

Strategic Transport Leadership Board

March 2025: Update on Actions

Action	Update	Status
From 1 March 2024 Strategic Transport Leadership Board		
Business Planning Update The Board: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - agreed the need for a long-term plan for EEH (2025 – 2030), to be developed over the coming months - agreed to continue its support to EEH through annual partner contributions, held at 2023/24 levels to reflect current financial pressures. 	Ongoing	Following a discussion amongst Board members, the next five year plan is proposed to be presented for a steer in May 2025, with the final draft ready for approval by the Board in July 2025.
From 27 September 2024 Strategic Transport Leadership Board		
New Government update, including fiscal events, and EEH financial update EEH to produce a paper on Public Sector finance.	Ongoing	The 'Securing Investment in the Region' paper includes information on public sector finance, with suggested actions for progressing understanding.
From 5 December 2024 Strategic Transport Leadership Board		
Buses Cllr Adam Zerny (AZ) said that he and Cllr Javed Hussain discussed the idea of establishing a bus link between the East Coast Main Line and Luton Airport, potentially from Hitchin, going cross-country.	Ongoing	Further work to explore the Luton to Dunstable extension options is being commissioned, including an extension to the ECML at either Hitchin or Stevenage. Demand levels at either end and along its existing route are being captured as part of the study.

EEH confirmed the gap had been identified within a connectivity study and agreed to explore this further.		
Connectivity Study Six EEH to make slight modifications to the report based on the feedback received.	Complete	EEH has reviewed the feedback received and have made the necessary modifications to the report to ensure it addresses all concerns and suggestions. The revised report will then be circulated to board members in due course. (has this already been done?)

Statutory Functions Exploration Update – On hold

Since the last Board in early December 2024, the English Devolution White Paper has been published. This outlines several transport functions envisaged for different types of Strategic Authority alongside other major local government reform. Individual local authorities will be considering what new opportunities are presented by different structures and are the best fit for their communities.

Given the level of change and the emerging clarity around devolution of powers, this is not the time for the region to be pursuing formal statutory status for its sub-national transport body. EEH envisages working in collaboration on a pan-regional basis with strategic authorities, who will have funding and powers devolved directly to them. These are exactly the discussions that are now underway within the Transport East and Transport for the South East areas, where a number of places have been included on the Devolution Priority Programme.

Alongside exploring possible statutory powers and functions, the EEH Business Unit has commissioned work on different delivery models and how well these might meet the aspirations of the Board.

At present, the existing 'as is' arrangement appears to be the most appropriate delivery model for EEH to work as a strategic partner as the region navigates through the uncertainty of local government reform transitions. The option spectrum for delivery models can be revisited at an appropriate time for the region, as the Board desires. EEH will continue working with our local partners to establish the best way we can support as a devolution partner, learning from other regions, recognising our own unique opportunities (such as East West Rail) and drawing on our own strengths around convening and collaboration.