

## **Place Leadership Group 13<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

### **Major Road Network Consultation**

#### **Introduction**

Following a study by the Rees Jeffries Road Fund, in which the LEP participated, the Government decided in 2018 to designate a Major Road Network (MRN) for England. This would comprise the most important routes managed by Local Transport Authorities, and would be complementary to the Strategic Road Network (SRN) of motorways and trunk roads operated by Highways England.

The definition of the MRN was criteria based, depending upon total vehicle flows, heavy goods traffic and strategic role of routes including connections to ports and airports. Following a consultation in 2018 the Department for Transport (DfT) has now determined which routes will be included in the MRN.

Funding for the MRN, and the SRN, will come from a National Roads Fund, which will be drawn from the receipts of Vehicle Excise Duty.

#### **Peninsula Transport and Western Gateway**

Government has also encouraged the establishment of Sub National Transport Bodies (STB) to advise on the prioritisation for investment in the SRN. The first STB, Transport for the North, has now been granted statutory status.

In the south west the Local Transport Authorities have decided to set up two shadow STBs, **Peninsula Transport** covering Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, Plymouth and Torbay, and **Western Gateway** covering Gloucestershire, West of England, Wiltshire, Dorset and Bournemouth/ Poole.

The Peninsula Transport shadow STB comprises the five Local Transport Authorities, together with key stakeholders including the two LEPs.

A key role of each STB is to prepare a Regional Evidence Base, outlining the position of transport in their area. Peninsula Transport has engaged consultants to assist with this task.

#### **Improvements to the Major Road Network**

Government has now invited the STBs to prepare submissions for the first round of bids for improvements to the MRN. These bids have to be submitted in July 2019.

The STB officers have identified some indicative proposals, which were endorsed by the meeting of the shadow STB on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019. They now need to consult with key stakeholders. Therefore one of the STB officers will attend this meeting of Place Leadership Group to give a brief presentation on the emerging proposals, and to seek LEP views on whether there are any other schemes that should be considered.