

Mayor's Transport Strategy

Consultation response from the London Borough of Sutton

September 2017

The London Borough of Sutton (LBS) has developed an ambitious programme for growth and economic development which aligns with the Mayor's ambitions for London. We are playing our part to deliver the jobs, housing and economic opportunities that are essential to London as the pre-eminent World City.

We agree with the analysis you set out in the Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS) that a modern, future-proofed transport system is key to this, connecting communities, opening up opportunities and creating the conditions for London's global economy to flourish. And we support the recognition of how it can improve residents' lives through healthier lifestyles, cleaner air and a better quality of public space.

This response should be read in conjunction with that of the South London Partnership (SLP), and with reference to that of London Councils. Earlier this year we launched The Sutton Plan - an attempt, alongside our major local partners, to rethink and overhaul the way that we design, plan and deliver the services our residents need and rely on. We present this response alongside/on behalf of a number of our Sutton Plan Partners: Sutton Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Epsom and St. Helier University Hospital Foundation Trust; Sutton College; and the Sutton Centre for the Voluntary Sector.

One of the key priorities of The Sutton Plan is a renewed effort to rejuvenate and diversify our economy, and reinforce the need for greater connectivity between decent jobs, decent transport and decent places to live - thus enshrining the principles of good growth. In this context, this document highlights our overarching, strategic arguments, whilst our detailed responses to the questions posed in the MTS can be found in the accompanying appendix.

South London - a new sub-regional transport strategy as the key to future success

- Along with our colleagues and neighbours in SLP we believe that the promotion of a polycentric city is key to London's future growth - by having an alternative, significant employment centres it is possible to provide areas able to meet needs that central London cannot provide, *i.e.* affordable workspace, sufficient follow-on space, and/or effective broadband. This prevents businesses being unable to grow or forced to leave London and allows for a broader ecosystem for businesses to develop and flourish. It would also provide for greater opportunity and quality of life by offering more Londoners decent jobs within easy commute, in turn supporting sustainable modes of transport.
- We welcome the references to Outer London-specific challenges in the MTS but think that London government, led by the Mayor, needs to go further in its efforts to properly comprehend the variety of spaces between (and particularly within) Outer London boroughs. For London to succeed in the 21st century existing, pervasive conceptions of

Outer London living will need a radical overhaul: the future mode share and nature of town centres will be very different to streets of semi-detached family homes.

- We believe that the MTS would benefit from the inclusion of, and commitment to, more schemes, whether expanding existing rail and tram offers beyond 2041 or utilising emerging transport options, to encourage long-term thinking and prepare Outer London for meaningful economic growth and expansion.
- Following a meeting with Val Shawcross, Deputy Mayor for Transport, in March 2017 the SLP agreed to develop a sub-regional transport strategy for South London. Once completed, we expect the strategy to provide a framework to help us define a sub-regional placemaking vision and attendant shared objectives; agree targets and milestones for delivering ambitions set out in the final draft of the MTS; develop both our long and medium-term infrastructure priorities; coordinate local travel reduction strategies and other cross-borough schemes; collate the data required for effective transport planning; and agree a process for the SLP and TfL to identify and agree new and improved bus services. ***This South London sub-regional transport strategy needs to be officially referenced in the MTS to allow it standing in future planning decisions.***

Sutton - pioneering a new model of Outer London living

- A more expansive vision in the MTS would chime for our aspirations for Sutton. As you know, we are one of only ten boroughs to have exceeded our housing target between 2010/11 and 2014/15, building 723 more units than agreed. Our Local Plan¹ (currently under examination) has set a housing target that is a 103% increase on our 2014/15 target; indeed, we expect 55% of our total growth to occur in Sutton Town Centre, and have worked hard to craft the groundbreaking Sutton Town Centre Masterplan in order to create the conditions needed to accommodate this level of anticipated growth.² We are in the process of developing a clear Masterplan delivery strategy and would value your input into this.
- Crucially, we are one of two major partners, along with the Institute for Cancer Research, in the proposed London Cancer Hub (LCH).³ The Hub has the potential to become the world's leading centre for cancer research, diagnosis and treatment - and is unique in that it places an internationally successful cancer research institute next door to a world famous cancer hospital. The initiative is being supported by the Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust. The Hub will act as the catalyst for significant economic, social and educational innovation, and create over 13,000 jobs - 7,000 of them in scientific, medical and associated fields, contributing over £1 billion per year to the UK economy, making the initiative an obvious candidate to pilot as a Greater London Innovation District.

¹ https://www.sutton.gov.uk/info/200464/planning_policy/1521/local_plan_in_preparation

² <https://www.opportunitiesutton.org/area-renewal-and-regeneration/sutton-town-centre-programme/>

³

<http://d1ijoxngr27nfi.cloudfront.net/default-document-library/the-london-cancer-hub-roadmap-document-03-02-16.pdf?sfvrsn=4>

- Over the past three years we have worked hard to remove barriers to growth and development, so much so that we believe we are leading the way across Greater London, definitely in terms preparing ourselves for growth from what was, effectively, a standing start. We have revised our local planning framework, drafted the aforementioned Local Plan, bought part of the site for the Cancer Hub (strengthening the position of our NHS hospital trust in the process) and are now in the process of appointing a commercial adviser for the project.
- ***Across Greater London, the major regeneration areas have been planned and are now being developed. We are ready to work in strategic partnership with you to unlock the growth potential of Sutton, and South London as a whole, acting as the pioneer for a new model of Outer London living - but we need the infrastructure to support it.***
- Our *Smart Place* agenda seeks to embed new technologies as part of the way the council and its partners deliver services. In relation to transport, we have highlighted opportunities such as optimising the use of electric vehicles to reduce toxic emissions and improve air quality conditions; intelligent use of data to allow for smart route planning around the borough, easing congestion and allowing public transport to run on time; real-time availability of parking bays; and the exploration of autonomous vehicles to improve connections on key routes. We look forward to working with you and colleagues across Greater London to promote this agenda.
- Underpinning all of this, we've stayed true to our administration's aspiration for One Planet Living, and agree with your proposals to make public transport greener and widen the net of the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ). Any move towards air quality improvement will have a beneficial effect on the health of our region and the prevalence and management of chronic disease, *e.g.* respiratory diseases such as asthma and chronic pulmonary disease. A population with a more active lifestyle will have health benefits for both physical and mental health and a transport plan to facilitate this should be considered. Our health partners, in particular, have pressed for the MTS to have a strong section on health promotion and prevention agendas, addressing the health needs of our changing population demographics and how we access employment and health care facilities in South London, and across the wider conurbation.
- A population with a more active lifestyle will have health benefits for both physical and mental health and a transport plan to facilitate this should be considered. The MTS could also support the healthcare estates strategies within South London and beyond. There are estate strategies for our local hospital Trust, the region's mental health trust and our primary care facilities of the future. We should also consider residents' access to sites for exercise such as leisure centres and parks.

Sutton - transport challenges to overcome together

- However, we are handicapped by the inadequacy of our public transport networks. Sutton has no Underground, Overground nor DLR equivalent - and the London Tram network only has two stops in the very far north east of our borough, away from the populated areas.

Sutton is reliant on a limited network of largely low frequency buses and a rail network with irregular timetabling and reliability. It is no wonder that we have such low rates of public transport use (only 16% of trips are made this way).

- Hence, Sutton is a borough largely dependent upon car use, accounting for 54% of all current journeys, with 77% of households having access to at least one car or van. These conditions are far from ideal and mean that we will find it challenging to meet your new modal targets unless there is a fundamental transformation of the public transport landscape across the borough. Projected demographic growth and an increase in our aging population will present further strains on our existing infrastructure and services, whilst also affecting the use of transport options within the borough.
- We were disappointed with the Secretary of State for Transport's decision not to devolve suburban rail services in London to Transport for London (TfL), and would support you in any future campaign to reverse this decision. As you know, we have co-commissioned research with TfL that demonstrates, beyond contention, that our growth aspirations for Sutton town centre will not be realised without investment in the public transport network. ***As it stands, continued underinvestment in Sutton hampers our efforts to help you realise a successful city that provides opportunities for all Londoners.***
- Due to the ability of developers to 'net off' floorspace, projected levels of developer contributions or CIL are not sufficient to fund the large scale transport improvements we need. We are therefore reliant on TfL and/or Department for Transport (DfT)/Network Rail to bring forward schemes with us to realise our joint aspirations for growth and improvement. This means that regional and national support, both practical and financial, for Tramlink extensions to Sutton and the London Cancer Hub, Crossrail 2 to Worcester Park station, and Metroisation from West Croydon to Cheam and Belmont, are essential.
- Furthermore, for the Cancer Hub to be fully deliverable, public transport links to the site need to be significantly upgraded. We need to ensure that the site can cope with increased daily trips from staff, patients and visitors alike. We also need to ensure that people can efficiently access it through comfortable, reliable, low-emission transport routes. As such, a vital element of the Cancer Hub project is the proposed extension of the Tram network - a project that is funded by the GLA, One Public Estate (OPE) Programme and supported by TfL through the funding of public transport assessments.

Sutton's pledge to you

- Sutton stands ready to play its full part in realising the goals you set out in the MTS. In order to do that, both we and our partners want to work collaboratively with you and TfL to secure the essential investment required to make Sutton a connected, prosperous and healthy borough. We stand ready to act as a good partner to achieve the good growth ambitions of the Mayor.