

TRANSPORT EAST Forum
Wednesday 16th June 2021 via Teams

In attendance:

Core Members		TESOG Officers		Guests and Observers	
Cllr Kevin Bentley (Chair)	Essex County Council	Andrew Summers	Transport East	Carly Freeston	DfT
Cllr Lesley Wagland	Essex County Council	Esme Yuill	Transport East	Dr Liz Smith	DfT
Cllr Martin Wilby	Norfolk County Council	Rebecca Rangì	Transport East	Ros Vincent	Jacobs
Cllr Ron Woodley	Southend County Council	Adam Thorp	EELGA	Sean Perry	Jacobs
Cllr Mark Coxshall	Thurrock Borough Council	David Cumming	Norfolk County Council	Tim Steiner	Jacobs
Cllr Graham Butland	Braintree District council	Mat Kiely	Thurrock Borough Council	Charles Freeman	Jacobs
Cllr Phil Smart	Ipswich Borough Council	Alistair Southgate	Essex County Council	James Gore	Copper Consultancy
Andy Walker	Suffolk Chamber of Commerce	James Bradley	Network Rail	Tom Warren	Copper Consultancy
Laura Waters	Norfolk County Council	Matthew Taylor	Highways England	Kellie Mulveen-Moore	Copper Consultancy
Trevor Scott	SELEP	Trevor Wigget	Norfolk County Council	Phil Cruddace	Essex County Council
Mark Lucas	UK Innovation Corridor	Karen Gearing	Southend Borough Council	Louise Flavell	Braintree District Council
Perry Glading	South East LEP	David Glason	Great Yarmouth District Council	Andrew Cook	Essex County Council
Howard Davies	South East LEP	Suzanne Buck	Suffolk County Council		

Apologies

Mayor Dave Hodgson	Bedford Borough Council	Ellen Goodwin	New Anglia LEP
Davinia Farthing	Southend Borough Council	Steve Oliver	New Anglia LEP
Francesca Day	Essex County Council	David Birch	Essex Chamber of Commerce
Cllr Ian Bates	Cambridge City Council	Karen Chapman	Suffolk Growth Partnership
Cllr Graham Plant	Great Yarmouth Council	Nova Fairbank	Norfolk Chamber of Commerce
Nicola Beach	Suffolk County Council		

1.	Welcome and apologies, and Declaration of interest	<u>Actions</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
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	<p>Cllr Phil Smart declared he is now employed by the Railfreight Group. Cllr Smart declared register has been updated on Suffolk website.</p>		
<p>2.</p>	<p>Forum approved previous minutes 24th February 2021 were approved.</p>		
<p>3.</p>	<p>Transport East Governance Update</p> <p>Cllr Martin Wilby led the opening remarks and proposed the continuation of Cllr Kevin Bentley as chair of Transport East. This was seconded by Cllr Ron Woodley. Cllr Bentley was recently elected as the new leader of Essex County Council. It was agreed that Cllr Bentley would not have voting rights on the Transport East Forum, and the representative for Essex with voting rights on the Transport East board would be Cllr Lesley Wagland.</p> <p>Additional new members of the Transport East board were welcomed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Richard Smith, Suffolk County Council who replaces Cllr Andrew Reid • Dr Nik Johnson, Mayor of Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority (observer) <p>Final Approval of the Transport East Business Plan and DfT Funding grant of £520k for 2021/22 has been received from Baroness Vere. The Forum agreed to the publication of the Business Plan on the TE website in accordance with the DfT's terms and conditions. Alongside the award, Baroness Vere set clear objectives to TE for this financial year to complete our Transport Strategy and set of investment priorities. The Minister have also set expectations for the English STBs to work closely together.</p> <p>Formal thanks were given to Adam Thorp from East of England GLA who is returning to his main post with EEGLA on the 18th of June. During his time at TE Adam's professionalism, support and management of the technical programme has been outstanding. Adam's involvement within TE will continue through the EEGLA membership of the Senior Officer Group.</p> <p>Future Meeting Arrangements</p> <p>The forum agreed that once it is safe and appropriate to do so our forums will take a hybrid approach with meeting across the region supporting on site visits. This approach will enable a closer more collaborative relationship. Our first full hybrid meeting will take place in the autumn in Thurrock with Cllr Mark Coxshall hosting Transport East. It was agreed to investigate site visits at each of the future meetings to provide insight into regional transport challenges and priorities.</p>	<p>TE to work with Mark Coxshall to arrange the first meeting</p>	

	<p>Cllr Martin Wilby welcomed the board to Great Yarmouth and the Norfolk Energy Coast at a future meeting. It was suggested and agreed by the forum that further afield site visits to Europe would enhance the partnership work given the geography and innovation that aligns closely with our region.</p>		
<p>4.</p>	<p>Communications, partnerships, and engagement</p> <p>Communications Plan Update Esme Yuill provided a progress update on TE Key priorities over the next financial year as set out in the paper. Key highlights were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Plan publication and supporting delivery of workstreams within it • The finalisation of our transport strategy, and the core communication objectives • Potential Comprehensive Spending Review in Autumn 2021 and Government Budget process • Advocacy for our regional priorities • Support for partners for priority schemes and regional campaigns • Forum endorsement of Transport East branding • Forum endorsement of the principles of the public consultation <p>TE will build on the successes already achieved in 20/21 by strengthening and extending our relationship with Parliamentarians and work to deepen our relationships with Government and delivery bodies. The success of TE’s first virtual summit in early March and regional MP engagement workshop in May showcased the growing aspirations of the region. Feedback from the MP engagement was overwhelming positive with further collaborative sessions planned for mid-summer.</p> <p>Strategy Partner Engagement Report James Gore, Tom Warren and Kellie Mulveen-Moore presented the Engagement Report. Slides were shared with members, and key highlights were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of a dedicated engagement programme to ensure partners are shaping the Strategy • Meeting completed with over 300 partners in workshops, roundtables, 121s, surveys, creative engagement and our Annual Summit. • Between November 2020 and January 2021, completion of the public survey to gain the views of the widest range of residents of our region as possible, with feedback from over 600 residents • Creative competition to invite young people’s views on transport to 2050, with 40 submissions received 		

	<p>Thanks was given to Copper for their support during challenging timelines. A full engagement report will be published alongside the technical notes from Jacobs.</p>		
<p>5.</p>	<p>Transport Strategy Update</p> <p>Adam Thorp provided an update to the Forum members on the transport strategy and the launch of the public engagement in September. The following points on the strategy were endorsed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The four strategic pathways set out in Stage 2b • The approach towards the assessment and prioritisation of solutions as set out in Stage 3 (appendix 1) • The launch of a 5-week consultation period on the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (appendix 2) <p>Key points raised by members were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent of ‘transport deserts’ was discussed, and how the TE strategy aims to combats them. Tim Steiner from Jacobs explained ‘a transport desert has no effective transport services beyond those that are available to those who got access to private car’. • TE Strategy needs to consider the housing and job targets that have been set for the East and investment in transport requirements that will be needed to support this. • We must use more ambitious targets for better digital connectivity within the strategy, focusing on full rollout of high-quality broadband in the next 2-3 years, rather than by 2050. <p>The launch of the 5-week ISA scoping report consultation period begins on 16th June with statutory consultees. The consultation primarily focuses on five areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) • Natural Capital Assessment (NCA) • Health Impact Assessment (HIA) • Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) • Community Safety Assessment (CSA) <p>Transport East is following statutory processes to allow us the most robust ISA process to developing the transport strategy and ensure the strategy is fit for purpose should our statutory status change in the longer term. The Transport Forum endorsed the launch of the scoping report consultation.</p> <p>Alongside the strategy, an Investment and Delivery Plan will be developed. This will set out an investment pipeline into which our existing and future schemes will be placed. An assessment framework will be used to</p>		

<p>assess projects and identify how they contribute to the Transport East goals. Within the pipeline, projects will be categorised into three ‘pools’:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideas Pool • Development Pool • Delivery Pool <p>Options are assessed using an Assessment Framework (AF) at three points to ensure continued alignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the Ideas Pool the AF helps develop and refine ideas/ packages • In the Development Pool, the AF helps shape the business cases for projects • In the Delivery Pool, the AF identifies which schemes best fit the strategy and guides further enhancements to be made. <p>This approach will be finalised over the next few months, prior to public consultation on the strategy.</p> <p>Comments from members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we identify priorities for the CSR, if we are not completing the strategy until the end of the year? The Forum has already endorsed an interim investment and delivery plan to make ourselves clear in our ask from government, and we have enough clarity on the emerging draft strategy to share emerging details with DfT alongside our submission. <p>A paper was shared in the meeting pack on a proposed approach to CSR and it was agreed that officers will return to the Forum in July with proposals for the full CSR submission.</p>	<p>Andrew / Esme to share details of proposed TE CSR approach with members at next meeting scheduled for July 21st.</p>	
<p>6. Investment and Delivery Planning Supporting Buses</p> <p>Andrew presented a report on the DfT’s Bus Back Better Strategy and the Transport East draft report on Passenger Transport.</p> <p>The Bus Back Better strategy sets a strong ambition with funding for those areas with an Enhanced partnership. It sets the focus on the bus user and requires greater collaboration between operators, local authorities and other partners. Local authorities are required to progress one of two options to deliver buses in the future:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced partnership • Franchise 		

Transport East strongly supports the strategy, but retains concerns over the resource available to deliver the ambition. As a first step, our Chair and Parliamentary Ambassador wrote to the Minister to express our support and set out our challenges.

To support the evidence base for developing passenger transport in our region (with a focus on buses), TE commissioned Jacobs to identify the extent of our strategic challenges (including the extent of our significant transport deserts and the specific challenges in our rural and urban areas).

Next Steps

DfT has set a budget of £3billion to support delivery of the Bus Back Better Strategy. The role of Transport East is to support our authorities to access this funding to deliver better outcomes for our residents. It was agreed that the Forum should:

- Review the draft report and provide comments back to the Transport East team.
- Transport East and Jacobs to complete the report and share with DfT alongside a further letter to the Secretary of State articulate the opportunity within our region and the role of our local authorities.
- Our local authorities and operators to use the evidence to help prioritise investment.

Comments from members:

- Local authorities will shortly be approving plans for the BBB enhanced partnerships and TE support is welcome.
- Any benefits to the ease of using buses is welcome to help reduce congestion
- We must improve the integration of buses with rail and active travel options.
- There are penalties if authorities do not secure operators' commitment to BBB with the potential to lose out on entitlement to bus service operator grant, and the remaining post COVID recovery support.

Ely Junction Consultation Response

Stephen Deaville presented slides on the current and next stages of Ely Junction and they were shared for comments. Highlights included:

- Round 1 consultation results - 89% of responses support the proposals to increase capacity for passenger and freight services through the Ely Area.
- Ely is part of project Speed which would include change to Ely junction this decade
- Future consultation round in Autumn to 2021 to focus on:
 - Remodelling of track layout at Ely North junction
 - Queen Adelaide level crossings – integrated rail/road options

TE Forum members to provide comments on the draft report.

Andrew and Jacobs to complete the final report and share with DfT and Transport East authorities.

- Proposals for other level crossings between Ely – Cambridge / Ely – Peterborough / Ely – King’s Lynn / Ely – Soham
- Additional funding of almost £9m has been granted by the DfT to look at which level crossings between Ely and Ipswich may need to be upgraded and to develop proposals.
- Future Consultation Round – Summer /Autumn 2022

Comments from Members:

- Question whether Ely South would be done in isolation - Stephen confirmed the project will not be divided in that way, explaining the main reason that the NR have come forward with the South consultation first is that NR is still currently in the design development phase for North junction and the associated Queen Adelaide challenges.

East West Rail

Kerry Allen provided a brief update on the preliminary strategic outline business case that is underway which identifies the financial benefits of investing in the eastern section of East-West Rail to achieve improved connectivity between Norwich, Ipswich, Essex and Oxford and the economic centres that exist along the East West Rail main line.

Work is coming to an end on the pre SOBC work and Kerry confirmed that there is a strong economic case for investing in the eastern section, which in turn gives a strong economic case for passenger rail services and to run freight services along the route.

Comments of this pre SOBC to be circulated to members with comments by 9th July