



## **Report to Solent Transport**

**Date:** 11 October 2017

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**Subject:** Update on Transport for the South East

### **Purpose of the Report**

The purpose of this report is to provide Solent Transport with information on the development of Transport for the South East (TfSE) and the newly formed shadow Sub National Transport Body (STB), which aims to help secure more efficient, sustainable and integrated transport infrastructure and services and improve the South East's wider connectivity.

TfSE brings together the South East region's transport authorities and its five Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) to work directly with the Government, Highways England, Network Rail, as well as with major port, airport, bus and rail operators. Its key outcome will be the development and implementation of a single, strategic transport infrastructure strategy that influences future investment programmes of key agencies, such as Highways England and Network Rail, to better align its priorities and with the Strategic Economic Plans of the region's LEPs.

### **Recommendation**

That the Joint Committee notes the development of the Shadow Sub National Transport Body, TfSE, and its associated work, as outlined in the report.

## **1. Background**

1.1 The Government aims to boost economic growth by establishing STBs across the English regions. Through its Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016 STBs can be granted legal powers and duties to advise transport ministers on strategic transport decisions and investment priorities for their area. National agencies, such as Network Rail and Highways England, will be expected to take account of STB priorities, which will be set out in their transport strategies and

associated plans. Whilst the primary role is to advise transport ministers on strategic transport priorities for their areas, it is expected that over time STBs may have wider responsibilities for improving transport planning, or provide other enhancements to economic development in their areas.

- 1.2 The initial concept of STBs was aimed at strengthening the 'Northern Powerhouse' by providing a statutory footing for ***Transport for the North*** (TfN). Although TfN has yet to secure statutory status, it has received significant funding from the Department for Transport (DfT) to develop its Transport Strategy which makes a case for transport investment in the North up to 2050. There are now three other areas developing plans to establish STBs for their regions: the Midlands, through '***Midlands Connect***'; the region between Oxfordshire and Peterborough, including Buckinghamshire and Cambridgeshire, through '***England's Economic Heartland***'; and more recently the South East region, through '***Transport for the South East***' (TfSE).
- 1.3 A statutory STB is required to cover the whole area of at least two 'relevant authorities', defined in the legislation as county councils, unitary authorities, integrated transport authorities and/or combined authorities. The Secretary of State for Transport, Chris Grayling, has indicated his preference for a small number of STBs across England (possibly just six or seven). He has also made clear that before granting his approval he will look for clear evidence about how they would add real value to the travelling public. Subject to consultation and the Secretary of State's approval, each STB will require its own Parliamentary Order, none of which have yet been laid. In the meantime Government is working with the emerging shadow STBs and has made clear in the recent Transport Investment Strategy they are expected to have a prominent role in new transport policies, such as the creation of a new Major Route Network.

## 2. Development of Transport for the South East (TfSE)

- 2.1 Conscious of the steps being taken in the North and Midlands to establish STBs, the South East 7 Group (Hampshire, East Sussex, West Sussex, Kent and Surrey county councils and Brighton & Hove City Council and Medway Council) began to develop plans for an STB in the South East to ensure the region has an effective mechanism by which to exert influence over future national transport investment decisions. SE7 was also mindful of the benefits an STB could bring to regional transport services, by working strategically across local transport authority boundaries it should help advance innovation and joint initiatives to further improve the transport offer and customer experience.
- 2.2 By the end of last year individual member authorities had considered and approved the outline plans put forward by SE7 to develop a shadow STB, to be known as Transport for the South East (TfSE).

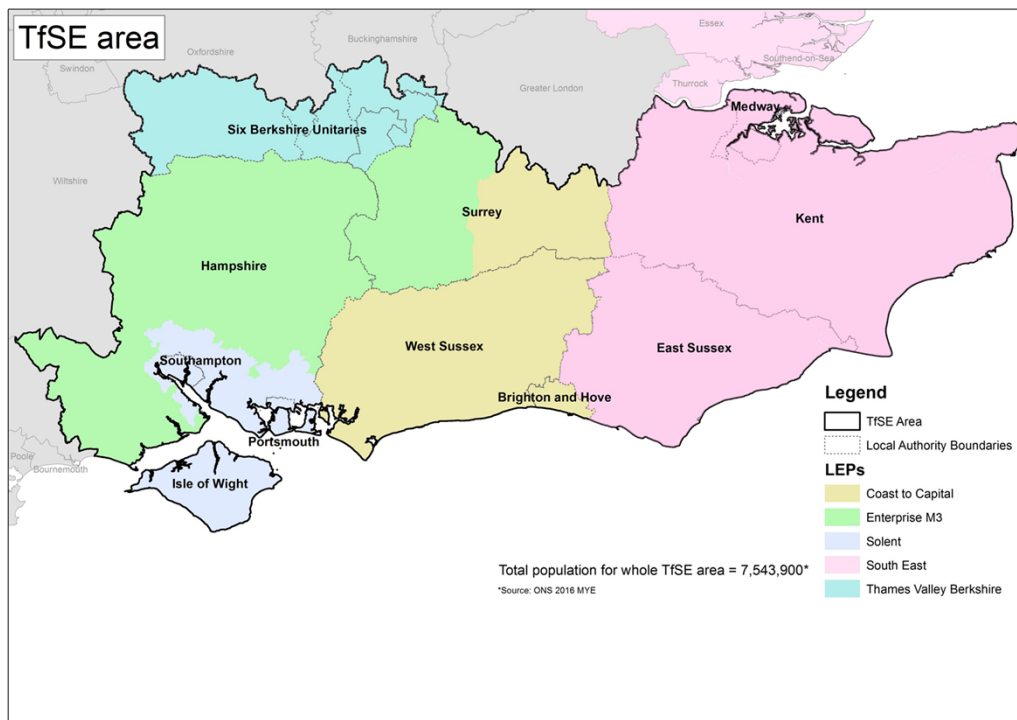
Since then TfSE is pleased to have extended its membership to include all of the Solent Transport member authorities, as well as the six Berkshire authorities, and all five LEPs within the region.

- 2.3 It has been agreed that TfSE's primary focus should be to identify, prioritise and lobby for major strategic transport infrastructure, providing a strong united voice for the region on strategic transport issues. Over time TfSE may extend its functions to help address any identified gaps between national and local transport structures, for example integrated ticketing policy and operations, sea port surface access plans, and monitoring of a Major Road Network.

### 3. Geography and Membership

- 3.1 The geography of TfSE mirrors the huge importance of the South East to the national economy, as it includes some of the UK's busiest motorways, key strategic corridors and primary international gateways. The South East region contributes 15% of the UK's GVA, the largest contribution outside of London. However, TfSE is mindful that this success is now threatened by intense pressure on its congested transport networks and future growth pressures.

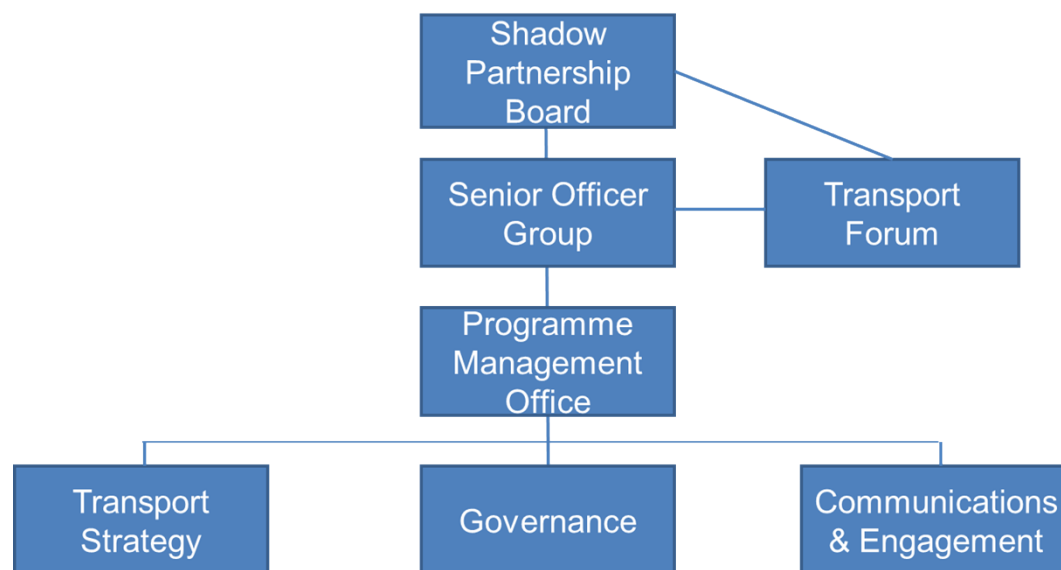
- 3.2 The TfSE area has 7.5 million residents and over 24,000 miles of road network, with its ports collectively handling 81 million tonnes of freight each year and providing crucial trade links to the Far East as well as to mainland Europe. The region stretches eastwards from the Thames Valley over to Kent, and down to the south coast and the Isle of Wight, including the cities of Portsmouth and Southampton.



#### 4. TfSE Governance Structure

4.1 On 26 June 2017 the Partnership Board held its first meeting. Solent Transport Chairman, Cllr Jacqui Rayment, attended as the Board's representative for both Portsmouth City Council and Southampton City Council. Other attendees included Cllr Ian Ward, representing the Isle of Wight, Cllr Rob Humby representing Hampshire County Council, and Dave Lees, Chairman of Solent LEP.

4.2 The Board agreed the Partnership's structure as illustrated below:



4.3 The Board elected Cllr Keith Glazier, Leader of East Sussex County Council, as its Chairman and Cllr Tony Page, Deputy of Reading and Chair of the Berkshire Transport Forum, as its Vice-Chairman. The Shadow Partnership Board is the main decision making body for TfSE and is to be supported by a Senior Officer Group, chaired by Rupert Clubb, which involves senior officers from each of the local authorities and the LEPs. Both the Board and Senior Officers Group are supported by a small Programme Management Office, which also helps to co-ordinate the officer working groups.

4.4 TfSE's governance arrangements are illustrated below. The Board considered a draft constitution and agreed that appointments be for a period of one year. It also appointed East Sussex County Council as the Lead Authority.

## Shadow Partnership Board – the decision making body for TfSE

### Voting Members

- SE7 Leaders (7 votes)
- Berkshire Local Transport Body (1 vote)
- Southampton & Portsmouth (1 vote)
- Isle of Wight (1 vote)
- LEP Board Members (2 votes) \*
- Chair of TfSE Transport Forum (1 vote)

### Non Voting Members (co opted)

- Non-unitary representation (B&Ds)
- Protected environments

### Observers:

- Department for Transport
- Highways England
- Network Rail
- Transport for London

\* Solent & Coast to Capital LEPs



## 5. Emerging Vision and Strategic Priorities for TfSE

- 5.1 The Partnership Board held a workshop in September to discuss the vision and priorities for TfSE which are summarised below:

### TfSE Vision

*“The South East is a powerful driver of the UK economy and the nation’s major international gateway for people and businesses.*

*We will grow the South East’s economy by delivering a quality, integrated transport system that makes us more productive and competitive, improves the quality of life for all and protects the environment.”*

### TfSE Strategic Priorities

To deliver a high quality, sustainable and integrated transport system that improves productivity to grow our economy and compete in the global marketplace by:

- facilitating housing and employment space growth and regeneration;
- connecting international gateway ports and airports with their markets;
- improving journey time and capacity for people and goods along major radial road and rail corridors to and from London;
- improving the linkages between the major centres and transport hubs within the South East and the rest of the UK and improving orbital routes;
- harnessing new digital technologies to reduce the need to travel, promote shared transport, and improve network efficiency through the creation of a digitally connected transport network; and
- creating and maintaining a network that is resilient to incidents and climate change.

To deliver a high quality, sustainable and integrated transport system that works to improve safety, quality of life and access to opportunities for all by:

- providing value for money rail services for commuting and leisure travel to London, within the South East, and for longer journeys to the rest of the UK and Europe;
- creating a bus network that meets local needs, both urban and rural;
- creating a well-functioning and effective road network that meets the travel needs of individual road user;
- enhancing accessibility through the roll out of digital technologies and innovation more generally, to increase connectivity and opportunities for shared transport;
- creating effective interchanges between different modes of transport to enable seamless end to end journeys; and
- facilitating increased levels of walking and cycling as part of all journeys to benefit public health and wellbeing and reduce congestion.

To deliver a high quality, sustainable and integrated transport system that protects and enhances the South East's unique natural and historic environment by:

- considering the impact of transport on the South East's National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), UNESCO World Heritage Sites and other environmental and heritage designated sites;
- considering the value of open spaces to the economy, well-being and the importance of tourism to the rural economy;
- considering the impact of transport interventions on landscape and agricultural production;
- minimising emissions to improve local air quality and reduce the South East's contribution to global climate change; and
- reducing noise and disturbance to maintain tranquillity in rural areas across the South East.

## **6. The Transport Forum**

6.1 The Transport Forum held its first meeting on 21 September 2017. Its purpose is to provide appropriate challenge as well as technical guidance and expertise to the TfSE Shadow Partnership Board and its Senior Officer Group. The Forum will ensure that a broad range of stakeholder and partner views are taken into account, ensuring that the following key areas are considered:

- Integration of various modes of transport and the impact of technology;
- Enhanced user experience;
- Changing the approach to connecting people across the South East; and
- Freight and logistics.

- 6.2 The Forum brings together a wide range of stakeholders, including district and borough representatives from each of the county areas, to inform the TfSE Partnership Board and to provide technical guidance and expertise on key issues, including integration of modes, the impact of emerging technology and user experience.
- 6.3 The Forum will support the development of the emerging Transport Strategy and provide guidance on how best to consult and engage with different audiences and stakeholders; it is also expected to help develop a shared understanding of the key issues facing users, operators and the supply chain; and provide support to the Board in influencing the Government.

## **7. Development of TfSE's Transport Strategy**

- 7.1 The cornerstone of TfSE will be its emerging Transport Strategy. The Strategy will build upon existing evidence, such as that contained in the LEPs' Strategic Economic Plans, in Local Transport Plans and in the growth and infrastructure frameworks/studies that a number of upper-tier authorities are undertaking. It will set out the ambitions of TfSE, including securing the future effectiveness, efficiency and resilience of the region's transport network and the actions required to provide integrated, multimodal transport policies, involving freight, ports, airports and other public transport modes.
- 7.2 TfSE aims to publish its full Transport Strategy in autumn 2019 and hopes to secure statutory status the following year ie 2020, although that is dependent on securing parliamentary time for a Draft Order to be laid. A route map, setting out the development stages for the Transport Strategy over the next two years is in preparation. It is expected that this will be a substantive item at the next Shadow Partnership Board meeting.

## **8. Other developments**

- 8.1 TfSE has held a number of meetings with DfT officials and has sought to inform the Department's next Road Investment Strategy by submitting its own priorities for investment, details of which are published on its website [www.transportforthesoutheast.org.uk](http://www.transportforthesoutheast.org.uk) (see Partnership Board Meeting [papers](#) 26 June 2017) This includes Solent Metro, the M27 Junction 3 – M271/A35 and the A34/M3 strategic corridor.
- 8.2 Following the Government's publication of its Transport Investment Strategy, TfSE is now working to develop criteria for a new Major Route Network in the region which would combine the current strategic road network with the most economically important local roads.
- 8.3 TfSE is also seeking financial support from the DfT to help fund development of the Transport Strategy, in a similar way to support

given to TfN and Midlands Connect and will consider future resource implications for member authorities at its next Board meeting. To date an initial £20,000 has been provided to TfSE by each voting member of the Board.

- 8.4 TfSE branding and a website has been developed, where all media releases and Shadow Partnership Board meetings will be published. (see [www.transportforthesoutheast.org](http://www.transportforthesoutheast.org))
- 8.5 There is ongoing engagement with local MPs who have a key role in helping to secure and sustain the active support of the Government in this emerging sub national transport body. TfSE is hosting an informal reception for MPs in Westminster on 31 October, to enable MPs to meet members of the Shadow Partnership Board. This event is being sponsored by South East MP, Huw Merriman, who also sits on the House of Commons Transport Select Committee.

## **9. Relationship with Solent Transport**

- 9.1 TfSE provides a further mechanism by which Solent Transport can seek to influence national transport investment decisions and, through effective linkages, should be able to demonstrate how its own more local priorities for the Solent area compliment the wider, sub national ambitions for the South East which will be articulated in the TfSE's forthcoming Transport Strategy.
- 9.2 TfSE's governance structure and membership makes provision for strong links and effective work with Solent Transport. TfSE's shadow Partnership Board membership includes Solent Transport's Chairman, Cllr Jacqui Rayment, who represents Southampton City Council on the Board, together with lead members from Portsmouth City Council, Hampshire County Council and the Isle of Wight. Hampshire County Council's lead Solent Transport officer, Keith Willcox, sits on TfSE's Senior Officer Group, along with senior officers from Portsmouth, Southampton, Isle of Wight and Solent LEP. TfSE's Transport Forum and its potential wider sub or sector groups will help ensure Solent transport operators have a direct link into TfSE. As an example, members of SHBOA participated in the first meeting of the Transport Forum, which involved discussions about effective links between local operators and the strategic body.



Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background papers

**The following documents disclose facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and has been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report.**

NB the list excludes:

1. Published works.
2. Documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.

TITLE

LOCATION

None