

REGIONAL TRANSPORT FORUM – 17 September 2008

REGIONAL TRANSPORT FORUM WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

Report by: EEDET Strategic Transport Sub Group

Purpose of report:

- To seek members view on future working arrangements of the Forum.

Recommendation:

1. To invite representatives from Bedford Borough Council and Central Bedfordshire Council to future Regional Transport Forum meetings.
2. To invite nominations from local authorities in the East of England to chair the Regional Transport Forum and provide appropriate administrative support from April 2009 for a period of two years.

1 Introduction

1.1 The Regional Transport Forum (RTF) was set up in 2005 and initially chaired by Hertfordshire. Membership of the Forum is restricted to transport authorities in the east of England.

1.2 The following national and regional organisations are also invited to and attend RTF meetings:

- DfT;
- Government Office for the East of England;
- East of England Regional Assembly;
- East of England Development Agency;
- Highways Agency; and
- Network Rail.

1.3 For the benefit of new members previous RTF agendas and reports can be found on the EERA website at the following address:

<http://www.eera.gov.uk/category.asp?cat=532>

1.4 In addition the Terms of Reference for RTF are attached as Appendix A.

1.5 There are two issues that members may wish to consider relating to Local Government review and chairmanship of RTF.

2 Local Government Reform

2.1 On 27 March 2008 the Government approved the relevant implementation order to establish a two-unitary configuration for Bedfordshire. The two new Unitary Authorities are:

- Bedford Borough and
- Central Bedfordshire.

2.2 The new Central Bedfordshire Council Shadow Authority and the new Shadow Executive have been established. From 1 April 2009 both new unitary authorities will be responsible of delivering public services within their areas, including responsibility as Local Transport Authorities.

2.3 It is considered appropriate for RTF invite representatives from the new unitary authorities to future Regional Transport Forum meetings.

3 Chairmanship of RTF

3.1 Initially Hertfordshire County Council agreed to chair the Forum, host meetings and provide administrative support until April 2007. This was on the basis that chairmanship of the Forum would rotate between authorities.

3.2 RTF agreed at the meeting on the 12 October 2006 that:

- Suffolk will chair the Forum from April 2007; and
- The rotating chairmanship should be extended to a two year term.

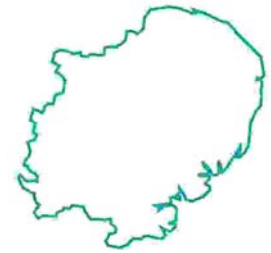
3.3 At the same meeting Hertfordshire County Council agreed to retain responsibility for management of the RTF budget.

3.4 Since April 2007 Suffolk County Council has hosted RTF meetings and provided appropriate administrative support to the Forum and will continue to do so until the end of March 2009.

3.5 It is appropriate at this meeting to start the process of identifying which authority will take over responsibility for chairing RTF from April 2009 for a two year period.

3.6 Invitations are invited from local authorities in the East of England to chair the Regional Transport Forum and provide appropriate administrative support from April 2009 for a period of two years.

**EAST OF ENGLAND
REGIONAL TRANSPORT FORUM**



*East of England
Regional Transport Forum*

TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 1) Provide the principal forum to enable discussion between local authority transport portfolio holders, and with regional agencies and other key transport bodies;
- 2) Encourage opportunities for the exchange of information on best practice between county/unitary transport authorities;
- 3) Advise EERA's Regional Planning Panel on transport matters, in particular:
 - on the identification of regional transport priorities;
 - on issues relating to strategic road and rail routes;
 - on wider inter-regional transport issues such as those relating to London, the wider South East and the East Midlands;
 - on transport issues associated with ports and airports within the region.