

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Lead Member for Economy, Transport and Environment
Date:	29 July 2021
Title:	Sub-National and Sub-Regional Transport Planning
Report From:	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

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Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of Hampshire County Council's current engagement with regional and sub-regional transport bodies, to seek approval for a number of Interim Policy Statements guiding work in this area, and to seek endorsement for the Business Plan for 2021/22 of Solent Transport.

Recommendations

2. That the Executive Lead Member for Economy, Transport and Environment notes the updates in this report on various work streams being undertaken by regional and sub-regional transport bodies.
3. That the Executive Lead Member for Economy, Transport, and Environment approves the Solent Transport Business Plan for 2021-22, as set out in appendix A.
4. That the Executive Lead Member for Economy, Transport, and Environment notes the key priorities for the Transport for the South East (TfSE) Business Plan for 2021-22, as set out in this report.
5. That the Executive Lead Member for Economy, Transport, and Environment notes the programme for consultation on the forthcoming TfSE Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) and requests that TfSE ensures that there is adequate

time for constituent authorities to approve the plan between the completion of consultation and adoption of the SIP.

6. That the Executive Lead Member for Economy, Transport, and Environment agrees the Interim Transport Policy Statements set out in this report, to shape and guide engagement on current regional transport work.

Executive Summary

7. This paper seeks to:

- set out the background to all regional transport partnerships with relevance to Hampshire County Council;
- update on and agree the relevant business plans for regional transport bodies; and
- agree a high-level interim policy framework to guide studies and work undertaken by the transport entities.

Contextual information

8. Hampshire County Council is currently actively engaged with three regional/sub regional transport bodies. This is, and has for the last two years or so, been a particularly active area of work.
9. There is also a long-established joint working arrangement in the South Hampshire sub-region through Solent Transport. This has provided a valuable means of co-operation and co-ordination on transport issues and is widely recognised as an example of good practice.
10. Transport for the South East (TfSE) covers the geographic area to the south and west of London encompassing the counties of Kent, East and West Sussex, Surrey, Hampshire, and former Berkshire. It also includes a number of unitary authorities, including Portsmouth, Southampton and Isle of Wight. TfSE published a regional transport strategy in 2020, which can be accessed at [TfSE-transport-strategy.pdf \(transportforthesoutheast.org.uk\)](https://transportforthesoutheast.org.uk/TfSE-transport-strategy.pdf).
11. The Western Gateway covers the region bordering Hampshire to the west, stretching from Dorset in the south to Gloucestershire and Bath/Bristol/North Somerset in the west. While not directly impacting on Hampshire, the regional planning work is of relevance and the County Council is welcomed as a key stakeholder in the Western Gateway work.
12. This report provides a summary of business plans/programmes for the main strategic transport bodies and seeks approval for the Solent Transport Business Plan in accordance with the agreement governing its operation. It sets out a series of recommended Interim Policy Statements, to guide the work inputting to the range of regional transport study development and provides an overview of various studies underway or programmed.

Solent Transport Business Plan

13. The Solent Transport agreement requires that each authority agree the Solent Transport Business plan for the year ahead following its approval by the Solent Transport joint Committee. This ensures that the decisions reached in the joint committee are ratified by the County Council. Furthermore, it helps ensure that the work of Solent Transport is focused on the priorities of the member authorities.
14. The business plan for 2021/22 was agreed by the Solent Transport Joint Committee on 4 March 2021. The Business Plan is appended to this report (Appendix A) and the original covering report is at [Report.pdf \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](#). The report recommendations seek to endorse that decision, which will make it compliant with the Joint Committee governance rules as set out in the Solent Transport legal agreement.
15. Key items within the business plan are –
 - continuing delivery of the Future Transport Zone (FTZ);
 - development of a Strategic Vision and High Level Strategy for Solent Transport;
 - support/co-ordination for Member authorities in securing funding through bid opportunities;
 - completion of validation work and ongoing administration of Sub-Regional Transport Model (SRTM);
 - support Isle of Wight Transport Board on cross-Solent connectivity;
 - engagement in future land-use modelling with Local Transport Authorities and Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH);
 - marketing, promotion and lobbying; and
 - support delivery of the M27 Travel Demand Management (TDM) project with Highways England.

Transport for South East Business Plan

16. Unlike Solent Transport, TfSE is not a formal joint committee – it is seeking formal status as a statutory body and, pending approval, is currently operating under shadow arrangements. The business plan for 2021-22 identifies four priority areas of work, as follows:
 - complete a programme of area and thematic studies which form the principal building blocks of a strategic investment plan;
 - develop a strategic investment plan ready for public consultation in summer 2022;
 - agree a clear and compelling vision for the future role of Transport for the South East, including the tools needed to deliver [TfSE's] investment plan; and

- secure a multi-year financial settlement from government, enabling TfSE to work more efficiently and effectively and deliver best value for [TfSE's] partners and taxpayers.
17. Alongside these key priorities, TfSE indicates that it will continue to work closely with government and partners in the road and rail sectors to support investment in the region and ensure the South East's voice is heard.

Individual Regional Studies/Work Areas

Transport for the South East (TfSE)

Inner Orbital Area Study

18. This is the orbital area running south of Greater London from Basingstoke and Reading in the West, to Ashford, Dartford and Medway in the East, large parts of the Thames Valley, Surrey and Gatwick also fall within the study area. Overall, the County Council interim position on this is to promote improved Local Strategic link principles which facilitate hub and spoke networks between Basingstoke and adjacent major urban centres within the study area, namely Basingstoke to Reading, and Newbury and Farnborough to Blackwater Valley areas. The County Council's position emphasises the importance of local movements rather than long distance, end to end journeys. To support this, the specific interventions and schemes arising from the Multimodal M3 to M4 link enhancements, in line with emerging outcomes of the Thames Valley and North Hants study including Rail electrification, will be advocated by the County Council.
19. Other priority projects for Hampshire County Council are:
- Junction 7-8 M3 – enhancement to facilitate significant growth to West of Basingstoke;
 - Mass Rapid Transit for Basingstoke;
 - enhancements to the Basingstoke to Reading corridor, in line with emerging findings from the corridor study;
 - enhancements to the A339 in line with emerging outcomes of the A339 Corridor Study;
 - Black Dam M3 junction to become Strategic Road Network; and
 - Woking rail flyover.

Interim Policy Statement 1

The focus of work on the Inner Orbital study should be on accommodating major development proposals around Basingstoke, including promotion of Mass Rapid Transit for the town, on developing multi-modal approaches for the A33 and A339 corridors, and on addressing rail capacity issues, especially at Woking.

Outer Orbital Area Study

20. This study area runs from New Forest in Hampshire to Thanet and Medway in Kent and covers the coastal areas of South Hampshire (including the cities of Southampton and Portsmouth) extending along the south coast through East and West Sussex (including the Town of Brighton and coastal areas of Kent). As such, this also includes the south coast ports of Southampton, Portsmouth, Shoreham, Newhaven, Folkstone and Dover. It is also important to consider the neighbouring urban area of Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole immediately to the west of Hampshire.
21. The County Council's initial position on this study has been that this should place less emphasis on developing long distance 'orbital' transport corridors, for example by road or rail, as there is little evidence that there is a strong unmet demand for end-to-end journeys. This is consistent with Interim Policy Statement 2 above. The County Council has instead pursued a 'hub and spoke' approach, promoting networks such as BRT/Metro networks (based upon integrated rail and bus). This has including promoting:
- Waterside Rail;
 - Solent Connectivity Study;
 - Southampton Radial enhanced bus network;
 - extended SEHRT;
 - A27 – people movement corridor enhancement;
 - Access to Gosport – Active and public transport modes enhancements (Eclipse extensions);
 - A3 – (Star corridor to be enhanced to mass transit level of service);
 - Waterside Transport Strategy inc. A326, passenger rail and other multimodal enhancements;
 - four track railway from Parkway to Southampton Central, including four platforms at Airport Parkway and associated bridge enhancements;
 - better Integrated land use planning; and
 - step change in integrated ticketing and pricing.
22. The County Council will wish to keep under review the potential benefits of promoting a Passenger Transport Executive (PTE) for Hampshire.

Interim Policy Statement 2

The focus of work on the Outer Orbital study should be on enhancing local connectivity, serving the major conurbations in the study area, on better integrating transport and land-use planning, and on enhancements to the 'rail offer' for all settlements along the south coast.

South West Radial Study

23. This study is scheduled to commence shortly and will cover the area to the south west of London - extending from Outer London to Portsmouth, Southampton, Ringwood, Winchester, Basingstoke, Andover and Newbury. At this early stage the County Council considers that the strategy in Hampshire should focus on strategic long-distance end to end journeys recognising its international gateway function, which again is consistent with Interim Policy Statement 2 above. In this regard the following interventions and schemes will be advocated:

- ensure adequate capacity and seek improved rail services on key rail corridors, taking into account future demand patterns once the longer-term impact of Covid-19 is fully understood;
- A3 corridor and Portsmouth – improve Portsmouth-London rail times and improvements to/replacement of Ham Barn roundabout;
- M3 Junction 9 major improvement scheme to be delivered;
- Smart Motorways and strategic network junction enhancement to South Western section of M27 and M3; and
- Highways England to study the A34 in Road Investment Strategy (RIS) period 3 to understand the case for upgrading to motorway standard.

Interim Policy Statement 3

The focus of future work on the South West Radial Study should be on ensuring enhanced rail capacity and improved rail services to serve future demand, and on the delivery of existing commitments on the road/motorway network.

Freight Logistics and Gateway Study

24. This is a topic-based study which aims to identify what investment is needed to better connect the region's ports, airports and international rail links, supporting sustainable economic growth both within the region and more widely.

25. There are five work packages, as follows, that in combination reflect the scope of the work.

- **Stakeholder Engagement.** To engage and transform stakeholder perceptions that freight is a problem to one where it is seen as a sector that can deliver on healthier streets, stronger communities and driving economic recovery and growth.
- **Data, Research & Insight.** To share a clear baseline of freight travel patterns, needs and opportunities, and forecasts, and continue to share data and insights.
- **Infrastructure.** To develop a clear infrastructure priority list with decarbonisation, resilience, and predictability at its core.

- Technology & Decarbonisation. To create and deliver a zero-emission strategy and route-map for the region.
 - Operational & Planning Considerations. To develop a toolkit for better incorporating freight (sites and integrated policies) into local planning. To develop a delivery plan for increased levels of training and education to facilitate safe, efficient, and reliable movement of goods.
26. Both Hampshire County Council and Solent Transport are represented on the steering group. With important international gateways at Southampton Port, Portsmouth Port, and Southampton Airport, it has been important to ensure that a focus is retained on the South Hampshire area, particularly with the emerging Freeport proposal.

Interim Policy Statement 4

The local focus of work on the Freight and Logistics study should be on ensuring that adequate links are provided for freight movements to and from the ports of Southampton and Portsmouth and Southampton Airport and that adequate provision is made for freight movements associated with the Solent Freeport. This should include rail access as well as road access.

The potential for new approaches to 'last mile' delivery should be explored, including schemes utilising cycle/electric vehicle courier systems, to minimise the impact of HGVs in town centres and other sensitive locations.

Mobility

27. This is a topic-based study which explores the role of changing technology and future model of mobility, and the role local highway authorities may play in the future. The County Council general position is based on the evidence submitted to the 2050 vision work. This places emphasis on new technologies and innovations coming forward that are targeted at helping to achieve specific policy outcomes and not simply supportive of new technology for technology's sake.
28. This is an evolving and uncertain area of work. Innovations and new technology are rapidly disrupting and changing, and hint at a very different future of mobility: a future where shared vehicle ownership and vehicle autonomy present significant opportunities to reduce the need to own a vehicle whilst still facilitating the freedoms we have become used to through car ownership. The cleaning of vehicle technologies is moving at pace with, at a national level, the banning of the sale of internal combustion engine cars by 2030 already starting to have a discernible impact on vehicle sales and customer interest.
29. The technology to support back-office functions integrating different modes and allowing more seamless and affordable charging systems already exists but is not widely deployed. Embracing such developments could have

significant benefits for customers and ease of travelling using multiple forms of transport in a seamless and connected way.

Western Gateway

30. The Western Gateway transport body is currently undertaking four multi-modal corridor studies, as follows –
- South East to South West;
 - Midlands to South Coast;
 - Midlands to South West; and
 - South East to Wales.
31. Hampshire County Council has been engaged with the steering group of the first two of these studies; the remaining two are too peripheral to Hampshire to be of direct interest.
32. Much of the focus of the studies has been on north-south road links to the west of Hampshire. There is also interest in improving rail journey times between Poole and London. These are legitimate interests for the Western Gateway grouping although have little or no direct impact in Hampshire. The principal approach taken to date, therefore, is to be supportive but to be assured that the improvements sought will not be at the expense of investment and services directly impacting on Hampshire (e.g. investment on the A34/M3/A31 corridors or rail stopping patterns that affect service levels in Hampshire).

Future Regional Working Structures

33. The future direction of statutory status for Sub National Transport Bodies is currently uncertain. The Government has not at this time agreed to set up any new Sub National Transport Bodies and its appetite to do so appears to have waned, presumably because of other more pressing national priorities. TfSE is, however, continuing to develop ideas for devolved powers and responsibilities which in turn may require it to present a case to Government for Statutory status. This would mean it can perform functions and responsibilities in its own right as a Local Highway Authority instead of through constituent member authority.
34. Work to define the future role of TfSE is ongoing. In principle Hampshire County Council's position on this issue has to date emphasised subsidiarity, supporting devolution of powers down from central Government, but sceptical of the benefits of drawing power from existing Local Highway Authorities into TfSE. There may be situations where sharing some functions could lead to efficiencies and future savings, e.g. shared back office functions for integrated ticketing or the assessment and issue of concessionary or blue badge passes. However, such shared services can already be established under voluntary agreement and do not necessarily require TfSE to have statutory status.

Finance

35. There are no direct financial implications arising from the report, although the influence gained through membership of and engagement with sub-national bodies will impact positively on potential future funding schemes at a regional level.
36. Hampshire County Council makes financial contributions towards the cost of running TfSE and Solent Transport. Budgetary provision has been made for both and payment has been made to both for the current year.
37. Transport for South East Membership currently costs £58,000pa, which is the agreed sum paid by all County Highway Authorities. This is a partnership with an ambitious work plan. The Government has provided substantial funding to support TfSE's study programme and this is clearly good news. It means that potential pressure to increase partner contributions to maintain the work programme has, for the time being, been resolved.
38. Solent transport Membership currently costs £90,000pa. A formula governs the membership fees, which is set in proportion to the population covered by the Solent Transport member authorities. The full cost of these activities including officer time is considerably more than the membership fee.

Consultation and Equalities

39. An Equalities Impacts Assessment has been completed. This has identified potentially positive outcomes for populations affected by poverty and/or rurality. This is because it is anticipated that the County Council's engagement with sub-national transport bodies would highlight the needs to support economic regeneration and to ensure that the needs of rural areas are properly reflected in their strategies.

Climate Change Impact Assessments

40. There are no direct implications for climate change from the report as it is established broad policy positions to influence future investment decisions. The ability to influence climate change will be impacted by those decisions, but it is not possible to quantify those impacts until the level of investment and types of scheme supported are known. The Interim Policy Statements are intended to secure a positive impact by directing investment to types of scheme that support carbon neutrality.

Climate Change Adaptation

41. Adaptation measures will be considered in future schemes, once the level of funding and types of scheme supported are known.

Carbon Mitigation

42. Mitigation measures will be considered in future schemes, once the level of funding and types of scheme supported are known.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

None

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

- 2.1 An Equalities Impacts Assessment has been completed. This has identified potentially positive outcomes for populations affected by poverty and/or rurality. This is because it is anticipated that the County Council's engagement with sub-national transport bodies would highlight the needs to support economic regeneration and to ensure that the needs of rural areas are properly reflected in their strategies.