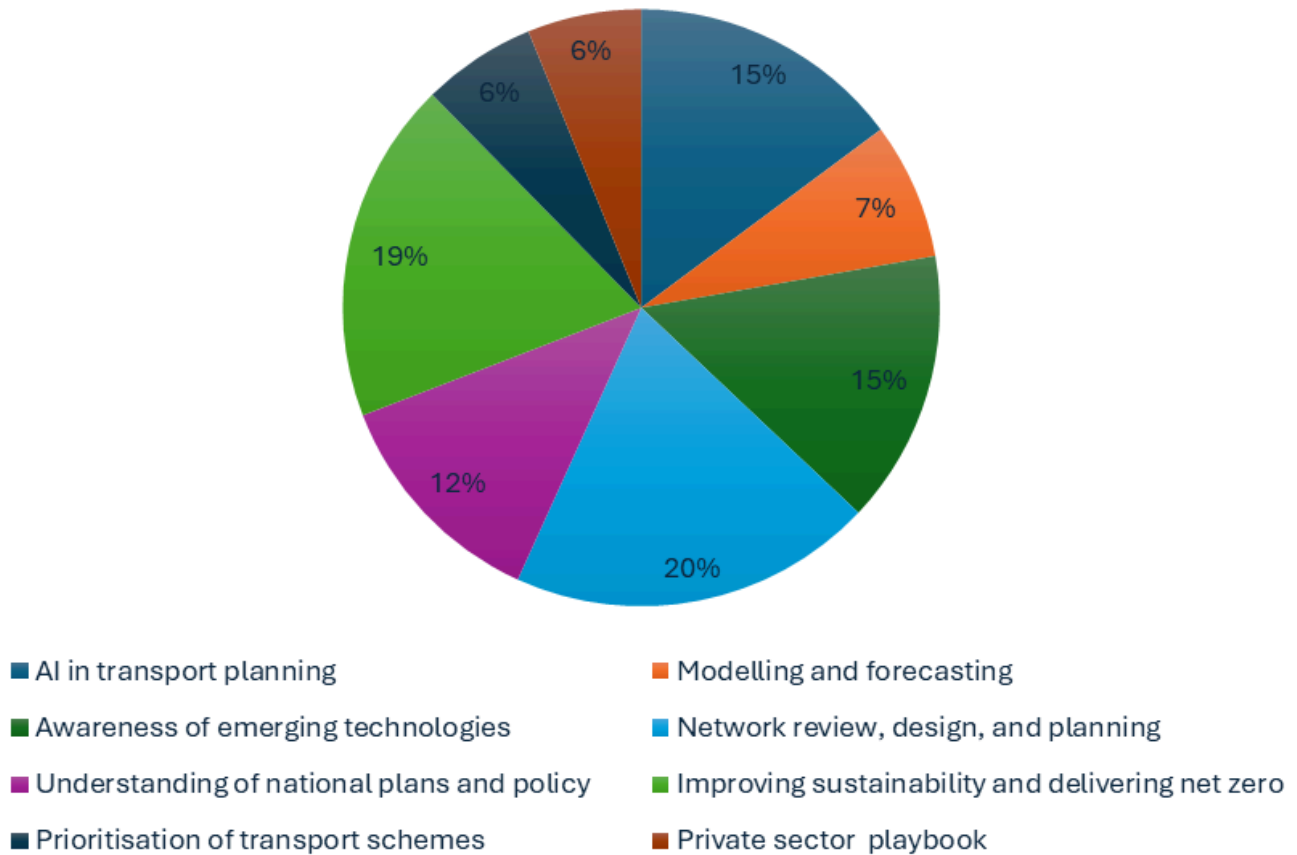
Every funded theme includes a tailored combination of expert-led training, webinars, roundtables, and one-to-one surgeries, complemented by TfSE's internal data and policy workstreams, peer learning activities, and practical case studies.

This balanced approach enables officers to build capability across core skills, respond to evolving national policy, and apply best practice locally. In addition, £127,693 has been retained as unallocated budget to provide agility, allowing us to commission further support in response to new priorities, work with academic institutions, and deepen activity where demand increases.

TfSE Centre of Excellence - 2025/26 Work Plan

Roadmap to March 2026

Support package budget allocation



The pie chart does not include spend against workstreams that TfSE are fulfilling, or already commissioned pieces such as the Bus Support package (£43,066), or private sector finance playbook (£5,000).

Roadmap to March 2026

Our delivery is phased to reflect funding cycles, national timelines, and most importantly, officer time. Early support (July-August) will focus on AI in transport planning, understanding national plans and policy, and strengthening modelling and forecasting.

As we move into Q3 and Q4 (September-March), support will shift toward devolution readiness, net zero delivery, and improving sustainability. The work programme is time-bound, agile, and managed with clear delivery checkpoints to ensure effective progress.



Support Packages

AI in transport planning


Goal: To empower officers to understand and appropriately apply AI tools in their workstream.

Learning outcomes:

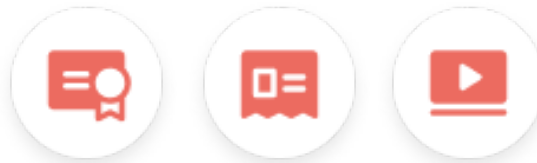
- Knowledge on how to apply AI tools effectively in planning and resource allocation
- Build trust in AI transport solutions
- Alignment to DfT plans relating to AI

Support in 25/26

- Multi-module virtual training on legislation, data analysis, and applications in planning

 Research blog and explainer article

- Roundtable session with subject matter experts



Impact: Officers will gain confidence in ethical, practical applications of AI to improve decision making, reporting, and forecasting.

What does success look like?

Improved awareness of AI's role in transport planning, and building more confidence in its use.

Target audiences: Team Managers/Principal or Senior Transport Planners



Support Packages



Modelling and forecasting

Goal: To strengthen capability and capacity to use modelling tools for business cases and policy development.

Learning outcomes:

- Awareness of available methods for modelling and forecasting transport impacts
- Knowledge, and opportunities for hands on experience of how to apply modelling to support different workstreams (e.g. business cases)

Support in 25/26

- Webinars on using TfSE's modelling tools (e.g. Travel Market Synthesiser)
-  Regional review of modelling capabilities to improve efficiencies
-  Provision of analytical support where possible



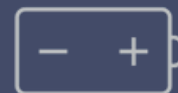
Impacts: Officers will understand the right tools for different use cases and build stronger, evidence-based proposals.

What does success look like?

Greater use of regional tools in local business cases, stronger modelling assumption in LTA submissions, peer feedback on enhanced modelling capability.

Target audience: Team Managers/Principal or Senior Transport Planners

Support Packages




Awareness of emerging technologies

Goal: To equip officers to plan for and adopt shared mobility and autonomous vehicles solutions.

Learning outcomes:

- Understanding how to plan for emerging shared mobility and autonomous vehicles
- Knowledge on the assessment and deployment of new transport technology

Support in 25/26

- Multi-module training on new mobility, procurement, and success factors
-  First/last mile toolkit and best practice materials
- Subject Matter Expert surgeries for targeted queries



Impact: Officers will be ready to respond to rapid tech changes and future proof local strategies.

What does success look like?

• LTAs referencing emerging technologies in strategy and schemes, increased officer confidence in assessing new mobility proposals.

Target audience: Head of Service/Team Manager




Support Packages

Network review, design, and planning

Goal: To build practical capability to deliver people centred, integrated transport networks.

Learning outcomes:

- Understanding how to better integrate land use and transport through planning and design

 Webinar with DfT land-use representative

- Awareness of good practice technical review and design of transport networks
- Practical knowledge on how to navigate and apply design guidance effectively

Support in 25/26

- Two-part in-person training. Firstly on the NPPF (introductory), and planning principles and tools (e.g. triple access planning, user hierarchies, movement and place, healthy streets). Secondly, there will be a multi module training series covering planning to design, kerbside management, and place-based schemes/building consensus/technical assurance and the use of data.
- Webinars on topics like integrated land use and LTN1/20s



Impact: Officers will be able to confidently apply tools like Healthy Streets and LTN1/20 in designing inclusive, future ready networks.

What does success look like?

Officers using network design tools during scheme scoping, improved integration of transport and land use plans.

Target audience: Principal and Senior Transport Planner/Junior Transport Planner



Support Packages

Understanding National Plans and Policy

Goal: To improve local interpretation and implementation of complex national guidance.

Learning outcomes:

- Awareness of implications of relevant national plans and policies on transport planning and operations
- Knowledge of ways to operationalise complex national guidance locally

Support in 25/26

- 📅 Roundtables between officers and SMEs on policy areas relevant to transport (planning reform/local government reorganisation/decarbonisation/local transport plans)
- 📄 FAQs and explainers on key policy updates
- 🗣️ Seeking input to answers from DfT, MHCLG, DESNZ, DEFRA



Impact: officers will be better equipped (and aware of upcoming changes) to align local plans with central government direction.

What does success look like?

· Increased LTA confidence in responding to policy change, evidence of national guidance being referenced in plans and strategies.

Target audience: Head of Service/Team Manager

Support Packages



Improving Sustainability and Delivering Net Zero

Goal: To help LTAs embed environmental, social, and health impacts into local strategies.

Learning outcomes:

- Knowledge of different tools for building consensus around decarbonisation of the transport system
- Practical understanding of how to assess the sustainability of strategies, policies, and interventions

Support in 25/26

- Multi module training on impact assessments (Strategic Environmental and Habitats Regulation Assessment, EQIA)
- Webinars on consensus building, utilising available data and tools such as the TfSE CAP
- Roundtable showcasing application of the CAP and what it has helped to achieve



Impact: Greater strategic integration of net zero, with stronger stakeholder buy in.

What does success look like?

Better quality impact assessments, more CAP uptake and usage, wider officer engagement with decarbonisation strategies and production of carbon impact assessments for local policies, strategies and interventions.

Target audience: Team manager/Principal or Senior Transport Planner



Support Packages


Prioritisation of transport schemes

Goal: To support officers in creating deliverable investment pipelines through prioritisation.

Learning outcomes:

- Understanding of the principles of strategic prioritisation
- Knowledge of how to apply robust framework to develop deliverable investment pipelines

Support in 25/26

 Regional Forum/workshop for LTAs officers to attend and discuss how they currently undertake prioritisation of transport schemes within their authority (9 July)

- Documents/guidance and training on development of strategic prioritisation framework for building a deliverable pipeline



Impact: Greater ability to prioritise through robust processes to ensure delivery aligns with current drivers.

What does success look like?

To have a suite of materials and tools that support development of agile robust prioritisation frameworks that can be implemented by partner LTA's to ensure schemes they prioritise are aligned with the latest internal and external drivers.

Target audience: Head of Service/Team Manager



Support Packages

Impacts of Devolution on Buses

Goal: To prepare LTAs for devolution on specific areas such as cross boundary infrastructure, cross subsidy, and franchising.

Learning outcomes:

- Awareness of legislation and its implications for bus planning and operations
- Understanding how to navigate options for bus devolution and ensure benefits realisation

Support in 25/26

- In person training on legislation, cost-benefit, and delivery
- Roundtable with TfGM and WYCA to share lessons learned
- 1-1 Subject Matter Expert surgeries to provide specific advice on a case by case basis
- Guidance documents and summaries on how to approach cross subsidy and cross boundary infrastructure



Impact: Officers gain a practical understanding of pathways to franchising (or not) and enhanced partnerships.

What does success look like?

LTAs exploring partnership or franchising models, increased officer understanding of devolution routes and business case implications.

Target audience: Head of Service/Team Manager



Support from TfSE

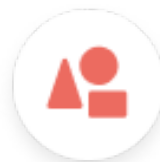
Alongside the commissioned support listed previously, TfSE will directly contribute to the Centre of Excellence.

Strategic Data and Knowledge Sharing

Goal: To enhance regional capacity by reducing the need for procuring data, unlocking valuable insights, and data collection from one source, and improved productivity.

Support in 25/26

- Shared datasets from all TfSE workstreams, mobile data, regional travel survey, and travel market synthesiser
- Rail data where there is appetite
- Common analytical framework tools and licences (some free, some subsidised)
- Centralised repository on the CoE website



Impact: Officers have improved evidence and confidence, with consistency across the region, and a reduction in time and costs related to data procurement and analysis.

What does success look like?

Officers regularly use shared datasets, reduce their time in sourcing data, share any data collected by the authority, and support business case development and submissions.



Support from TfSE

Scheme Development

Goal: Help LTAs learn from real-world examples, share knowledge, and reduce consultancy dependency.

Support in 25/26

- Safe space for asking questions and sharing learning through the CoE Chat Forum
- Library of supporting information and documents available including case studies for all business cases that have received funded support from TfSE.
- Support and mentoring for scheme development



Impact: LTA officers' ability to progress business cases will be enhanced through the shared experience of others through the CoE and the library of supporting documents available within it. Confidence and efficiencies in working with consultants and delivering business cases as a result of CoE support and mentoring which will in turn increase collective experience and knowledge base they can share through the CoE.

What does success look like?

Officers replicating learning in subsequent projects, case study downloads and sharing experience increases the competency of authorities throughout the region.

A growing library of supporting texts and greater efficiency and success in delivering business cases and securing funding.



Support from TfSE

Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation

Goal: Support LTAs in navigating structural change effectively.

Support in 25/26

- Best practice case studies from existing mayoral combined authorities
- Readiness guidance
- Support for improving efficiency during government restructuring



Impact: More confident officer response to devolution, with shared learning and streamlined processes.

What does success look like?

Early strategic planning in response to devolution, with officers reporting greater clarity and reduced duplication.

TfSE Centre of Excellence - 2025/26 Work Plan

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation is a core part of the Centre of Excellence. It will be embedded throughout the programme to ensure we deliver meaningful and measurable impact.

Success will be delivered through a combination of pre and post-delivery feedback, focusing on officer confidence levels, reported improvements in capability, and the practical application of support. The uptake of tools, resources, and engagement with thematic support (including webinars, roundtables, and one to one surgeries) will be tracked across all workstreams.

Aggregated findings will be used to identify trends, inform commissioning, and ensure ongoing alignment with the Department for Transport's priorities.

Each support theme will be monitored against its stated goals, impacts, and success measures, which will be built into future pulse surveys and feedback forms.

Outputs such as case studies, training materials, and data access tools, will be logged and reviewed to assess usage, while outcomes will reflect officer behaviour change, improved delivery capability, and stronger pipelines of work.

Regular engagement and reporting to the DfT will maintain feedback loops, allowing the programme to remain responsive and relevant throughout the year.