Strategic Transport Forum
16th March 2018

Agenda Item 3: Innovation

Recommendation: **It is recommended that the Forum note the update**

1. **Context**

1.1.   The scope and pace of England's Economic Heartland's work in supporting and applying innovation across the arc is expected to increase in 18/19. Work-streams are maturing and government focus on the region as a fundamental pillar of post-Brexit growth will develop further and provide more opportunity.

1.2.   Realising the economic potential of the Heartland is a national priority. Facilitating this transformational economic activity requires investment in infrastructure and services that is transformational. Innovation is central to delivering that growth and "future proofing" the region.

1.3.   Oxfordshire County Council has been providing strategic leadership on behalf of England's Economic Heartland working closely with partners from across the corridor.

2. **Regional Evidence Base**

2.1.   A key role for the Forum – as the emerging Sub-national Transport Body – is being responsible for the regional evidence base. Our approach has three building blocks:

a) A regional database – that brings together information on planned growth, with core socio-economic data and baseline transport information. The first version of this database is now available to partners.

Reaction from partners has been very positive and the Forum is seen nationally as setting a benchmark in terms of establishing this baseline.

b) A regional policy scenario modelling tool – where the database provides the Forum with a consistent understanding of the baseline, this tool will provide it with the capability to explore the relative implications of alternative policy scenarios.

A contract has been let to a locally based SME – Immense – to develop this capability for the Forum. This Forum had a demonstration last Autumn of a similar tool developed by Immense.

An initial proof-of-concept model will be available by the summer and will be used to develop some initial thinking on scenarios. Further work will be required to develop the full capability. As with the database, the tool – which will be web-based – will be made available to partners for their own use. Unlike traditional

transport models, the tool will not require specialist knowledge or skills to operate.

In the medium term opportunities will be explored to link the tool with databases that hold information on the condition of the highway asset. This offers the potential to develop a better understanding of the impact of new development on the existing highway network.

c) A regional datahub/platform – data is an increasinngly important part of the regional evidence base. It is also going to be a key component of the eco-system that will enable the ambition to be a 'living laboratory' for innovation.

Critically the datahub will help support the development of a common approach to delivering enhanced mobility services across the Heartland. In particular it will help the Heartland realise the potential for Mobility as a Service offers to businesses and residents alike.

3. Mobility as a Service

3.1. Mobility as a Service (MaaS) is an approach to transport provision that sees use of digital interface to enable a user to source and manage the provision of a transport related service(s) which are tailored to their individual needs.

3.2. As transport increasingly becomes viewed by successive generations as a service so there are opportunities to develop solutions that cover any type of travel experience using any type of transport service, public or private.

3.3. A number of the Heartland urban centres – Oxford, Milton Keynes, Northampton and Cambridge – are already at the leading edge of innovations that could potentially form part of a MaaS offer.

3.4. As work on the development of the overarching Transport Strategy is taken forward so it will be important to understand the opportunities that exist to encourage the development of MasS offers. In this regard the Forum will have a key role to play in stimulating the development of new services and in understanding the implications for the wider transport system.

3.5. MaaS is an area where collaborative working with the Transport Systems Catapult potentially offers the opportunity to accelerate the emergence of new service providers to the benefit of the user.

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