



## **Report to Solent Transport**

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**Subject:** Solent Transport Working in Partnership

### **Purpose of the Report**

The purpose of this report is to highlight the contribution that Solent Transport and its predecessor Transport for South Hampshire have made and continue to make to transport investment in the Solent. It also considers how Solent Transport needs to evolve in the future as the local and national political situations change and funding streams become more diverse.

### **Recommendations**

- 1. It is recommended that, in the light of the changing local and national political picture, as well as the changing nature of funding opportunities, the Joint Committee begins work to further develop its relationships with its partners and stakeholders and to consider how a single Transport Delivery Plan for the sub-region can be delivered.**

### **Introduction**

- 1.1 Solent Transport and its predecessor Transport for South Hampshire (TfSH) have a strong track record of working collaboratively across the four local transport authorities in the Solent area. As a result of this collaboration, and of the extensive partnership working with regional and governmental stakeholders and transport operators, significant amounts of external funding from both the public and private sectors have been levered into the area for the benefit of residents, businesses and visitors.**

- 1.2 A particular asset of Solent Transport has been its Sub Regional Transport Model (SRTM) which is a high quality, multi-modal, transport, land use and economic impact evidence base. The SRTM has been instrumental in securing over £60m of funding for transport projects in the Solent through the provision of transport evidence to support the development of high quality business cases for funding bids.
- 1.3 Another particular strength of Solent Transport is its ability to bring together the major transport stakeholders in the sub-region. Through Solent Transport, infrastructure owners such as Network Rail and Highways England, transport operators including South West Trains and the area's bus operators regularly sit alongside the local highway authorities, the DfT, the Solent LEP and the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) to plan projects, align investments and strategies, and to prepare funding bids.
- 1.4 Over recent times, there have been changes to funding arrangements for transport projects as well as to the national and local political landscape. There is an increasing number of actors involved in transport funding, including Local Enterprise Partnerships and a range of Government sources e.g. Department for Transport, Department for Communities and Local Government, Homes and Communities Agency. Much of the current funding available is secured through a competitive process.
- 1.5 Solent Transport has been successful over recent years in securing funds through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund, Better Bus Area Fund and has supported successful Travel Transition Year, Access Fund and Local Growth Deal bids. The majority of these projects are delivered by Solent Transport's constituent highway authorities. Highways England has delivered capacity improvements to junctions 3 and 5 of the M27 and has significant investment committed to the Solent area through its Road Investment Strategy, including Smart Motorways on the M27, eastern access to Southampton, Redbridge roundabout and M3 capacity improvements. Through the Local Growth Fund, the Solent LEP has secured funding for transport projects including road capacity improvements in Fareham and Gosport. The LEP has also commissioned its Strategic Transport Investment Plan which focuses on the business community's aspirations for 'transformational' transport investments towards 2040.
- 1.6 Central Government ambitions for devolution have been echoed in the local landscape, with competing proposals submitted to Government from the Hampshire and Solent areas. Whilst the picture is still not clear on future local government arrangements in the Solent and the wider Hampshire area, there remains the strong need for transport, land-use and infrastructure planning in the area to be coordinated across local authority and LEP boundaries. Transport

movements do not take local authority boundaries into account so planning on a wider geographical basis has a vital role to play in the continued growth and development of the sub-region.

- 1.7 A further important recent development is the potential emergence of a Sub-National Transport Body for the South East. This would see major transport investments of national importance coordinated across the South East of England. It is anticipated that this body would enable the South East region to compete more effectively for national funding. The role of Solent Transport in the context of this new body is yet to be determined at a local level.

## **2. Discussion, Challenges and Opportunities**

- 2.1 As the political and funding backdrop continues to evolve, Solent Transport needs to retain and develop its important role as a strategic body across the four Solent transport authorities. Solent Transport's positive relationships with transport infrastructure owners, DfT and transport operators have delivered significant investment in a variety of transport schemes. This impressive track record needs to continue into the future with a number of major projects due to be delivered, notably the significant Highways England investment in the Strategic Road Network.
- 2.2 A major opportunity for the Solent area in the short term would be to develop a renewed Solent Transport Delivery Plan. The current Transport Delivery Plan and the Local Transport Plan 3 Joint Strategy for South Hampshire date to 2013. Much has changed since their publication, including publication of the Solent LEP's Strategic Transport Investment Plan and the position statement developed by PUSH setting out the overall need for, and a distribution of development in South Hampshire to 2034 to meet the objectively assessed need of approximately 100,000 new homes by 2036, which however will need to take into account the recent Government White Paper – Fixing Our Broken Housing Market. Significant transport investment will be required to enable and mitigate this level of development, and there is a good opportunity for Solent Transport, bringing together the strategic planning and delivery agencies, to lead on the development of a combined Transport Delivery Plan to produce a combined Transport Plan that meets the needs of all communities within the sub-region. This Plan would require funding for studies, staff resource and model runs of the SRTM. This funding is not currently in Solent Transport's budget.
- 2.3 This combined Transport Delivery Plan would be fully evidence-based through the SRTM, and would be the opportunity for the Solent to set out its vision for transport, and to lobby effectively for the major transport investments that are required to deliver approximately 100,000 new homes by 2036, sustainable economic growth, improved

labour mobility, cleaner air and improved productivity. Specific examples of 'deliverables' include faster rail journey times to London, better rail services across the Solent between Portsmouth, Southampton and the stations in between, the development of Solent Metro, Park & Ride, Park & Rail, securing the future of the Island rail line, expansion of Bus Rapid Transit, highway capacity improvements to deal with congestion hot spots, active travel investment, all supported by comprehensive promotional activities encouraging modal transfer to sustainable transport .

- 2.4 In order to deliver a single Transport Delivery Plan for the Solent, the Joint Committee needs to consider the future direction of Solent Transport and how it can work most effectively with its partners, particularly the Solent LEP to maximise the sub-region's ability to present a coordinated and unified approach to transport funding bodies.

### **3. Conclusions**

- 3.1 Solent Transport and TfSH have been successful in securing major transport funding and building strong relationships with the Solent's transport stakeholders as well as with Government. Solent Transport now needs to consider how it engages into the future with these organisations as the local political and transport funding situation is evolving. The delivery of a single Transport Delivery Plan for the Solent should be considered as a positive step forward in this process.
- 3.2 The Joint Committee needs to be aware that whilst considering its future relationships with its partners and stakeholders, and proposals for a single Transport Delivery Plan for the area, there is currently insufficient funding and staff capacity within Solent Transport to deliver the required studies, model runs and reports. The Joint Committee therefore needs to consider how it could work with the Solent LEP and its constituent Local Transport Authority members to fund and coordinate this work.

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background papers

**The following documents disclose facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and has been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report.**

NB the list excludes:

1. Published works.
2. Documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.

TITLE

LOCATION

None