



# Strategic Transport Leadership Board

15 July 2022

Agenda Item 10

## Business Unit Update

*Recommendation:*

**It is recommended that the meeting:**

**a) Notes the business unit update**

### 1. Active Travel Programme

- 1.1. A key action point in EEH's transport strategy is championing investment in active travel and shared transport solutions to improve local connectivity.
- 1.2. In September 2021, DfT allocated £125,000 to EEH to develop its active travel programme. Of this £25,000 was allocated for the Varsity Way conditions report and options assessment and £100,000 for the development of an active travel strategy.
- 1.3. Working with partners, EEH developed [Active Travel Strategy phase one](#), which was agreed by Board in February 2022 and outlined the ambition for active travel in the Heartland; *'to create an exemplar active travel network and culture that encourages mode shift for both shorter journeys and for the first and last mile of longer journeys'*
- 1.4. Building on the phase one document, EEH will now commence the development of phase two of the Active Travel Strategy, which will focus on how we meet the ambition outlined in Phase 1 of the study.
- 1.5. Specifically, there will be five elements of phase two of the strategy:
  - 1.5.1. Baseline and (place based) target setting
  - 1.5.2. Understanding the regional active travel network and future ambitions
  - 1.5.3. Challenges to achieving the ambitions
  - 1.5.4. Modal integration
  - 1.5.5. Delivery Plan
- 1.6. An Active Travel Strategy steering group was formed during phase one of the study and we will continue to liaise with this group during the development of phase two, including four workshops over the study programme.
- 1.7. It is anticipated the technical work will conclude in December 2022, for agreement at Board in early 2023
- 1.8. In addition, EEH has been working with Sustrans on a route assessment and options appraisal of the Varsity Way – an active travel route linking Oxford and Cambridge. The report is due to be complete shortly and will be shared with the stakeholder group upon completion.

- 1.9. During the development of the Varsity Way report, there was some stakeholder support for more widescale realignment of the route between Milton Keynes and Bedford.
- 1.10. Although widescale realignment was out of scope of the project (and beyond the project budget), the strategic rationale for assessing the potential has been noted and next steps (funding and stakeholder support dependent) outlined in the report. It should be noted there is no funding currently available for the study extension. However, EEH is working to identify potential funding pots to take additional work forward.

## **2. Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy 2**

- 2.1. The Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy 2 (CWIS2) has been published, which looks ahead to 2025.
- 2.2. Objectives by 2025 are to:
  - Increase the percentage of short journeys in towns and cities that are walked or cycled from 41% in 2018 to 2019 to 46% in 2025
  - Increase walking activity, where walking activity is measured as the total number of walking stages per person per year, to 365 stages per person per year in 2025
  - Double cycling, where cycling activity is measured as the estimated total number of cycling stages made each year, from 0.8 billion stages in 2013 to 1.6 billion stages in 2025
  - Increase the percentage of children aged 5 to 10 who usually walk to school from 49% in 2014 to 55% in 2025.
- 2.3. Beyond 2025, further objectives reflect commitments originally set out in the government's 'Gear Change' and transport decarbonisation plan documents are to:
  - Increase the percentage of short journeys in towns and cities that are walked or cycled to 50% in 2030 and to 55% in 2035
  - Deliver a world-class cycling and walking network in England by 2040
- 2.4. Other key messages in the strategy:
  - Focus on inclusivity
  - Focus on 'high quality infrastructure'
  - Focus on integration
  - Maximising impact on wider government objectives such as net zero.
- 2.5. The strategy also outlines the total investment into active travel across government through to 2025. In the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy 1 this was projected at £1.2 billion of investment in walking and cycling (outside of London) over the five years to March 2021 (later updated to £2.4 billion). The revised projection looking ahead to 2025 is £3.245 billion.

## **3. Future of Rural Transport Strategy**

- 3.1. The Department for Transport is developing a Future of Rural Transport Strategy, currently anticipated for spring 2023.
- 3.2. The aim of the strategy will be to help local authorities, operators, STBs and other organisations to join up cross modally in rural areas.
- 3.3. Between November 2020 and February 2021, a call for evidence was launched for input into challenges and opportunities for rural transport. Feedback from the department is that some of the main challenges identified were well known and long-standing issues such as isolation, funding and lack of infrastructure. Opportunities identified through the call for evidence were new business models, automation, data and digital, new mobility, shared mobility and decarbonisation.



- 3.4. In February 2021, the seven sub-national transport bodies (STBs) sent in a joint response to the Future of Rural Mobility call for evidence. The response outlined the challenge that the traditional transport business case appraisal does not provide optimal outcomes for rural residents, the need for a user centric approach and better engagement with rural communities, a need to reduce commissions and new ideas and technology to help reduce the need to travel.
- 3.5. EEH, Hertfordshire County Council and Department for Transport is sponsoring a series of roundtable discussions with local transport authorities, public transport providers and industry experts on understanding the challenges and opportunities of transport in rural areas, to support further the Future of Rural Transport Strategy. The roundtables are being coordinated by University of Hertfordshire, culminating in the publication of report, which will set out a summary of the key themes and points that emerged from the roundtables, copies of which will be made available once published.

#### **4. Changes in E-Scooter Legislation**

- 4.1. The Transport Secretary informed the House of Commons Transport Committee on 27 April 2022 that the government planned to introduce legislation to regulate e-scooters in the 2022–23 session.
- 4.2. At present, e-scooters are illegal to use on the public highway unless they are rented as part of an official trial. There are over 30 areas across the UK involved in the trials, including in the EEH region: Milton Keynes, Cambridge, Aylesbury, High Wycombe, Princes Risborough, Oxford, Northampton, Kettering, Corby, Wellingborough and Rushden/Higham Ferrers.
- 4.3. In these trial areas, it is legal for rental e-scooters to be used on roads (excluding motorways) and on cycleways. There are several requirements for riders, including holding as a minimum a provisional driving licence and scooters being used in the trials must meet specific standards.
- 4.4. Although the standards are yet to be published, the Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety, which supports both the House of Commons and House of Lords on transport safety, has published draft regulations which do provide some clarity on what is likely to be included in the final regulations. These include:
- Maximum continuous rated motor power of 250 W
  - Anti-tampering mechanisms be included in construction.
  - Minimum front wheel size of 12 inches (30.5cm) and minimum rear wheel size of 10 inches (25.5cm)
  - Two independently controlled braking devices, one acting on the front wheel and one acting on the rear wheel
  - Lighting to be mandatory at all times
  - Maximum unladen weight of 20kg
  - An audible warning device to be mandatory
  - Helmet wearing to be mandatory
  - Riding on the footway or footpath to be prohibited
  - Rider age limit of at least 16 years
  - Carrying of a passenger to be prohibited
  - Drink driving, dangerous or careless riding, and handheld mobile phone use to be prohibited
  - In-person rider training and third-party insurance are recommended



- 4.5. Incidents of harm involving e-scooters have been widely reported, with the BBC noting that the emergency services attended 713 e-scooter accidents in 2021 , compared with 392 in 2020. According to government figures, there were 931 casualties and three fatalities involving e-scooters in the year to June 2021 .
- 4.6. The government has not yet published the final details of accidents and injuries in trial area(s). However, local authority partners receive road safety data as part of their trials. For example, in Buckinghamshire the e-scooter trials have had over 408,426km ridden and four 'personal injury' accidents have been reported.
- 4.7. Transport for London publishes monthly reports (which includes data on incidences of serious injuries due to e-scooter hire use). Up to 8 May 2022, 16 serious injuries had been reported since June 2021, out of just over 1.7million km ridden. In comparison there were 0.74 serious injuries per million km travelled by pedal cycle in the whole of UK in 2019 and 3.5 serious injuries per million km travelled by motorcycle in UK in 2019.
- 4.8. The existing trials are set to continue to run until November 2022, at which time local authorities can choose to withdraw from the trials or continue with an extension to 31 May 2024. The Government is due to publish a full report on the trial outcomes, when they conclude and further information on the legislative changes in due course.

#### **4. Road Programme Update**

##### **Major Road Network (MRN) Bids 2020-2025**

- 4.1. EEH MRN/Large Local Majors programme remains a priority for investment in the region. DfT has expressed concerns over schemes that are likely to extend beyond the 2025 deadline and welcomed open, honest and realistic timescales for delivery. The withdrawal of a scheme from the current RIS programme will not prejudice if from any future programme. DfT says it welcomes honest and accurate programme management rather than future delays.
- 4.2. EEH business unit has some concerns over the long tails of some of our schemes. We are keen to work with local authority partners through the capacity and capability work to ensure that the scheme are progressing in a timely manner and are accurately reported to DfT.

##### **Route Strategies**

- 4.3. EEH has recently reviewed the route strategy overview reports for National Highways RIS3 route strategies. Our region has the most route strategies of any of the STBs with eight. The reports included the local objectives for the route strategies. We have ensured that these are aligned to the EEH transport strategy objectives and incorporated known local objectives.
- 4.4. The route strategies will link into National Highway's study programme and inform the investment programme and are due to be published in Autumn 2022. We are waiting to comment on the high-level "locational areas for consideration" that will incorporate high level priorities for each of the routes.

#### **5. Ely capacity enhancements**

- 5.1. The Chair of EEH has co-signed a letter (see annex 1) sent to the Secretary of State for Transport and Chief Secretary to the Treasury urging the government to commit to the Ely Area Capacity Enhancement in the forthcoming Rail Networks Enhancement Pipeline (RNEP) funding period.
- 5.2. Ely is crucial to increasing capacity for rail freight on the vital Felixstowe-Midlands freight corridor - a key policy of EEH's transport strategy.



- 5.3. However, there are concerns that the scheme may be downgraded or postponed. In correspondence with the East of England All-Party Parliamentary Group, Transport Minister Wendy Morton said: "Should the outcomes of the Spending Review impact on the Ely programme, my Department would continue to work with industry to explore opportunities to realise at least some of the desired outcomes, either through wider operational changes to the network or through smaller, targeted investment enabled by future funding settlements." She added: "I am considering the necessary changes to the national enhancement portfolio and some projects will have to be cancelled or indefinitely paused."
- 5.4. In its letter of response, co-signed by Cllr Wenham, the East of England APPG states that the corridor is considered the highest priority for investment by the freight industry.
- 5.5. Work undertaken by Network Rail so far demonstrates that the improvements would deliver substantial national economic, levelling up and decarbonisation benefits through the planned doubling of freight capacity, alongside increased passenger services on poor frequency routes.
- 5.6. The benefits spread well beyond the East, supporting access and growth in the Midlands and North as well.
- 5.7. The letter has also been signed by the Chair of Transport East, Chair of the UK Innovation Corridor, and the MPs who sit on the East of England APPG.
- 5.8. On 5 July, EEH's managing director also made representations on the importance of Ely to Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Transport, Robert Courts during a meeting organised by the East of England APPG.

**Suzanne Winkels**  
**Principal Technical lead**  
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