

## LETTER FROM SHADOW JOINT STRATEGY AND INVESTMENT BOARD

NP/RP/HC/sam/1356

29 June 2009

Charlotte Dixon  
Local Transport Strategy and Funding  
Department for Transport  
Great Minster House (Zone 3/16)  
76 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DR

Dear Charlotte,

### **Delivering a Sustainable Transport System (DaSTS) Stage 1: West Midlands' Response**

We are pleased to submit our regional response to DaSTS Stage 1 to you. It has been prepared for the shadow Joint Strategy & Investment Board by Advantage West Midlands, West Midlands Regional Assembly, Government Office for the West Midlands, Local Government, Highways Agency, Network Rail and the Integrated Transport Authority, Centro. The opportunity to engage with the Department throughout the process, both through regular contact with our regional engager, Pia Wilkes, and the Head of National Networks, Andy Braithwaite was both helpful and informative.

Set within the wider policy context for the West Midlands including our key economic, environmental and social challenges; our response to DaSTS Stage 1 is built upon the stakeholder engagement and evidence we have gathered in producing the Regional Economic, Spatial and Housing Strategies, the Regional Transport Priorities Action Plan and Regional Funding Advice (Round 2).

This robust evidence base, along with the strong regional governance arrangements and engagement with stakeholders, has provided a solid foundation for the DaSTS process, enabling the development of our response to Stage 1, and subsequent stages, to be undertaken in a structured and informed manner.

Our submission sets out our process for delivering DaSTS Stage 1, identifying our strategic priorities and developing an outline work programme. We would like to draw your attention to two aspects of the submission: the emphasis that we have placed on articulating a clear evidence path for the Stage 1 process as a whole; and, the resultant work programme, including the study areas where we would like to work with the Department and other partners.

A wide breadth of evidence, national, regional and sub-regional has been gathered, analysed and used to inform and shape our response. Analysis confirmed that our regional strategic framework and regional priorities are strongly aligned with DaSTS' national goals of supporting national economic

competitiveness, tackling climate change, better safety security and health, equality of opportunity and quality of life. A suite of 12 key travel challenges that need to be addressed by the region to enable the delivery of our strategic framework and priorities were then identified.

These challenges were prioritised to identify our 3 priority themes:

- More Sustainable Communities across the West Midlands
- Better Travel Choices Supporting a Stronger, Lower Carbon Economy; and
- More Efficient and Reliable Journeys in Urban Areas and Connecting the Region.

Our work programme has been developed to make the best use of resource to ensure that we achieve the maximum value for money from the investment both nationally and regionally into the DaSTS process. Our work programme builds upon, rather than repeats or re-visits existing work. It comprises a suite of distinct but complimentary studies and activities that will address our priority themes, focussing in the geographical areas where they are most relevant, to deliver a range of realistic options for evaluation.

The driver of our work programme is the delivery of 4 specific studies:

- Reducing Demand for Travel and Changing Travel Behaviour - a study to identify specific interventions (smarter choices), in specific areas across the region, that will tackle climate change and move us towards a low carbon transport future;
- Access to Birmingham - a joint study with the Department that will focus on the Birmingham/Black Country urban areas and the inter-urban connections, identifying the measures across all modes needed to tackle the gaps in connectivity and improve journey reliability, choice and quality on the local, regional and national networks;
- Improving Connectivity in the Coventry North-South Corridor - a study to support the development, travel choices and connectivity to and within this key economic driver of the region; and
- Improving Connectivity to and within North Staffordshire - a study to understand the extent to which transport inhibits economic activity in North Staffordshire area and explore how these inhibitors can be overcome to support sustainable growth and regeneration.

We also wish to engage with the Department on the national networks studies that have an important bearing on the West Midlands. We have a particular interest in the outcomes of the work on moving Freight from Road to Rail, Influencing Travel Behaviour and Integrated Demand Management, together with the geographically specific studies relating to Corridor Routeing and Access to Birmingham, for which we are proposing a joint study that will incorporate the findings of key parallel areas of work including that for High Speed 2.

The execution of the regional suite of studies will be supported by a range of overarching and cross cutting activities; for example, stakeholder engagement both for the DaSTS process as a whole and for specific studies, and a monitoring programme to ensure that the DaSTS process and the delivery of our Regional Transport Priorities Action Plan continue to be taken forward in a mutually complementary way.

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The shadow Joint Strategy and Investment Board will continue to lead on the DaSTS process. We welcome the opportunity to continue to work with the Department and build on the positive relationship as the DaSTS process is developed.

Yours sincerely



Cllr Roger Phillips  
Co-Chair  
Shadow Joint Strategy & Investment Board  
Chair, West Midlands Leaders Board



Nick Paul CBE  
Co-Chair  
Shadow Joint Strategy & Investment Board  
Chair, Advantage West Midlands