

**Report to:** Partnership Board –Transport for the South East

**Date of meeting:** 2 February 2026

**By:** Chief Officer, Transport for the South East

**Title of report:** Communications and Stakeholder Engagement update

**Purpose of report:** To update the Partnership Board on communications and stakeholder engagement activity

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

**The Members of the Partnership Board are recommended to comment on the communications and engagement activity that undertaken since the last meeting.**

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**1. Introduction**

1.1 This paper provides an update on communications and engagement activity undertaken since the last Partnership Board meeting, including support provided to technical projects, stakeholder meetings, and recent and upcoming events.

**2. Recent communications and engagement activity**

2.1 Transport for the South East (TfSE) continues to use communication and engagement activity to support the implementation of our technical work programme and the promotion of the organisation with our audiences.

2.2 We are delivering against the objectives set in the 2025/26 Communications and Engagement Plan, with activity supported by website updates, social media coverage, and our monthly *Connections* newsletter.

2.3 The team has continued to support colleagues on the development of the rail strategy and SIP refresh, coordinating engagement activity and arranging meetings with officer groups and partnership board representatives, and this will continue into the Spring.

**3. Transport Strategy**

3.1 We added a permanent, direct link from the TfSE home page to our recently adopted Transport Strategy and ran a social media campaign to promote the strategy's five missions, illustrating each mission with two examples per week, over five weeks.

3.2 Each of the region's MPs was emailed about the strategy with a link to the website and short introduction to the missions and the approval process. We also emailed all Local Authority leaders and chief executives, 323 transport forum members, 31 working group members and 1153 consultation and Your Voices respondents.

**4. Events and speaker slots**Past Events

4.1 In October, TfSE Head of Strategy, Mark Valleley, delivered the keynote speech at the Transport Smart Class conference in London about devolution and the impact on

local bus services. In November, Head of Analysis and Appraisal Sarah Valentine spoke at a Systra UK webinar with other transport representatives on the impact on transport delivery of changes to government appraisal and investment frameworks.

4.2 The TfSE Chair and Chief Officer were invited to the Kent Leaders meeting in November to provide an update on TfSE activity including the Transport Strategy and consultation responses.

Future events/speaker slots

4.3 We're planning a Transport forum in early Spring that will cover the SIP refresh, Centre of Excellence and devolution.

## **5. MP engagement and public affairs**

5.1 Following an invite from Caroline Dinenage, MP for Gosport, we met to discuss her proposals for a Solent water taxi seeking guidance on funding opportunities and followed up with further written advice.

5.2 Ben Spencer, MP for Runnymede and Weybridge, wrote to TfSE's Chair regarding the Transport (Duty to Cooperate) Bill, that he had introduced. The Chair replied that whilst local highway authorities have statutory duties to manage street works, maintenance and construction, TfSE's Transport Strategy highlights the importance of coordination, reliability and confidence in the transport system.

## **6. Delivering against our Communications and Engagement Plan**

6.1 We continue to follow the priorities and objectives outlined and monitor outcomes and progress of our communications and engagement activities.

6.2 We are monitoring devolution and local government reorganisation, and the impacts that may have on our region over the months and years ahead. We are planning to produce a document that sets out TfSE's role, impact and how our work helps to support local authorities.

6.3 Since the last board meeting, we have gained 41 followers on LinkedIn, a 2.9% increase, bringing our total to 1,477 against our 2025/26 target of 1500. Engagement rate is also continuing to grow, increasing by 18.1% since the last meeting, which suggests that a greater number of our followers are actively engaging with TfSE on LinkedIn.

6.4 Our Connections newsletter subscriber base fell slightly this quarter, but we will increase promotional activity and post articles from Connections onto social media more regularly, with sign-up prompts. This has risen by 43 since October to 3790.

## **7. Conclusion and Recommendation**

7.1 The Partnership Board are recommended to comment on the communication and engagement activity undertaken since the last Partnership Board meeting.

**RUPERT CLUBB**

**Chief Officer**

**Transport for the South East**

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