

# England's Economic Heartland Strategic Alliance Strategic Transport Forum

12<sup>th</sup> February 2016

## Agenda Item 4: Governance Arrangements

**Recommendation: It is recommended that:**

- a) **The Terms of Reference are adopted**
- b) **The Terms of Reference are reviewed in 12 months**

### 1. **Strategic Alliance: Background**

1.1. The Strategic Alliance initiative came about through recognition of the fact that:

- In terms of strategic infrastructure the issues (and solutions) extend beyond any one single upper-tier authority
- Issues that are common to one or more upper-tier authority administrative area may benefit from a co-ordinated response
- There is a need for stronger integration of investment by Government, its agencies, local authorities, as well as infrastructure and service providers

1.2. In this regard the Strategic Alliance partners share a common aim: to look beyond current success and through collaborative work are committed to the aim of:

- a) Raising productivity to match, and where possible exceed, that of our global competitors
- b) Addressing identified barriers to the delivery of economic growth

1.3. In this way the Strategic Alliance partners look to:

- a) Strip away duplication and remove inefficiencies, enabling faster, more agile decisions
- b) Simplify funding streams wherever possible so that the time (and cost) taken to develop proposals and get them delivered on the ground is reduced
- c) Provide greater certainty for private sector investors thereby encouraging them to commit sooner to investments with greater confidence

1.4. A key principle of the Strategic Alliance approach is that participation in it:

- Does not oblige partners to be involved in all activities, projects or proposals
- Does not preclude any partner from working cross-boundary with other organisations or partners.

1.5. The Strategic Alliance approach is entirely consistent with the development of local, county based 'devolution deals'.

## **2. Strategic Transport Forum: Statement of Purpose**

- 2.1. Early agreement was reached amongst the Alliance partners that strategic transport issues are an area in which there is added value to be realised through collaborative working at the sub-national scale.
- 2.2. To that end the Strategic Transport Forum has been established as a non-statutory partnership. The Terms of Reference set out the purpose of the Forum as being to:
  - Provide the opportunity to share technical expertise and resources across the partners to assist in the development, assessment and implementation of proposals
  - Enable a more efficient and meaningful engagement with the Department for Transport, infrastructure agencies (such as Highways England and Network Rail) and service providers (such as bus and train operating companies)
  - Provide the focus for a single conversation on strategic transport related activities.
- 2.3. In this way the partners will be able to:
  - Enable rationalisation of standards, practices and policies in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of day-to-day operation of the transport system and response to disruption (accidents, emergencies and extreme weather events)
  - Build upon locally identified needs to develop and maintain a single overview of strategic transport priorities in liaison with the Local Transport Authorities/Boards and other stakeholders as appropriate
  - Manage the resources available to establish project teams as a means of providing leadership required to develop strategic proposals, including engagement with business and the wider community
  - Establish joint bidding teams to undertake and commission technical work (including the development of business cases) to secure investment funding to enable the delivery of strategic proposals
  - Work with Government and its agencies to co-design nationally delivered transport investment programmes.
- 2.4. At the time of its establishment the geographical extent of the Forum extends to cover Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire, Milton Keynes, Bedford, Central Bedfordshire, Luton and Cambridgeshire.
- 2.5. It is accepted that there will be an on-going requirement for the Forum to develop and maintain a strong and effective working relationship with adjoining areas, including sub-national partnerships where these either exist or emerge.

## **3. Terms of Reference**

- 3.1. In establishing the Forum as the focus for the single conversation on strategic transport issues it is essential that Terms of Reference provide the Forum with sound governance for collaborative working.

- 3.2. The draft Terms of Reference (Annex 1) have been developed taking into account the following principles:
- Members of the Forum retain their existing accountabilities and responsibilities for transport
  - It is for partners to determine who they nominate to sit on the Forum – however the expectation is that for Local Transport Authorities it will be the relevant Cabinet member, for Local Enterprise Partnerships a member of their Board
  - Meetings of the Strategic Transport Forum are held in public, with papers published on the Strategic Alliance website
  - Third parties may be invited to participate in meetings of the Forum where this will add value to the issue being considered: in addition to which third parties may request to address the Forum on a specific issue or proposal
- 3.3. The Chairman of the Forum will serve in the role for at least a year but for no more than 2 years. The secretariat for the Forum will be provided by the Chairman's organisation, supported by the Strategic Alliance programme team.
- 3.4. An executive officer group will support the Forum by developing a detailed programme of work for the Forum's consideration and approval. Once agreed, the executive officer group will be responsible for delivering the programme of work, undertaking activity on a collaborative basis wherever possible.
- 3.5. The Forum's activity and programme of work will be taken forward on a collaborative basis, building upon and complementing existing working arrangements where this is appropriate.
- 3.6. Membership of the Strategic Transport Forum is set out in an appendix to the Terms of Reference. This meeting's attention is drawn to the fact that the programme team are in discussion with the Association of Train Operating Companies with a view to identifying appropriate representation from the rail operators. The programme team is also exploring the extent to which Peterborough Council and the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough LEP may be interested in participating in the Transport Forum.

#### **4. Next Steps**

- 4.1. The Terms of Reference adopted by this meeting (including any amendments agreed by the meeting) will be posted on the Strategic Alliance's website.
- 4.2. It is proposed that the Terms of Reference are reviewed in 12 months; partly to enable a review in the light of experience and partly to enable the implications (if any) of progress being made with the development of a proposal to establish a Sub-national Transport Body.

**February 2016**

**England's Economic Heartland  
Strategic Alliance  
Strategic Transport Forum**

(Draft) Terms of Reference

**1. Context**

- 1.1. The Strategic Alliance partners share a common aim: to look beyond current success and through collaborative work are committed to the aim of:
- Raising productivity to match, and where possible exceed, that of our global competitors
  - Addressing identified barriers to the delivery of economic growth
- 1.2. The Strategic Alliance initiative came about through recognition of the fact that:
- In terms of strategic infrastructure the issues (and solutions) extend beyond any one single upper-tier authority
  - Issues that are common to one or more upper-tier authority administrative area may benefit from a co-ordinated response
  - There is a need for stronger integration of investment by Government, its agencies, local authorities, as well as infrastructure and service providers
- 1.3. The Strategic Transport and Infrastructure Forum is the Partners' response to the need for a forum in which strategic issues and proposals can be addressed in a timely and efficient way.
- 1.4. The Forum brings together representatives of Local Transport Authorities/Local Transport Boards and Local Enterprise Partnerships with representatives from Government, infrastructure agencies and transport service providers in a collaborative partnership that enables a single co-ordinated conversation.
- 1.5. As such the Forum provides a single point of contact for Government, its agencies, infrastructure and service providers on strategic transport issues

**2. Statement of Purpose**

- 2.1. The Strategic Transport and Infrastructure Forum will:
- Provide the opportunity to share technical expertise and resources across the partners to assist with the development, assessment and implementation of proposals
  - Enable a more effective and meaningful engagement with the Department for Transport, infrastructure agencies (such as Highways England and Network Rail) and service providers (such as bus and train operating companies)
  - Provide the focus for a single conversation on strategic transport and infrastructure related activities.

- 2.2. In this way the partners will be able to:
- Enable rationalisation of standards, practices and policies in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the day-to-day operation of the transport system and response to disruption (accidents, emergencies, and extreme weather events)
  - Build upon locally identified needs to develop and maintain a single overview of strategic transport priorities in liaison with the Local Transport Authorities/Boards and other stakeholders as appropriate
  - Manage the resources available to establish project teams as a means of providing the leadership required to develop strategic proposals, including engagement with business and the wider community
  - Establish joint bidding teams to undertake and commission technical work (including the development of business cases) to secure investment funding to enable the delivery of strategic proposals
  - Work with Government and its agencies to co-design nationally delivered transport investment programmes
- 2.3. The Forum will enable the partners to realise:
- Greater added value through the sharing of knowledge, skills and resources
  - More efficient operation of the strategic and local road networks
  - Improved resilience of the transport system, particularly during periods of disruption (both planned and unplanned)
  - More efficient and effective delivery of infrastructure, with schemes delivered faster and at less cost
  - More effective engagement with, and influence over decision making at the national level

### **3. Membership of the Forum**

- 3.1. The members of the Forum are set out in appendix 1
- 3.2. It is for each Partner to nominate their representative on the Forum. The expectation is that Local Transport Authorities will be represented by the relevant Cabinet member; Local Enterprise Partnerships by a member of their governing Board.
- 3.3. Public transport operators that provide services within the geography represented by the Forum will be invited to participate in the work of the Forum.
- 3.4. Substitutes may attend meetings of the Forum if the nominated representative is unable to attend.
- 3.5. Individual members of the Forum will be responsible for ensuring their organisation is kept briefed on the work of the Forum.

- 3.6. The Chairman of the Forum will be a representative from a Local Transport Authority, who will serve in the role for at least one year but no more than two years.
- 3.7. Additional organisations may be invited to join at any time where their membership and participation is seen as adding value to the Forum.
- 3.8. Membership of the Forum will be reviewed on a regular basis
- 3.9. Members of the Forum retain their existing accountabilities and responsibilities for transport.
- 3.10. Membership of the Forum:
  - Does not oblige partners to be involved in all activities, projects or proposals
  - Does not preclude any member from working cross-boundary with other Local Transport Authorities or strategic transport organisations

#### **4. Ways Of Working**

- 4.1. Meetings of the Forum will be held quarterly. All papers and meetings will be in public, with all interested parties able to attend meetings
- 4.2. Decision making within the Forum will be consensual.
- 4.3. Third parties may be invited to participate in meetings of the Forum and invited to be members of project teams established by the Forum
- 4.4. Third parties may request to address the Forum on a specific issue or proposal. The Chairman of the Forum will determine whether to grant the request.
- 4.5. The Forum may decide to establish sub-groups where this is appropriate in order to address specific issues: sub-groups may be either time-limited in their duration or standing sub-groups where the issue is on-going.
- 4.6. The secretariat for meetings of the Forum will be provided by the Local Transport Authority that provides the Chairman for the Forum, supported by the Strategic Alliance programme team
- 4.7. The work of the Forum will be supported by a Technical Support Group at officer level. This Group will provide technical and professional advice drawn from the Local Transport Authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships..
- 4.8. The Technical Support Group will maintain an overview of the activities taken forward as part of the Forum and ensure that the work programme adopted by the Forum is delivered.

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**Membership – February 2016**

Local Transport Authorities	Bedford Borough Council Buckinghamshire County Council Cambridgeshire County Council Central Bedfordshire Council Luton Borough Council Milton Keynes Council Northamptonshire County Council Oxfordshire County Council
Local Enterprise Partnerships	Buckinghamshire Thames Valley LEP Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership
Local Transport Boards	Oxfordshire Growth Board
Government and agencies	Department for Transport (observer) Highways England Network Rail
Other Organisations	Arriva (The Shires) Go-Ahead (Oxford Bus) Stagecoach  Civil Engineering Contractors Association Transport Systems Catapult