

WEST MIDLANDS REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

Assembly Board of Directors

10 June 2009

Delivering a Sustainable Transport System (DaSTS)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This reports provides the Board with an update on the Department for Transport's (DfT) Delivering a Sustainable Transport System (DaSTS) process.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Board notes the details of the process and supports the decision to sign off Stage 1.

3. Background

- 3.1 The over arching aim of DaSTS is to identify the transport priorities that are needed from 2014 onwards, specifically 2014-2019 through a 4 stage process:

Stage 1: Agree a short suite of priorities and develop a work programme (by end of June 2009).

Stage 2: Generate a set of realistic options (by December 2010).

Stage 3: Devise a methodology, prioritise and package options (by December 2011)

Stage 4: Publish an overall programme of investment (the first half of 2012).

- 3.2 In March 2009 the shadow Joint Strategy and Investment Board (JSIB) agreed that:

- Regional Advisory Group should work with the DfT to complete DaSTS Stage 1, by the end of June 2009;

- The Stage 1 response should be founded on the strategic priorities set out in Regional Funding Advice (RFA) and the Regional Transport Priorities Action Plan (RTPAP); and that the
- DaSTS work programme would require additional capacity to be sought from consultants.

3.3 JSIB also asked Regional Advisory Group to consider the role/relationship for the Regional Transport Partnership, which only meets once during Stage 1 (6th July 2009).

4. Progress to Date

4.1 There has been good progress to date, both at the regional and national level. Regional Advisory Group has established a Steering Group supported by a Project Group to take this stage, and subsequent stages 2 – 4, forward.

4.2 The Steering Group is chaired by Mark Pearce and comprises:

- Ron Hilton, Local Authority Chief Executive;
- Olwen Dutton, West Midlands regional Assembly;
- Geoff Inskip, Centro;
- Anne Jones, Highways Agency;
- Dave Marr / Nic Cole, GOWM;
- Richard Eccles, Network Rail; and
- Danny Lamb, (Project Group Chair) West Midlands Regional Assembly

4.3 The Project Group has a similar composition to the Steering Group and includes a DfT advisor. Atkins and David Pywell Consulting; have been commissioned to provide support and additional capacity.

4.4 DfT has held a seminar with regions to discuss progress and highlight early outputs from their work on national networks and has also published further guidance for regions a set of “data books” and their response to the DaSTS consultation.

4.5 The DfT guidance includes a template for the information required by the end of June 2009. The stage 1 report should include:

- Details of the identified regional strategic priorities, including an indication of how they, and the regional challenges, have been selected.

- Commentary on how far the proposed DfT priorities on strategic national corridors are consistent with regional views.
- Consideration of the likely RFA headroom for additional interventions, given existing commitments and likely budget constraints, and when such headroom may arise.
- Demonstration of a clear link between the priority strategic goals, the work that is being proposed and the broad outputs that it should deliver.

4.6 Under the direction and leadership of the Steering Group work is underway on stage 1 of the DaSTS regional process. Work to date has already confirmed that:

- Our regional policies and strategies; including RES, RSS and the Regional Transport Priorities Action Plan; are consistent with DaSTS;
- We have a strong evidence base and are able to articulate a clear and reasoned path from our 3 regional strategic priorities to a suite of travel challenges; and
- We are likely to directly feed into the DfT led national corridors work through engagement and involvement in a number of national studies over the coming months that have an impact on our region.

5. Future Work Programme

5.1 Work is on track to identify our 2 / 3 priority challenges through the distillation of the extant suite of travel challenges against our evidence base. Development of the work programme, which will articulate how we will progress the expected 2/3 priorities, is also underway.

5.2 For the period between July 2009 and March 2011 DfT has allocated up to £2m for the region to develop DaSTS. However, to unlock the funding, the DfT requires a contribution of some 25% from the region.

5.3 The DfT guidance identifies elements of a possible work programme where the region may wish to apportion the funds i.e.:

- Improving modelling capability;
- Employing consultants for strategic work;
- Training existing staff to improve analysis and modelling capability and/or ability to act as intelligent client;

- Employing additional personnel to support the DaSTS workstream;
- Funding partners to consider options; and
- Supporting consultation within the region.

5.4 Each of these options will be considered in Stage 1 as part of the work programme development and recommendations will be made for JSIB to consider.

6. Conclusions

6.1 The regional response needs to be submitted to DfT by the end of June 2009: JSIB/RAG meetings occur in March and July 2009.

6.2 JSIB are asked to support the delegation of responsibility for the formal sign-off of the final regional response to Stage 1 to the co-chairs.

6.3 Finally, the DfT is aware that the outcome of the RSS Phase 2 revision, particularly with respect to transport investment and housing growth could have an impact on the DaSTS process. With that in mind it is envisaged that the DaSTS process could be subject to sensitivity testing to consider different outcomes e.g. different levels/distribution of housing growth.

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