

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: **DfT/STB priority workstreams**

Purpose of report: **To update on the budget position for Transport for the South East**

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**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**The members of the Partnership Board are recommended to note the current position on the additional Department for Transport / STB work streams.**

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**1. Overview**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Partnership Board on the additional Department for Transport (DfT) and STB work streams.

1.2 In October 2021 the Partnership Board agreed to submit a bid for additional in-year funding for 2021/22, focused on decarbonisation, local capacity and capability, bus back better and EV charging infrastructure. This followed an invitation from the DfT offering STBs the opportunity to bid for additional funding to support these four work streams. TfSE submitted its bids in October and received confirmation of the grant funding award on 12 January 2022.

2.2 TfSE submitted bids totalling £500,000 for the following four areas. The grant award sets out that TfSE has successfully secured £600,000 across the four work streams, although due to the lead STB role that TfSE will take for the bus work stream, £700,000 in grant funding will be received.

**2. Work stream update**

2.1 The Partnership Board agreed in January 2022 to delegate authority for the procurement of the additional work streams to the Lead Officer, in consultation with the Chair.

2.2 Work is underway to take forward the three areas that TfSE is leading and discussions continue with Transport East and England's Economic Heartland on the development of the joint projects.

*EV Infrastructure Strategy*

2.3 TfSE submitted a bid for £100,000 to develop an EV Infrastructure Strategy, including the associated evidence base and action plan. The funding for this project was approved.

2.4 Given the value of this project, work has progressed to develop a Request for Quotation (RFQ) that will be issued through the East Sussex County Council processes. The strategy will need to align with the national strategy that is currently being developed and will need to support existing local transport authority work. An exercise is currently underway to understand the work that local transport authorities are taking forward in this area and this will feed into the RFQ.

2.5 The RFQ will be issued in mid-April and submissions are expected by early May. RFQs will then be assessed, and the contract is expected to start by the beginning of June. A representative from the Transport Strategy Working Group has been invited to participate in the scoring and assessment process for this work. An update will be provided at the next Partnership Board meeting.

#### *Local Capacity and Capability*

2.6 TfSE submitted a proposal for a regional centre of excellence, with the aim of supporting local authorities in the accelerated delivery of their Local Transport Plans and related existing programmes. Initial work will identify local authority needs aligned to the South East Centre of Excellence aim and focus areas; and in parallel TfSE will establish the technical expert resource and supporting operational infrastructure, procedures and governance.

2.7 TfSE bid for £200,000 for this work stream but was awarded £300,000 as part of the grant settlement. Discussions have been held with the Transport Strategy Working Group and the DfT to agree the best way to proceed with this work. The work will be broken into stages, with the initial work commissioned through an RFQ. This will have a value of £20k and will aim to appoint consultants to work with local authorities in the area to identify projects that will improve capability across the region. The consultants will be responsible for developing a proforma for local transport authorities to complete and an assessment matrix to ensure there is a clear and transparent method in place to assess project proposals.

2.8 At the end of this initial stage, there will be an opportunity for the Transport Strategy Working Group and DfT to consider the results before providing funding for the successful proposals.

2.9 The RFQ for stage one was issued in March 2022 and the aim is to have consultants in place by early May 2022. A member of Senior Officer Group has been asked to participate in the evaluation of the quotations that are received.

#### *Bus Back Better*

2.10 Working jointly with Transport East and England's Economic Heartland, TfSE submitted a bid for a project that would identify and deliver the support needed to assist local transport authorities with the delivery of their Bus Service Improvement Plans and Enhanced Partnerships.

2.11 The value of the bid was £100,000 per STB area, with a total project value of £300,000. The full project value was awarded and TfSE will act as the lead STB and will receive the full project value. TfSE, through East Sussex County Council as its accountable body, will be responsible for procuring the activity and contracting with the successful supplier on behalf of the three STBs.

2.12 Due to the value of this project, it is necessary to undertake an Invitation to Tender through an existing framework. Research has been carried out into the various framework options available to TfSE and it is considered that Lot 5 of the ESPO Framework offers the most appropriate route to procure this activity.

2.13 The ITT will be issued in mid-April and will close by mid-May. The intention is to have a provider in place for this work from June 2022.

### *Decarbonisation*

4.9 Working jointly with Transport East and England's Economic Heartland, TfSE supported a collaborative bid for a project that will deliver a program of works to develop local authorities understanding of the transport and non-transport (behavioural) options and interventions they can make to decarbonise the transport system, that are applicable to their places and support local place-making and policy goals. The resulting 'toolkit' will enable authorities to plan for activities and interventions of the type and scale that will be required in their geographies to deliver the DfT's' Transport Decarbonisation plan and meet the UK's legally binding net zero targets.

4.10 The bid was led by England's Economic Heartland, who will act as the lead STB and adopt responsibility for procuring and contracting the activity through their accountable body. The value awarded was £100,000 per STB, with a total project value of £300,000. EEH are in the process of preparing a specification for the work and it is understood that they will be looking to appoint a supplier through the ESPO framework in April 2022. TfSE will be involved in the tender evaluation process.

4.11 In addition, TfSE supported a second joint bid on decarbonisation to commission research to investigate and quantify the decarbonisation impacts of different policy options and scheme interventions in a variety of representative topologies/places across the seven STB geographies. The bid was submitted on behalf of all seven STBs by Midlands Connect. The value awarded was £10,000 per STB, with a total value of £70,000. The outputs from this work will provide one of the inputs into the decarbonisation toolkit described above. Midlands Connect will be procuring this work through their supplier framework in April 2022.

## **5. Conclusions and recommendations**

5.1 The Partnership Board are recommended note the progress against the four additional work streams.

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