

ANNUAL REPORT 24 / 25



CONTENTS

Chair's Welcome	2 - 3
Foreword	4 - 5
About us	6
Our Constituent Authorities and Our Region	7
The Difference We Made Last Year	8 - 9
The Year In Review	10
Local investment in the South East 24/25	11
Refreshing Our Transport Strategy: a Changing Future	12 - 13
How TfSE Supported Delivery in 2024/25	14 - 16
Delivering Impact Through Our Centre of Excellence	17 - 18
Strengthening Our Relationships	19 - 21
Responding to Consultations	22
Finances	23 - 26
Partnership Board	27
Looking Ahead to 2025/26	28

CHAIR'S WELCOME

COUNCILLOR KEITH GLAZIER

The past year has been one of change and opportunity; politically, economically, and across the transport landscape. The election of a new Government has brought a number of fresh priorities on economic growth, infrastructure, and decarbonisation.

These priorities present real opportunities but also significant implications for local authorities, which continue to operate under significant financial pressure, making strategic collaboration more essential than ever.

For Transport for the South East (TfSE), this is an important moment. As a sub-national transport body, we bring together local authorities, business leaders, and transport partners to provide a single, united voice for our region. With Government accelerating work on an Integrated National Transport Strategy, our role in shaping and aligning regional priorities with national ambitions is becoming increasingly significant.

Our region plays a vital role in the UK's success. It is home to international gateways, major industries, and millions of people who depend on safe, reliable, and sustainable transport. Ensuring the South East's voice is heard in national decision-making remains our top priority. A truly integrated national approach must recognise, and invest in, the infrastructure that underpins our regional and national prosperity.

The continued shift toward devolution makes cross-boundary collaboration more important than ever, with the creation of new combined authorities and elected mayors across the South East. TfSE is well placed to support this evolution, drawing on our strong regional partnerships, established networks, and shared evidence base to shape coordinated, long-term solutions.

Over the past year, we've taken key steps to strengthen that foundation. We've launched the TfSE Centre of Excellence, providing hands-on support to local authorities in developing robust, fundable transport proposals. We also completed work on a major refresh of our regional Transport Strategy, ensuring it reflects today's travel patterns and responds to the growing urgency to reach net zero, increase resilience, and encourage inclusivity.

CHAIR'S WELCOME

COUNCILLOR KEITH GLAZIER

The year ahead will be pivotal. We will seek approval for the refreshed Transport Strategy this autumn and begin the review of our Strategic Investment Plan- translating our long-term vision into a pipeline of deliverable, high-impact projects. These next steps will ensure we remain closely aligned with national policy, support local priorities, and continue to champion transport as a driver of economic growth, net zero, and stronger communities.

None of this would be possible without our partners. I want to thank everyone who has supported our work over the past year; from local leaders and officers to colleagues in government, industry and the wider community. Your insight, challenge and collaboration are central to our success.

Together, we are making a real difference. Let us continue shaping a transport system that connects people, powers the economy, and helps the South East thrive.



Councillor Keith Glazier,
Chair,
Transport for the South East

FOREWORD

COUNCILLOR JOY DENNIS, CHAIR OF THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

As Chair of Transport for the South East's Audit and Governance Committee, I am pleased to present our reflections on 2024/25 – a year of continued progress, resilience, and assurance in our work to support sustainable and inclusive transport across the South East.

The Audit and Governance Committee plays a crucial role in ensuring that TfSE operates in a transparent, accountable, and effective manner. We provide independent oversight of governance arrangements, financial management, risk, internal controls, and assurance processes. Our role is to ensure that public funds are used wisely, that risks are properly managed, and that TfSE continues to operate with integrity and in line with best practice.

Over the past year, TfSE has continued to strengthen its capability to support local transport authorities, helping them to address the ongoing challenges facing our region. Reliable, high-quality transport is essential for the South East to thrive economically, socially, and environmentally, and TfSE's work plays a vital part in achieving that.

Following the Department for Transport's request for TfSE to expand its role, we have deepened our support for local authorities during a period of sustained funding pressure. Through our Local Authority Capability programme, we've offered tailored assistance in key areas such as strategic optioneering and carbon reduction.

This work reached a significant milestone with the launch of our Centre of Excellence in June 2024 – a new initiative designed to empower local authorities with expertise in areas ranging from data and modelling to the development of local transport plans. Alongside this, TfSE continues to deliver vital scheme development funding that helps turn strategic plans into practical interventions.

FOREWORD

COUNCILLOR JOY DENNIS, CHAIR OF THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

The technical programme that underpins our Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) continues to be a cornerstone of our work. It demonstrates the power of robust evidence and local insight in designing effective transport solutions. Our region's success depends on people; dedicated TfSE staff, local partners, and stakeholders. We prevail when working together toward the shared vision of a transport network that is reliable, inclusive, environmentally responsible, and future-ready.

This report sets out the progress we have made in 2024/25 across all our work areas. From a governance perspective, I am confident that TfSE has the right systems, people, and leadership in place to maintain high standards of accountability and deliver on its mission. The year ahead will no doubt present fresh challenges, but with a strong foundation of good governance, TfSE is well-positioned to continue supporting the region's transport needs.

Thank you for your continued engagement and support.



Councillor Joy Dennis,
Chair of the Audit and Governance
Committee

ABOUT US

As a Sub-National Transport Body (STB), TfSE provides partnership and leadership on strategic transport in the South East.

We are one of seven STBs in England outside of London and bring together 16 local transport authorities (LTAs), representatives from district and borough councils, business representatives, transport providers and other stakeholders to identify transport solutions that meet the needs of the region.

Our overarching mission is to support economic growth in the South East by delivering a safe, sustainable, and integrated transport system. We take a joined-up approach to policy development, aiming to directly influence government, transport operators, and investors — with the backing of residents and businesses across the region.

The South East is a critical hub for national and international connectivity and trade. The region is served by the UK's two largest airports and a strategic motorway network, including the M25, with strong rail links to London, the wider UK, and Europe.

It is also home to some of the UK's largest and busiest ports, positioning the South East as the country's leading gateway for the movement of people and goods.

With a population of over 7.8 million and around 350,000 businesses, the region supports a vibrant and growing economy, contributing £230 billion in GVA to the UK and playing a central role in the nation's economic success.

Our vision is for the South East offer the highest quality of life for all. A cleaner, safer, and fully integrated transport system will drive this ambition—boosting connectivity, unlocking new jobs, and opening global trade opportunities. Environmental safeguards will ensure this growth supports a better standard of living for everyone who lives, works, and does business in the region.

We have a vital role to play in supporting LTAs to deliver the most effective transport solutions across our region. We will continue to work in close collaboration with them through our Partnership Board, ensuring a joined-up approach that delivers maximum value for both government and the taxpayer.

OUR CONSTITUENT AUTHORITIES



OUR REGION

Our constituent authorities represent the region's diverse geography and transport needs.

As devolution takes place, our constituent authorities may change, but we will continue to bring together local transport authorities across the South East.



THE DIFFERENCE WE MADE LAST YEAR

What have we achieved in the last twelve months?

We have developed a new draft **transport strategy** to bring it up to date with current transport challenges. This is now based around a new vision, goals and incorporates five missions which TfSE will seek to deliver in partnership with a range of delivery bodies.

We have launched our regional **Centre of Excellence**, which now has over 250 users. It is home to over 300 resources including 20 regional case studies and delivered 35 webinars covering subjects from strategy development to transport modelling.

We have published two key studies on freight in the South East. Our **waterborne freight study** examines the opportunity for transferring freight off road and rail to inter-coastal and inland waterways, while our **warehousing study** provides valuable insight into current and future demand for warehousing space in the region.

We have progressed our work on the **Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy and Action Plan**, hosting regional forums to share best practice alongside guidance to support LTAs to plan charging infrastructure accessible to commercial and fleet vehicles.

We have provided funding to support our LTAs to develop eight schemes in our **Strategic Investment Plan**. This includes contributions to feasibility studies and Strategic Outline Business Cases in Kent, Hampshire, West Sussex, Brighton & Hove, East Sussex, Surrey and Berkshire via West Berkshire, Reading, Wokingham, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and Slough.

We have contributed to the progress of the **Wider South East Rail Partnership**, working with Transport East (TE) and England's Economic Heartland (EEH) to bring a collaborative approach and stronger voice to improving rail across the region.

We have engaged with the public and organisations across the South East, receiving over **850 responses** to the consultation for our draft transport strategy, and increasing subscriber numbers to our monthly Connections newsletter by 10%.

THE DIFFERENCE WE MADE LAST YEAR

We have enhanced our **analytical framework** to support local authority transport planning and strategy development, delivering advanced modelling, forecasting, and evaluation capabilities.

We have devised our **Regional Active Travel Strategy** and associated Action Plan, supporting existing and future LTA work in this area and identifying opportunities for the development of a strategic active travel network across the region.

We have collaborated with our STB partners in developing the **Common Analytical Framework**. Having adopted Transport for the North's (TfN) Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Visualiser Tool in the South East, we have rolled out the Carbon Assessment Playbook in partnership with TE and EEH which enhances the capabilities of LTA officers in identifying carbon emission 'hot spot' locations in their areas.

We have analysed travel habits across the South East in the production of the **regional travel survey**. Incorporating responses from over 6000 members of the public, the survey will identify key travel behaviours and enhance transport planning opportunities within our local authorities.

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

APR- JUN 2024

- Launched the **Centre of Excellence** platform
- Initiated a **data management plan** for an updated evidence-base
- Completed work on our **Regional Active Travel Strategy**
- Received 1500+ responses to our public **Your Voices survey** on transport
- **Assessed the impact of fleet electrification** on public charge points

JUL- SEPT 2024

- Completed work on our **waterborne freight study** as well as our **study of future warehousing requirements**
- Progressed **Common Analytical Framework** on common data standards
- Supported strategic cases for larger **Strategic Investment Plan schemes**
- Provided enhanced **modelling capability** for the South East
- Delivered **webinars, guidance and training** via our Centre of Excellence,
- Launched two popular resources; our **Carbon Assessment Playbook Tool**, and **Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Tool**.

OCT- DEC 2024

- Completed the **draft Transport Strategy**, with a 12 week public consultation
- Commenced studying **opportunities to transfer freight from road to rail**
- Updated the **map-based viewing platform** for presenting TfSE datasets
- Published reports into **waterborne freight** and assessing **future warehousing requirements** in the South East

JAN- MAR 2025

- Refreshed the **Delivery Action Plan**
- Measured impact through the **Centre of Excellence Annual Report**, and planned the second year of work for the platform
- Delivered webinar series and In-person masterclass on **Policy and Strategy development**, via our Centre of Excellence
- Supported Local Authorities to identify skill gaps to tailor our programming through the Centre of Excellence **Capability Survey**
- Surpassed **200 local authority officers registered** on the Centre of Excellence, with **379 pieces of content** on the virtual platform
- Completed **consultation on the draft Transport Strategy** and its **Integrated Sustainability Appraisal**.

LOCAL TRANSPORT INVESTMENT IN THE SOUTH EAST 24/25

This table summarises the transport funding DfT awarded to LTAs in our region in FY24/25. TfSE's Audit and Governance Committee asked us to record this data as an on-going metric and report on it in each Annual Report.

Fund	FY 24/25	Change FY 23/24
Bus Service Improvement Plans	14,352,021	► 0
Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas Scheme 2*	0	▼ 25,400,000
Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (Capital)	23,426,000	▲ 602,000
Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (Capability)	2,813,830	► 0
Active Travel (Capital)	8,920,733	▼ 1,280,204
Active Travel (Capability)	1,962,171	▲ 3,082,264
MRN/LLM	9,143,615	▼ 773,083

**Decrease as Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas Scheme 2 grant was announced in FY23/24, but money was awarded to be spent in FY23/24 and FY24/25.*

This is based on our analysis of figures publicly available on GOV.UK and returns submitted quarterly to the DfT by local transport authorities updating on LLM/MRN scheme progress and forecast investment. The figures have not been independently verified by a third party. It should not be used to make investment decisions.

It only includes government funding for local transport improvements in 24/25. It doesn't include on-going funding for local road maintenance, or other council grants.

This table excludes funding for enhancements of the rail and the strategic roads network. These figures will be published by the Office for Road and Rail, Network Rail and National Highways in their annual reports.

REFRESHING OUR TRANSPORT STRATEGY: A CHANGING FUTURE

In 2024/25, Transport for the South East made significant progress in delivering a refreshed Transport Strategy—ensuring our long-term vision continues to reflect the region’s evolving needs and national policy priorities.

Building on the foundations laid in previous years, we focused on updating our evidence base and engaging widely with stakeholders under the banner of Your Voices. This refresh has taken on board the lessons of the past five years, the impact of post-pandemic travel patterns, and the imperative to align with new national goals on decarbonisation, levelling up, and inclusive growth.

This year we have;

- ① Completed the development of a **new suite of future scenarios**, designed to test how different external forces—such as climate action, economic shifts, and technology—could affect travel in the South East by 2050.
- ① Drafted a **revised Transport Strategy**, underpinned by robust and refreshed evidence base to ensure we can deliver meaningful outcomes for people, places, and the economy.
- ① Launched a **comprehensive public consultation**, using a mix of online tools, targeted outreach, and in-person engagement to hear from people across all parts of the region—urban, rural, coastal.
- ① Completed an **integrated sustainability appraisal**, which included assessments of environmental, economic, and equalities impacts, ensuring our strategy delivers benefits for all communities, particularly those with protected characteristics.
- ① Begun composing the **final Transport Strategy**, drawing on feedback gathered through the Your Voices engagement campaign, ready for adoption in 2025.

REFRESHING OUR TRANSPORT STRATEGY: A CHANGING FUTURE

Our aim throughout this process has been to ensure that the updated strategy is not only technically sound, but also publicly supported, inclusive, and deliverable.

The refreshed Transport Strategy will set out a clear roadmap to 2050, helping guide investment, shape local plans, and support the development of sustainable, resilient transport networks that meet the needs of our growing population and changing economy.

Looking ahead to 2025/26, we will finalise and publish the updated strategy, ensuring it continues to serve as the blueprint for transforming the South East's transport system—making it greener, more accessible, more connected, and better prepared for the future.

HOW TFSE SUPPORTED DELIVERY IN 2024/25

Driving Progress Through Strong Regional Support

In 2024/25, Transport for the South East played a central role in turning strategic ambition into practical progress in the region, through the delivery of our **Strategic Investment Plan (SIP)**. Working collaboratively with local transport authorities (LTAs), the Department for Transport (DfT), National Highways, Network Rail, and other partners, we helped ensure that schemes moved from vision to viability.

Supporting Scheme Development Across the Region

Through our scheme development support programme, TfSE have supported development of **12 schemes through feasibility study** or **Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC)** stage. These projects span modes and geographies—from bus priority schemes and station hubs to active travel corridors and major road enhancements.

2023/24 examples include:

- Fastrack Optimisation and Extension (Kent)
- New Strood Interchange (Medway)
- Cosham Station Mobility Hub (Portsmouth)
- West Quay Road Realignment (Southampton)

2024/25 examples include:

- A259 Chichester to Bognor Regis Enhancement (West Sussex)
- South East Hampshire Active Travel Corridor (Hampshire)
- London to Sussex Coast Highways (A22 Corridor) (Surrey)
- A27/A23 Patcham & Falmer Hubs (Brighton & Hove)

Without TfSE's support, these schemes were unable to progress, lacking resources for early-stage development. Through this programme, we have set the foundation of a stronger pipeline of projects that can be put forward for later stage business case development when funding becomes available.

HOW TFSE SUPPORTED DELIVERY IN 2024/25

Providing Regional Insight and Tools

TfSE continued to enhance our Analytical Framework, offering region-wide modelling, forecasting, and evaluation tools that help LTAs build robust business cases. This year saw:

- ① Progressed work on a **regional travel survey** with over 6,000 responses—providing understanding of current travel patterns, changes since before the pandemic, and support TfSE's strategies by providing data on travel behaviour, motivations, and potential for new mobility options
In future years, TfSE will be able to provide analysis and insight from our regional travel survey
- ① Development of the **South East Highway Assignment Model (SEHAM)** and Travel Market Synthesiser
- ① Development of a proof-of-concept study on **rail modelling**, which provided us with the evidence needed to develop our rail modelling capabilities
- ① Progress on procurement of **Mobile Network Data (MND)** and journey time data, which address two key data gaps highlighted by local transport officers during a data gap survey conducted early last year.
- ① Advancement towards a **regional data hub**, a shared system for storing and analysing transport data across the South East
- ① Successful organisation of three **South East Modelling and Appraisal Forums**, providing a platform for technical officers from LTAs to share and discuss their experiences and challenges in technical work
- ① A suite of training, guidance and shared access to new dataset and tools - through our **Centre of Excellence** - helping partners maximise their technical and analytical capabilities

HOW TFSE SUPPORTED DELIVERY IN 2024/25

Monitoring Progress and Making the Case for Investment

We continued to maintain and update our Delivery Action Plan (DAP)—which helps us understand how SIP interventions are progressing, identifies delays, and enables us to provide tailored support to partners.

The information from the DAP has also been updated in our Interactive Story Map, which enables users to easily visualise schemes including current status across the region.

Looking ahead, we are finalising data for our next State of the Region report, which will help demonstrate the cumulative benefits of our work and inform national decision-makers about investment priorities in the South East.

In 2024/25, TfSE's role as a strategic enabler was clearer than ever: bridging the gap between vision and delivery, bringing partners together, and ensuring the South East is ready with the schemes that are aligned with both central government and TfSE's objectives.

DELIVERING IMPACT THROUGH OUR CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

In 2024/25, Transport for the South East's Centre of Excellence (CoE) moved from ambition to delivery—establishing itself as a trusted, practical, and essential source of support for local transport authorities (LTAs) across our region.

Launched in summer 2024, the CoE was created to help our partners do more with less, by building capability, sharing expertise, and strengthening evidence-based planning. Designed in close consultation with stakeholders, the CoE now provides a tailored suite of resources, tools, and advice aligned with both regional priorities and national objectives.

Over the year, the CoE has:

- ① **Launched a new virtual platform** offering access to a curated library of technical resources, training materials, toolkits, and case studies - allowing LTAs to build skills and capabilities in areas ranging from strategic optioneering to decarbonisation
- ① **Supported LTAs in developing business cases** for priority transport schemes, aligned with our Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) and national levelling-up and net zero goals
- ① **Facilitated knowledge-sharing** through regular webinars, peer networking, and live chat functionality, fostering collaboration and consistency across the region
- ① **Delivered targeted training and guidance** structured around key themes including data management, carbon impact, scheme prioritisation, and effective local transport planning
- ① **Engaged actively with the Department for Transport**, continuing our collaborative relationship to ensure the CoE remains responsive to evolving policy priorities and offers value to the wider national transport agenda
- ① **Implemented a robust monitoring and evaluation framework**, allowing us to measure the Centre's regional impact and identify areas for future development

DELIVERING IMPACT THROUGH OUR CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

By the end of the year, we had begun a formal evaluation of the CoE's first phase to help us refine and expand its offer in future years. Feedback from users has been overwhelmingly positive, with many LTAs reporting that the support they received enabled them to progress faster and more confidently on projects that had previously stalled.

The CoE has not only enhanced the ability of local authorities to plan and deliver more effectively, but also demonstrated how strong regional collaboration—backed by evidence, shared insight, and practical tools - can unlock real, long-term value for people and places across the South East.

As we move into 2025/26, we remain committed to evolving the CoE to meet the needs of our partners. Our focus will be on scaling up impact, incorporating new areas of expertise, and continuing to champion best practice—both within our region and as a model for others across the UK.

More detail on what our Centre of Excellence has delivered can be found in the Centre of Excellence Annual Report.

STRENGTHENING OUR RELATIONSHIPS

Transport Forum and Advisory Panel

Our Transport Forum continues to meet in-person twice a year bringing together representatives of a wide group of stakeholders including user groups, transport operators, environmental groups and delivery partners. Through collaborative workshops this year, the Transport Forum has fed directly into the emerging Transport Strategy through early engagement and a joint formal consultation response.

Our Advisory Panel brings together representatives from our thematic groups providing feedback on evolving workstreams, perspectives from across TfSE's transport modes, and policy areas on our strategic work.

Regional Active Travel Steering Group

The Regional Active Travel Steering Group have been instrumental in the development of the Regional Active Travel Strategy and Action Plan (RATSAP). With the completion of the RATSAP the group have continued to meet, highlighting the need for ongoing knowledge sharing in active travel across the region.

Regional EVCI Forum

TfSE's EVCI forum was launched as part of the development of our regional strategy that was published in 2023. The forum meets on a quarterly basis and brings together both regional and national stakeholders who have a keen interest in the delivery of EVCI. It also provides a mechanism for sharing insight, best practice and lessons learnt around the successful rollout of EV charging infrastructure.

Over the last year, the forum has had a number of guest speakers, ranging from different local transport authorities, charge point operators, central government and other key stakeholders. The forum has provided a platform for sharing case study presentations on a wide variety of different aspects regarding the rollout of EVCI within the South East, and will continue to meet moving forward in order to share the latest information and updates on EVCI rollout."

STRENGTHENING OUR RELATIONSHIPS

Bus Forum

The TfSE Regional Bus Forum was launched in 2022 as part of the Bus Back Better support programme and has continued due to the significant value it provides to local transport authority (LTA) officers.

Meeting quarterly, the Forum brings together LTAs, the Department for Transport (DfT), and bus operators to facilitate open dialogue, share updates, and collaborate on key issues. A core feature of the Forum is the regular update from the DfT, which has proved particularly valuable during the release of new policies and legislation, as well as in the lead-up to the submission of Bus Service Improvement Plans (BSIPs).

The Forum also serves as a space to share best practice, showcase new schemes and enhanced services, and develop cross-boundary initiatives that improve outcomes for passengers. Insights from these sessions directly informed a collective review of Enhanced Partnerships submitted to government in 2024.

Modelling and Appraisal Forum

In the last year we have established the TfSE Modelling and Appraisal Forum, bringing together experts in modelling from our constituent authorities. We know our local authorities face challenges with in-house modelling capability, renewal needs and budget limitations. The Modelling and Appraisal Forum was to tackle issues such as this, by supporting consistency in modelling approach, and improving technical expertise and capabilities.

Wider South East Freight Forum

The Wider South East Freight Forum - covering the England's Economic Heartland, Transport East and TfSE areas - recognises that freight does not stop at our borders and provides an overarching engagement approach across the wider South East.

The Forum has held several in-person meetings and work has commenced on a freight awareness programme.

STRENGTHENING OUR RELATIONSHIPS

Engagement with Universities

Our universities are key partners in supporting our wider research. The establishment of the Centre of Excellence has provided the opportunity for direct ongoing engagement with our universities.

Funding and Finance

TfSE's Funding and Finance Group brings together key players in government, construction and finance, to provide advice to TfSE on identifying, developing, and recommending ways to fund and finance strategic transport projects across the South East of England.

Business Advisory Group

In the last year TfSE have successfully set up our Business Advisory Group that provides the business voice to support, advise and contribute to the TfSE Board.

Stemming from the work of our Business Advisory Group, TfSE will be hosting our first Business summit in 2025 bringing together business leaders from across the South East to explore how transport can unlock growth and opportunity for our region. TfSE will use the outcomes from the day to directly inform a new report to government.

RESPONDING TO CONSULTATIONS

Using our collective voice to respond to consultations is one of the many ways we make sure the south east has its say on key issues and influences policy development - adding value to our partners and the people and businesses they represent.

This year TfSE have responded to 12 consultations, including the following:

- ① *Department for Transport – Adapting the UK’s transport system to the impacts of climate change*
- ① *Kent County Council Local Transport Plan 5 consultation*
- ① *Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system*
- ① *Invest 2035: The UK’s modern industrial strategy*
- ① *Bracknell Forest: Local Plan Transport Consultation*
- ① *Western Gateway: Draft Strategic Investment Plan Consultation*
- ① *Transport Select Committee’s call for evidence on Rail Investment Pipelines: ending boom and bust*
- ① *Kent County Council’s A229 Blue Bell Hill Improvement Scheme Consultation*
- ① *Integrated National Transport Strategy call for Ideas*
- ① *Department for Transport’s – Phasing out sales of new petrol and diesel cars from 2030 and supporting the ZEV transition*
- ① *East Sussex Coast and Marshlink Strategic Study’s request for comment*
- ① *Department for Transport – “A Railway Fit for Britain's Future”*

These consultation responses can be found in full on the TfSE [website](#).

FINANCES

TfSE is funded by contributions from our constituent authorities and grant funding from the DfT. This mixed approach to funding reflects our commitment to delivering best value for our partners and taxpayers.

Multi-year funding

The DfT provided TfSE a multi-year indicative funding allocation back in March 2022. This multi-year funding commitment from government enabled us to refresh our Transport Strategy, implement and deliver our Strategic Investment Plan, and develop our Centre of Excellence.

Because we had the certainty of funding in future years, we were able to deliver this work at a better value for money, building the capability of our organisation and relying less on consultants to deliver work.

Following the 2025 Spending Review, we hope the government will provide TfSE and the other STBs with another multi-year funding allocation.

Where our income comes from

In 2024/25, we received just under £500,000 from our Constituent Authorities. This funding is used to support our operational and staff costs. The approach for calculating contributions was developed with members and reflects the relative sizes of different member authorities. The formula has remained unchanged for the last seven years.

In 2024/25, we received £2,065,000 in funding from the Department for Transport, an increase of £340,000 on 2023/24. This level of funding enabled us to proceed with many aspects of our technical programme including the development of the Transport for the South East Centre of Excellence and commencing the refresh of our Transport Strategy.

Our total income for 2023-24 was £4,374,082. This includes carry forward from 2023/24 and TfSE's reserves, which we cannot spend, but are obligated to hold in case we are wound up as an organisation.

FINANCES

How we spent our money

ITEM	Budget	Expenditure	Carry forward
Salaries (including on-costs)	1,300,000	1,051,659	248,341
Training	20,000	1,754	18,246
STAFFING	1,320,000	1,053,413	266,587
Transport Strategy	500,000	419,263	80,737
SIP implementation	656,745	324,272	332,473
Analytical framework	395,000	161,349	233,651
Future mobility	40,000	0	40,000
Active travel	56,000	13,750	42,250
Decarbonisation	55,000	15,000	40,000
Freight	185,000	130,885	54,115
Electric Vehicle Infrastructure	130,000	86,421	43,579
Centre of Excellence	260,000	269,177	-9,177
Other costs/technical support	204,997	171,254	33,743
TECHNICAL PROGRAMME	2,482,742	1,591,370	891,372

How we spent our money continues next page.

FINANCES

ITEM	Budget	Expenditure	Carry forward
Events	41,000	40,057	943
Communications	17,500	730	16,770
Publications	5,000	1,469	3,531
Website	21,000	10,302	10,698
Stakeholder Database	18,000	8,925	9,075
COMMUNICATIONS/ENGAGEMENT	142,000	55,049	86,951
TfSE Governance	10,000	0	10,000
Operational Expenses	52,110	23,431	28,679
OTHER	62,110	23,431	38,679
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	3,967,352	2,729,696	1,237,656

TfSE endeavour to spend all our grant funding each year, apart from our TfSE reserve, which we are obligated to hold, in case TfSE are wound up as an organisation. In 2024-25, expenditure was lower than hoped, with a technical programme underspend of £1,237,656.

£317,435 of this underspend was due to delivering cost savings in our business. This underspend was uncommitted, meaning the Board was able to re-allocate this to deliver additional technical work in 2025-26.

The remaining £920,221 is committed carry forward for technical work that is underway and will be finished early in 2025-26. Expenditure on the SIP Implementation and Analytical Framework were lower than profiled, due to a re-profiling of our Analytical Framework and delays agreeing SIP Implementation support with Local Authorities. These issues have been resolved, and expenditure will be made early in 2025-26.

TfSE has a strong Business Plan in place for 2025-26 and our intention is to end the next Financial Year with no carry forward, apart from our reserve.

FINANCES

FUNDING	
Local Contributions	498,000
DfT Grant	2,065,000
Carry Forward	1,362,607
Other Income*	41,745
TOTAL FUNDING	3,967,352
TfSE Reserve	406,730
TOTAL FUNDING INCLUDING RESERVE	4,374,082

Accountable body

As part of TfSE's establishment in 2017 it was agreed that East Sussex County Council (ESCC) would act as the organisation's accountable body. During the last eight years, TfSE's processes and procedures have followed those of the accountable body. In addition, the Section 151 Officer at ESCC has financial oversight of TfSE's budget, ensuring effective review of governance over financial decisions.

Audit and Governance Committee

The Audit and Governance Committee provides an independent, high-level focus on the audit, assurance and reporting framework underpinning financial management and governance arrangements for TfSE. The Committee meets quarterly and has overseen the approval of TfSE accounts to the Partnership Board. The Committee also monitors risk and performance by reviewing the risk register, ensuring progress is made with mitigating actions. The Committee reports finding, conclusions, recommendations and effectiveness of the governance, risk management and internal controls to the Partnership Board with quarterly update reports.

PARTNERSHIP BOARD

The Partnership Board is our principal decision-making forum. It comprises a mix of representatives from the public and private sectors including local authorities, business groups, protected landscapes, and national delivery partners.

The Partnership Board meets four times a year in person. Our meetings are open to the public and the agenda, papers and minutes of each meeting are published on our website.

Partnership Board's members for 2024/25 were:



CHAIR
Cllr Keith Glazier
East Sussex County Council



DEPUTY CHAIR
Cllr Simon Curry
Medway Council

Cllr Trevor Muten
Brighton & Hove City Council
Chair for Transport and Sustainability Committee

Cllr John Ennis
Berkshire Local Transport Body
Lead Councillor for Climate Strategy and
Transport, Reading Borough Council

Cllr Phil Jordan
Isle of Wight Council
Leader

Cllr Lulu Bowerman
Hampshire County Council
Executive Member for Highways and Passenger
Transport

Cllr David Robey
Kent County Council
Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

Cllr Peter Candlish
Portsmouth City Council Cabinet Member for
Transportation

Cllr Eamon Keogh
Southampton City Council Cabinet Member for
Environment and Transport

Cllr Matt Furniss
Surrey County Council
Cabinet Member for Transport and Infrastructure

Cllr Joy Dennis
West Sussex County Council Cabinet Member for
Highways and Transport

Geoff French
Transport Forum
Independent Chair

Daniel Ruiz
Business Representative
Independent Consultant

Vince Lucas
Business representative
Director, VA Rail

**Cllr Dr Beccy Cooper & Cllr Sophie Cox
(Part Year)**
District & Borough authorities' representative
Worthing Borough Council

Cllr Matt Boughton
District & Borough authorities' representative
Leader, Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council

Tim Burr
Protected landscapes representative
South Downs National Park Authority

Ellie Burrows
Network Rail (non-voting member)
Managing Director, Southern Region

Richard Leonard
National Highways (non-voting member)
Network Planning Director

Gary Nolan
Transport for London
Strategic Engagement Lead (non voting Member)

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2025/26 AND BEYOND

Momentum

As devolution and local government reform progress, our strategic role in shaping transport investment in the South East has never been more critical.

We will continue to provide government with region-wide insight and evidence to inform decision making while supporting our LTAs to deliver successful outcomes, offering expertise, coordination, and a strong regional voice.

By aligning local priorities with national objectives, we can help demonstrate how improved transport infrastructure can unlock economic growth and support wider government goals.

Support

We provide a robust and relevant evidence base—through transport modelling, research, analytical tools, and our Centre of Excellence—that supports informed decision-making across the region.

While this already offers valuable insights for our local transport authorities, it will also serve as a ready-made source of expertise for evolving combined authorities as they shape their own transport strategies over the coming year.

Collaboration

One of our greatest strengths is our ability to bring partners together—across local and regional levels—to improve transport infrastructure and support economic growth in the South East. We work closely with LTAs to build capability, for example through webinars and case studies shared via our Centre of Excellence.

Our collaborative approach extends beyond our region, with active partnerships alongside other STBs such as Transport East and England's Economic Heartland through the Wider South East Rail and Freight Partnerships.