

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Leader of Kent County Council

DECISION NO:

25/00080

For publication**Key decision: YES****Subject Matter / Title of Decision :**

Transport for the South East – KCC endorsement of Transport Strategy for the South East

Decision:

As Leader of the Council, I agree to:

1. ENDORSE the new Transport Strategy for the South East prepared by Transport for the South East (TfSE) and support TfSE with its implementation; and
2. DELEGATE authority to the Corporate Director Growth, Environment and Transport, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, to take the actions required to support TfSE with the implementation of the strategy, subject to the Council's decision-making procedures.
3. DELEGATE authority to the Corporate Director Growth, Environment and Transport to take other necessary actions, including but not limited to entering into contracts or other legal agreements, as required to implement the decision.

Reason(s) for decision:

The Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016 amended the Local Transport Act 2008 to allow the creation of Sub-national Transport Bodies (STBs). Transport for the South East (TfSE) was established in 2017 and is a partnership of 16 Local Transport Authorities.

In December 2024, TfSE published a draft new Transport Strategy given the significant changes in context since 2020, such as the implementation of Brexit, changes in government policy, and changes in travel patterns post-pandemic. TfSE have now refined the Transport Strategy following consideration of the responses received in the public consultation and have put it forward for a vote to adopt it as their new Transport Strategy at the Partnership Board meeting on 27 October 2025.

As a named partnership, it is set out in the Council's constitution that the Leader has responsibility for decisions on TfSE and therefore will need to decide whether to endorse this new Strategy so that KCC's representative (the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport) at the TfSE Partnership Board can vote (aligned with the Leader's Decision) on its potential adoption by TfSE.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

TfSE consulted on the draft Transport Strategy from 10 December 2024 to 7 March 2025. KCC responded to this consultation. TfSE analysed the results and amended the final Transport Strategy accordingly.

The proposed key decision was considered and endorsed by Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee on 9 September 2025.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

To not endorse the Transport Strategy would mean voting against it at the TfSE Partnership Board

meeting on 27 October. If a weighted majority of the Board voted in favour of the Strategy, then KCC would be in a position where it did not support a Strategy that may form the basis of future funding and investment decisions that could affect Kent. Given that the Transport Strategy accords with KCC's own statutory Local Transport Plan 5 and that KCC's consultation comments have been addressed, this option was discounted.

Another option would be for KCC's Board Member to raise a motion for further amendments to the Transport Strategy to be made before coming forward later for endorsement. This would rely on the motion being carried. For the same reasons as above, this option was discounted.

The only other option would be to cease participation in TfSE altogether. This option has been discounted because it is not strictly the subject of this decision and further work on the ramifications of such a decision would need to be undertaken.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

None.

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signed

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date