

EQIA Submission – ID Number

Section A

EQIA Title

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

Responsible Officer

Katie Pettitt - GT TRA

Approved by (Note: approval of this EqIA must be completed within the EqIA App)

Tim Read - GT TRA

Type of Activity

Service Change

No

Service Redesign

No

Project/Programme

No

Commissioning/Procurement

No

Strategy/Policy

Strategy/Policy

Details of other Service Activity

No

Accountability and Responsibility

Directorate

Growth Environment and Transport

Responsible Service

Major Capital Programme Team

Responsible Head of Service

Tim Read - GT TRA

Responsible Director

Haroona Chughtai - GT TRA

Aims and Objectives

Background:

Kent County Council (KCC) was a founding member of the Sub-national Transport Body (STB), Transport for the South East (TfSE), participating and funding TfSE since 2017. In July 2020 a decision (20/0010) was taken to support the TfSE Proposal to Government for Statutory Powers, including endorsing its first Transport Strategy. TfSE's Board agreed in July 2024 to update its Transport Strategy, which was subject to public consultation from December 2024 to March 2025. KCC, as a member of the Partnership Board, is currently being requested to endorse the new Transport Strategy.

KCC contributed to the Draft Transport Strategy through its representative and various working groups. KCC gave generally positive consultation response, highlighting alignment with Kent's Local transport Plan 5 but requested some changes and timeline flexibility given the significant changes across local government in Kent.

By endorsing the Transport Strategy, KCC will benefit from being a part of the voice of the wider South East when the new Transport Strategy is presented to government. Schemes and interventions in the Transport Strategy that are in Kent will therefore have increased visibility with the Department for Transport. Although KCC would be endorsing the new Transport Strategy as a whole, some of its content does not

apply to the KCC area, such as improving ferry services to the Isle of Wight.

Overview of the new Transport Strategy:

The Transport Strategy outlines TfSE's role and the context for updating the Transport Strategy, this included policy change, travelling impacts post Covid-19 pandemic and impacts on trading post-Brexit. It highlights the current challenges facing the south-east which include poor east-west connectivity, lack of funding for transport interventions and reducing productivity.

The overarching vision for the new Transport Strategy is:

"Our Vision for the South East to offer the highest quality of life for all and be a global leader in archiving sustainable, net zero carbon growth."

The Strategy prioritises five main missions: Strategic Connectivity, Resilience, decarbonisation, Inclusion and Integration. Each mission is underpinned by clearly defined outcomes, as well as short- and long-term priorities that facilitate the achievement of the outcomes.

The Transport Strategy explains how it will be delivered, highlighting both challenges and opportunities. It emphasises the importance of regional collaboration with partners such as transport providers, government and universities.

The following EQIA evaluates the equality implications to KCC in taking the decision to endorse the TfSE new Transport Strategy for the South East.

EQIA Overview:

The EQIA finds that the overall goals and outcomes of the strategy are expected to be either neutral or beneficial for protected characteristic groups. However, specific projects or actions proposed within the strategy could have both positive and negative impacts on equalities groups and would be required to be individually assessed.

In addition to the benefits that all users (KCC residents) will gain from endorsing the new Transport Strategy for the South East, individuals with certain protected characteristics should also experience additional advantages. The protected characteristics expected to see improvements include:

- ❑ Age (increased design consideration for accessibility and increased confidence in independent journeys)
- ❑ Disability (improved design considerations for increased accessibility and safety)
- ❑ Pregnancy and maternity (reduced emissions and improved health)
- ❑ Sex, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Race and Religion (improvements to public realm could reduce fear of hate crimes for vulnerable groups).

Section B – Evidence

Do you have data related to the protected groups of the people impacted by this activity?

Yes

It is possible to get the data in a timely and cost effective way?

Yes

Is there national evidence/data that you can use?

Yes

Have you consulted with stakeholders?

Yes

Who have you involved, consulted and engaged with?

Transport for South East (TfSE) alongside its consultant team of Arup and Steer ran a consultation for 12

weeks from December 2024 to March 2025 on their Draft Strategy. They conducted a range of consultation and engagement activities with the aim to encourage meaningful engagement and to update the Transport Strategy accordingly. They consulted with a full spectrum of stakeholders. This included the TfSE Partnership Board, Key Partners, socially excluded groups, expert working groups and the wider public. Feedback was received from 742 individuals and 69 organisations, with 94% of organisations and 74% of individuals who responded either strongly supporting or supporting the vision and goals in the strategy. The final version of the Transport Strategy has been reviewed by KCC and is considered to have adequately addressed KCC's consultation response.

The TfSE Partnership Board is comprised of representatives from all member local authorities across the South-East, as well as representatives from Network Rail, National Highways and Transport for London. The Partnership Board has played an integral role in the refinement of the strategy through the following activities of engagement:

- Partnership Board Meetings where comments were invited.
- A dedicated Task and Finish Group was established and collaborated with the TfSE officer team through four sessions to enhance and refine the content of the Draft Transport Strategy.
- Engagement Workshop prior to the Partnership Board's meeting on the 22nd July 2024.

Key stakeholders were invited to participate in a series of workshops, during which the content of the strategy was collaboratively developed. This consisted of:

- Two scenario planning workshops in April and May 2024
- Three strategy development workshops in August, September and October 2024
- Challenge definition workshop on the 11th April 2024
- Informal Fireside Chats throughout October and November 2024

TfSE, supported by Arup, held two online workshops for socially excluded groups using the Double Diamond approach to improve inclusivity within the strategy. In total 16 individuals took part. The first workshop focused on identifying the challenges faced by socially excluded individuals. Participants shared their experiences and feelings of using different modes of transport and created a challenge statements, which identified a problem, the impact of this problem and how it made the individual feel. The Second workshop 'Develop and Do' focused on assessing the Challenge Statements according to their scale and impact. The data collected helped shaped the transport Strategy by understand real-world barriers to transport experiences and offer inclusive solutions.

TfSE ran an online survey via its Your Voices platform to gather public feedback across the South East. The objective was to reach a demographically and geographically representative sample. To promote the survey, TfSE issued press releases on news outlets, podcasts and social media channels. Full details are available in the Your Voices Survey Report.

Has there been a previous Equality Analysis (EQIA) in the last 3 years?

No

Do you have evidence that can help you understand the potential impact of your activity?

Yes

Section C – Impact

Who may be impacted by the activity?

Service Users/clients

Service users/clients

Staff

Staff/Volunteers
Residents/Communities/Citizens Residents/communities/citizens
Are there any positive impacts for all or any of the protected groups as a result of the activity that you are doing?
Yes
Details of Positive Impacts
<p>By endorsing the Transport Strategy, KCC will benefit from being part of the voice of wider South East when the new Transport Strategy is presented to government. This collective representation increases the visibility of Kent-based schemes and interventions with the Department for Transport, helping to promote inclusive and accessible transport outcomes.</p> <p>The new Transport Strategy proposes a range of Missions that if implemented will have positive outcomes for all users, but specific positive impacts have been identified for the following protected characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Age ☐ Disability ☐ Pregnancy & maternity ☐ Sex, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Race and Religion <p>Age:</p> <p>The Strategy aims to enhance connectivity, facilitating improved access to essential services such as schools and hospitals for both older and younger individuals. Additionally, by reducing congestion and related emissions, the strategy seeks to benefit older and younger individuals that are particularly vulnerable to respiratory illnesses. Improvements to the public realm are intended to boost confidence among older and younger people, encouraging independent journeys using public services.</p> <p>Disability:</p> <p>The Strategy aims to implement inclusive design principles, ensuring the infrastructure is safer and more accessible for people with mobility impairments. Additionally, it supports a joined-up transport network meaning it would be more accessible for disabled users to navigate between different modes of transports with fewer barriers, more consistent service reliability and increased access to services.</p> <p>Pregnancy & Maternity:</p> <p>The strategy aims to reduced congestion and related emissions will be beneficial for those pregnant or with small children as it will improve both maternal and child development health.</p> <p>Sex, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Race and Religion:</p> <p>The strategy promotes improvements to the public realm, and this can reduce fear of hate crimes for vulnerable groups and encourage the use of public transport services.</p> <p>Next steps for any proposals taken forward:</p> <p>There are no current negative impacts identified for any protected characteristic. Endorsing the Transport Strategy does not guarantee funding or delivery of individual projects. However, as funding becomes available and projects progress, a full Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out at the appropriate design stages to evaluate potential positive, neutral, or negative impacts and recommend mitigations where required.</p>

Negative impacts and Mitigating Actions
19. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Age
Are there negative impacts for age?
No
Details of negative impacts for Age
Not Applicable
Mitigating Actions for Age
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions – Age
Not Applicable
20. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Disability
Are there negative impacts for Disability?
No
Details of Negative Impacts for Disability
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Disability
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for Disability
Not Applicable
21. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sex
Are there negative impacts for Sex
No
Details of negative impacts for Sex
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Sex
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for Sex
Not Applicable
22. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender
Are there negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender
No
Negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender
Not Applicable
23. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Race
Are there negative impacts for Race
No
Negative impacts for Race
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Race
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Race
Not Applicable
24. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Religion and belief
Are there negative impacts for Religion and belief
No
Negative impacts for Religion and belief

Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Religion and belief
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Religion and Belief
Not Applicable
25. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
Are there negative impacts for Sexual Orientation
No
Negative impacts for Sexual Orientation
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
Not Applicable
26. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Are there negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity
No
Negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Not Applicable
27. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Are there negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
No
Negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Applicable
28. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities
Are there negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities
No
Negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for Carer's responsibilities
Not Applicable