

Transport East Board Meeting

Friday 25th November 2024

Via Teams

Attendees

Core Members		TESOG Officers		Observers	
Will Quince	Transport East Chair	Andrew Summers	Transport East	Liz Smith	DfT
CLlr Graham Plant	Norfolk County Council (VC)	Esme Yuill	Transport East	Dan Taylor	DfT
CLlr Lesley Wagland	Essex County Council	Rebecca Rangi	Transport East	Jack Weaver	Norfolk Chambers
CLlr Chris Chambers	Suffolk County Council	Richard Doleman	Norfolk County Council	Nova Fairbank	Norfolk Chambers
CLlr Phil Wittam	Suffolk District Rep	Alastair Southgate	Essex County Council	Fiona Foulkes	EEH
CLlr Graham Butland	Essex District Rep	Sara Noonan	Suffolk District Rep	Jaimie McSorley	TfSE
		Luke Barber	Suffolk County Council	Karen Chapman	OPR Consulting
CLlr Tim Adams	Norfolk District Rep	Karen Gearing	Southend City Council	Andrew Cook	Suffolk County Council
CLlr Alexander Nicoll	East West Rail Eastern Board Chair	Nav Tung	Thurrock County Council	Paul Simon	Suffolk Chambers
CLlr Alex Beckett	Cambridgeshire County Council	Sara Noonan	West Suffolk Council	Richard Lumley	Southend City Council
		Graeme Mateer	Suffolk County Council		
		Mark Lucas	UK Innovation Corridor		
		Matthew Stewart	EEGLA		
		Trevor Wiggett	Norfolk District Rep		
		Matthew Taylor	National Highways		
		Richard Joslin	Network Rail		

Apologies

CLlr Holloway	Thurrock Council	Phil Bibby	Hertfordshire County Council
CLlr Cowan	Southend City Council		

1	Welcome & Introductions Chair welcomed colleagues to the meeting.	Action
2	Minutes from last meeting on 22nd July 2024 No comments	

3 Department for Transport Update

Dan Taylor, Deputy Director, Regional Partnerships and Delivery, DfT provided an update on current DfT work areas.

- National budget due 30th October and DfT expects high level specifics will follow over the coming weeks. This is a one-year budget for 25/26, however DfT is expecting in year savings for 24/25.
- Integrated National Transport Strategy: Danny Williams appointed as director, he is currently the CEO of Active Travel England, and he will remain in that position. The INTS team will be setting out key aims of the strategy and organising workshops for colleagues in the coming weeks, with the final report due in spring 25.
- Business planning for 2025/26 has started but not firm dates / guidelines available currently. TE will be engaged once DfT have confirmed the timeline.
- In July 2024, the SoS announced a transport infrastructure review - an internal review of DfT's capital spend portfolio. This review is in two parts. TE has feed into the first part and raised the following key issues.
 - Rail priorities
 - Road priorities
 - Local government finance – increases, long-term and integrated allocation
 - Bus funding including £2 bus cap.

Part 2 is the CSR, which TE is currently working on and will submit to government in the new year.

Comments

- Chair: TE received a response from Simon Lightwood MP Minister for Local Transport, further engagement will be done over the coming months to highlight TE ability to be a delivery partner for government.
- Cllr Plant expressed his disappointment that the NH RIS programme currently has no schemes in the East. Norfolk would like to see further engagement with DfT and NH and for NH to be encouraged to support the ambitions in the East. DfT & NH commented the RIS programme is challenging and there is a full programme of studies in the East region with further investment in concrete roads, maintenance, and Lower Thames Crossing.
- A timeline of upcoming decisions and announcements related to the region's priorities will be shared at the right time through TE.
- Cllr Butland recently meet with Jess Asato MP who is the co-chair of APPG, in his role as Chair of EELGA, and he reiterated to her the regions key priorities and the need for further investment in the East.
- Cllr Nicoll: Ely and Haughley rail schemes are strategically important and stressed the need for the government to prioritize the project to support the UK economy. The schemes are supported by multiple transport bodies and parties. DfT has no doubt that Ely and Haughley are valuable schemes, however the government needs to review all schemes, and nothing can be guaranteed at this point. Importance to the region is noted.

- Norfolk to meet with NH team for further discussion.

	• Cllr Nicoll: EWR Eastern Section EWR East of Cambridge is still undecided and in the face of climate change rail needs to be prioritised. • Cllr Wagland: LTAs are willing to take the risks needed to support rails schemes the government needs to show the same will.	
4	Transport East Strategic Advice to Government Esme Yuill, Head of External Affairs The meeting discussed the progress and future of transport infrastructure and reforms in the East. Key points included. • The re-establishment of the East of England All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) with co-chairs Jess Asato MP and Andrew Pakes MP, and co-Vice Chairs, Marie Goldman MP and Blake Stephenson MP. There was positive response from MPs to the East priorities including an initial focus on re-energising the Ely/Haughley rail campaign. • The importance of local government investment, inward investment, and the devolution agenda for coordinated transport strategies, especially around rural transport, and climate change. • The political leveraging needed to support advancements in our transport priorities. Comments • Labour conference fringe event held in conjunction with EEGLA, Chambers of Commerce was well received and hosted by BBC Look East's political editor Andrew Sinclair. Cllr Beckett would welcome Transport East going to the Liberal Democrat party conference next year and holding a similar fringe event. • TE will continue to engage with local authorities to gather input on their Local Transport Plan and strengthen the evidence base for Transport East's strategic investment program. • TE to explore ways to highlight and address the challenges around road maintenance and revenue funding constraints, particularly in more rural areas. • We need to understand the importance of social value in transport project appraisals and align them with government missions. • The conversation highlighted positive discussions around rail and strategic infrastructure for supporting maritime and freight movements, further work is needed before the CSR announcement.	
5	Communications Update Esme Yuill, Head of External Affairs summarised the below highlights.	

TE Forum Comms & Engagement update: July 24 – Oct 2024

Workstream		Outputs
Centre of excellence for the region	- TE Corporate - Enhanced capacity & capability - Rural Mobility Centre of Excellence	• Annual report ongoing comms • Business Plan ongoing comms • Recruitment • CILT Focus interview with Sharon Payne; Public Sector Executive interview with Andrew
Next generation of transport projects	- Data & analytics - Evidence for next generation - Policy changes	• REVEAL EV report – updated insight and guidance for LAs • NPPF consultation response • Carbon Assessment Playbook launched for LTAs • Transport Related Social Exclusion report and data
Accelerated delivery of priorities	- Investment pipeline - Funding - Business cases	• Letter to SoS for Transport and Chief Secretary to the Treasury • Ely/Haughley campaigning
Single Voice	- Partnerships - Advocacy - Awareness	• Party conference attendance; joint regional fringe event • Re-established East of England APPG • Catch the Bus month • Events: Highways UK; Transport Smart Class; EoE Chief Executives; Long Stratton By-pass event

Comments:

- Transport East annual summit is on 16th January, the invite should be with you, and we look forward to seeing you there.
- TE held a joint Enhanced Partnership Leads Meeting with EEH and TfSE in July, with positive feedback received from the DfT Bus team and the Bus Centre of Excellence. The report will be published in due course with plans for additional engagement being prepared.
- The bus reforms are potentially significant in terms of transport policy framework outside of London, but rural transport provision remains well behind most urban centres. Imbalances in resourcing means ongoing challenges in solving rural transport issues, which is need to help reduce private car ownership.
- The importance of engaging with local councils and MPs, particularly in rural areas is critical. The government continues to take a traditional look at Business Cases, they need to broaden how Business Cases are assessed to include social economics alongside pure economics.

	• There are challenges in rural transport, and we need public engagement and coordinated transport structures to shift. • The narrative around public transport needs to change and the government needs to be aware of the impact of commercial operators leaving the field.	
6	Transport East Enabling Powers - Strategic Outline Case Andrew Summers, Chief Executive, Transport East summarised the key points and the next steps for the process. Transport East enabling powers proposal emphasises the need for strategic partnerships to enhance local influence on major infrastructure investments. The proposal, developed with OPR Consulting, aims to secure enabling powers to reduce costs, accelerate schemes, and align regional transport strategy with national reform, it highlights the importance of collaboration and the need for alignment with neighbouring regions. The Board endorsed this proposal and agreed to move to the next step of formally consulting with partners. How the SOC benefits local authorities, government, and other partners: • More influence for local authorities to determine strategic transport investment in their areas, including road, rail, and other strategic infrastructure. • Potential cost reduction in delivering transport infrastructure projects at national level. • Better transport networks and service provision through integrated regional strategies, bringing together different national agencies focused on one set of agreed regional transport objectives to deliver economic, industrial, social, and environmental strategies. • Public sector efficiency savings through planning integrated strategic transport in the East through one partnership, working together. • Reduction in local authority bid costs due to a lower number of higher quality submissions in line with agreed statutory strategy and regional priorities. • Right infrastructure at the right time to support wider government ambitions for growth and the need to deliver more homes in the East. • Enhanced long term accountability for transport decision making in the East, aligned to the devolution framework, leading to greater cost transparency.	

	Comments • This emphasises the importance of sub-national transport bodies (STBs), securing enabling powers to drive forward scheme and their delivery. • The DfT highlighted the importance of a nuanced approach to the case and the valuable role of partnerships / STBs have. The above is an important list of priorities. TE does not need to be like the 'TfN Model.' • TE needs to be clear about what powers would be effective. • The report aligns with the Local Government Association's framework for economic growth and infrastructure needs. Local authorities and STBs have expressed a desire for greater influence on major infrastructure investment decisions.	
7	Transport East Business Unit Update Andrew Summers, Chief Executive, Transport East highlighted the two main points for the Board to note. • TE is in the process to finalising the Business Plan 2025/26 • TE work to embed the East's priorities within Great British Railways through the Wider Southeast Rail Partnership.	
8	Transport East Consultation Responses: Dan Johnson, Principal Transport Planner Dan summarised the main points from National Planning Policy Framework and The Regional Energy Systems consultations. The Chair thanked Dan and Suzanne Buck for completing them and they were both endorsed.	
9	AOB and Meeting Close No further business	