

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Cabinet **DATE:** 18th March 2019

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PORTFOLIO: Cllr Martin Carter – Planning and Transport

PART I **KEY DECISION**

PROPOSAL TO JOIN TRANSPORT FOR THE SOUTH EAST

1 Purpose of Report

A report setting out the key principles involved in joining Transport for the South East (TFSE), the sub-national transport body, a regional partnership organisation for the south east of England.

2 Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

The Cabinet is requested to resolve:

- (a) That Slough Borough Council join Transport for the South East in the capacity of Local Transport Authority, as a constituent authority.
- (b) That membership be exercised via the existing joint committee (Berkshire Local Transport Body). In this capacity, Slough Borough Council will be a joint and equal member of the Berkshire Local Transport Body (BLTB), which will effectively be treated as a county authority within the TFSE organisation.
- (c) That the establishment of TFSE as a subnational transport body be supported.
- (d) That the geographical extents of the TFSE region, and the governance structure of TFSE including membership status, voting rights and responsibilities be noted.
- (e) That the importance of TFSE in achieving success in the following ways be noted:
 - Increasing transport connectivity across the South East, maximising the benefit of cross-boundary links and regional travel;
 - Increasing economic growth across the South East;
 - Improving air quality in the South East
 - Endorsing and contributing to the subnational 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 Slough Borough Council as an individual authority;

- Supporting 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) That it be recognised that the recent and ongoing success of membership of the Berkshire Local Transport Body, within the Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), with reference to Slough's status as a constituent member of these partner organisations and the resultant success in terms of enhancements to the borough in terms of enhanced infrastructure, transportation, economic growth and all areas of sustainability.

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

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

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

Recommendation from section 2 above	Risks/Threats/ Opportunities	Current Controls	Using the Risk Management Matrix Score the risk	Future Controls
To support 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.
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(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

The proposal to join TFSE has been referred to the Council’s Service Lead, Governance. The response obtained confirms that this is an executive decision requiring 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 vision.

5 Supporting Information

Legislative background

5.1. The statutory basis for sub-national transport bodies is set out in Part 5A of the Local Transport Act 2008, as amended by the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016, which says that “the Secretary of State may by regulations establish a sub-national transport body for any area in England outside Greater London” (s102E(1)) and it goes on to set the conditions and limits for such arrangements.

5.2 The Act requires a new sub-national transport body to be promoted by its constituent authorities, to have the consent of its constituent authorities, and that the Proposal has been the subject of consultation within the area and with neighbouring authorities.

Main purposes of establishing TFSE

5.3 The main purposes of creating sub-national transport bodies are to facilitate the development of a transport strategy and to promote economic growth for the area. This will facilitate the delivery of jobs, housing and growth and increase gross added value (GVA) in the region by development of strategic infrastructure

5.4. This is considered necessary:

- Due to continuing underinvestment in the south east (IPPR research on investment per head outside of London)

- Poor connectivity – particularly orbital routes
- The region not reaching its full potential

General functions of a sub-national body:

5.5. For TFSE, the principle functions are to:

- Develop a strategy for the region
- Have the right to be consulted about new rail franchises
- Jointly set the Road Investment Strategy (RIS) for the south east
- Enter agreements to undertake certain types of works on the Strategic Road Network (SRN) or local roads
- Make capital grants for the provision of public transport facilities
- Promote or oppose bills in parliament
- Promote the interests of LEPs, protected landscapes, boroughs and districts, transport industry partners

Proposed developments/innovations across the region:

5.6. Include:

- Increased economic growth across the south east
- Improved air across the south east
- Increased and enhanced bus service provision.
- Integrated ticketing
- Clean air zones
- Incidental powers

Geographical extents of the TFSE region

- 5.7. The region comprises the 16 constituent authorities as follows: Bracknell Forest, Brighton and Hove, East Sussex, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Kent, Medway, Portsmouth, Reading, Slough, Southampton, Surrey, West Berkshire, West Sussex, Windsor and Maidenhead, and Wokingham.
- 5.8. The six Berkshire Unitaries will act together via this joint committee, the Berkshire Local Transport Body.
- 5.9. The Proposal sets out arrangements for involving in governance the five Local Enterprise Partnerships, two National Park Authorities, 44 Boroughs and Districts and representatives from the transport industry.
- 5.10. London is not included in the TFSE region, since it is subject to alternative governance and funding streams.

5.11. Oxford and Buckingham are also not included in the TFSE region, since they are part of the subnational body entitled *England's Economic Heartland*

Governance structure of TFSE

5.12. Each authority will have one representative on the board.

5.13. A total of 54 votes allocated to constituent members

5.13. The number of votes per constituent member is based on population size

5.14. BLTB will have 6 votes (one for each constituent member) but only one representative on the board. All other authorities will have one seat each on the board.

5.15. Should any Berkshire authority not join as part of the BLTB group, or leave at any stage, that authority will be granted its own representative on the board but will still only have one vote.

5.16. In November 2017, Joe Carter (SBC) was authorised to sign a collaboration agreement on behalf of BLTB.

TFSE Powers

5.16. TFSE proposal seeks to draw down specific powers from central government. The newly acquired powers will be exercised in partnership with local authorities, and concurrently with existing local government legislation.

5.17. The TFSE proposal emphasises that TFSE will only ever exercise these local powers with the consent of the local authority concerned.

5.18. No existing local authority powers will be removed.

Current Status

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

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

5.21. 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

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

5.23. The formal application to the DfT will be in December 2019

5.25. Statutory status is expected by 2020/2021

Specific benefits to Slough

5.26. The existence of the TFSE and the TFSE strategy is expected to be highly advantageous to Slough in support of existing SBC plans and ongoing developments. This includes the Slough Borough Council Transport Vision, the SBC Low Emission Strategy, the overall SBC Local Plan and all related core transport and environmental policies.

5.27. In particular, TFSE is expected to significantly contribute to the delivery of the Slough Transport Vision, which will guide development and regeneration in the borough to 2040 and beyond. The SBC Local Plan runs to 2036.

5.28. Major developments expected in Slough include the town centre, the northern expansion, the expansion of Heathrow, and proposals for new strategic transport infrastructure (such as the Elizabeth line and Western Rail Link to Heathrow). SBC will be seeking support from both BLTB and TFSE in securing funding for major infrastructure projects relating to these and other major developments in the borough.

5.29. SBC will also be seeking support from and to work in partnership across the TFSE region in regards to public transport developments. Major public transport routes are, by nature, not confined within local authority boundaries. Hence regional cooperation will continue to be essential. In particular, SBC has extensive plans for enhancing the SMaRT (Slough Mass Rapid Transit). TFSE support for this will, again, be vital.

Examples of previous successes with BLTB support

5.30. In recent years, considerable financial support has been secured for major projects in Slough. These have included new and enhanced infrastructure, transportation, contributions to the delivery of economic growth and all areas of sustainability. Much of this has been achieved via the Local Growth Fund (LGF) and the Business Rates Retention Pilot (BRRP), secured via the Thames Valley LEP and the BLTB. This demonstrates success in partnership working across the local area. By extension, Slough can reasonably expect ongoing support through these and similar channels once the TFSE is formerly in place.

5.31. Although a number of the major developments expected are likely to involve Heathrow development, Heathrow will not be part of TFSE. Similarly, the northern expansion will involve negotiation with Buckinghamshire County Council, who again will not be part of TFSE. Nevertheless, the partnership principles referred to in point

5.30 are expected to continue within the regional TFSE arrangement, with significant ongoing support in particular from the other Berkshire unitary authorities.

5.32. As examples, TV LEP and BLTB support and cooperation has been clearly evident on developments and in discussions relating to Heathrow, the Western rail link, Southern rail access, and in particular the SMaRT expansion (including phase 2, where funding has been awarded to Slough, and acknowledgment of the upcoming phase 3).

6 **Comments of Other Committees**

This report has not been considered by any other committees.

7 **Conclusion**

Approving membership of Transport for the South East as both an individual local transport authority and a joint and equal member of the Berkshire Local Transport Body sub-group of TFSE will contribute to the delivery of progress in planned growth and transport connectivity throughout Slough and across the South East region. The subnational transport body seeks to radically change the funding mechanisms and sources for developments across the region, with support and positive implications for individual authorities in terms of enhanced public transport, reduced traffic congestion and improved air quality, all of which will facilitate a better style of living for our residents and better growth opportunities for our businesses.

8 **Appendices Attached**

'A' – Transport for the South East – Draft Proposal for Informal Engagement

'B' – Berkshire Chief Executive Group – Consultation Timetable 2019 and Recommendations

'C' Draft proposal to government. Informal engagement. Presentation by Richard Tyndall (TFSE, formerly TV LEP)

9 **Background Papers**

None.