

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

Date of meeting: **23 January 2023**

By: **Chair of the Transport Forum**

Title of report: **Transport Forum Update**

Purpose of report: **To summarise the Transport Forum meeting of 20 December 2022 and inform the Board of the Transport Forum’s recommendations.**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The members of the Partnership Board are recommended to:

- (1) Note the recent meeting of the Transport Forum; and**
 - (2) Note and consider the comments from the Forum.**
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1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Partnership Board on the most recent meeting of the Transport Forum.

1.2 The meeting took place virtually on Tuesday 20 December 2022 and was attended by more than 30 members of the Forum. The Forum welcomed two new members, Cllr Robert Franklin and Cllr Sarah Barker, who will be representing town and parish councils and demonstrates the continued interest in engaging with the work of TfSE.

1.3 The Chair, Geoff French, clarified a question raised regarding the approach to the minutes for the Forum and the report that is given to the Board. It was noted that voices of the entire Forum are to be represented in the feedback to the Board that moving forward we will consider how the broad range of comments can be recorded.

1.4 In the next financial year, it will be proposed that a review of the Transport Forum’s operation will be undertaken to ensure it is fit for purpose, as TfSE moves from strategy to delivery of the SIP.

2. SIP Delivery action plan

2.1 The Forum were reminded of our extensive work, developing our strategic investment plan. Sarah Valentine set out the proposed approach to deliver the 30-year investment blueprint for the South East.

2.2 Delivery of the schemes that sit within the SIP will require input from a wide range of partners, all working in collaboration, with arrangements varying from scheme to scheme. Sarah offered an overview of the intention and approach for this phase of the SIP.

2.3 Sarah continued by setting out the intention to develop a common analytical framework, which will assist local authorities with their business cases when requesting funding for schemes.

2.4 Finally, the monitoring and evaluation strand of the SIP delivery was presented. It was raised to highlight the importance of having a clear and robust approach to ensure successful delivery of the interventions of the SIP. IT will offer a clear line of sight from the transport strategy's vision through to intervention level objectives via the SIP.

2.5 For more information on the three workstreams for the SIP delivery, please see item 6.

3. Thematic workstreams update

Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy

3.1 The Forum were informed of the recent progress of the EV charging infrastructure and reminded of the intention of the commission, which was awarded to Arcadis earlier this year. In response to a query raised regarding engagement, Mark Valleley confirmed that extensive engagement will be undertaken with local authorities so that we can address gaps in supply and creating policy engagement will be undertaken in future workstreams.

Bus Back Better

3.2 The Forum were informed on the development on the bus back better DfT priority workstream, which is now moving in to Phase 2, which will see the delivery of support packages to aid bus service improvement plans (BSIPs) and enhanced partnerships (EPs) being implemented throughout the TfSE region. A key component of this workstream is to improve collaboration and engagement between bus operators and local authorities.

Freight and Logistics Strategy

3.3 Alan Jones informed the Forum of the development of an action plan which brings together tangible actions to execute TfSE's Freight Strategy. Alongside this, TfSE are commissioning a project that will address the measures of action plan, manage the Freight Forum, produce technical studies and take forward the implementation of the strategy.

3.4 The Forum were additionally informed of the collaborative study with Transport East and England's Economic Heartland to investigate where there will be a need across the highway network for alternative fuelling stations. Engagement with John Lewis was confirmed as a result of this presentation.

Future Mobility

3.5 Katie Lamb set out the intention for this workstream, and the progress that has been made so far. For the future of this workstream, it has been split into 3 areas: engagement, technical and briefs. Depending on the development of activities in the action plan, there will be a consideration given to whether the briefs or technical documents will be used when working on pilot projects and future propulsions.

Decarbonisation

3.6 Mark Valleley informed the Forum on the three workstreams that are currently being developed regarding decarbonisation: quantifiable carbon reduction (QCR), carbon assessment tool and a decarbonisation pathways report. In response to a query raised regarding engagement with National Highways and emissions on the Strategic Road Network (SRN), Mark Valleley noted that it is important to distinguish between carbon emissions from trips originating within each local transport authority area, against those from through traffic over which the local transport authority have no control.

3.7 Responding to a query raised regarding the Freedom of Information (FOI) request relating to the national decarbonisation strategy, and whether it will effect the outcomes of the tool, Mark noted that the release of the tool will be coordinated to be delivered at the same time as the final version of the QCR guidance.

Future Technical Work Programme

3.8 Katie Lamb provided an interactive session on Active Travel, to understand the Forum's views on its barriers. The highest ranked of the options was infrastructure, followed by safety, distance and disability. These responses will be used when forming the foundation for the brief. Engagement has taken place with England's Economic Heartland and Western Gateway, to further strengthen our proposal.

3.9 The Transport Strategy refresh was also presented to the Forum as a planned future workstream, to adhere to our commitment.

3.10 More information on these workstreams can be found in agenda item 9.

4. Summary of forum comments for the Board

4.1 The Chairman thanked the membership for their involvement, and acknowledged concerns regarding the process of feedback to the Board.

4.2 The Forum were invited to contact TfSE in order to suggest future agenda items.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 It is recommended that the Board note the meeting of the Transport Forum and the important communication link this provides TfSE with its key stakeholders.

5.2 The Forum members welcomed the opportunity to see in some detail, the technical work programme that has been developed by TfSE over the past 8 months.

5.3 It is recommended that the Board note and discuss the comments regarding the Forum's feedback on the progress of the technical programme, and the future business plan.

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