

**SOUTH EAST ENGLAND REGIONAL ASSEMBLY
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Date: 12 September 2008

Subject: **Regional Transport Board**

Report of: Chairman of the Regional Transport Board

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Committee notes the content of this report.

Purpose of Report:

To update the Executive Committee on the work of the Regional Transport Board.

1. Board Meeting - 16 May 2008

1.1 Programme Management and Monitoring

1.2 The Board was informed that there were no significant issues requiring immediate attention.

2. 2008 Refresh: Progress Report

2.1 The Board were informed that 164 schemes had been submitted for consideration, 140 from Local Authorities, and 24 from the Highways Agency.

2.2 The next Board meeting on 23 October 2008 will provide an opportunity to re-profile the existing 2006-16 programme, to ensure that existing priorities are delivered to appropriate timescale. A further report highlighting the state of transport networks in the region, and future growth pressures, will also be presented. The Board will be considering in detail an updated regional programme of investment at its meeting in January 2009.

3. South Central Franchise

3.1 Following the publication of the draft specification for consultation by the Department for Transport the Board discussed the draft response and noted the emphasis in our submission on how the spatial planning is supported.

3.2 A revised response has now been sent to the Department for Transport having included all points highlighted by the Board.

4. Network Rail Business Plan

4.1 The Board was reminded that the development of the five year Strategic Business Plan is Network Rail's response to the requirements set out in the Government's High Level Output Statement of summer 2007. This is now subject to the Office of Rail Regulation's Draft Determination process which will recommend to government the investment levels for the railway from 2009 to 2014. While most of the investment plans were welcomed by the Board, there were two key issues of concern to the Board which, unless addressed, would impact on the delivery of regional priorities.

4.2 The first issue related to the proposal by the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) to reduce the funding provision made for improvements at Gatwick Airport Station; from the £30m originally identified by Network Rail to £9m. The second issue concerned the proposed delay in investing in improvements at Redhill Station; these had been judged by the ORR as being outside the scope of HLOS.

4.3 A third issue raised during the meeting was that planned investment in Reading Station appeared to be £15m less than that originally put forward by Network Rail. The Board therefore requested that the submission to the ORR highlight the importance of safeguarding the funding for the concourse and related improvements.

4.4 To support the case for investment at Gatwick Airport Station, the Board has subsequently written to the Office of Rail Regulation, the Secretary of State for Transport, and the London 2012 secretariat and we are awaiting responses.

5. 2008 Refresh: Contextual Review

5.1 Martin Tugwell provided the context for the following presentations. He highlighted to the Board the importance of identifying the key challenges facing the region's transport system. He emphasised the importance of ensuring that investment priorities reflected the priorities set out in the regional policy framework (the draft South East Plan and the Regional Economic Strategy). This context would be critical to ensuring that the Board's advice on investment priorities is based on a good understanding of the evidence base.

5.2 It was envisaged that the Board's discussion following the presentations would enable the Secretariat to develop the narrative that sets out the region's challenges. This would be the subject of a discussion at the Board's next meeting.

5.3 Regional Monitoring Report

5.3.1 The spatial context underlying the role for transport investment was explained by Andy Mak. He presented a series of maps through which it was possible to begin to identify how the key areas of developmental pressure relate to the existing transport system. This work would continue to be refined over the summer,

5.4 Highways Agency: Network Report

5.4.1 The John Aspinall, Regional Director South East gave a presentation on the state of the Motorway and Trunk Road network. He set out the importance of understanding the nature of the problem that needs to be addressed before embarking on promoting a particular solution.

5.5 Network Rail: Network Report

5.5.1 Paul Harwood of Network Rail gave a presentation on the priorities and programmes for the rail industry for the region, highlighting in the process the importance for the region of addressing bottlenecks in London.

5.6 Presentation from Transport for South Hampshire

5.6.1 Stuart Jarvis and Keith Wilcox updated the Board on developments with Transport for South Hampshire since their previous presentation. They highlighted how through the work undertaken by the partners (work funded in part by the DfT and Regional Assembly) it had been possible to develop a robust strategy.

5.6.2 Considerable progress had been made with developing good working relationships with local public transport operators. In particular the establishment of a bus operators' forum was enabling the local partners to

move forward with ambitious plans to develop the public transport offer in the sub-region.

Cllr Nick Skellett
Chairman of the Regional Transport Board
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