

## Strategic Transport Forum 16<sup>th</sup> March 2018

### Agenda Item 4: Transport Strategy: Vision and Objectives

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the meeting consider and comment on the draft framework for the discussion document on Vision and Objectives (Annex 1).

#### **1. Context**

- 1.1. A key priority for this Forum is to take forward the work to develop the overarching Transport Strategy for the Heartland area.
- 1.2. The commitment underpinning the Business Plan is to develop a draft of the framework for the overarching Transport Strategy by the turn of the year, with a view to seeking views from stakeholders in the first quarter of 2019.
- 1.3. The development of the overarching Transport Strategy needs to involve stakeholders across England's Economic Heartland, as well strategic stakeholders in adjoining regions and nationally.
- 1.4. The proposal is to seek their involvement through the publication of 'discussion papers': the purpose of those discussions paper being to set out a position on which comments are invited.
- 1.5. The intention is that the first of these 'discussion papers' will seek to set out a draft vision and propose a set of strategic objectives for the overarching Transport Strategy.
- 1.6. The vision and strategic objectives are important building blocks for the subsequent work to develop the overarching Transport Strategy. They will also provide the context in which the core programme team will, working with the Transport Officers Support Group, develop responses to consultation documents.
- 1.7. An initial draft of the framework for this initial discussion paper is set out in Annex 1. The Forum is invited to consider and comment on this draft.
- 1.8. Subject to the views of the Forum the proposal is to publish the discussion paper in early April and invite comments by mid-May, enabling the Forum to consider the responses at its meeting in June.

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March 2018

**Transport Strategy Discussion Paper:  
Vision and Strategic Objectives****Draft Framework****1. Context**

- 1.1. The need for a transport strategy is driven by the transformational change that is planned for the region. Whilst the Cambridge-Milton-Keynes arc was identified as a national priority by the NIC, there is also a need to improve transport and digital connectivity to, through, and within the region to support the UK performance on the world stage.
- 1.2. The region is a hive of world class research, innovation and technology. The success of the region has meant that the existing transport infrastructure is under pressure and as a result suffers from resilience and reliability issues. The need to grow the population and improve productivity to harness the economic potential of the region means that success is contingent on investment in improved connectivity (physical and digital infrastructure) and smarter/ more efficient methodologies.
- 1.3. The emerging transport strategy will need to provide the strategic framework from which the public and private sector can work in partnership to develop the opportunities at a local and inter-urban level. There will need to be alignment of investment, not just in transport, but across all strategic infrastructure.
- 1.4. The first stage of the commission has been completed and sets the scene for the region (ProjectView). The next stages require the vision and objectives to be defined, and then testing of land use and transport scenarios within the emerging policy modelling tool.

**2. Ambition**

- 2.1. The vision has to relate to the overarching ambitions for the region. Broadly the transport strategy sits within the scope increasing the economy, enhancing the environment, and meeting the needs of the people who live in the region and use the transport network.
- 2.2. The world class research, innovation and technology in the region need to be supported to allow them to compete in the global market place. An appropriate transport strategy should be seen as a mechanism to facilitate growth, which allows the region to be the UK's home of science and innovation.
- 2.3. The growth should be considerate of the consequences that can arise when it is poorly planned, and delivered in a manner which is reactive rather than proactive. The outcome of the growth in the region should be overall net gain to the built and natural environment.

- 2.4. It needs to be reemphasised at every opportunity that the success of the region is important, not only for those that live and work here, but also the rest of country as it provides vital connectivity between London and the south east, airports, seaports, and other parts of the UK.

### **3. Challenges**

- 3.1. The region is already economically successful, with the NIC report citing strengths being highly skilled labour, cutting edge research facilities, and technology clusters that compete on the world stage. It is also a fantastic place to live, with access to areas of outstanding natural beauty, and cities, towns, and villages that are highly sought after.
- 3.2. However, the success has not always been supported and the ambitions matched by investment in physical and digital connectivity. This has resulted in roads and rail networks that lack resilience, and regularly experience issues relating to journey time reliability.
- 3.3. East-west and north-south connectivity are ripe for improvement, with the former a focus for the current government. The response to this has been for government to propose the East-West Rail, and Oxford to Cambridge Expressway schemes. These have the potential to be transformational in terms of how they impact on transport, emerging development, and productivity.
- 3.4. The east-west schemes will go some way to increasing capacity of the networks, but without well planned and phased upgrades other sections of the road and rail networks will act as bottlenecks to growth. New infrastructure is required and should comprise thinking beyond only increasing transport capacity. Digital connectivity and increased capacity are also crucial to facilitate economic growth. The region cannot continue to operate with areas which lack modern digital connectivity.
- 3.5. Finally, the attractiveness of the area as a place to live is contingent on there being good accessibility to services. There are many areas in the region that are not able to easily access services and jobs. Rural connectivity (lack of) being an example of this. Improving the choice of modes available or removing the need to travel could help overcome the disconnect that is currently present.

### **4. Opportunities**

- 4.1. There are numerous opportunities that an integrated transport strategy can support, but the guiding principles should be about the following:
  - Improving the economy, access to markets, and productivity.
  - Improving accessibility to labour markets (through physical and digital connections, smarter choices, and more homes).
  - Enhancement of the urban and natural environments.
  - Maximising mode shift and the trip not taken.

- Stimulate new markets through initiatives that promote innovation.
- Maximise the digital economy.
- Phase growth in a way that unlocks sites with the smartest use of investment funds that are available.

## 5. Creating a vision

5.1. The vision statement is an anchor point for the transport strategy, which should ideally be memorable, inspirational and ultimately justify why there needs to be a transport strategy for the EEH area.

5.2. The vision statement proposed for consultation is:

***"A THRIVING REGION WHERE PRODUCTIVE PEOPLE, INTEGRATED AND SUSTAINABLE PLACES, AND WORLD CLASS KNOWLEDGE AND INNOVATION ARE PHYSICALLY AND DIGITALLY CONNECTED TO FACILITATE ECONOMIC GROWTH."***

## 6. Setting objectives

6.1. Broad objectives are required from which SMART goals can be developed. The following themes potentially form the starting point for a discussion on objectives:

- Develop an accessible, high quality, connected and integrated transport network that supports economic growth and sustainable development.
- Increase the capacity, reliability, resilience, safety and agility (level of service) of the transport system to cope with change.
- Enable development while supporting the natural environment and quality of life for all network users.
- Promote sustainable modes of travel to improve accessibility and enhance the built environment.

6.2. Discussion amongst the Transport Officers Support Group highlighted the importance of including measures that relate to the importance of unlocking growth and boosting productivity.

6.3. The objectives created from the discussion have been grouped into the following areas: economy, environment, user. These are listed below:

### **Economy**

- Unlock housing and job growth through phased investment in infrastructure and innovation, smarter use of existing assets, and intelligent location of development.
- Stimulate innovative and creative business via strategic, long term policy making.
- Improve safety, reliability, and resilience of the network to maximise productivity of goods, services, and commuters.

- Improve transport networks within and through the region to increase access to jobs, skills, markets, and international gateways.

**Environment**

- A zero carbon transport system in the region.
- Integrated land use - transport planning which locates development where sustainable modes are viable.
- Protect and enhance the built and natural environment.
- Seek innovation at all stages of an infrastructure assets lifecycle.

**User Focus**

- Improve access to jobs, education, and services.
- Simplify multi-modal travel by creating more seamless journeys and improving the information available to travellers.
- Reduce the severance between rural and urban areas.
- A transport system that is safe and reliable for use by all.

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