

Enterprise M3 Board Meeting

2 February 2023

Transport for the South East - Strategic Investment Plan - Item 12

Enterprise M3 Board are asked to:

AGREE: Enterprise M3 LEPs support for the final draft of Transport for the South East's Strategic Investment Plan of the South East.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Board has received regular updates on the work of Transport for the South East (TfSE), in promoting the case for investment in strategic transport infrastructure across the South-East. LEP Board Member, Daniel Ruiz sits on the TfSE Partnership Board, as one of two LEP representatives.
- 1.2 In August 2022 the Board received a presentation on the TfSE Strategic Investment Plan (SIP.) This helped to inform the LEPs response to the consultation on the draft SIP, which was submitted in September 2022. Our response was fully supportive of the broad direction and ethos of the approach outlined in the SIP to shaping the economy and connectivity around the South East.
- 1.3 We highlighted that the top priority for the SIP must be decarbonisation and that virtual access and reducing the need to travel through digital connectivity must be an integral part of the delivery of the SIP. We also emphasised our belief that for the SIP to be successful will require an integrated approach to investment and delivery and working across institutional, sectoral, and spatial boundaries.
- 1.4 This report seeks the Board's formal approval of the final draft of the TfSE SIP.

2. Context

- 2.1 TfSE published its Transport Strategy in July 2020. The strategy sets an ambitious vision for the region to 2050 and identifies a preferred scenario to help achieve that vision. A series of Area Studies and thematic studies have since been completed and they identify packages of multi-modal interventions that are needed to deliver the 2050 vision.
- 2.2 On 13 June 2022 the TfSE Partnership Board approved the draft Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) for public consultation.
- 2.3 The SIP will form the final part of the transport strategy, bringing together the outputs from the area studies and thematic studies, to become the blueprint for investment in the south east for the next 30 years.
- 2.4 The formal consultation period on the draft SIP ran over the Summer with over 600 responses received from a range of stakeholders. TfSE has listened, reviewed the feedback and amended the plan.
- 2.5 TfSE has now completed the formal consultation, analysis and revisions on the draft SIP. It is now seeking the agreement of its constituent authorities and key partners such as the LEP, prior to submitting the final SIP to Government in spring 2023.

3. TfSE Transport Strategy and Strategic Investment Plan

- 3.1 TfSE provides an opportunity to support and deliver growth across the south east through the development of a long-term strategic programme of multi-modal transport interventions to facilitate economic growth, improve quality of life and enhance the environment.
- 3.2 The Transport Strategy published in July 2020 supports and complements the work of the local authorities and LEPs. The Strategic Investment Plan will further this and will offer a key route to influence the investment decisions by the Government and by the major national delivery agencies such as National Highways and Network Rail in a way that has not been possible in the past.
- 3.3 The SIP places equal emphasis on economic growth, environmental protection and enhancement and social inclusion. It sets out global policy measures and interventions that will help to achieve net-zero by 2050 at the latest. The TfSE SIP looks to make a compelling case for investment in the South East. It is supported by a significant body of evidence taken from a series of area studies and thematic studies, that have been carried out since the publication of the initial Transport Strategy to become the blueprint for investment in the south east for the next 30 years.

4 Public Consultation

- 4.1 The public consultation on the draft SIP commenced on 20 June 2022 and concluded on 12 September 2022. There were 640 responses to the consultation, with all of them being considered and helped inform revisions to the plan. The key themes arising from the consultation were.
 - Support shown to investment proposals to improve public transport in the south east.
 - Respondents welcomed the focus on Active Travel schemes.
 - Respondents welcomed the recognition of importance of the need to tackle climate change.
 - Of those respondents that participated via the survey, 49% of respondents agreed that the Strategic Investment Plan makes the best case possible for investing in transport infrastructure in the south east.
- 4.2 When asked to what extent they agreed that the packages of interventions for a geography delivered on the priorities of the SIP, the online survey submissions showed that 68% somewhat or definitely agreed for Wessex Thames, which is the area that includes Enterprise M3, with less than 1% definitely disagreeing. Rail, mass transit and active travel were also the most popular interventions in the Wessex Thames area, with highway interventions being the least supported. The most frequent comments were surrounding a desire for greater investment in public transport and a greater focus on active travel.
- 4.3 The main changes to the draft SIP following the public consultation were:
 - Provided more context on the purpose of the SIP and importantly, what the SIP won't do;
 - Provided clarity that the financial ask of the SIP is above and beyond the funding that Local Transport Authorities already receive;
 - Asserted the need to ensure that public transport provision returns to the quality of provision prior to the covid pandemic;
 - Updates to investment priorities section to reflect feedback on the priorities;
 - Strengthened the focus on decarbonisation and the environment throughout the document, including making it clearer that addressing climate change is a main aim of the SIP;
 - Greater recognition of the importance of strategic active travel and mass transit;
 - Clarification that highways are multi-modal assets, supporting active travel and mass transit interventions as well as freight movements;

- Made amends to the narrative for coastal areas to reflect the challenges that transport can help address and the opportunities that it can unlock;
 - Strengthening the narrative around key priorities that support health and wellbeing;
 - In recognition of the current financial situation, the funding and finance section has been updated to reflect that the SIP is a live document and costs will need to be updated as individual schemes are taken forward;
 - Clarification that transition of freight to rail will not be of detriment to passenger services;
 - Changes and clarification to information on proposed interventions to reflect comments received; and
 - Updates to the delivery stages and next steps of the SIP to set out how the SIP will be implemented, delivered and monitored.
- 4.4 Having reviewed the final draft of the SIP it is considered that the proposed revisions reflect the consultation responses and that the comments submitted by the LEP have also been reasonably incorporated in the final draft of the Plan. Importantly the SIP continues to be aligned with and supports wider policy and government priorities at multiple levels and across multiple transport modes, including the LEP Recovery and Renewal Plans and Evidence Base developed to support Local Industrial Strategies.
- 4.5 We are therefore happy to recommend to the Board that the final draft SIP is supported.

5 Next Steps

- 5.1 All constituent authorities and Partnership Board members have been offered the opportunity to take the draft final SIP through their governance processes. The Partnership Board will consider the final SIP at its meeting in March 2023,
- 5.2 The Partnership Board will consider the final SIP in March 2023 and subject to partner support will agree the process for submitting to Government.
- 5.3 TfSE will continue to work with constituent authorities and other delivery partners including the LEP to shape a delivery plan which will set out how the schemes and interventions in the SIP will be implemented.

Kevin Travers
Head of Infrastructure, Transport & Place
19th January 2022