

Strategic Transport Forum

24th March 2017

Agenda Item 8: Sub-national Transport Body

Recommendation: It is recommended that the meeting:

- i) Note the process highlighted in section 2 for the procurement of Stage 1 (development of the STB concept – advice report)
- ii) Discuss and endorse the proposed approach for Stage 2 (wider stakeholder engagement) as outlined in section 3

1. Context

- 1.1. The leaders of England's Economic Heartland Strategic Alliance have set out their committed to develop a proposal for the establishment of a statutory Sub-national Transport Body (STB).
- 1.2. At the last Strategic Transport Forum, endorsement was given to commission specialist advice in respect of developing such a proposal: the proposal being to do so in stages (drawing upon the experience of other emerging sub-national partnerships):
 - Stage 1 – Development of STB Concept
 - Stage 2 – Wider Stakeholder Engagement
 - Stage 3 – Develop Draft Proposal for Establishing an STB
- 1.3. The Forum noted that work on developing the proposal for a STB would be taken forward in parallel with the work to develop a longer-term Transport Strategy for the Heartland.
- 1.4. Taking forward work to develop a proposal to establish a STB is identified in the work programme for the Strategic Transport Forum. The National Infrastructure Commission in its Interim Report set out its support for strategic transport issues being considered by a single body covering the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford corridor.

2. Progression of Stage 1

- 2.1. Stage 1 of the STB work is being commissioned. This initial piece of advice will set out the issues and options that the Strategic Transport Forum will need to consider in developing a proposal for a STB.

- 2.2. The commission will consider a wide range of factors, including (but not limited to):
- What an STB is and the different options that the EEH could consider
 - The benefits of the EEH becoming a STB (i.e. in terms of the economy, potential powers etc.)
 - How the STB could potentially interact with local and national government and agencies
 - Initial advice on issues relating to membership and geographic area
 - What might be included in the EEH transport strategy
 - Potential governance arrangements (and how this might work)
 - Potential financial arrangements (and how this might work)
- 2.3. A key area that the concept work is to consider what roles and responsibilities the EEH STB should take. These could include:
- Responsibility for identifying the Major Road Network
 - Responsibility for identifying investment in the Major Road Network, including that currently managed through the Roads Investment Strategy
 - A role in managing the operation of the Major Road Network as part of an integrated transport system
 - A role in identifying investment in rail infrastructure
 - A role in specifying and letting of future passenger rail franchises – e.g. East-West Rail
 - A role in ensuring a high quality bus network and enhancement of the local bus offer in partnership with the bus operators – Enhanced Partnership
 - Responsibility for enabling the widespread adoption of smart ticketing technology
 - A role in identifying and implementing measures that improve the overall resilience of the transport system as a means of supporting economic activity
- 2.4. A variety of Alliance members and partners (such as the National Infrastructure Commission) will be engaged with throughout stage 1 in order to gain essential knowledge and steer.
- 2.5. With the work on Stage 1 commissioned at the beginning of April, this will enable the next meeting of this Forum to consider in greater detail the options available prior to engaging more widely with interested parties, including those in adjoining areas.

3. Proposals for Wider Stakeholder Engagement (summer 2017)

- 3.1. It is intended that stage 2 of the work to develop the proposal for a STB will take place over the summer 2017. During this stage, the outline of the STB proposal will be form the basis of a structure engagement with stakeholders (including bordering Local Authorities). The expectation is that the outline of the STB proposal will evolve further during this period as a consequence of this engagement.
- 3.2. In order to ensure that arrangements for this stage can be put in place this meeting is asked to provide a steer on the form of the stakeholder engagement. In addition to inviting on-line submissions from interested parties it is anticipated that there will be a need to organise some form of set piece engagement, with the options currently being considered:
- A large scale regional event (like the recent Silverstone conference)
 - A series of workshops organised across the Heartland area and including provision for adjoining authorities to participate
 - A series of more targeted workshops supplemented by bi-lateral meetings with key stakeholders
- 3.3. Forum members are invited to provide an initial steer as to their preferred approach to stakeholder engagement. Views are also sought as to whether there are particular sectors or interests for which bespoke arrangements may need to be considered.

4. Programme Overview

- 4.1. The Transport Officer Group supporting this Forum will be responsible for overseeing the development of the STB proposal and ensuring that it is taken forward in conjunction with the work to develop a longer-term Transport Strategy. An outline of the overall programme is provided as Appendix 1 for information.

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Appendix 1 – Proposed STB Work Programme

