

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

Date of meeting: **21 March 2022**

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

Title of report: **Area Studies Progress Update**

Purpose of report: **To provide a progress update on the area studies programme.**

RECOMMENDATION:

The members of the Partnership Board are recommended to note the progress made with work on the area studies.

1 Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a progress update on the programme of area studies.

2 Financial considerations

2.1 In May 2019 the Department for Transport (DfT) made a grant award of £500,000 to TfSE to take forward the technical work programme including the area studies. On 13 March 2020, the DfT approved a variation to the £500,000 grant, authorising TfSE to undertake additional preliminary tasks to ensure that a robust evidence base was in place for the area studies. The remaining funding available from the 2019/20 grant was sufficient to enable TfSE to proceed with commissioning one area study.

2.2 In August 2020 the DfT made a grant award of £1,225,000 to TfSE to take forward further elements of the technical work programme including the area studies. This provided sufficient funding to take forward two further area studies.

2.3 In March 2021 the DfT made a grant award of £1,225,000 to TfSE to take forward further elements of the technical work programme including the area studies. This provided sufficient funding to take forward the remaining two area studies.

3 Area studies background

3.1 The programme of area studies will identify where geographically, when in time, and under what conditions, packages of scheme interventions and wider policy initiatives should be implemented across the South East to deliver the 2050 vision set out in our transport strategy. The outputs from these studies will feed into the development of TfSE's Strategic Investment Plan (SIP). Each of the packages presented in the SIP will identify a range of scheme options some of which will need to be subject to further feasibility work to identify preferred options for possible introduction at particular locations.

3.2 The specific geographic location and movement types within scope for each study along with their sequencing and programme for delivery was agreed at the Partnership Board meeting on 22 October 2020. Five area studies are to be carried out; two focusing on orbital movements and three focusing on radial movements across the TfSE geography.

3.3 The methodology for the reporting of the outcomes of Stage D of the area studies has been revised. This work now brings together the outputs from all five areas at an earlier stage into four revised geographies that enables the strong strategic narratives that have emerged from the technical work to be presented in a more streamlined way for inclusion in the SIP.

4 Area studies progress update

4.1 A diagram showing the stages and steps of work to be undertaken through the area studies, along with each study's relative progress is shown at Appendix 1.

4.2 The programme of area studies is now nearing completion and work is progressing well on developing the the following final outputs which will feed into the SIP development:

- Four **Strategic Programme Outline Cases (SPOC)** based around four revised geographies. These will make a compelling case for investment in the programme showing that it is strategically aligned, will stimulate substantial positive impacts and is deliverable.
- A **Strategic Narrative** which will be TfSE area-wide and place-based, bringing together SPOC narratives and underpinned by evidence including SEELUM outputs at a TfSE area level.
- A TfSE wide collated **Delivery Plan**, based on SPOC packages and a global package of interventions.
- Five **Thematic Chapters** which will set out how the interventions identified in the proposed packages will deliver key Government policies on decarbonisation, levelling up, strategic highways, rail and strategic cycling.

4.3 A programme showing the timescales for undertaking the remaining work on the area studies and the Strategic Investment Plan is shown at Appendix 2.

5 Stakeholder engagement

5.1 Key stakeholders have been engaged throughout the area studies development with area specific working groups providing the opportunity for detailed technical input and challenge from TfSE's constituent authorities and other key stakeholders. The final working group meeting for the area studies programme has been held, and we remain very grateful for the high level of engagement from our working groups who have provided valuable insight and challenge as the studies progressed.

5.2 An area study forum was also convened for each study to feed in wider stakeholder views at key points, including setting the objectives for the study and inputting into the long lists of potential interventions. A third and final combined forum

encompassing all study areas has also been held. Again, we are grateful for the very good level of engagement and input from these wider stakeholders.

5.3 Engagement sessions with both MP's and District and Borough political leaders have been held. Meetings were led by Cllr Glazier and provided an opportunity for attendees to hear about the potential interventions that are emerging from the area studies.

6 Conclusions and recommendations

6.1 The Partnership Board is recommended to note the work undertaken to date and the progress made with the area study work programme. A further progress update on the area studies will be presented to the Partnership Board at the June 2022 meeting.

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