

Strategic Transport Leadership Board

11 July 2025

Agenda Item Number 6: Business Unit Update

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Strategic Transport Leadership Board:

- a) Notes the 2024/25 year end financial narrative and position (annex 1) and agrees to the publication of the annual report (annex 2)**
- b) Notes the timing for appointment of a new Chair and Vice Chair of the Strategic Transport Leadership Board, due for election in September 2025.**

1. Financial year end update

- 1.1. This sets out the year end corporate position for the financial year 2024/25. This includes staffing and budget updates. The full budget can be found in annex 1.
- 1.2. EEH finished the financial year 2024/25 in a stable financial position. The programme has been delivered (or commissioned) within the overall funding envelope allocated, with much of the technical programme delivered or committed by financial year end.
- 1.3. EEH's financial and programme delivery for 2024/5 programme has been reported to, and received approval from, the Department for Transport.
- 1.4. *DfT Income:* Last year, EEH received our DfT settlement in July 2024 to a value of £1,426,000. The balance carried into 2025/26 is £1,866,454, which includes a reserve of £430,000 and an additional 6 months staffing costs in case of delays to DfT funding release in the future.
- 1.5. We have already received our financial settlement for the current financial year (2025/26) from DfT, which is £1,522,667. This represents an uplift from previous years, the uplift in funding is in recognition of the way EEH works in partnership both within and across our partnership boundaries.
- 1.6. *Local contributions:* In the financial year 2024/25 local contributions were made by our partner authorities totalling £364,486. Further final local contributions for 2024/25 were also received in Q1 of 25/26: bringing the total local contributions for the year to £449,627. Local contributions have been utilised to pay for staffing, communications and to unlock the DfT settlement as a demonstrable commitment to EEH and its work.
- 1.7. *Other contributions:* EEH received a contribution of £31,212 from the East West Main Line Partnership to cover costs of secretariat and business management functions. Additionally, EEH received further grant for £67,563.93 from Innovate UK for the development of modelling. We also partnered with Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership to secure a Rees Jeffreys road fund grant of £10,000 for Women and Girls Safety on Buses.
- 1.8. *Staffing:* The EEH business unit is a small, agile team formed of 13 people, on a mixture of contract types.

- 1.9. Every EEH team member undertakes a proportion of directly programme-related work. In 2022/23, it was agreed that some permanent staffing costs could be offset against the DfT programme grant for the first time where this direct link could be demonstrated. This approach has continued into 2024/25 and will continue further in 2025/26, with DfT now explicitly supporting STBs to recruit expertise in house.
- 1.10. The team successfully delivered or commissioned a significant proportion of the programme in year. The breakdown of spend and commitment against our programme can be seen in Annex 1.
- 1.11. EEH has produced a draft annual report which highlights achievements during the previous financial year (see annex 2).

2. Election of new chair and vice chair

- 2.1. Cllr Liz Leffman was appointed as Chair of England's Economic Heartland in September 2023.
- 2.2. As per EEH's **terms of reference**, a Chair may only serve a maximum of two consecutive years, and therefore the election of a new chair (and vice-chair) will be required at the next of the Board in September 2025.
- 2.3. EEH's chair must be an elected member of a transport authority within the region.
- 2.4. Previous chairs have all been the leaders of their respective authorities.
- 2.5. They are vital to EEH's success and influence, acting as a high-profile figurehead who ensures EEH remains accountable to the democratically elected members of the Strategic Transport Leadership Board.
- 2.6. The Chair works closely with the Managing Director to ensure EEH's work reflects the wishes of the Strategic Transport Leadership Board.
- 2.7. The Chair also represents the cross-boundary, regional interests of the Board on the national stage. For example, in meetings with ministers and MPs, and through speaking at events or to media.
- 2.8. The Chair may also have powers delegated to them by the Board, for example in signing off a document or ministerial correspondence as appropriate.
- 2.9. Where the Chair is unavailable, he/she may delegate representation and decisions to the Vice-Chair.
- 2.10. Board members who are interested in the position of chair/ vice-chair are invited to contact the outgoing Chair, Liz Leffman or EEH's MD, Naomi Green during July for an informal discussion.

Naomi Green
England's Economic Heartland
July 2025



Annex 1 – EEH 2024/25 – End of Year Budget

INCOME		
2024/25 Income		
Carry Forward from 23/24	£1,687,377	Includes reserve and funds committed and carried into 2024/25.
Local Contributions	£364,486	The final 2 local contribution payments were received in Q1 of 25/26 making the local contributions total to £449,627
DfT Grants	£1,426,000	
Additional Contributions	£74,082	External grants from projects such as Innovate UK and Connected Places Catapult and the contribution from East West Main Line Partnership to manage Secretariat functions.
TOTAL	£3,551,945	
NON-PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE		
2024/25 Spend and Committed		
Staffing	£1,409,133	Includes pension, NI and other staff costs such as training. This also includes 6 months additional staffing cost in case of future delayed DfT funding
Operational Expenditure	£68,778	Includes office costs, service charges, conferences, meetings, document production, and website.
Reserve	£430,000	Reserve held at £430,000.
SUB-TOTAL	£1,907,911	
PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE		
2024/25 Spend and committed		
Delivering transport Strategy Priorities	£311,616	This includes delivery of the bus programme, mobility hubs, freight priorities, regional rail priorities, rail secondment, the wider south east rail partnership, major project, varsity way and EWR support.
Investment Pipeline and Evidence Bae	£152,316	Supporting the regional evidence base; including Cadence, Development, housing data and Tourism and visitor attractions, analytical capability and AI transport model technical support.

A transport system ready for the region's needs	£68,480	This includes the ongoing projects; Reducing our environmental impact tool updates and roll out (CAP), Innovation Pump Priming, policy intelligence, Responding to new Government priorities, including MRN 2, Skills Development Programme, C&C and Centres of Excellence, Universities engagement and £10,000 grant award held by Cambridge greater partnership for the women and girls safety commission.
Sub-total	£532,412	
TAIL 23/24 PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE	2024/25 Spend and Committed	
Regional Evidence Base	£22,949	Delivery of carry forward projects: Continued upgrade of EEH's regional evidence base
Planning Net Zero	£22,000	Delivery of carry forward projects: Finalisation of the Quantified Carbon Reduction (QCR) Tool
Improving Strategic Connectivity	£201,152	Carried forward projects: Completion of freight Action plan additional support, Connectivity study 6- Luton – Northamptonshire and secondment for the rail programme
Local connectivity and integration	£109,541	Delivery of carry forward projects: Finalisation investment in bus services and progressing varsity way commission.
Driving investment Opportunities	£128,847	Delivery of carry forward projects: Completion of Economic narratives, rail investment priorities and EEHELUM land use model updates
Skills development	£25,000	Delivery of carry forward projects: Completion of EEH's skill development commission
SUB-TOTAL	£508,489	
DfT 22/23 Tail programe	2024/25 Spend and Committed	
Regional Evidence Base	£10,000	Delivery of carry forward project: CAF Readiness
Planning for Net Zero	£24,000	Delivery for the Decarbonisation playbook change control, alternative Fuel for Freight and electric vehicles
Improving Strategic Connectivity	£27,768	Projects include: connectivity studies and rail line engagement work

Centres of Excellence	£15,000 (the remainder remains ringfenced to C&C)	Delivery of the Centre of Excellence and Capacity and Capability for Infrastructure
Innovation	£8,000	Projects include: innovation pump priming
Scheme Prioritisation and Development	£13,926	Projects include: investment prioritisation, which are now completed.
SUB-TOTAL	£98,694	
TAIL 21/22 PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE	2024/25 Spend and Committed	
Priority 1 – Supporting the Heartland Region	£37,000	Delivery of carry forward project: Regional Client-Side Capability. Packages of support for local authorities commissioned. Project is fully commissioned, awaiting DfT feedback on MRN bids or new priorities arising.
SUB-TOTAL	£37,000	
	Actual Spend	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£3,084,506	This figure includes a reserve and 6 months staffing cost which have not been spent but are ringfenced as part of the roll over costs.
Balance to carry forward into 2024/25: £1,866,454		
The carry forward includes reserves and 6 months staffing costs.		