



Strategic Transport Leadership Board

14 July 2023

Agenda Item 7 - Business Unit Update

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the meeting:

a) Notes the business unit update on:

- *Quarter 1 progress report, including considering the implications of the delay in funding confirmation from DfT for the financial year 2023/24.*
- *LTP Refresh Update*
- *EEH Bus Summit*
- *Joint electric vehicle project with Transport East – ELVIS*

1. 2023/2024 Progress Report (Quarter 1)

- 1.1. The recent review of EEH identified an opportunity for Board members to receive updates on EEH's programme progress on a more frequent, quarterly, basis. This approach would be in line with the quarterly review cycle already established, which reports into DfT and the business unit internal assurance process.
- 1.2. The 2023/2024 quarter 1 Progress Report for EEH is presented at annex 1.
- 1.3. Board members will note that the status of projects within the 2023/24 Programme all sit at either "Commissioned at Risk" (pink) or "Pre-Scoping" (yellow). This is reflective of the delay in DfT settlement which is pending ministerial sign-off.
- 1.4. In March 2023, the Strategic Transport Leadership Board considered and agreed 'in principle' to the work programme for the financial year 2023/24. The programme was based on the EEH three year business plan (2022 – 2025), and an indicative funding allocation for EEH provided by DfT through to April 2025.
- 1.5. However, in the absence of a confirmed funding settlement from DfT, it is not possible for EEH to commence work in earnest on the work programme for the year ahead. The EEH business unit is managing the delivery risks that are inevitable from this delay through: tighter programming; grouping projects to becoming a small number of larger programmes; and exploring essential projects that must be commissioned at risk. Central to decision making is a need to be able to continue to run the organisation, not least the salaries of our staff and seconded staff.

- 1.6. Despite these actions, one of the most pressing demands on EEH is how we plan our support for local authority partners this financial year will on the refresh of local transport plans (LTP). DfT has proposed the development of a Centre of Excellence (CoE) within each sub-national transport body. This is an additional element in the 2023/24 work programme and without the settlement, EEH business unit will need to consider what needs to be reduced or amended within our aspirations.
- 1.7. There is likely to be some implications on the wider programme as a result, and with the Board's agreement, it is proposed that officers develop an "absence of settlement" proposition over the summer to be approved by the Board in September 2023 (assuming the settlement has not arrived before that date).

2. Local Transport Plan Refresh - update

- 2.1. EEH business unit continues to work with authority partners to prepare for the publication of the DfT updated guidance on LTP development. DfT officers have briefed the EEH Transport Officer Group that the intention is to publish the consultation on the guidance as soon as possible, recognising the imminent Parliamentary recess.
- 2.2. EEH and DfT officers have provisionally agreed to undertake local authority engagement on the LTP consultation on September 22nd, facilitating dialogue, discussions and a further opportunity to highlight and demonstrate the tools that EEH are making available to authority partners to support development of LTPs.
- 2.3. A particular area of focus for STBs is responding to the new requirements regarding the quantification of carbon reductions as a result of the policies deployed in LTPs (QCR).
- 2.4. EEH continues to develop the Decarbonisation Policy Playbook tool to satisfy the QCR requirement. EEH officers met with DfT analysts on the 4 July 2023 to provide an update on the methodology for the tool. The feedback has been positive – a version will be made available for testing in August.
- 2.5. The EEH Board members may be interested to know that the tool developed by EEH and consultants on behalf of EEH authority partners has been adopted by the entire STB community. The tool will now be rolled out to all English transport authorities – providing a common approach to quantifying carbon impact of LTP interventions.

3. EEH Bus Summit

- 3.1. In March 2023, Board members were keen to consider the 'Future of Buses' paper further and asked that officers draw together a proposal and date for a follow-up event.
- 3.2. As a result, EEH is organising a bus summit, titled 'Improving buses outside of cities'. The event will enable Members to explore and reflect on the potential approaches to improve journeys and services between towns and cities as well as services to rural locations within the EEH region. Currently, issues with these journeys are not currently being fully addressed by operators or local authorities, due to funding constraints or lack of robust co-ordination between parties.
- 3.3. The proposed summit date is 15 September and initial invites and diary holds have been sent to Board members. The event will be held at Stockwood Discovery Centre in Luton, which is accessible by bus and rail and includes a transport museum onsite.

4. Joint EV Project with Transport East – Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy (ELVIS)

- 4.1. The ELVIS report - produced as part of the joint work undertaken with Transport East to support the delivery of Electric Vehicle infrastructure across the region has been published and shared with EEH authorities.



- 4.2. The report comes in two formats: A short overview and a comprehensive study. EEH officers and the consultant (City Science) have engaged extensively with authority officers and DfT (OZEV) as well as the private sector on the development of this report.
- 4.3. EEH and Transport East will use this report to support discussions with DfT on emerging approaches to funding, delivery and possible additional requirements to support the scaling up of EV infrastructure in the region.
- 4.4. EEH continue to support authorities in their approach to EV infrastructure deployment – providing insight from procurement specialists (Crown commercial services/ Oxford DPS) and wider engagement with the private sector. The report has provided significant insight in informing these discussions and framing the scale of the challenge.
- 4.5. EEH have committed to facilitating an additional regional forum for EV officers to continue to develop a collaborative approach to deployment and procurement -to ensure best practice is shared across the region.

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July 2023