

MEETING OF THE BERKSHIRE LOCAL TRANSPORT BODY (BLTB) – THURSDAY 10 NOVEMBER 2022

CONTACT OFFICER: Stephen Brown, Chief Operating Officer, Slough Borough Council

Item 7: Transport for the South East

Payment of Subscriptions

1. At your meeting in November 2021, you agreed to renew the annual subscription to Transport for the South East (TfSE) of £58,000 for 2021/22, with the amount to be split 6 ways between the constituent authorities.
2. In its role as accountable body for the Berkshire Local Transport Body, Slough BC collected contributions from BLTB members and passed the subscriptions to East Sussex County Council, the accountable body for TfSE.
3. For 2022/23 the subscription rate has been maintained at £58,000, however it has been agreed between TfSE and Slough Borough Council that for 2022/23 that TfSE should invoice the six local authorities individually for the subscriptions and they will make payment directly to TfSE rather than through Slough. This takes into account likely delays relating to Slough Borough Council's financial circumstances and in particular the need to justify the expenditure via an internal business case. The invoices for the individual payments were sent out in June and the amount for each authority was £9,667.00, making a combined total of £58,000.
4. It is anticipated that the subscriptions for 2023/24 will remain at £58,000 and that the process of each authority being billed individually will remain in place for this and any subsequent years.

Strategic Investment Plan

5. At their July 2022 meeting the Berkshire Strategic Transport Forum Members received a presentation from TfSE representatives on the consultation on their draft Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) for the South East, which sits alongside TfSE's Transport Strategy. Together these form a long-term multi-modal plan to support government priorities, making best use of existing facilities, taking advantage of the latest technology to support the UK's net zero targets.
6. The SIP is a blueprint for transport infrastructure investment in the South East and together the interventions within the SIP should deliver an additional 25,000 jobs, 500,000 more rail trips and £4.5m in GVA. The SIP is underpinned by a robust evidence base and technical programme and addresses key priorities around decarbonisation, levelling up left behind communities, regeneration and growth and travel within the South East.
7. The SIP contains a number of key interventions for Berkshire, notably Western Rail Link to Heathrow is a key priority, along with Southern access. In the shorter-term bus-based mass rapid transit and a range of sustainable transport measures are also put forward as part of enhanced inter urban connectivity.
8. The SIP models global policy packages, such as road-user charging, and integrated ticketing that could make significant changes to travel behaviour and improvements to carbon emissions and economic outcomes.

9. The consultation has now been completed and the LEP submitted a formal response on behalf of the BLTB, which is attached as Appendix 5. Overall our response was very positive, as the SIPs commitment to responsible economic growth and the urgency with which carbon emissions need to be reduced are well aligned with our priorities. The consultation response also gave us an opportunity to re-emphasise our key strategic transport priorities such as the need to progress western rail access to Heathrow Airport as soon as possible.
10. TfSE have recently completed their consultation response analysis and have used this to refine the draft SIP, to ensure that it reflects the feedback received. Overall TfSE consider the public consultation exercise to have been very successful with a good level of response to the consultation from a wide variety of different stakeholders. The results of the consultation showed that there is considerable support for key aspects of the draft SIP including the 2050 Vision, the 'decide and provide' approach that was used to develop it, the case it makes for continued investment in the South East and its role in enabling TfSE to achieve its overall mission.
11. Full details of the results of the consultation and proposed changes to the SIP will be presented to the TfSE Partnership Board for approval next Monday, 14th November, where we are represented by Councillor Tony Page.
12. Once the SIP is approved there will be an opportunity for the BLTB to formally approve the draft final version of the SIP via our formal procedures, in is envisaged that this can be done at the next meeting on BLTB on 9th March 2023. The final version of the SIP and the accompanying ISA will be presented to the Partnership Board for approval on 13th March 2023.

Recommendation

13. To agree to a renewed annual BLTB subscription of £58,000 for TfSE to cover the period 2022/23, with the amount to be split 6 ways between the constituent authorities and to agree in principle, subject to individual authorities budget setting processes, that a similar payment is made in 2023/24.
14. To receive a report of the final draft of the SIP for formal approval at the next meeting of the BLTB.