Developing a Transport Knowledge Hub

Consultation findings

November 2016

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What is the Transport Knowledge Hub and why consult on it

What is the Transport Knowledge Hub?

The Transport Knowledge Hub is both a web-based resource providing key content on the delivery of transport investments, including news, guidance and case studies, as well as a platform where transport practitioners and local decision makers can interact and support each other. Its target audience are local decision makers, particularly LEPs and local authorities, and more generally, transport scheme promoters.

The Hub intends to bring existing resources in one place providing a coordinated view of guidance and best practice. It also seeks to provide additional evidence regarding transport schemes delivering economic growth, and to create a community of local transport decision makers. The Hub will guide people to the right resources as opposed to duplicating content already available in other hubs or online resources.

The role of Greener Journeys and Local Partnerships

Through the early phases of the Transport Delivery Excellence Programme, a number of LEPs identified that setting up a Knowledge Hub would be beneficial in addressing the significant challenges that LEPs currently face in being able to access good practice guidance on programme planning and delivery. Based on this initial idea, Local Partnerships and Greener Journeys agreed to develop a Transport Knowledge Hub that would assist local decision makers in delivering schemes that generate economic growth. Going forward, they will take responsibility for the development and maintenance of the Hub in partnership with supporting organisations such as DfT, Network Rail and the LEP Network.

Why a Transport Knowledge Hub consultation

The concept of the Hub was initially tested with a Working Group formed by LEPs, DfT and a representative of the LEP network, who provided support for the idea and initial thoughts on the objectives and the content of the Hub. However, a formal consultation inviting all LEPs and other relevant stakeholders was considered to be a necessary exercise to identify what the precise objectives, content and operating model of the Hub should be to maximise the benefits that the Hub can bring to its target audience.

This document provides the findings from the Transport Knowledge Hub consultation.

Overview of the consultation

Overview of the consultation

KPMG undertook a consultation on the Transport Knowledge Hub on behalf of Greener Journeys during October 2016.

The consultation document provided an outline of the Hub, its objectives and content, and asked ask a series of seven questions as follows:

1. Do you agree with the broad objectives for the Transport Knowledge Hub?

2. How could the objectives be improved?

3. Do you have views on the proposed operating model for the Transport Knowledge Hub?

4. What factors do you think will contribute to its success?

5. How can the Hub add value to existing advice and guidance documents?

6. Do you have case study evidence that could be used to strengthen the content of the Hub?

7. What activities should the Transport knowledge Hub engage in?

Those consulted were invited to participate in an interview to discuss the questions or alternatively to provide a written response.

The diagram below provides an overview of the consultation process.

In total, over 70 people were invited to participate through different channels.

Figure 1 – Overview of consultation process
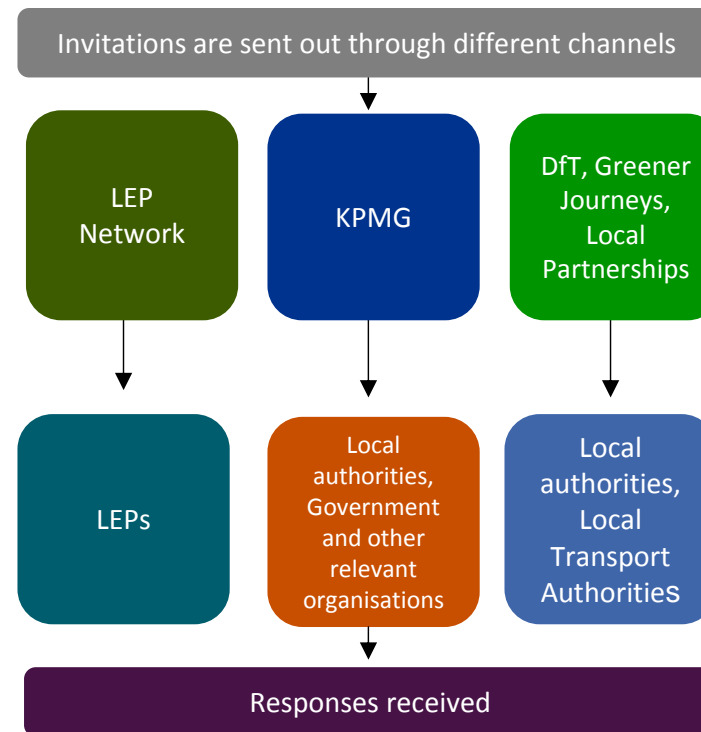
Response to the consultation

20 written responses + **6 Phone interviews** = **26 responses**

Table 1 Full list of consultees

Local Enterprise Partnerships	Local and Transport Authorities	Government and other organisations
▪ Coast to Capital	▪ Swindon Borough Council	▪ Local Government Association
▪ Cornwall and Isles of Scilly	▪ Buckinghamshire	▪ Department for Transport
▪ Humber	▪ Worcestershire County Council	▪ Infrastructure and Projects Authority (part of HM Treasury and Cabinet Office)
▪ West of England	▪ Southend-on-Sea Borough Council	
▪ Marches	▪ West Sussex County Council	▪ Network Rail
▪ Swindon and Wiltshire	▪ Thurrock Council	▪ Transport Catapult
▪ South East Midlands	▪ North Lincolnshire Council	▪ Yellow Buses
▪ Greater Lincolnshire	▪ Gloucestershire County Council	▪ Public Transport Consortium
▪ Oxfordshire	▪ Transport for Greater Manchester	
	▪ Liverpool City Region	

Key findings from the consultation

Key findings from the consultation - Objectives

Consultation document - Objectives

The consultation document suggested the following objectives for the Hub and asked people to provide their view on them:

- Building an active community of people and organisations working to deliver sustainable economic growth.

- Establishing new ways of working, building a culture of continuous learning and development to improve performance and efficiency of transport policy and investment initiatives to support economic growth.

- Running seminars and knowledge sharing events as well as supporting performance partnering and peer review.

- Assembling online resources to help foster creativity and innovation, improve decision-making and promote best practice in the delivery of transport policy and investment initiatives.

- Monitoring progress at a national level, providing details of transport schemes completed and in the pipeline.

What the consultation found

- Broad agreement with objectives:
  - 2 consultees out of 26 would not find the Hub useful
  - Some consultees said the Hub is an 'excellent idea'
- Concerns that the Hub may duplicate existing resources
- Need to refine objectives as the Hub is developed
- Need for a 'unique selling point' of the Hub
- Need to develop the monitoring objective
- Additional objectives mentioned:
  - Using the Hub to mobilise LEPs and provide a unique voice for local decision makers
  - Using the Hub to lobby to Government and respond to Government consultations
  - A database of schemes for tracking BCRs
- Suggestions for improvement:
  - Include social and environmental impacts
  - Include both capital and revenue schemes
  - Include all modes
  - Clarify if the hub will only focus on sustainable transport
  - Provide lessons learnt from previous schemes
  - Include international best practice
  - Consider the needs of different locations

Key findings from the consultation – Operating model and success factors

Consultation document - Operating model and success factors

The consultation document suggested the following operating model:

The operating model for the Hub will be determined as part of the consultation process. Our current working assumptions are that:

- The Hub will be hosted and administered by Local Partnerships.

- Initial funding will be provided by Greener Journeys who will help to develop the initial content of the Hub.

- We are currently in discussion with a range of government and private sector organisations with regard to on-going funding for the Hub.

We also asked consultees about which factors will contribute to the success of the Hub.

What the consultation found

Operating model:

Consultees broadly agreed with the operating model suggested and provided suggestions on how to improve it. They identified a:
- Need for up to date and reliable information
- Need to identify who leads the discussions and who the knowledge is aimed at
- Need for clear governance and administration structures
- Need for consistency with other hubs
- Need to further explain funding model
- Appetite for forums – which consultees would find useful.

Success factors:

Consultees suggested the following success factors:
- Provide non-biased information
- Inclusion of all sustainable modes of transport
- Content addressing 'real world problems' for local decision makers
- Public recognition
- A dedicated resource and point of contact maintaining the hub
- Buy-in and active involvement from the bodies listed as prospective participants (e.g. LEPs and LAs)
- Sufficient funding
- Not reinventing the wheel
- High quality/ peer reviewed case studies and contributions.

Key findings from the consultation – Content and activities

Consultation document - Content and activities

The consultation asked about how the Hub can add value to existing resources and which activities it should engage in. The consultation document stated:

The Transport Knowledge Hub will assemble and disseminate resources via a website hosted by Local Partnerships. The site will include information, case studies and links to additional resources on:

- Transport and the economy
- Strategic Economic Plans
- Transport policy and planning
- Transport business case
- Assurance and governance processes
- Programme and project delivery
- Funding and finance
- Evaluation and monitoring.

The aim is to bring together and summarise 'best practice' guidance supported by case study illustrations.

The Hub community may also undertake the following activities:

- Maintenance and upkeep of Hub resources
- Establishment of Task Groups to pursue specific issues
- Seminars and knowledge sharing events
- Updates to central policy initiatives
- Blogs/ news.

What the consultation found

Consultees stated that the Hub could add value by:
- Bringing a coordinated view of guidance and evidence
- Providing best practice guidance
- Providing a user forum or chat where people ask questions and share their own experiences
- Answering decision makers' questions and issues
- Disseminating and promoting existing resources
- Providing critical and impartial analysis of best practice
- Informing about seminar and events in other organisations
- Acknowledging tools that are available to LEPs and LAs
- Providing case studies that:
    - Contain an open and honest synopsis of successful or failed schemes
    - Demonstrate how people have used and applied guidance
    - Demonstrate the flow of process between a plan or policy, planning, securing the funding and delivering the infrastructure
    - Show ex-post evaluations
- Identifying weak areas in current guidance
- Stimulating debate
- Strengthening the evidence base
- Organising webinars, podcasts, seminars, events, etc.
- Newsletters and blogs

Key findings from the consultation – Case studies

Background

During the consultation we asked if people would be willing to contribute with case studies to be uploaded to the Hub. The purpose of case studies is to provide local decision makers with real life examples that provide lessons learnt for scheme promoters.

Case studies will be available across modes and will provide key information on different phases of the infrastructure delivery cycle.

What the consultation found

Throughout the consultation, people showed willingness to contribute with case studies and for these to be publicly available on the Hub. 11 consultees specifically said they would be happy to provide some case studies or pointed us to their website whether they thought they had useful material that could add value to the hub.

Examples included:

- A guided busway in Cambridgeshire

- Transport Catapult case studies on intelligent mobility hosted on their website

- Revenue and capital schemes in the Liverpool City Region

- Major transport investments and new housing sites in Swindon

- Rail enhancement best practice case studies provided by Network Rail

KPMG on behalf of Greener Journeys will follow up with consultees to gather case studies that can add value to the Hub.

Key findings from the consultation – Useful resources

The consultation on the Transport Knowledge Hub revealed that local decision makers currently use a variety of resources to support their development and delivery of transport schemes. We have tried to understand how these resources support scheme promoters.

Some consultees thought that it is important to consider these resources and how they are used at the moment to enable the Hub to bring a coordinated view within transport. The following resources were noted by respondents during the consultation:

- Transport Planning Society
- Charted Institute of Logistics and Transport
- Local Partnerships
- Institution of Civil Engineers
- Charted Institute of Highways and Transport (Transport Advice Portal)
- Urban Transport Group
- CEDOS
- ACT Travelwise
- Department for Transport
- Sustrans
- Konsult (University of Leeds)
- Greener Journeys
- What Works Centre for Local Economic Growth
- Public Transport Consortium.

Summary of the consultation

Key findings

- The consultation received a high response rate from those invited to participate.

- There was a broad agreement with the objectives of the Transport Knowledge Hub but these may need to be refined as the Hub evolves.

- The Hub will need to be a community as well as an access point to information.

- The Hub needs to include all modes, cover revenue and capital expenditure and include environmental and social impacts as well as economic impacts.

- Additional insight on the potential impact of interventions, supported by case study evidence would be welcomed by local decision makers.

- Access to official and best practice guidance on all aspects of the infrastructure delivery cycle in a single location would be helpful. The Hub should add value to existing resources rather than duplicate content.

- There is a need for a clear governance model for the Hub, on-going funding and a dedicated resource to actively maintain the Hub and the Hub community.

- To be successful, the Hub should address the needs of local decision maker, provide up to date and reliable information, obtain contributions from its target audience (LEPs and local transport scheme promoters) and achieve public recognition.

- The Hub should encourage discussion and critical thinking. The Hub could provide a platform for coordinated engagement and consultation responses to Government.

- Organising events, seminars and webinars can add value to the Hub and help create a community.