

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Cabinet **DATE:** 15th July 2019

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WARD(S): All

PORTFOLIO: Cllr Robert Anderson – Transport and Environmental Services

PART I NON-KEY DECISION

TRANSPORT FOR THE SOUTH EAST - TRANSPORT STRATEGY CONSULTATION

1 Purpose of Report

A report setting out the main elements of Slough Borough Council's formal response to the Transport for the South East (TFSE) consultation on the TFSE proposal to become a sub-national body.

This follows up the previous report setting out the key principles involved in joining Transport for the South East (TFSE).

2 Recommendation(s) / Proposed Action

The Cabinet is requested to resolve:

- (a) That the progress in the establishment of the TFSE sub-national body be noted;
- (b) That the formal consultation response submitted by Slough Borough Council, as a constituent member and part of the Berkshire Local Transport Group, to TFSE's draft proposal to Government to establish the body be noted;
- (c) To highlight the main areas of agreement with TFSE's proposals and to recommend ongoing support for the development of the TFSE strategy with prioritisation for the following specific areas:
 - Increasing transport connectivity across the South East, maximising the benefit of cross-boundary links and regional travel; developing and maintaining the resilience of strategic corridors, enhanced partnership arrangements, and support for Public Transport including smart-ticketing innovations and similar technological solutions.
 - Increasing economic growth across the South East;
 - Improving air quality and related environmental benefits in the South East.
 - Improving accessibility within the South East, leading to greater social equality.
 - Endorsing and contributing to the sub-national transport body's ability and powers to lobby central government and seek increased funding, over and

above the opportunities that would otherwise be available to individual local authorities.

(d) To note any challenges to the proposal, and specifically the areas where further research and engagement by TFSE are required, including:

- Increased reference to the role and potential opportunities associated with Heathrow Airport, Transport for London and all other neighbouring regional authorities and organisations of significance.
- Greater acknowledgment of the economic benefits being delivered in the most successful and highest performing areas within the region.
- Clarification on a number of matters relating to voting procedures and dispute resolution
- Reference to the importance of Travel Demand Management, focusing on practical and technological solutions.

(e) To further recognise the synergies between the TFSE proposal for the region and key policies in Slough, including the Slough Borough Council Transport Vision, the SBC Low Emission Strategy, the overall SBC Local Plan and all related core transport and environmental policies.

(f) To maintain overall support for the establishment of TFSE as a sub-national transport body.

3 **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

The links between this report and the overall Council strategies and plans, and the ways in which the Council's response to the TFSE proposal support these strategies and plans, remain the same as originally detailed in the report on the proposal to join the TFSE. They are set out again here for reference:

3a. **Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

Priorities:

Increasing life expectancy by focusing on inequalities – providing better and more connected public transport services across the South East region, but with specific benefit to the town of Slough, its leisure facilities and places of work, enabling better air quality and helping our residents to stay active.

Improving mental health and wellbeing – With increased support and influence at regional level, cycling can contribute to maintaining physical and mental health. Switching more journeys to active travel will improve health, quality of life and the environment

Housing – Improving integrated transport links in the area and giving greater choices for residents as to where they can live by improving access to work and facilities. Membership of TFSE will contribute to still further opportunities at a regional level.

3b **Five Year Plan Outcomes**

Explain which of the Five Year Plan's outcomes the proposal or action will help to deliver. The outcomes are:

- Slough children will grow up to be happy, healthy and successful

Increased levels of public transport and cycling will lead to fewer cars on the road providing safer, cleaner environment for Slough's children.

- Our people will be healthier and manage their own care needs.

Cycling, walking and multi-modal journeys including public transport will contribute to maintaining physical and mental health.

- Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and stay
Reduced traffic congestion through greater regional connectivity and increased public transport services will result in improved air quality and safer roads, making Slough a place where people want to live, work and visit

- Our residents will live in good quality homes

Improved integrated transport links across the region but specifically in the town, giving greater choices for residents as to where they can live and access work and facilities

- Slough will attract, retain and grow businesses and investment to provide opportunities for our residents

Continuing to work with businesses to reduce congestion on Slough's roads and provide integrated transport options will reduce employee's travel time, and provide reliable travel times. Investment will be further supported by regional major projects and schemes.

4 **Other Implications**

(a) Financial

As previously stated in the original report on the proposal to join TFSE:

There are no financial risks. There is, however, a financial obligation in joining TFSE. As a constituent member of the collective BLTB group, the charge per member authority will be £9,667 per annum for each of the six authorities.

Should Slough choose to join TFSE as an individual authority only (i.e. not part of the BLTB subgroup), the charge per annum would be £30,000 to the Council as a unitary authority. The current county rate is £58,000 per annum.

Subsequently, the next stage of the development of the TFSE subnational body will involve developing funding opportunities and methods for allocating resources. Within this context, working alongside regional partners and within the overall subnational jurisdiction, Slough will seek to develop a method of securing significant funds from national government and other sources for developments that will help to realise the Slough Transport Vision along.

(b) Risk Management

The risks below relate to the original proposal to joint TFSE, which was approved by Cabinet in March 2018. There are no further risks arising from this subsequent report on the Council's response to the TFSE Proposal to Government: Draft for Consultation.

Recommendation from section 2 above	Risks/Threats/ Opportunities	Current Controls	Using the Risk Management Matrix Score the risk	Future Controls
To maintain support for the establishment of TFSE as a subnational transport body	No risk to SBC Opportunity: Slough to benefit from regional support	Proposed TFSE governance structure. Recommendations from BLTB / TFSE	Political – (Severity/negligible: Probability/low) = rating 1	Work with BLTB and TFSE to ensure the success of the organisation.
To join as a constituent authority	Risk: Failure to join the TFSE would result in the TFSE not coming into being	Proposed TFSE governance structure.	Political – (Severity/negligible: Probability/low) = rating 1	Work with BLTB and TFSE to ensure the success of the organisation.
The membership to be exercised via BLTB	Risk: SBC voice not heard / part of collective voice Opportunity: SBC to benefit from collective presence and influence	Proposed TFSE governance structure. BLB governance structure	Political – (Severity/negligible: Probability/low) = rating 1	Work with BLTB and TFSE to ensure the success of the organisation.

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

As previously stated in the original report on the proposal to join TFSE:

The original proposal to join TFSE was been referred to the Council's Service Lead, Governance. The response obtained confirmed that this is an executive decision which required cabinet resolution. There are no other legal implications.

There are no HR implications resulting from this report

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

There are no impacts as a result of this response to consultation.

5 **Supporting Information**

This report follows up on the original TFSE cabinet report, approved in March 2019, in which it was proposed to join TFSE as both a constituent member and as a joint member of the Berkshire Local Transport Body. The original report includes supporting information sections on the following:

- Main purposes of establishing TFSE
- General functions of a sub-national body:
- Proposed developments/innovations across the region:
- Geographical extents of the TFSE region
- Governance structure of TFSE
- TFSE Powers
- Examples of previous successes with BLTB support
- Specific benefits to Slough

All of the above information remains relevant and as stated in the report. This follow-up report provides details of the next stage of the process, specifically including the Council's formal response to TFSE's consultation Proposal to Government. This response was submitted to TFSE in June, in the form of the questionnaire provided by TFSE, along with a lengthier version with numbered references, comprising Slough's full response to the proposal. These documents are included as appendices to this report.

Summary of the Council's response to the TFSE proposal:

Main benefits / areas of agreement:

TFSE is committed to:

- A high quality, sustainable and integrated transport system, focusing on increased productivity, improved safety and quality of life, and protection for the environment.
- Economic growth through integrated transport projects, improved connectivity, better protection of the environment, improved access to housing, jobs and education.
- Provision of adequate transport infrastructure to help deliver new housing and access to transport and education.
- Increased investment in the region.
- Influencing national government, investment in pan-regional strategic corridors, effective, joined up planning. With powers that are proportionate and additional to the existing powers of the relevant authorities.

- A powerful and effective partnership, bringing together 16 local transport authorities, 5 LEPs
- Integrated travel solutions, including smart ticketing
- Improved Air Quality, helped by clean air zones

Main areas requiring further research and engagement

- Inconsistent levels of engagement with the authorities within the region. Greater engagement with the Berkshire authorities is requested.
- Further recognition is requested regarding the level of economic growth of local authorities which may be small in geographic terms but which contribute significantly to the area, potentially outweighing the contributions of much larger members. It may be appropriate to revise the voting rights for authorities in the light of this level of contributions.
- Increased focus on air quality and other environmental concerns within urban areas, not just within the 'natural and historic' areas in the region.
- Increased engagement with other organisations which may not geographically lie within the TFSE region, but can be considered stakeholders in terms of impacts and contributions on a cross-regional basis. This would include Transport for London, Heathrow Airport Ltd and other any other relevant organisations or authorities of a similar stature.
- The impact of Heathrow and potential developments, both alongside and across the TFSE regional border, is potentially huge. The Regeneration directorate would welcome the opportunity, perhaps in partnership with Heathrow Airport Ltd, to make a formal presentation to TFSE on the impact of the airport and the implications for growth both within Slough and more widely across the region.
- Exploration of Travel Demand Management (TDM) and inclusion of this discipline within the TFSE strategy is required. This may in some cases result in non-transport solutions, drawing on the benefits of digital platforms and new technologies.
- More clarity is requested regarding resolution of disagreements or disputes. The decision to adopt a consensus based approach with no right of veto appears to be reasonable, but this may potentially be in conflict with the commitment to honour the wishes of individual local authorities.
- Further information is requested on some aspects of the proposed TFSE governance and representation.

Full details relating to all the above points are included in appendices A and B.

Current Status

Shadow arrangements are currently in place for TFSE as a sub-national transport body for the south east.

Councillor Page (Reading BC) represents BLTB at the shadow board meetings.

The main developments in progress are:

- Formal consultation to become a sub-national transport body
- The formulation of the strategy for TFSE
- One million pounds has already been allocated to TFSE by the Department for Transport for expected projects.

Futures dates

The proposal is for the TFSE strategy to cover from inception to 2050

The formal application to the DfT will be in December 2019

Statutory status is expected by 2020/2021

6 **Comments of Other Committees**

None

7 **Conclusion**

The TFSE consultation: *Proposal to Government*, sets out a transport vision for the south east region which is broadly consistent with the transport vision and wider interests of Slough Borough Council. The benefits are extensive and consistent with those summarised in both this report and the conclusion to the original cabinet report (on proposing to join). There are, however, several important areas in the consultation paper which require further attention by the TFSE shadow board, as part of the process of developing the TFSE strategy. These issues have been highlighted in the Council's formal response to the consultation, and further engagement has been requested. The overall expectation is that TFSE will be a highly successful, positive and forthright, partnership-based organisation. Membership of TFSE therefore continues to be advantageous to Slough, as both a constituent member and as a joint member of the Berkshire Local Transport Body sub-group of TFSE.

8 **Appendices Attached**

'A' – SBC Response to the TFSE Consultation Proposal (in questionnaire form)

'B' – SBC Full Response to the TFSE Consultation proposal (greater detail)

'C' – TFSE Proposal to Government: Draft for Consultation

'D' – TFSE: Becoming a Statutory Sub-national Body (summary document)

9 **Background Papers**

None.