

**SOUTH EAST ENGLAND
REGIONAL TRANSPORT BOARD**

Date: 26 April 2007

Subject: **Regional Funding Allocation 2011-2016**

Report of: Planning Implementation Director
South East England Regional Assembly

It is recommended that the Board:

1. Note the response of the Secretary of State to the Board's advice in respect of the period to 2011-2016;
2. Note the requirement to provide the Secretary of State with further advice in respect of the Bexhill to Hastings Link Road and the A23 Handcross to Warninglid schemes;
3. Requests the secretariat engage in dialogue with the relevant scheme promoters in respect of the package of proposals in Oxford, Portsmouth, Southampton and Chichester.

Purpose of the Report

To report the Secretary of State's response to the Board's advice.

Key Issues:

The Board submitted the region's advice in respect of transport priorities in two parts. The first part, covering the period from 2006-2011 was submitted in January 2006 and was approved by Government in July 2006. The second part, covering the period 2011-2016, was submitted in December 2006.

The Secretary of State has accepted the Board's advice in full and complemented the Board on taking a clearly strategic view in arriving at its priorities while achieving an overall balance in expenditure for the ten-year period to 2016.

The Secretary of State notes some issues arising from the Board's advice, notably around the levels of commitment in the programme and the future handling of changes to schemes in the regional programme, that require further consideration.

I. The Government's response

- I.1 A copy of the Secretary of State's response to the Board's advice is attached as Annex I. In accepting the Board's advice in full, the Secretary of State has welcomed the strategic manner in which these priorities were arrived at and the region is complimented on achieving an acceptable overall balance of cost across the full ten year period of the regional transport programme.
- I.2 The Secretary of State raises several observations and issues; the key issues are:
- i) The Secretary of State has requested the Board to provide further advice upon how the cost increases associated the Bexhill to Hastings Link Road and A23 Handcross to Warninglid schemes should be addressed; this is considered further under Agenda Item 7a.
 - ii) The A24 Ashington to Southwater scheme which will be required to submit a new business case to take into account its later phasing within the regional programme
 - iii) There is a need for the regional partners to work with the scheme promoters as they develop the detail of the "packages" at Oxford, Portsmouth, Southampton and Chichester;
 - iv) The Board's Advice on the treatment of the A244 Walton Bridge is accepted. However, the Secretary of State notes that the opportunity to bring forward the Brighton and Hove Rapid Transit system is dependent upon funds being available within the regional programme;
 - v) The Secretary of State notes that the prioritisation of the A421 Milton Keynes to M1 improvement aligns with the East of England's prioritisation of its portion of the project.
- I.3 In his closing comments to the letter, the Secretary of State defers the question of the overall level of resource allocated for transport measures in the South East until after the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) is published; the timing of this had been delayed until the autumn. The Secretary of State also notes the need to take into account the outcome of Examination in Public of the draft South East Plan in any future advice on the regional programme.
- I.4 With the exception of the need to provide advice on the Bexhill to Hastings Link Road and A23 Handcross to Warninglid schemes, the issues identified by the Secretary of State can be taken into account as part of the Board's programme of work, specifically as part of the 2008 refresh of the regional programme.
- I.5 Having established a clear framework for longer-term transport planning for the region, the Board will increasingly need to turn to consideration of key decisions concerning how to handle significant changes to the programme arising due to cost, design or other factors. This stresses the importance of the Board establishing the protocols and processes necessary to handle these issues.

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