Logistics UK response to consultation on ending Pan-Regional Partnership core funding

16 December 2024

Summary

- Of the Pan Regional Partnerships (PRPs) we are concerned about the proposal to end core funding to the Thames Estuary Growth Board (TEGB). In many of the other areas, the PRPs are supported by other elements of regional devolution, particularly the combined authorities.
- TEGB plays a pivotal role in addressing key logistical challenges by fostering collaboration among businesses, local authorities, and national government, ensuring that the needs of the freight and logistics sectors are considered in all major developments.
- Without the TEGB's leadership, the development of critical infrastructure, such as the Lower Thames Crossing, would face delays, jeopardising its ability to deliver congestion relief and improved connectivity.

About Logistics UK

Logistics UK is one of the country's largest business groups and the only trade association which represents all logistics. Our mission is to support, shape and stand up for safe and efficient logistics.

Our membership of more than 20,000 includes global, national and regional businesses and SMEs spanning road, rail, inland waterways, sea and air as well as the buyers of freight services, such as retailers and manufacturers. We deliver services, representation and thought leadership, helping members and policymakers to seize new opportunities for the sector and the economy as a whole, right across the country.

The UK logistics sector contributes £185 billion GVA to the UK economy each year, which is 12% of UK non-financial GVA. 2.6 million people in the UK are employed by logistics businesses or perform logistics roles in other business – 8% of the UK workforce.

How do you currently work with your PRP? What are the key activities for your organisation that the PRP currently delivers?

Of the Pan Regional Partnerships (PRPs) we are concerned about the proposal to end core funding to the Thames Estuary Growth Board (TEGB). In many of the other areas, the PRPs are supported by other elements of regional devolution, particularly the combined authorities. However, in the Thames estuary area, partly due to its proximity to Greater London, there is no such Combined Authority, and it seems unlikely one will develop. In addition, due to the significant economic opportunities present in the south east of England, it is sensible that the primary regional body there has a development focus – as the TEBG does.

Logistics UK works closely with the TEBG to ensure that infrastructure and transport projects across the region are designed and delivered in ways that enhance the efficiency and sustainability of logistics operations. The TEBG plays a pivotal role in addressing key logistical challenges by fostering collaboration among businesses, local authorities, and national government, ensuring that the needs of the freight and logistics sectors are considered in all major developments.

The TEGB's support for critical projects like the Lower Thames Crossing is a testament to its understanding of the importance of reliable, high-capacity infrastructure. The Crossing will not only reduce transport congestion and improve reliability but also enhance connectivity for goods moving between mainland Europe and the rest of the UK. By driving forward such projects, the TEBG directly supports the logistics industry's ability to meet growing demands efficiently and sustainably, in support of the productivity and growth of the whole economy.

TEBG's commitment to sustainability also aligns with Logistics UK's goals. By promoting the use of alternative transport modes, including river freight, and supporting low-carbon infrastructure, it demonstrates leadership in reducing environmental impacts while maintaining operational efficiency.

In the event of a PRP ceasing its operations, what impact would that have on you or your organisation?

The cessation of the TEBG's operations would represent a significant loss to the logistics sector. Without its leadership, the development of critical infrastructure, such as the Lower Thames Crossing, could face further delays, jeopardising its ability to deliver congestion relief and improved connectivity. This would have knock-on effects on freight reliability, costs, and delivery times, impacting the wider economy.

The TEGB's ability to convene stakeholders from across the region is unique and irreplaceable. Without this coordination, the logistics industry risks fragmented decision-making and missed opportunities to create integrated transport solutions that work for all. Projects such as river freight development and sustainable energy networks, which require broad collaboration, would lose momentum, undermining progress on sustainability goals. Moreover, the TEBG's role in championing the interests of the logistics sector ensures that freight and supply chain considerations are prioritised in regional planning. Its absence would leave a critical gap in advocacy, making it harder for the sector to address challenges and capitalise on opportunities.

Contact:
Natalie Chapman
Head of Public Affairs
Logistics UK
nchapman@logistics.org.uk