



## **Strategic Transport Leadership Board**

3 March 2023

### **Agenda Item 7 – Mobility Hubs**

*Recommendation:*

**It is recommended that the Board:**

- a) Notes the completion of the EEH Mobility Hubs Business Case Guidance**
- b) Agrees the next stage to identify – at a strategic level – potential appropriate sites for mobility hubs throughout the region**

#### **1. Purpose of report**

- 1.1. To update the Board on work completed by EEH on business case guidance for mobility hubs, the positive feedback which has been received and next steps to identify suitable locations for mobility hubs.

#### **2. Key points to note**

- 2.1. Mobility hubs provide visible, safe, and accessible spaces where public, shared and active travel modes are co-located alongside improvements to the public realm, aimed at increasing uptake of sustainable modes.
- 2.2. Given they are a relatively new concept, EEH, working with partners, has produced guidance on writing business cases for mobility hubs, particularly for rural areas.
- 2.3. The guidance has received positive feedback from DfT and local partners.
- 2.4. Next steps include identifying at a strategic level potential locations for mobility hubs.

#### **3. Context**

- 3.1. Policy 28 in EEH's transport strategy supports the establishment of mobility hubs in the region.
- 3.2. Mobility hubs bring together shared transport with public transport and active travel in spaces designed to provide a site for interchange or improve the public realm.
- 3.3. Advantages of mobility hubs include:
  - Plugging the gap in the public transport network, by allowing better 'first or last mile' connectivity to the nearest bus or railway services, in a cost-effective way.
  - Increasing convenience for multimodal trips, with the possibility of seamless switches and improved links between different layers of transport such as the core public transport network and shared services
  - Offering a safer and more comfortable experience for waiting passengers leading to improved uptake for more vulnerable users
  - Improving the public realm by allowing space to be reorganised for the benefit of pedestrians, cyclists and business owners addressing parking problems and creating more pleasant environments, including reducing 'street clutter' from dockless/free floating micromobility services and provide a natural home for EV charging infrastructure.

#### **4. Development of guidance**

- 4.1. Due to the relatively recent emergence of mobility hubs and limited examples of delivery in the UK to date, EEH local authority partners identified there was a lack of good practice and precedent in the development of business cases to support the delivery of mobility hubs, particularly for more rural locations.
- 4.2. To address this EEH worked with Milton Keynes Council, Oxfordshire County Council and Hertfordshire County Council to develop and commission the development of the mobility hubs business case guidance.
- 4.3. The guidance is intended to help support local authorities in the region – and potentially across the country – as they look to deliver visible, safe, and accessible spaces where public, shared and active travel modes which are co-located alongside improvements to the public realm.
- 4.4. The document provides guidance for a range of proposals from large scale where business cases and appraisal programmes need to be consistent with government’s ‘Green Book’ guidance and the Department for Transport’s transport analysis guidance (TAG), to smaller scale where business cases are for local government internal governance for example are at a very early stage of development prior to embarking on a TAG-compliant process.
- 4.5. The guidance has a particular focus on the challenges faced in rural areas where business cases can be more challenging to develop given the smaller catchments, limited mobility service provision and often smaller funding opportunities where extensive appraisal of benefits may not be possible, which reflects much of the geography within the EEH region.
- 4.6. To support the thinking and advice in the guidance document, consideration has been given to three hub case studies:
  - Rural village: Small (proportionate approach)
  - Rural railway Station: Large (full process)
  - Peri-urban Network: (programme level)
- 4.7. As part of the development of the guidance, drafts were shared with EEH local authority partners and DfT and the response has been positive. Feedback from a representative at DfT said *‘it is a very useful piece of well written guidance’*. Feedback from local authority partners said *‘the guidance will be a useful starting point to progress business cases’* and *‘it’s an excellent piece of work and will help with our own strategic thinking’*.

#### **5. Next Steps**

- 5.1. The final draft of the guidance is ready to be published and shared with all EEH local authority partners and wider through EEH communications channels. Part of the communications approach will be to stress that this guidance will be helpful to authorities from across the country.
- 5.2. Following on from this guidance, it is proposed that a mapping tool to identify potential mobility hub locations within the EEH region at a strategic level is developed to further support EEH local authorities when they are developing mobility hub opportunities within their geographies and boundaries.
- 5.3. Subject to Board agreement to the 2023/24 work programme, EEH business unit will work with local partners to identify possible locations for ‘mobility hub pilots’. Board members are encouraged to feedback any possible sites of interest for the business unit to pursue.

**Trevor Brennan**  
**Project Lead**  
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