

**SOUTH EAST ENGLAND COUNCILS
PLENARY AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Date: 14 July 2010

Subject: **South East England Councils' Approach to SR
- Transport Priorities (including report back
from the Transport Board)**

Report of: David Robertson, Chairman of the Transport Board

1. The Transport Board met on 11 June, following a post-election Board Members' workshop in mid-May.
2. The work of the Transport Board in the last few months has been centred on the South East's programme of investment - ensuring that the importance of the South East's economy is reflected in decision making at the national level. As a result of this, the Transport Board had two key items for discussion and decision at its meeting in June:
 - i) Programme Management and Monitoring
 - ii) Transport Investment Priorities
3. Prior to the meeting of the Transport Board on 11 June, the Department for Transport announced that no new decisions on transport schemes would be taken prior to the conclusion of the Spending Review in the autumn. This has an impact on a number of schemes in the South East.
4. It was agreed at the Transport Board meeting that the immediate focus should be on those schemes where a failure to progress the scheme in the short term would mean that the opportunity to deliver the scheme could be lost or put at risk. The Transport Board agreed that improvements to Gatwick Airport Station, Reading Station, Oxford Station and the M27 Junction 5 fell into this category. The Board also agreed to reaffirm its support to new Ministers for the delivery of the Bexhill to Hastings Link Road. A letter was sent in June 2010 to Norman Baker, Minister for Local and Regional Transport outlining these schemes; a copy of this letter is attached at Annex 1.
5. In addition to discussing individual schemes, the Transport Board also considered a draft of the 'Strategic Transport Investment Priorities' report which sets out the importance of transport investment in the South East. This report is the culmination of work led by the South East's local authorities. It was a requirement to report to the Department for Transport at the start of July. However local authorities, through the Transport Board, took a view that there is a need to update the strategic overview on transport priorities for the new Government. The final report will be submitted to the Department for Transport later this month and a copy of this report is attached at Annex 2.

6. Discussions were also held at the Transport Board about future ways of working and on 23 June 2010 I had the opportunity to meet Norman Baker to discuss this matter further. At the meeting the Minister stated that the Department will look to local authorities to advise on how they propose to work collectively. As a result of discussions with the Minister, I will be attending a meeting on 9 July 2010 with Department for Transport officials to develop joint-working proposals further.

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7 July 2010

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