



## **Meeting of the Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority - Greater Lincolnshire Transport Board**

**Date:** Wednesday, 16 July 2025

**Time:** 2.00 pm

**Venue:** Council Chamber, County Offices, Newland, Lincoln LN1 1YL

### **Membership:**

#### **Mayor**

Dame Andrea Jenkyns DBE

#### **Constituent Members**

Councillor Sean Matthews, Lincolnshire County Council\*

Councillor Ingrid Sheard, Lincolnshire County Council

Councillor Rob Waltham MBE, North Lincolnshire Council\*

Councillor Neil Poole, North Lincolnshire Council

Councillor Philip Jackson, North East Lincolnshire Council\*

Councillor Stan Shreeve, North East Lincolnshire Council

\*Lead Member

#### **Non Constituent Members**

Councillor Ashley Baxter (delegate), South Kesteven District Council

Councillor Craig Leyland, East Lindsey District Council

Councillor Richard Wright, North Kesteven District Council

#### **Associate Member (1)**

Professor Neal Juster

**Members of the Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority Transport Board are summoned to a meeting as set out above to transact the following business as set out in the agenda. Attendance of all Members is expected.**

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'L. Sirdifield', is written over a yellow rectangular background.

Lee Sirdifield  
Interim Chief Operating Officer

**GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE COMBINED COUNTY AUTHORITY - GREATER  
LINCOLNSHIRE TRANSPORT BOARD AGENDA  
WEDNESDAY, 16 JULY 2025**

| <b>Item</b> | <b>Title</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>Pages</b> |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>1</b>    | <b>Apologies and Substitutions</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |              |
| <b>2</b>    | <b>Declarations of Interest</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |              |
| <b>3</b>    | <b>Public Question Time</b><br>To receive questions from the public to the Mayor, Authority Members and Board Chairs in accordance with Combined County Authority Procedure Rule 14<br><br>The total time set aside for such questions and answers will be limited to 30 minutes with no extension of time, and questions not dealt with in this time will be dealt with by written responses.                                                                       |              |
| <b>4</b>    | <b>Chair's Announcements</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              |
| <b>5</b>    | <b>Greater Lincolnshire Local Transport Plan</b><br>To note the latest position of the Greater Lincolnshire Local Transport Plan and support the proposals for the next steps of the Greater Lincolnshire Local Transport Plan, endorse the development of a GLCCA Local Transport Plan, provide direction on how the Board would like to see activity evolving and monitoring of its progress, and request a follow up report on the new GLCCA Local Transport Plan | 5 - 12       |
| <b>6</b>    | <b>The Rural Transport Group</b><br>To endorse the development of a Rural Transport Group (RTG), confirm the proposed functions and direction on its activities, and delegate to the Interim Chief Operating Officer to approve the named point of contact the Department of Transport and co-opt them to the Greater Lincolnshire Transport Board                                                                                                                   | 13 - 18      |

## **Information about this meeting**

### **Members of the Public – Rights to Attend Meeting**

With the exception of any item identified above as containing exempt or confidential information under the Local Government Act 1972 Section 100A(4), members of the public are entitled to attend this meeting and/or have access to the agenda papers.

### **Live streaming**

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Generally, the public seating areas will not be filmed; however, by entering the meeting room and using the public seating area, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting.

### **Contact**

Persons wishing to obtain any further information on this meeting or for details of access to the meeting, please contact: Lincolnshire County Council Democratic Services [DemocraticServices@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:DemocraticServices@lincolnshire.gov.uk)

Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority, c/o County Offices, Newland,  
Lincoln LN1 1YL

## Report to the Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority, Transport Board

Meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2025

## Greater Lincolnshire Local Transport Plan

### Purpose of the report

This report is to:

- Set out the requirements for a Greater Lincolnshire Local Transport Plan.
- Report back on the work completed to date.
- Set out the next steps to develop a GLCCA Local Transport Plan.

### Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board:

1. **Recognises the previous policy commitments of the 3 constituent authorities, notes the latest position for the Greater Lincolnshire Local Transport Plan and supports the proposal for next steps,**
2. **Endorses the development of a GLCCA Local Transport Plan by the constituent authorities until such time that the work is resourced within the Authority,**
3. **Provides direction on how it would like to see activity evolving and how it would like to monitor progress made, and**
4. **Requests a report back to the next meeting of a scope for the ambition for and work programme to produce a new GLCCA Local Transport Plan**

### **Voting and consent arrangements**

Simple majority vote of Constituent Council Members, to include the Mayor.  
There are no consent requirements for this decision.

## Consideration

### **1 Background and context of Greater Lincolnshire devolution deal**

As part of becoming the Local Transport Authority, responsibility for an area-wide Local Transport Plan (LTP) will be conferred on Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority (GLCCA) and exercised by the Mayor. In agreement with Department for Transport (DfT), as part of the devolution deal, GLCCA had to develop a provisional area-wide LTP by March 2025 to be finalised by the GLCCA once established.

The three constituent authorities have worked together to produce a draft document providing an initial assessment of the key transport challenges to be addressed by the Greater Lincolnshire LTP.

### **2 Current Policy Position**

Each of the constituent highways authorities in Greater Lincolnshire has a current LTP and, while these plans have some degree of consideration of cross border travel within Greater Lincolnshire, they were largely developed independently to meet the needs of the authority's area.

Lincolnshire County Council, North East Lincolnshire Council and North Lincolnshire Council adopted their most recent LTPs in 2022, 2016 and 2011 respectively. These previously agreed documents have been used to shape the themes described below. As stated in the third recommendation of this paper this Board will provide direction for future activity in this space

|                                                                                                                    | Key aims/themes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| North Lincolnshire<br>Local Transport Plan<br>2011-2026;                                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitating economic growth</li> <li>• Reduction of transport related carbon dioxide emissions,</li> <li>• Protection and enhancement of the natural and built environment</li> <li>• Transport safety and security</li> <li>• Improvements in accessibility</li> <li>• Enhancing health and wellbeing</li> </ul>                                                                                                                  |
| North East<br>Lincolnshire Council<br>Local Transport Plan<br>2016 – 2032 (and LTP<br>Delivery Plan 2023 –<br>2026 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable growth</li> <li>• Reducing congestion</li> <li>• Supporting regeneration and employment, by connecting people to education, training and jobs</li> <li>• Connecting people to opportunities</li> <li>• Improving safety and security</li> <li>• Improving health</li> <li>• Improving the journey experience</li> <li>• Environmental excellence, improved air quality and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.</li> </ul> |
| Lincolnshire County<br>Council Local<br>Transport Plan 5 2022<br>– 2050 *                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting economic growth by improving connectivity</li> <li>• Future-ready, green transport</li> <li>• Reducing reliance on fossil fuels and minimising the need for travel.</li> <li>• Promoting thriving environments</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                |

\*The Lincolnshire County Council Transport Plan was produced by the previous administration and will be superseded by the development of a Greater Lincolnshire wide local transport plan.

- Safety, security, and a healthy lifestyle
- Promoting high aspirations by improving connectivity and access
- Improving quality of life

The draft GL LTP proposes a vision, along with some key themes and potential projects to deliver the vision.

### Updated position

Since the work above was undertaken, Lincolnshire County Council has seen a change in political leadership, and the first Mayor of Greater Lincolnshire has been elected. Both parties disagree with the focus on green transport and reducing the reliance on fossil fuels, and seek an enhanced focus on improving connectivity, service quality, affordability and reliability of transport solutions. These adjustments will need to be built into any future local transport plan for Greater Lincolnshire.

## 3 Local Transport Plan work completed to date

### 3.1 Proposed Vision

The following vision for the Greater Lincolnshire LTP has been developed.

*“Supporting the creation of a sustainable transport system that will connect communities to create good lives, with independence, wealth and good health”*

*Greater Lincolnshire is an outstanding place to visit, to invest, to study and to live.*

*We aspire to maintain a vibrant, sustainable and connected community founded on a proud identity and character.*

*Choices for everyone lie at the heart of a philosophy to create independence, growth and good health around a place that we can all enjoy.*

*We want, and need, everyone to embrace a culture that thrives on educational and economic accessibility and success, but which maintains social equality.*

*Sustainable transport provision is key to achieving this vision and will be embedded in every aspect of service delivery, making walkable, well maintained and safe neighbourhoods our norm.*

*Our wider transport systems will connect places of work and play with the region and beyond and enable choice in how and when we travel and transport goods.*

*The Local Transport Plan can help deliver this positive future for Greater Lincolnshire by being flexible enough to reflect inevitable change, and by its resilience in reacting to stakeholder needs and aspirations.*

## 3.2 Proposed Policy Themes

A full review of relevant national, sub-national, and local policies has informed the identification of the following key themes for the Greater Lincolnshire LTP:

- Economic Growth
- Safety, security and a healthy lifestyle
- Reduce transport related carbon dioxide emissions and protect and enhance the natural and built environment
- Connect people with homes, work, leisure and learning.

Specifically, we have taken each of the LTPs from the constituent authorities and ensured that the themes for the LTP align, alongside areas identified as important through the devolution deal.

| Greater Lincolnshire LTP themes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <br><b>Economic Growth</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <br><b>Safety, security and a healthy lifestyle</b>                                                                                                                                                      | <br><b>Connecting people with homes, work, leisure and learning</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <br><b>Sustainable Transport</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Key themes from national, regional and local policy                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Turbo charging business growth</li> <li>▪ Promoting High Aspirations</li> <li>▪ Economic recovery and growth</li> <li>▪ Regeneration</li> <li>▪ Productivity, pay, jobs and living standards</li> <li>▪ Growing and levelling up the economy</li> <li>▪ Stronger economy, stronger communities</li> <li>▪ Where business can sustain and grow</li> <li>▪ Enabling economic growth and renewal</li> <li>▪ Facilitate growth through transport improvements</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support high aspirations</li> <li>▪ Supporting Safety, Security and a Healthy Lifestyle</li> <li>▪ Quality of Life</li> <li>▪ Citizens of all ages live active, healthy, and independent lives</li> <li>▪ Keeping people safe and well</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A sense of community, local pride and belonging</li> <li>▪ Empowering local leaders and communities</li> <li>▪ Enable everyone to enjoy life to the full</li> <li>▪ Where young people have choice and are equipped with the skills to exercise that choice.</li> <li>▪ Where people are proud to live, work, invest and visit.</li> <li>▪ Enabling resilient and flourishing communities</li> <li>▪ Provide equal opportunities through improvements in accessibility to key local hubs and services by sustainable modes of Transport</li> <li>▪ Enhancing infrastructure to connect people with homes, work, leisure and learning</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Enabling resilient and flourishing communities</li> <li>▪ Reducing Pollution to improve the health of residents</li> <li>▪ Creating a Thriving Environment</li> <li>▪ Reducing negative impacts on the environment</li> <li>▪ Modernising Transport solutions and enabling choice</li> <li>▪ Protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment through sustainable transport solutions</li> </ul> |

## 3.3 Proposed list of interventions

To demonstrate how GLCCA can deliver these themes the LTP sets out a number of possible interventions and projects. Some of these projects will interrelate with development of other devolution workstreams.

The following interventions are proposed:

- **Rural bus pilot:** Demand Responsive Transport providing buses on-demand for example through a mobile phone app.

- **Measures to improve bus services** including service frequency enhancements, bus priority measures, simplified and integrated ticketing, modernising bus fleets, improved waiting facilities (bus stops and stations) through implementation of Bus Service Improvement Plans;
- **Public transport support**, including supported bus services, concessionary fares and travel information;
- **Improved rail infrastructure and services to improve journey times, frequency and reliability of services.** For example, line speed improvements between Cleethorpes and Doncaster and direct rail links to key economic centres London and other major centres in the north and Midlands for leisure, business and commuter travel, along with wider enhancements across our network, including rural locations.
- **Mobility hubs:** Interconnected hubs across Greater Lincolnshire. Allowing interchange between public (e.g. bus), private (e.g. car) and shared modes (e.g. shared bikes, scooters or cars) plus commercial opportunities from ancillary services (shops, cafés, EV chargers).
- **New and improved walking and cycling routes** as part of coherent networks including segregated cycling infrastructure through implementation of Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans;
- **Strategic road improvements**, including improvements to the Major Road Network and Strategic Road Network;
- **Road safety improvements:** Infrastructure and initiatives to reduce road danger across the county;
- **Supporting efficient and sustainable freight movements** across the county by road, rail and water, including HGV parking through implementation of freight strategies;
- **Road maintenance:** Maintaining Lincolnshire's extensive road network and addressing potholes.

### 3.4 Contribution intervention would make to LTP delivery

These interventions have then been cross referenced with the LTP themes to weight to contribution.

| Intervention Key<br>✓✓✓ significant contribution<br>✓✓ moderate contribution<br>✓ minor contribution | Economic Growth | Safety, Security and a Healthy Lifestyle | Reducing transport related carbon dioxide emissions and protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment. | Connecting people with homes, work, leisure and learning. |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| Rural bus Pilot                                                                                      | ✓               | ✓                                        | ✓                                                                                                                   | ✓✓✓                                                       |
| Measures to improve bus services                                                                     | ✓✓✓             | ✓                                        | ✓✓                                                                                                                  | ✓✓✓                                                       |
| Public transport support                                                                             | ✓✓✓             | ✓                                        | ✓                                                                                                                   | ✓✓✓                                                       |
| Improved rail infrastructure and services                                                            | ✓✓✓             | ✓                                        | ✓✓                                                                                                                  | ✓✓                                                        |
| Mobility Hubs                                                                                        | ✓               | ✓✓                                       | ✓                                                                                                                   | ✓✓                                                        |

|                                                        |                                                                                                                |                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                           |
|--------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| New and improved walking and cycling routes            | ✓✓                                                                                                             | ✓✓✓                                                                                                   | ✓✓                                                                                                                                                                   | ✓                                                                                                         |
| Strategic road improvements                            | ✓✓✓                                                                                                            | ✓                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                      | ✓✓                                                                                                        |
| Road safety improvements                               | ✓                                                                                                              | ✓✓✓                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                      | ✓                                                                                                         |
| Supporting efficient and sustainable freight movements | ✓✓                                                                                                             | ✓                                                                                                     | ✓✓                                                                                                                                                                   | ✓                                                                                                         |
| Road Maintenance                                       | ✓✓                                                                                                             | ✓                                                                                                     | ✓                                                                                                                                                                    | ✓                                                                                                         |
| <b>Outcomes</b>                                        | More reliable journeys<br>Improved access to opportunity<br><i>leading to</i><br><b>Increased productivity</b> | Enabling active travel and healthy lifestyles<br><i>leading to</i><br><b>Improved health outcomes</b> | Enabling mode shift and use of low emission vehicles<br><i>leading to</i><br><b>A resilient network and a liveable county</b><br><br><b>Improved health outcomes</b> | Improved access to opportunity<br>leading to<br><b>Improved productivity and improved health outcomes</b> |

The interventions intend to provide examples of what could be achieved and these examples would be developed, prioritised and scoped in full as part of the full LTP document.

## 4. Next Steps

### 4.1 Timescales

The timescales for working on the next steps of the LTP will be led by the Transport Board. However, it should be noted that the constituent authorities have existing LTPs, with North Lincolnshire's needing refreshing at the end of the year, which may drive timescales. A full Transport Plan programme would usually take around 18 months.

The draft LTP sets out the following workstreams which will need completing.

### 4.2 Further development of the LTP evidence base

Further development of the evidence base compiled to inform this document can inform identification of suitable interventions and policies appropriate to Greater Lincolnshire's varied place types.

The general principle of this place-based approach is that each place will likely have its own unique socio-economic, transport, environmental and physical characteristics, and flowing from this, its own problems and opportunities, so transport plans / strategies could be developed for individual place types. The nature of place-based analysis is for authorities to decide – developing the plans using a data driven understanding of place-based need and connectivity allows policies and interventions to be identified that meet the needs of specific localities.

#### 4.3 Develop the draft vision further and set objectives

The Greater Lincolnshire LTP should articulate a clear vision and case for change for the future of transport in the area. A vision should establish how the GLCCA would like the area to be in the future. The vision should incorporate the themes from the key policy drivers identified in this LTP lite and clearly align with the Greater Lincolnshire Investment Plan and Local Growth Plan.

#### 4.4 Further scheme identification and multi-criteria assessment

The Transport Act 2000 as amended requires that LTPs contain policies and implementation plans. Once the evidence base has been prepared and a set of objectives (and targets) have been developed, a “long-list” of potential interventions should therefore be established. The draft LTP contains some but a full list should be developed with the Transport Board reflecting the properties of the GLCCA.

#### 4.5 Full implementation plan

A detailed implementation plan for the first 3-5 years of the Greater Lincolnshire LTP is required, setting out the proposed interventions that respond to the local issues and opportunities identified in the evidence base and support the vision and objectives.

The implementation plan should set out estimated costs, funding sources, delivery lead, delivery partners and estimated timescales

#### **Alternative options considered**

The Authority is required to produce a Local Transport Plan as part of becoming the Local Transport Authority. There are no alternative options to consider in this regard.

#### **Reasons for the recommendation**

To inform the Board of progress to date on developing a GL LTP and to provide next steps for production of a final policy document.

#### **Implications, advice and guidance**

The implications are set out in detail in the body of the report

#### **Public sector equality duty implications**

The development of the local transport plan will consider the public sector equality duty as it is developed. This is an overarching plan, and individual programmes of activity will also consider implications as they are developed.

## Legal implications / comments

The remit of the Transport Board is to advise the Authority and the Mayor on the development of policy, strategy and budgets and to make recommendations on, amongst other things, the Greater Lincolnshire Local Transport Plan.

Preparing and reviewing a Local Transport Plan under section 108 of the Transport Act 2000 is a Mayoral General Function, (that is, exercisable by the Mayor). The Mayor must have regard to any relevant statutory guidance when discharging this function.

## Finance and resource implications / comments:

Dedicated GLCCA resources will be required to deliver a full LTP.

## Greater Lincolnshire policy / comments:

There is a requirement for the Mayor to bring forward a local transport plan for Greater Lincolnshire. It sets out the intentions of the Greater Lincolnshire Combined Authority area. Further work and engagement will take place to develop the final local transport plan over the coming months.

## The following have been consulted in the preparation of this report:

The Greater Lincolnshire LTP proposed vision, and themes have been shared and agreed with Leaders of the constituent authorities as well as portfolio holders for Transport (pre-May 2025 elections). Members have been supportive of the work to date and the approach taken. The document has not been shared any wider at this stage.

## Appendices included with this report

- None

## Background information

Paragraph 120 of the devolution deal states:

*“As part of becoming the LTA, responsibility for an area-wide Local Transport Plan (LTP) will be conferred on Greater Lincolnshire MCCA and exercised by the mayor. The Greater Lincolnshire MCA will develop a provisional area-wide LTP by March 2025 to be finalised by the Greater Lincolnshire MCCA once established. Spending Review is expected in 2024; in developing its case for local transport investment DfT will be engaging the local transport sector. As such, we will look to draw on any emerging evidence base and strategy Greater Lincolnshire is able to make available by that time. Greater Lincolnshire MCCA will be expected to ensure its LTP aligns with best practice in transport planning including any revised LTP guidance, and to update their LTP as necessary.”*

Link to: [Greater Lincolnshire Devolution Deal](#)

## Contact details for the report

Report on behalf of: Lee Sirdifield – Interim Chief Operating Officer, GLCCA  
Report prepared by: Andy Gutherson – Executive Director – Place, Lincolnshire County Council

## Report to the Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority, Transport Board

Meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2025

### **The Rural Transport Group**

#### **Purpose of the report**

This report is to describe plans to develop a Rural Transport Group (RTG), as outlined with the Devolution Deal for Greater Lincolnshire.

#### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Transport Board:

- 1. Endorses the development of the Rural Transport Group with Terms of Reference (TOR) to be established,**
- 2. Confirm the proposed functions of the RTG as set out at paragraphs 7 to 11 of the report and provide direction on any activities or themes that should be prioritised,**
- 3. Confirms the ambition to establish a Westminster Launch event in the autumn of 2025, and**
- 4. Delegates to the Interim Chief Operating Officer to approve the named point of contact at the Department of Transport (DfT) and co-opt them on to the Transport Board**

#### **Voting and consent arrangements**

Simple majority vote of Constituent Members, to include the Mayor.  
There are no consent requirements for this decision.

## Information and background

- 1 The Greater Lincolnshire Devolution Deal set out a new national transport role:

*The mayor of Greater Lincolnshire will establish and chair a rural transport group alongside existing Level 3 combined authorities, that will lead the national debate on transport in mayoral rural areas. The group will champion innovation and work in partnership with the Department for Transport to identify pilot projects to address rural connectivity and accessibility challenges.*

- 2 Over the last 20 years successive governments have focussed on and responded to the needs of urban transport. The Urban Transport Group (UTG), a UK network of city region transport authorities, representing the strategic transport interests of the largest urban areas in the country plays a key role in shaping national transport policy and supporting local delivery. There is currently an absence of such a voice for rural authorities. Appendix A provides a link to the UTG website for comparative purposes
- 3 According to the Department for Transport's 2025 Main Estimate the majority of capital investment continues to be directed toward urban and inter-urban infrastructure, such as HS2, city-region transport settlements, and major road upgrades. In contrast, rural areas receive significantly less per capita investment in public transport and active travel infrastructure.
- 4 No one person has the responsibility of leading the rural conversation with the Department for Transport – although pockets of interest do sit within modal teams.
- 5 The sub national transport body Transport East, have the lead for rural transport and welcome the opportunity that the Rural Transport Group will provide. They will be a very valuable, evidence rich partner.
- 6 A roundtable session was held at UKReiiF in May 2025 with key players, to explore the interest in the subject. The roundtable event was well received and there is clearly an appetite to progress the work.

### Proposed functions:

- 7 The role of the group will be multi-faceted and will require appropriate representation from partner organisations. Full terms of reference will need to be drafted but it is not intended that the group will be a formal joint committee of the Authority but a national special interest group whose work will be presented into the public domain through this Transport Board for the Authority.
- 8 **Policy and Advocacy:** influence national transport policy by engaging with government, publishing research, and responding to consultations.
- 9 **Knowledge Sharing:** provide a platform for transport authorities to share best practices, data, and innovations.
- 10 **Research and Reports:** publish in-depth reports on topics like bus reform, active travel and funding.

- 11 **Support for Devolution:** champion the case for devolving more transport powers and funding to local areas.

## Parties in this space who should be invited to join

- 12 Department for Transport will be an essential part of the group. The group requires a direct line to Whitehall and a senior civil servant will be an important element. The group will need to ensure that the partnership described in the deal text is effective:

*“The group will champion innovation and work in partnership with the Department for Transport to identify pilot projects to address rural connectivity and accessibility challenges.”*

- 13 Sub-national Transport Bodies (STBs) in the UK are strategic transport governance organisations formed by groups of local councils to plan and deliver transport infrastructure and policy at a regional level. They are shown on the diagram below. Established under the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016, STBs aim to provide a unified voice for regions, enabling more effective collaboration with central government and better alignment of transport investment with local economic priorities.



- 14 Transport East is the STB for Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Southend-on-Sea, and Thurrock. It is recognised as the national lead for rural mobility due to its extensive rural geography and its proactive work through the Rural Mobility Centre of Excellence. This initiative focuses on identifying and implementing practical solutions to improve transport in rural areas, supporting economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability. Transport East's leadership in this area reflects both the scale of rural transport challenges in the East and its commitment to innovation and partnership working to address them.

Transport East has welcomed the creation of the Rural Transport Group, recognising the value of political engagement which can provide a counterbalance to the urban narrative. Transport East will be the STB that supports the group and will help to build evidence.

- 15 Rural Transport Authorities from across England have expressed interest. Many local rural authorities are seeking a way to work collaboratively on this issue as funding settlements are failing to recognise the rural agenda and the opportunities that could be unlocked with better access to jobs and skills in rural areas. Some of the strongest voices in this space are the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority (YNYCA) and the county councils in East Anglia. For example, DfT have announced an intention to work with YNYCA on rural bus franchising. Those experiences could be reported through the RTG with a view to aligning the findings with other activities
- 16 Industry bodies and private sector representatives, will provide an industry voice for the private sector. While a number of operators have come forward directly to seek a seat at the table, the group must be a manageable size. As such officers are in conversation with industry representatives such as Confederation of Passenger Transport. There will be a need to have specialist attendees and invited guests depending on the agenda items.

## **Next steps**

- 17 The Rural Transport Group will be launched in November 2025 in Westminster. The first formal meeting of the group will be held in early 2026. It is expected that Mayors will seek to engage DfT in the agenda between now and then.
- 18 Officers across Greater Lincolnshire are working with colleagues from Transport East to build a strong evidence base to inform the meeting.
- 19 Meetings are now taking place with other authorities to shape the agenda.

## **Alternative options considered**

- 20 Do not take up the opportunity offered within the Devolution Deal.

## **Reasons for the recommendation**

- 21 Good rural transport provides access to work, training, health and leisure and can provide options and opportunities. The rural agenda deserves equal consideration to the urban agenda. Currently rural transport receives less funding from and less consideration by Westminster. This group provides a high profile platform to begin to address these disparities.
- 22 Combined authorities are being tasked with new functions –focussing of economic growth: developing Growth Plans and Investment Strategies as well as planning for future infrastructure through a Spatial Development Strategy a comprehensive plan, to guide long-term use and development of land, setting a vision for how people will live, work, travel and interact within a defined area, influencing where homes, jobs, and infrastructure are located. The rural transport agenda will be a central enabler to the work and to the success of the plans.

## **Implications, advice and guidance**

- 23 The implications are set out in detail in the body of the report.

## **Public sector equality duty implications**

- 24 The Rural Transport Group will consider improvements to rural transport provision across the England. Each of these proposals will consider public sector equality duty implications as appropriate.

## Legal implications / comments

25 This decision is within the remit of the Authority under the terms of the constitution.

## Finance and resource implications / comments

26 There may be a financial implication of the Westminster launch.

## Greater Lincolnshire policy / comments

27 The creation of a Rural Transport Group, with representation from DfT, was agreed as part of the devolution deal for Greater Lincolnshire. This paper furthers efforts to bring forward the group, and sets a timeline for establishing activities with other combined authority areas.

## Consultation, Boards, Overview and Scrutiny / comments

The following have been consulted in the preparation of this report:

- Discussions have taken place with each constituent authority regarding the development of the Rural Transport Group. This concept was also part of the devolution proposal that was consulted upon in 2023.

## Appendices included with this report

The following documents are included:

- Appendix A – [Home page | Urban Transport Group](#)

## Background Papers used in the preparation of this report

The following background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

| Background Paper                                     | Where it can be viewed                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Deal Text                                            | <a href="https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/657099237391350013b03c30/Greater_Lincolnshire_Devolution_Deal.pdf">https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/657099237391350013b03c30/Greater_Lincolnshire_Devolution_Deal.pdf</a> |
| Urban Transport Group                                | <a href="https://urbantransportgroup.org/">https://urbantransportgroup.org/</a>                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Transport East website                               | <a href="https://www.transporteast.gov.uk/">https://www.transporteast.gov.uk/</a>                                                                                                                                                               |
| Transport East: Making the case for rural investment | <a href="#">Case-for-Rural-Investment-v-6-1.pdf</a>                                                                                                                                                                                             |

## Contact details for the report

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Report prepared by: Andy Gutherson – Executive Director – Place, Lincolnshire County Council

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