

Transport East Forum

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Item: Item 5c: Transport Strategy Project Plan
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Purpose

This report explains why our partnership needs a Transport Strategy, and proposes a work programme to complete it.

Recommendations

Transport East Forum Members are asked to endorse the proposed approach to completing the Transport Strategy

1. Introduction

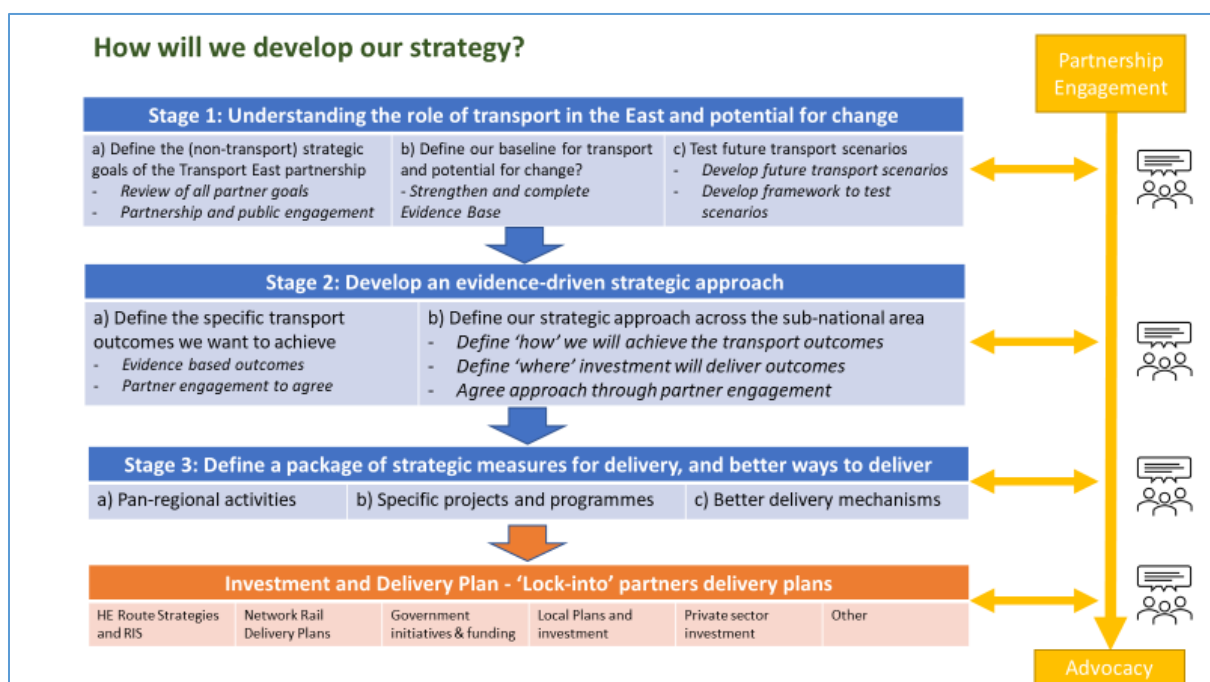
- 1.1 The 100-day plan sets out a requirement for Transport East to produce ***“an ambitious, focused and coherent Transport Strategy, based on robust evidence, fully reflecting the unique ambitions of local partners and aligned to national goals”***
- 1.2 Our inaugural Transport East strategy, unique to our region and setting our ambition to 2050, will articulate a compelling case for investment and strategic approach that underpins our future transport investment. The strategy will define our partnership’s single voice, leading to one set of priorities, locked into delivery plans, to achieve better outcomes for our region.

Figure 1: The role of our Transport Strategy



- 1.3 All other six Sub-National Transport Bodies (STBs) are developing, or have completed their sub-national strategies. An evidence-based strategy, with a framework for investment and delivery, is fundamental for regions to attract government and private sector support.
- 1.4 There are significant advantages and opportunities of initiating our strategy now. Transport East will adopt the best practice and lessons learned from the other STBs, and devise the first sub-national transport strategy in England developed in the post-COVID19 world. This strategy will be grounded in the new global reality, supporting both (a) our **short-term economic recovery from COVID19** and (b) our **unique long term goals to 2050**.
- 1.5 The audience for the strategy will be wide-ranging. It will provide:
- Confidence to national decision-makers and delivery bodies to invest here: including Government, transport delivery agencies and private sector investors
 - Clarity and co-ordination for local and regional partners: including local authorities, community groups, businesses, transport operators and the general public
- 1.6 We are not starting from scratch. Our partners already have the building blocks of a strategy:
- ✓ The Transport East partnership has already established three core strategic priorities: (i) Global Gateways; (ii) Multi-centred growth; and (iii) Energised coastal areas;
 - ✓ Within the region, local partners have already established a range of local strategies, priorities and proposals to support economic, social and environmental goals;
 - ✓ De-carbonisation is emerging as a national and local priority, with DfT's Decarbonisation Consultation now live, and Transport East producing its own carbon evidence base;
 - ✓ Transport East has already produced an initial regional transport evidence base in 2019, with a focus on road and rail.
 - ✓ The government has additional national goals, including housing and economic growth (including 'levelling up' and COVID-19 recovery)
- 1.7 Our proposed programme of work will strengthen this evidence base and clarify our ambitions and goals, setting out a transport approach from now to 2050 that is fully owned and endorsed by Transport East's partners. To scope out our methodology, a TESOG workshop was held on 10th June, resulting in a three-stage process proposed in Figure 2:

Figure 2: Methodology – The three-stage process



1.8 This reports explains the **three technical stages** and our **Engagement Plan** in more detail, and sets out our governance and timescales. The method is based on best practice from across the UK, and tailored to our unique location and circumstances:

2. **Strategy Development Stage 1: *Understanding the role of Transport East and the Potential for Change***

2.1 Stage 1 will comprise three modules, answering three strategic questions:

A) **What do we want to achieve? (both short term recovery and to 2050)**

- We will research and collate the existing economic, social and environmental goals and outcomes that local and national partners have already set out in Local plans, Local Industrial Strategies and other documents throughout the region.
- Our early engagement with partners and the public will then shape these into **unique strategic goals** for our transport strategy.

B) **What is current situation and potential for change?**

- We need to **strengthen and complete our evidence base**, to ensure credibility and robustness. Investors in our region will need to understand why our proposals will deliver our outcomes, and we need to put forward a compelling case.
- The main evidence gaps include our understanding of the role of transport (both generally and specific modes – e.g. roads and rail) in ‘levelling up’, supporting coastal communities, unlocking the potential of our international gateways, and supporting our energy coast. These outcomes will be our unique selling points, and we need to be able to fully evidence transport’s contribution to them.

C) **What are our options?**

- We need to create a unique set of **potential future scenarios**, to understand the best approach for our region. This will allow us to test and define our preferred strategic approach in stage 2.

2.2 Partner and public engagement will be vital throughout stage 1 of strategy development to ensure that Transport East’s thinking is informed at an early stage by a wide range of partners, businesses and communities (see section 5 below for **Engagement Plan**).

2.3 We proposed that consultancy support is commissioned to support all three modules, with the Transport East programme team retaining oversight of the whole stage. The outcomes of stage 1 of strategy development will be drafted into a **stage 1 report** that is shared with the Transport East Forum for approval in Autumn 2020.

3. **Strategy Development Stage 2: *Developing an Evidence-driven Strategic Approach***

3.1 Stage 2 of strategy development will define transport-specific outcomes for the region with clear measures for success, and set a strategic approach to achieve them. This stage will answer two questions:

A) **What transport outcomes does our strategy need to achieve?**

- We will use the outputs of stage 1 to set and prioritise specific transport-related outcomes, goals and targets for our strategy. These could include transport’s specific contribution to carbon reductions, safety, connecting economies, supporting trade, as well as supporting goals such as mode shift.

B) **How will we deliver our outcomes? What is our strategic approach?**

- We will then define a unique strategic approach, taking the most effective elements of the scenarios to maximise delivery of the transport outcomes. This

will include both a thematic approach (i.e. **how** will we achieve our goals) and spatial (i.e. **where** will we need different types of measures).

- 3.2 As for stage 1, engagement is vital to ensure all partners are involved in development of the transport goals, and preferred strategic approach.

4. **Strategy Development Stage 3: A Package of Delivery Measures**

- 4.1 Stage 3 of strategy development translates our outcomes and approach into a set of delivery measures and interventions for Transport East. These will be presented in the form of an Investment and Delivery Plan, covering both post-COVID recovery and to 2050. This will include:

A) Pan-regional measures: This will establish a programme to tackle strategic challenges on a pan-regional scale. For example, this could include rural transport, roll-out of low-carbon vehicles, and other.

B) Specific projects, packages or programmes: on our strategic network and urban / rural areas, or national scale proposals that impact on our region.

C) Better delivery: Alongside what we want to deliver, we need to set out what else needs to change to improve delivery – be that devolution of funding, ways of working with partners or other mechanisms.

- 4.2 Whilst developing this package of delivery measures, it will be crucial to work closely with delivery agencies, including Highways England, Network Rail, DfT, transport and infrastructure operators and businesses to ensure close alignment with their delivery plans, and ensure our strategic transport priorities are 'locked in' them. We also propose to engage with a wide range of other partners across the region, to ensure the delivery measures capitalises on all strengths and opportunities and minimises weakness and threats.
- 4.3 Following completion of stages 2 and 3 of strategy development, a **first draft of the complete Transport Strategy** will be produced and shared with the Transport East Forum to seek approval to go into public consultation

5. **Partner and Public Engagement**

- 5.1 Our strategy will only be successful if it truly represents a single voice, and therefore, alongside the technical work, we will launch an **Strategy Engagement Programme**. It is essential that all our partners, businesses and communities, including those from harder to reach audiences, are given the opportunity to influence all three stages of strategy development. With a time horizon to 2050, this will be a strategy that unlocks economic and social opportunities for all people across the Transport East geography, inclusive of age, gender and ethnicity.

- 5.2 It is through this engagement programme that we also cultivate our single voice and future advocates. In order to achieve high-quality and wide-ranging partner engagement, it is proposed that specialist support is commissioned, to deploy best practice and innovative methods to reach diverse target audiences. Core activities and audiences would include:

- **Dedicated website** to host the engagement documentation and invite comments via online survey.
- Using opportunities to engage **MPs**, such as the All Party Parliamentary Group for the East of England, and further events
- **Focused meetings** with national, regional and local partners representing interests including transport, business, environmental and planning

- **Business** roundtables throughout the region to establish what business leaders need from the transport system
- Establishing a ‘transport influencers group’ to ensure we understand the specific needs and requirements **of different transport** users, for example those with **disabilities** or on **low incomes**.
- **Social media and web-based** activity, to gather views of the general public
- Securing the views of **future generations** with **young people engaged** via youth parliaments, competitions and other channels
- Holding ‘**walking conferences**’ where members of Transport East will visit locations within the region and meet local community and business representatives about their expectations for the transport system

5.3 Transport East is recruiting a Communications Manager who would lead on this engagement programme. In addition, it is proposed that up to 30 per cent of the Transport East budget is allocated for the engagement programme in order to achieve the best possible input across all three stages, and ensure we are developing our future team of regional advocates through this process.

6. Governance and resourcing

6.1 This will be a resource intensive programme, managed by a sub-group of TESOG as follows:

- Programme Director: Andrew Summers (TE Strategic Director)
- Programme Manager: Adam Thorp (EELGA contracted support)
- TESOG Steering sub-group: David Cumming (Norfolk), Graeme Mateer (Suffolk), Alastair Southgate (Essex)
- Advisors: LEPs, Highways England, Network Rail, DfT

6.2 As set out in figure 2, the programme would be split into 3 stages, each comprised of modules. Transport East would retain oversight of the stages. Within the stages, some of those modules would be led by members of TESOG, and some of those modules would be completed by specialist consultancy support. All consultancy support would be procured via the programme manager.

6.3 There is a baseline budget allocation in this financial year of c.£100,000 to cover all costs. At time of writing, we are awaiting news of further funding contributions from other bodies. We have designed the brief to enable us to quickly increase the scope of the work to enhance the outputs, if further funding was forthcoming.

7. Statutory processes

7.1 To ensure legal and statutory robustness, stage 1 would also include a scoping of an **Integrated Sustainability Appraisal**.

7.2 The Cities and Devolution Act which created Sub-national Transport Bodies stipulates that in preparing a Transport Strategy, an STB must carry out a formal public consultation. Following the completion of stage 3, and in addition to the significant early engagement programme, it is expected that a **formal public consultation** would be held, potentially over a period of 8-12 weeks. The exact timings of this would depend on successful completion of stages 1 to 3, and would need to avoid any purdah period for 2021 local elections.

8. Timescales

8.1 Experience from other STBs suggest that the pre-public consultation process would take approximately six months. The timescale depends entirely on the scale of the funding available from external sources (see agenda item 3). If external STB funding is forthcoming

from DfT, we expect the strategy development to take the full financial year due to enhanced scope. If not, then we would expect to complete it sooner, with reduced scope.

- 8.2 We would expect to launch the public consultation on the draft strategy in early 2021, with the final strategy subsequently launched following that consultation.
- 8.3 Whilst we develop the strategy, we do not want lose out on short-term opportunities to progress and deliver existing priorities throughout the strategy development period. Transport East is producing an interim Investment and Delivery Plan (see agenda item 6), which sets out our existing programme for delivery within the partnership.

9. Next Steps

9.1 **Members are requested to comment on these proposals today, and endorse the overall approach.**

9.2 Following today's meeting, we will:

- Update the proposal based on comments received today
- Confirm additional funding from potential contributors
- Initiate project plan, including procurement of consultancy support required
- Report back to Forum members on progress, prior to initiation of the Engagement Plan.
