



Transport for the South East
County Hall
St. Anne's Crescent
Lewes
BN7 1UE

EEH Business Unit
c/o Buckinghamshire County Council
County Hall
Walton Street
Aylesbury

Date:

Dear Sir/Madam

**TRANSPORT FOR THE SOUTH EAST (TfSE)
STATUTORY SUB-NATIONAL TRANSPORT BODY - CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

England's Economic Heartland Strategic Transport Forum, at its meeting on 12th July 2019, considered the consultation paper published by Transport for the South East.

The Forum is the Sub-national Transport Body for the Heartland region. Membership of the Forum covers the area from Swindon, through Oxfordshire, Milton Keynes and across to Cambridgeshire, and from Northamptonshire across to Luton and Hertfordshire.

The Strategic Transport Forum for England's Economic Heartland is entirely supportive, in principle, with the proposed establishment of a statutory Sub-national Transport Body for the South East and supports the proposed functions for the Body, as set out in the consultation proposal.

Transport for the South East shares a contiguous border with England's Economic Heartland at the boundaries of: Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Swindon with Berkshire, Slough, and Wiltshire. As a result, it is vital that TfSE continues to work closely with England's Economic Heartland both strategically and operationally on issues and opportunities that exist across those boundaries.

The requirement for joint working between England's Economic Heartland and Transport for the South East will continue to grow in relevance should the ambitions for bus franchising and quality partnerships (as set out in TfSE's consultation document) be approved. Customer-derived bus routes should not be constrained by administrative boundaries. At the point that TfSE assumes the powers for bus franchising or quality partnerships, EEH will want to work closely with TfSE to ensure decisions around bus services are to the advantage, rather than detriment, of EEH residents. This expectation for joint working is also applicable in the development of integrated ticketing solutions.

In addition, the emerging conclusions of the Williams Rail Review are likely to fundamentally change the current rail franchising model. As the conclusions of the review become clear, it is essential that Sub National Transport Bodies have a role in shaping future rail service provision. England's Economic Heartland and TfSE must work collaboratively to shape future rail services in areas where both STBs are operational. And, regardless of statutory status, the appropriate governance must be established to allow this function to be genuinely effective across boundaries.

England's Economic Heartland and Transport for the South East have historically enjoyed excellent working relations and we look forward to continuing to work with you.

Major Dave Hodgson
Chair, EEH Strategic Transport Forum

Draft