

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

Date of meeting: **13 June 2022**

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

Title of report: **DfT/STB priority workstreams**

Purpose of report: **To update on progress with the work on the additional Department for Transport/STB workstreams**

RECOMMENDATION:

The members of the Partnership Board are recommended to note the progress that has been made with the four additional Department for Transport / STB work streams on decarbonisation, local capacity and capability, bus back better and electric vehicle infrastructure strategy development.

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 electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure strategy development. 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.

1.3 TfSE submitted bids totaling £500,000 across the four work streams. 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. The DfT have asked STBs to consider the EV infrastructure requirement that will result from the electrification of vehicle fleets.

2.5 The RFQ was issued on 19 May 2022 and the deadline for submissions is 16 June 2022. RFQs will then be assessed, and the contract is expected to start early in July 2022. 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. Following an RFQ exercise in March 2022 the first stage of the work has been awarded to Arup. This has value of £20k and will involve work with local authorities in the area. An initial workshop has been undertaken with officers from the constituent authorities 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. An update will be provided at the next Partnership Board meeting.

Bus Back Better

2.9 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.

2.10 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.

2.11 Due to the value of this project, an Invitation to Tender (ITT) was issued through an existing framework. The ITT was issued on was issued through Lot 5 of the ESPO Framework on 22 April 2022 with the deadline for submissions being 31 May 2022. . Following a tender assessment process, a consultant will be appointed to undertake the work by the end of June 2022. An update will be provided at the next Partnership Board meeting.

Decarbonisation

2.13 Working jointly with Transport East and England's Economic Heartland, TfSE supported a collaborative bid for a project that will deliver a 'toolkit' that will enable local authorities to understand the carbon reduction impacts of different local transport interventions in different places in their areas. The 'toolkit' will enable authorities to plan for activities and interventions of the type and scale that will be required in their geographies to assist in delivering the DfT's' Transport Decarbonisation plan and help meet the UK's legally binding net zero targets.

2.14 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. An ITT for the work was issued in May 2022 through the Crown Commercial Service framework with the deadline for submission being 13 June 2022 Following a tender evaluation exercise EEH will be looking to appoint a supplier in early July 2022. TfSE will be involved in the tender evaluation process. An update will be provided at the next Partnership Board meeting.

2.15 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 procured this work through their supplier framework in April 2022 with Atkins and Systra having been appointed to undertake the work. An update will be provided at the next Partnership Board meeting.

3. Conclusions and recommendations

3.1 The Partnership Board are recommended note the progress against the four Additional DfT/STB work streams.

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