



## Appendix 2

## Transport for the South East Draft Transport Strategy Consultation East Sussex County Council Response

### January 2020

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the TfSE Transport Strategy consultation, for which comments are requested by 10 January 2020. This is an officer response to the Strategy consultation and the County Council's formal consultation response will be considered at the Council's Cabinet meeting on 28 January 2020.

We have not responded to the About You section (**Questions 1 – 5**) on the consultation questionnaire.

### Strategy Approach

#### **Question 6: Moving away from predict and provide - to what extent do you agree or disagree with the use of this 'decide and provide' approach?**

The County Council is broadly supportive of the TfSE's proposal within the Transport Strategy of moving away from a 'predict and provide' approach of transport planning across the sub-national area and towards a 'decide and provide' approach of deciding the preferred future and transport outcomes, and providing the transport interventions necessary to deliver that future.

It is acknowledged that the move to a 'decide and provide' approach could provide greater opportunities to alleviate congestion alongside moving towards a carbon neutral society, through investment in sustainable transport, developing land use planning policies, adopting emerging transport technologies and implementing demand management policies. However, a 'predict and provide approach' and the use of appropriate tools to determine this, will still be valuable especially in the short term for assessing parts of the wider transport network, such as the strategic road and major road networks, and as transport providers transition to a 'decide and provide' approach. This would enable existing deficiencies to be addressed in the short term to ensure these networks are 'fit for purpose' and able to accommodate the additional demand generated by the impacts of housing and employment growth.

In the context of East Sussex, there are key and targeted sections of the strategic road network that have been identified using a 'predict and provide' approach – the A27 between Lewes and Polegate and on the A21 between Kippings Cross and Lamberhurst as well as at Hurst Green and Flimwell - as priorities for providing adequate capacity to bring the network up to an appropriate standard. Similarly, we have used a 'predict and provide' approach to identify the need for improvements to the A22 around Hailsham and Stone Cross to accommodate the housing and employment growth, coupled with a 'decide and provide' approach in relation to wider improvements to public transport, walking and cycling on the movement corridor between Hailsham, Polegate and Eastbourne. Therefore this

demonstrates the benefits of integrating both approaches to ensure that all forms of mobility are considered in a strategic context, which will be important as sustainable mobility will need to be considered closely alongside future highway improvements to support the premise of sustainable growth.

In implementing the Strategy, TfSE will also need to recognise that the different constituent authorities will move at different timescales in terms of adopting the 'decide and provide' approach more locally through their Local Transport Plans (LTP). We will be reviewing and updating our LTP, commencing in 2020/21, and in doing so we propose to embrace this approach.

**Question 7: Planning for people and places - to what extent do you agree or disagree that transport policy across the South East should evolve in this way?**

We are broadly supportive of the approach set out in Figure 1.3 of the Strategy which shows the move from planning for vehicles in the longer term, towards planning for people and planning for places over time. This is sensible as people and their journey purpose strongly determine their behaviour and choice of mobility, and enables the move away from labelling people as a cyclists, drivers, pedestrians etc., when they could be all three. With a move towards more transport provision in the future being provided as a service and shared this will be even more important to consider and have a greater understanding of people's journey purpose and how this influences their behaviours and choice of mobility.

The Strategy highlights in section 1.23 that the South East is in the first stage of the process focussed on planning for vehicles however this is felt to be a misnomer.

Whilst it is acknowledged that in East Sussex we are, for example, seeking targeted improvements to the strategic road network and capacity enhancements to junctions on the Major Road Network, we are already, (and have been for a number of years) 'planning for people' and 'planning for places'.

For example, in planning for people we are investing significantly in sustainable transport infrastructure to provide people with greater choices in relation to using public transport, or cycling and walking. We wish to re-iterate the need for this to be continued with similar funds to Local Growth Fund monies which we have secured through the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP). It would be sensible if this kind of funding could be integrated with travel behaviour change funding as well.

Likewise, in planning for places, we have invested in high quality street environments in many of our towns including Hailsham, Uckfield and Eastbourne. In addition, we are seeking to ensure that transport and land use policies are closely inter-related through engagement with the Borough and District Council's in the development and delivery of their Local Plans.

Therefore it is suggested that the narrative in the Strategy, and Figure 1.3, acknowledges this and that planning for vehicles will continue over the life of the strategy but reduce over time; whilst planning for people and planning for places is already taking place but will increase over time, in parallel with the reduction in the number of vehicles.

**Question 8 – How important do you feel the key features of our ‘Sustainable Route to Growth’ scenario are for the future of the South East? (pp126 – 131)**

Recognising the polycentric nature of the sub-region, we believe that it is very important that the South East becomes less reliant on London and builds on its existing successful economic hubs. Within East Sussex, it is important that we continue to develop and grow our economic priority areas of Hastings/Bexhill, Eastbourne/South Wealden and Newhaven to ensure that we can provide high quality, high skilled jobs for our residents locally rather than having residents needing to travel to London to seek these roles.

The need to ensure that land use and transport planning are better integrated is also seen as very important in relation to the ‘Sustainable Route to Growth’ scenario in order to help reduce the need to travel by ensuring that housing and employment growth is located in sustainable locations which encourage journeys to be undertaken on foot, by bike or by public transport where possible. At present, this is done at a local level between the highway authorities and the local planning authorities. In the absence of any strategic land use planning body at sub-national level this will continue to be the case; therefore the role of TfSE, will be to support discussions at a strategic level between respective highway and local planning authorities in relation to transport investment required to support planned growth and the delivery of the wider strategy for the region.

In order to meet the Sustainable Route to Growth vision, the shift away from private cars towards more sustainable travel and creating a cleaner and safer environment is seen as very important. Increased investment in walking, cycling and public transport coupled with decisions about how we best utilise and maximise the available road space will be key to achieving this.

We welcome the reference to the delivery of targeted demand management measures with more mobility being consumed on a ‘pay as you go’ basis. It is recognised that this will be important in the future as changes in people’s mobility habits change as the benefits of emerging technology are harnessed across our transport networks. We expect that the Strategy will need to consider the approaches that could be delivered in both the mix of urban, semi-urban and rural parts of the TfSE area. In addition, any kind of ‘pay as you go’ road use approach can only be considered and implemented nationwide rather than just in the South East. It is noted that the Government’s Transport Committee will be considering road user charging in 2020 and the Transport Strategy, through its ongoing delivery, will need to reflect any changes in Government policy.

**Question 9 – Additional comments**

N/A

**TfSE Area**

**Question 10 – To what extent do you agree or disagree with the evidence set out in chapter 2 of the draft Transport Strategy makes a strong case for continued investment in the South East transport system?**

Strongly Agree. The evidence in Section 2 of the Strategy provides a comprehensive summary of the governance structures; economic, social and environmental characteristics and challenges in the TfSE area. Specific comments on the evidence base presented are set out in our response to Question 11 below.

**Question 11: Additional comments about the information set out in Chapter 2, or any additional evidence that should be included.**

General – It would be helpful, if available, for specific information by district to be provided on public transport (bus) usage across the Transport for the South East geography.

General – the ability to access service through improved digital connectivity would help to reduce the need to travel and information could be provided on this within the evidence base. Within East Sussex, the creative, cultural and digital sector typically choose to work close to home or at home; they are the fastest growing sector who are leading the way in new ways of working and to achieve this need improved broadband capability.

General – the need to promote the use of travel behaviour change programmes alongside sustainable transport infrastructure projects and emerging technologies in providing transport as a service and shared transport, to enhance the use of investment in these.

Page 17, Para 2.8 – it is suggested that the text highlight that the two national parks in the TfSE area are the South Downs and New Forest.

Page 18, Para 2.10/Figure 2.3 – the text in para 2.10 identifies that the area is home to national and world leading universities; could their locations be shown on Figure 2.3 as well as the Priority Industrial sectors particularly if there are any inter-relationships between the higher education and industrial sectors?

Page 25, Figure 2.7 – it is suggested that the Protected Landscapes figure also include RAMSAR sites (eg Pevensey Levels).

Page 26, Figure 2.8 – whilst it is acknowledged that Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA's) should be shown as part of the evidence base, because of the scale of the map it is very difficult to see where all the more localised AQMA's are which are not in the defined economic hubs (eg Newhaven, Lewes). It is suggested that these are labelled or listed on the map.

Page 35, Para's 2.41 to 2.44 (Key transport patterns) - The modal share statistics, as presented, include journeys to and from London. It is important that the strategy properly sets out the modal split of other urban and inter-urban journeys which take place, given the significant issues with these too. These 'other' journeys should therefore also be illustrated in a separate modal share table. Emphasis should also be provided to more local travel patterns where there are potential significant opportunities for interventions to encourage

modal shift using sustainable transport modes (including cycling and local/inter-urban bus and train services). This might be illustrated through statistics on average journey distance by mode of transport, and take up of various modes of transport by distance.

Page 37, Figure 2.13 - There are some parts of the network, such as the A259 South Coast Road and the A2270 into Eastbourne, where there is no forecast growth in traffic flow shown. Is this correct – if it is less than 20% then should it be shown as such?

Page 40, Para's 2.52 – 2.57 (Highways):

- It is suggested that para 2.54 needs to highlight that there are some targeted interventions which are and could be made to the radial SRN routes to expand capacity. For example, in the context of connectivity to East Sussex, SMART motorway between junctions 6 and 10 on the M23 which is currently being implemented or improvements to the A21 between Kippings Cross and Lamberhurst as well as at Flimwell and Hurst Green, which are priorities identified in TfSE's submission to Government on the second Roads Investment Strategy.
- The reference to the A27 corridor in para 2.55, should be 'A27/A259/A2070'. North – south MRN routes also supports the Strategic Road Network where it is not fit for purpose; for example the A22 MRN corridor, provides relief to the A21 and A27/A259 SRN corridors serving the county.
- Whilst the reference in para 2.56 is about the opportunities for the MRN in urban areas, the text should also highlight that for inter-urban MRN routes, the focus is likely on ensuring journey time reliability and connectivity between urban areas on or near these routes.
- It is suggested that whilst the priority of this section is on the strategic and major road networks, the narrative should make reference to the inter-relationship these networks have with the rest of the local highways network managed by the local highways authorities, which is a component of nearly every journey undertaken.

Page 42, Para's 2.58 – 2.63 (Railways)

- General – there is little reference to the roles and responsibilities of Network Rail and the Train Operating Companies in relation to rail network and services in the south east
- Para 2.58 – it is suggested that some of the journey time relative to distance issues are also highlighted in the text; for example, Bexhill is 52 miles from London and yet it takes 2 hours whatever route you take to get there by rail.
- Para 2.61 – it is suggested that the non-electrified sections of the network are highlighted; in East Sussex these are Uckfield to Hurst Green (which runs north – south) and Ore to Ashford. The paragraph could also highlight that the use of alternatively powered bi-mode train units – electric/diesel; electric/battery or hydrogen – could offer up options to addressing the challenge on the current un-electrified sections of rail network in the south east.
- Para 2.62 – whilst it is agreed that the majority of rail capacity is needed on the radial routes, there are capacity needs and opportunities on orbital routes (eg. Marshlink, Ashford – Gatwick; North Downs line) which is suggested could be referred to as well.

Page 45 (Gatwick Airport) – it is suggested that the narrative is amended to clarify that Gatwick Airport Limited are proposing to use their standby runway for departures only in parallel with their main runway which would increase the overall number of flights and passengers using the airport.

Page 46, Para 2.69 – The narrative refers to the Avenue Verte between London and Paris; for completeness, it would be helpful if this was shown on Figure 2.17.

Page 48, Para 2.73 – Whilst it is acknowledged that Local Enterprise Partnerships promote economic development across their respective areas, it is suggested that the text also highlights the crucial role that County Councils and Borough/District Councils play in delivering sustainable economic growth within their own geographies.

### **Vision, Goals and Priorities**

#### **Question 12: To what extent do you support or oppose our vision for the South East?**

We strongly support the vision statement for transport across the south east in 2050 which seeks to balance the triumvirate of the supporting the economy of the sub-national region in a sustainable way; ensuring that social issues such as safety and quality of life are addressed, whilst recognising the high quality environment of the South East and the need to reduce carbon emissions in line with Government targets.

#### **Question 13: Do you have any further comments on our vision?**

The strategic vision could also emphasise that the mix of planning for vehicles, people and places is required to enable its delivery, and that improving sustainable travel choices, inclusive accessibility and reducing the need for travel are means of addressing these three elements, which at present does not come across.

#### **Question 14: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the goals set out within the Transport Strategy?**

The County Council strongly agrees all three strategic goals – Economic, Social and Environment – which underpin the vision for the transport strategy.

From an East Sussex perspective, the strategic goal to improve productivity, attract investment to grow our economy and ensure the sub-national area can better compete in the global marketplace, accords with one of the Council's priorities to support the delivery of sustainable economic growth. This is reflective of the approach set out in the County's Growth Strategy 2014 – 2020 which focusses on three pillars:

- **Business:** Enabling business growth, particularly of 'high value' businesses;
- **Place:** A significantly valued asset to the East Sussex economy;

- **People:** Meeting the skills needs of business and supporting residents to reach their full potential.

Similarly, the strategic goal to 'Improve health, safety, wellbeing, quality of life, and access to opportunities for everyone' accords with the County Council priority of 'Keeping Vulnerable People Safe'.

Within East Sussex, it is recognised that the county has a high quality natural, built and historic environment with the South Downs National Park, High Weald AONB; our coastal towns and market towns with their rural hinterlands, which need to be protected and enhanced as appropriate, whilst also ensuring the connectivity to one another and to other parts of the south east.

**Question 15: To what extent do you agree or disagree that these are the priorities which the Transport Strategy should aim to achieve?**

In relation to all economic, social and environmental priorities set out in paragraphs 3.8 to 3.10 of the Transport Strategy, these are all supported.

Economic Priorities

From an East Sussex perspective, the economic priorities of better connectivity between our major economic hubs, international gateways and their markets, and more reliable journeys between major economic hubs and international gateways, such as Newhaven and Gatwick, are at present a high priority for the County.

We recognise the resilience challenges that the current transport network, particularly the strategic road and rail networks, have which consequently have an impact on connectivity and journey time reliability between our major economic hubs, as well as putting pressure on our own managed transport network. Therefore, we would want to see targeted investment in the strategic networks serving the county in order to address these issues, combined with more localised sustainable travel options which also embrace emerging technology.

Equally, we acknowledge the need to manage the impacts of climate change has, and will continue to have, on our networks whether this be from extreme weather such as hot dry summers and increased flooding, or from coastal erosion putting parts of our road network at risk. This means that strategic and local transport infrastructure providers need to collectively ensure that they are mitigating and adapting to the changing climate.

The importance of digital technology and Smart Cities concepts to manage transport demand and make the best and most efficient effective use of the transport network including better use of available road space, particularly in urban areas, will be a priority for areas of the county such as Hastings and Eastbourne.

Likewise, the roll out of 'mobility as a service' (MaaS) concepts across the county will become increasingly important in rural areas and other parts of the county where there are limited options to the car or where people choose to not own a car.





## Social Priorities

In relation to the specific social priorities, within East Sussex, promoting active travel which supports health and wellbeing is a high priority. We also support the priority of the providing an affordable, accessible transport network which addresses social inclusion issues and helps to reduce barriers to employment, learning, social, leisure, physical and cultural activity.

This accords with the investment that has been made by the County Council in active travel modes over a number of years, particularly in our growth areas using monies secured from the Local Growth Fund through the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP). This also reflects the development of the County's Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plan which will set out policies to encourage active travel and identify priorities for future investment. This has also been supported by investment in revenue based initiatives to encourage active lifestyles through increased walking and cycling through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund between 2012 and 2016 and latterly through DfT funding secured towards the County Council's Active Access for Growth Programme which started in 2017 and will continue through until 2020/21.

The County Council has recently declared a Climate Change emergency at its Full Council meeting in October 2019, alongside other local authorities in the county and the TfSE area. Improving air quality and improving the impact and management of climate change by reducing carbon emissions, particularly by enabling people to use more public transport and to choose to walk and cycle should be a priority.

## Environmental Priorities

Within the environmental priorities, a reduction in carbon emissions to net zero by 2050 – which reflected the target agreed by Full Council at its meeting in October 2019 – and reducing the need to travel, particularly by private car, whether by walking, cycling and using public transport or by improving digital connectivity are considered to be the highest priority.

**Question 16: Are there any other economic, social and/or environmental priorities which you feel the Transport Strategy should aim to achieve?**

See response to Question 15.

**Question 17: Achieving Key Outcomes: To what extent do you support or oppose these principles?**

All the principles that are used to identify the key transport issues and opportunities in the South East are supported. In particular, the principles of 'supporting sustainable economic growth, but not at any cost', 'planning for successful places' and 'putting the user of the heart of the transport system' would be high priorities from an East Sussex perspective and help us in recruitment and retention in the County.

‘Supporting economic growth’, as a principle, accords with the Council’s priority of driving sustainable economic growth and the East Sussex Growth Strategy ‘Business’ pillar, whilst planning for successful places accords with the priorities for supporting our growth areas – Eastbourne/South Wealden, Hastings/Bexhill and Newhaven – and the Growth Strategy ‘Place’ pillar. We are also highly supportive of putting the user at the heart of the transport system – whether they have chosen to walk, cycle, use the bus or the railway, or use a vehicle to drive – to ensure that we meet people’s needs.

**Question 18: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the key challenges relating to each journey types have been correctly identified?**

Radial journeys

We strongly agree with the key challenges relating to radial journeys in particular those relating to East Sussex.

We welcome the acknowledgement of the challenges faced on the A21/Hastings Line corridor related to poor connectivity. At present the inconsistency in provision on the A21 corridor, with single carriageway sections between Kippings Cross and Lamberhurst, and south of the Lamberhurst bypass, as well as sections of the route running through Flimwell and Hurst Green, inhibit journey time reliability that businesses want and the economic connectivity of Hastings and Bexhill with other hubs on the corridor and with London. Similarly, the sinuous alignment of the Hastings/Tonbridge line and power restrictions south of Tunbridge Wells inhibits fast journeys from the coast into London.

In addition, the Brighton Main Line (BML) is important to the connectivity of the County and therefore we support its inclusion as a challenge. Addressing capacity constraints on the BML at locations such as East Croydon and at Gatwick will unlock opportunities for rail improvements elsewhere on the network, including:

- Reduced journey times from the Sussex coast into London,
- Enabling additional rail services to be operated into London from the East and West Coastway routes and the Uckfield line.

These improvements will encourage more businesses to locate to coastal areas, supporting labour markets, and thereby optimising the creation of jobs within our coastal communities.

Orbital and coastal journeys

*Challenge 3*

We strongly support the inclusion of the M27/A27/A259 /East Coastway/West Coastway corridor as a challenge in relation to coastal and orbital journeys.

The Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) developed by Highways England to inform the Roads Investment Strategy 2 process recognised that there is a transport problem on the A27 between Lewes and Polegate which is the only strategic east – west link in the area.

These problems include the mix in traffic demand using the route; the single carriageway is inconsistent with the dual carriageway either side of this section of the A27; poor journey time reliability due to congestion and low resilience; the number of accidents along the route being above the national average for A-roads, and the road does not have spare capacity to accommodate planned growth in the future. Consequently, the SOBC demonstrated the strategic case for an off-line improvement scheme to address current problems and to facilitate housing and economic growth in the area. It also highlighted that whilst any scheme would need to address concerns about the environmental impact (including the visual and landscape impact on the South Downs National Park) and the impact on the local community, the economic impacts were high.

In relation to the East Coastway and Marshlink, we are working with Network Rail on developing proposals which would enable high speed rail services to run into East Sussex via Ashford. This would comprise a new platform and track re-alignment at Ashford International to enable trains to access the Marshlink from the high speed rail link as well as improvements to line speeds on the Marshlink through to Eastbourne. This work is informing a SOBC to DfT to secure funding to develop a final single option for Ashford and the Marshlink infrastructure. The delivery of high speed rail into East Sussex would be a potential game-changer for the local economy which would:

- transform the connectivity and image of the area with reduced journey times;
- support growth in London and the South East with improved connectivity with the capital critical to economic prosperity;
- act as a catalyst for economic growth attracting investment and ensuring the area is a more desirable place to live and work leading to lower out-migration of skilled labour and in-migration of higher earners.

### Inter-urban journeys

#### *Challenge 1*

We welcome recognition that Major Road Network (MRN) routes also provide an important function alongside the SRN. For example, because of the inconsistencies in the quality of the SRN in the county– A27 and the A21 – parts of the MRN such as the A22 corridor have to provide an important role in carrying strategic long distance traffic into the county. However, capacity limitations on the A22 north of Hailsham and the constraints of the junctions on traffic flow, mean that the road is not well-suited to carry long distance and strategic traffic, and the annual average daily traffic (AADT) volumes of over 20,000 vehicles often results in queuing and delay on this part of the network in the peak hours, including peak spreading. Without improvements to the MRN, the county will be unable to meet its full potential.

## *Challenge 2*

We also support the identification of risk in bus services deteriorating if congestion rises. In East Sussex, bus services have already been deeply damaged by increased traffic congestion. This has resulted in unreliable services for users and higher costs for bus operators who have to provide extra resources simply to maintain existing frequencies. This has led to higher fares due to increased cost of operation, fewer passengers, and more uptake of unsustainable transport modes. It is imperative that the strategy is much stronger in stating that interventions will be made to ensure bus performance not only does not deteriorate, but will markedly improve and do so in a sustainable manner.

### Local journeys

## *Challenges 4 and 5*

From a bus service perspective it should be noted that inter-bus services very often also cater for local journeys. Whilst acknowledging that local authorities may intervene with localised schemes to support local journeys, any inaction in terms of bus services will very often have an adverse effect on inter-urban journeys too. The strategy therefore needs to acknowledge the importance of local interventions, which are sustainable and look to embrace emerging technologies and encourage their provision from a more regional perspective.

### International Gateways and freight journeys

## *Challenge 1*

We welcome the recognition of the surface access improvements required at Gatwick Airport being a challenge. Following the consultation on the Gatwick second runway proposals in 2015, the Council has been supportive of the airport's expansion as it would support the delivery of the Council's key priority of long term economic growth for East Sussex. This would be significantly important for businesses in the county by providing better access to international trade and global markets, encouraging inward investment and supporting the vitality of our local economy and generating much needed jobs both on and off the airport for our residents over the next 20 – 30 years. This support was caveated on the basis that surface access improvements were introduced.

Should the Development Consent Order for the use of the standby runway on a permanent basis for departures be approved, this will increase the number of staff and passengers travelling to and from the airport. This increase will need to be mitigated effectively and careful consideration will need to be made of how bus/coach and rail services to and from Gatwick can be improved to encourage non-car travel to the airport, particularly from areas such as the northern and central parts of East Sussex, where these opportunities are limited and therefore travel by car is the only option.

### *Challenge 3*

We welcome the recognition that where port expansion occurs, this needs to be supported by appropriate access to the highway and railway networks. Whilst Newhaven Port is modest in scale compared to the likes of Southampton and Dover, the Port has significant plans for expansion which will be facilitated by the delivery of the Newhaven Port Access Road. It is important that Highway England consider opportunities to improve the A26 which directly leads from Newhaven up to Lewes to make connections easier for increasing freight movements onto the wider strategic road network in the south east, alongside opportunities to further support sustainable tourism combined with sustainable travel options.

### Future journeys

We support all the challenges that have been identified in relation to future journeys.

In relation to electric vehicle (EV) charging, the County Council does not currently provide on-street charging points however we recognise that there is a growing level of interest in this area and that greater availability of accessible electric vehicle charging points [EVCPs] is key to increasing the uptake of EV. During 2019/2020 we will be developing our approach to support electric vehicles in East Sussex, and are currently in discussion with our District and Borough Council colleagues about a strategic approach to EVCPs in East Sussex. However, a cross TfSE approach to ensure consistency in charging infrastructure provision across the geography would be supported and would give the travelling public greater confidence in its availability for the significant number of journeys that start and finish within the TfSE area.

It is important that in looking at how journeys in the future are provided that this just does not focus on the urban areas of the TfSE geography. Therefore the strategy should and has recognised that there are different models that would need to be considered and applied, in the context of East Sussex, across the large urban areas along the coastal strip, the smaller market towns and rural parts of the county.

**Question 19: Additional comments on the key challenges that have been identified or explain any additional challenges that need to be addressed.**

No further comments.

**Question 20: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the initiatives we have outlined to address the challenges that have been identified for each journey type?**

### Radial journeys

We welcome the initiatives highlighted to speed up journey times to London, including investing in parts of the railway that serve, or potentially could be served, by high speed rail services. This includes improvements at Ashford and on the Marshlink to enable high speed rail services to Rye, Hastings, Bexhill and Eastbourne. We also welcome initiatives that will

improve connectivity by both rail and road to deprived communities which in the context of East Sussex includes Hastings as well as parts of Bexhill, Eastbourne and Newhaven.

In addition, we also support the provision of additional capacity and resilience on radial railways to and from London, particularly in the context of East Sussex, to the Brighton Mainline, the Hastings – Tonbridge line and Uckfield line.

We would also support improvements to the resilience of the road network, including targeted demand management policies to reduce demand for journeys which could otherwise be undertaken by alternatives to the car, or reduce the need to travel.

### Orbital and coastal journeys

As wider electrification of the rail network is likely to be cost prohibitive, we are supportive of the initiative to encourage the wider use of bi-mode trains across the south east. This would be particularly beneficial on the currently non-electrified sections of the Marshlink and on the Uckfield line south of Hurst Green which would thereby increase passenger capacity on these sections of the network that are currently served by diesel units.

We strongly support the initiative to build a consensus for the M27/A27/A259/East Coastway/West Coastway corridor. Whilst it is acknowledged that a multi-modal approach needs to be taken, which was considered before through the South Coast Multi-Modal Study, there are still a number of key and targeted interventions required to the A27 corridor to address the current inconsistencies in the quality of the network and ensure it is fit for purpose to carry long distance strategic traffic. Within East Sussex, specific focus is required on the section of the A27 between Lewes and Polegate where a more comprehensive solution is required over and above Highways England's current package of smaller scale interventions. Equally, we are supportive of initiatives that improve rail connectivity across this orbital corridor and we are working with Network Rail to address this by making the case for high speed rail to come into East Sussex via Ashford International.

We are supportive of the initiative to address the impacts of road traffic on orbital routes that pass through urban areas such as Bexhill and Hastings, and how these issues can be addressed by supporting the uptake in cleaner technology vehicles and reallocating road space where appropriate.

### Inter-urban journeys

We are supportive of the initiative to bring the MRN up to an appropriate standard and at present the County has two of the 10 TfSE priority MRN schemes – the A22 junction improvement package focussed on the Hailsham, Polegate and Stone Cross area, which is at Outline Business Case stage, and the A259 South Coast Road Package which is at pre-Strategic Outline Business Case stage.

We also are supportive of seeing enhancements to the viability of inter-urban bus services and delivering improvements to inter-urban rail connectivity, however recognising that rail services also can provide a vital lifeline for smaller communities where the rail station may

be the only means of accessing employment or services where people don't have access to a car.

### Local journeys

In principle, we are supportive of all the initiatives identified which would help address local journey challenges, many of which will be the responsibility of local transport authorities to deliver through their Local Transport Plans, in particular in relation to the first mile/last mile of inter-urban, orbital and coastal and radial journeys.

The Strategy needs to recognise that the mix of sustainable transport initiatives that are delivered will need to flex across the local transport authorities within the TfSE geography. At a more local level this will be dependent on a wide range of economic, social and environmental factors, the types of journeys that are being made – whether to access employment, education, training or for leisure purposes - which will be different for each settlement, particularly in an urban/rural county such as East Sussex.

### International gateways and freight journeys

We strongly support the improvements needed to public transport access to Gatwick Airport, and would want to see enhancements to bus/coach access to the northern and central parts of East Sussex, where there are currently no options other than travel to the airport by car.

We also support exploring a freight strategy and action plan for the South East and how improvements to the efficiency of freight vehicle operations can be made. In addition, we strongly support appropriate improvements that can be made to the highways and sustainable transport options and rail network serving Newhaven Port to support its future plans.

### Future journeys

We recognise that the way in which people travel now and will be travelling in the future, will change and evolve over time. Therefore, we are supportive of initiatives such as 'Mobility as a Service' being integrated into the wider public transport network which would provide improved accessibility for wider parts of the population. In the context of East Sussex, this would help to address rural and urban inaccessibility to jobs and services for those who do not currently have access to public transport or a private car who need to travel longer distance journeys where walking or cycling may not be possible. It will be important to us that inclusive design for both physical and hidden disabilities are included.

It is important that this is further explored as a concept and how this can be applied across large urban areas, smaller market towns and rural areas of the Transport for the South East area. Therefore we are supportive of the development of a Future Mobility Strategy for the South East.

**Question 21: Additional comments on the journey types which form part of the draft Strategy, including any of the initiatives identified for each journey type?**

No further comments

**Implementation**

**Question 22: To what extent do you agree or disagree with these performance indicators**

We strongly support the proposed economic, social and environmental performance indicators to assist in monitoring the progress of the Strategy so long as they are easily measurable and do not place additional burdens at a local level to collect specific data.

**Question 23: Do you have any comments about the implementation of the Strategy including the performance indicators, our role and/or the future funding challenges?**

Whilst overall the Strategy is supported, the key challenge to its delivery will be the level of funding, both capital and revenue, that will be available over the life of the strategy.

At present, funding for road infrastructure for both strategic and major road network improvements are provided in 5 year funding envelopes whilst for rail infrastructure enhancements are determined on a case by case basis. Other funding for specific modes or types of schemes (eg. pinch point fund, highway maintenance challenge fund) also becomes available on an as and when basis. To enable effective planning of the delivery of infrastructure and the initiatives identified in the strategy across the TfSE area and within local transport authorities, as well as to ensure that a pipeline of schemes/projects are being developed ready for delivery, there needs to greater certainty on the level of funding that will be available over the longer term.

At a local level, Government funding for local transport is received annually through the Integrated Transport block funding and determined using a formulaic approach. This is augmented by funding from other sources including development contributions (s106 and Community Infrastructure Levy monies); Local Growth Fund monies, and other external capital and revenue funding sources from Government. To ensure that local transport authorities are able to support the delivery of the Strategy, the County Council would want to have greater long term certainty on Government funding that is available to deliver the initiatives, particularly in relation to the first and last mile of the local journey challenges described in the Strategy. We understand that longer term funding for cycling and walking may be available through the Cycling & Walking Investment Plan, for both infrastructure and initiatives, and the County Council is supportive of this approach.



## **Integrated Sustainability Appraisal**

**Question 24: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal represents a thorough assessment of the draft Transport Strategy?**

**Question 25: Do you have any additional comments regarding the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal?**

No comments on Q24 and Q25.

## **Overall Views**

**Question 26: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the draft Transport Strategy provides the mechanism that will enable Transport for the South East to achieve our mission of growing the South East's economy by delivering a safe, sustainable and integrated transport system that makes the region more productive and competitive, improves the quality of life for all residents and protects and enhances its natural and built environment.**

To an extent we agree that the draft strategy will enable the region to achieve this mission, as it clearly demonstrates a sound approach in determining the key issues and opportunities, which embrace the key challenges we need to act upon now. This includes the need to grow our economies whilst managing and mitigating against climate change impacts and supporting health and well-being that is inclusive for all.

In order to measure how well the Strategy is achieving TfSE's vision, it will be crucial to regularly monitor progress with appropriate metrics in place which are agreed by all authorities especially around the key policy areas which are often challenging to assess including productivity and competitiveness, quality of life and the natural and built environment.

**Question 27: Are there any additional comments that you would like to make that are relevant to this consultation on the draft Transport Strategy for the South East?**

No further comments