**Purpose of the report**: To update on transport shared service opportunities. Following the STSG meeting on 5 November, it was proposed that, through the RCE CURE project, a concise baseline report should be produced setting out where services are being shared on transport activities both within the region and beyond including the work of RTF, EEDET and STSG. Research is ongoing to produce the report and it will be brought to the March 2011 RTF.

**Recommendations**:

- RTF agree the STSG November 2010 proposal to produce a report establishing the good practice to date on sharing services and the opportunities for extending this
- Note the questionnaire results to date, the further research already underway and encourage members to offer their examples for inclusion in the report
- Agree the format of the report as case studies which will be sent to RTF members to comment upon before being included in the report for wider circulation

**Background**

RCE is a partnership of the local authorities of 6 regional cities: Southend, Colchester, Ipswich, Norwich, Peterborough and Luton. Part of the CURE programme of RCE is focussed on developing shared service models to protect performance, within reduced budgets. In 2010/11 this has been focussed on carbon management, transport and culture and the arts.

RCE were invited to RTF in September and STSG in November to explore shared services on the transport agenda, looking wider than the six cities listed above. To inform the early discussion, a questionnaire was circulated and the results are summarised below.

**Shared Services in Transport in the East**

Following the September RTF meeting, six questionnaires were returned and the findings are below:

- Greatest inter authority collaboration is recorded on:
  - Real Time Passenger Information
  - Casualty reduction and road safety partnerships including safety cameras
- Several councils are collaborating on:
  - Civil protection or emergency planning
  - Concessionary fare schemes
Other examples that were included on the questionnaires were:

- Low carbon projects
- Lift share schemes
- Access and rights of way
- Call connect services
- Joint improvement schemes
- Traffic signals
- Cycling initiatives
- Procurement
- Bidding and business case development

The objectives of this collaboration were consistent across the six authorities:

- Efficiency, cost reduction, buying more for less, enabling more money to go to the front end of services by reducing the costs of back office activities
- Best value, value for money
- Sharing best practice through partnership working
- Ensuring a better quality physical fabric than would otherwise be possible

Future developments and areas of interest were more diverse and only two were mentioned by more than one authority:

- Procurement through the Eastern Highways Alliance
- Low carbon projects

Others included extending what is already happening but fresh ideas included:

- Professional services contract, specialist skills including modelling
- Fleet management
- Private sector engagement
- Freight transport work

From these findings, we can see that transport service sharing is widespread across the region and mainly at a project or operational level.

To develop this, since STSG, I have been interviewing members and obtaining further details to work up concise case studies on the best practice across the region. I have so far about 20 case studies but only from a limited number of members so I would encourage as many members as possible to let me know how we can capture the best practice of shared working in their authority for the report.
Shared Services in the Transport Sector – some national examples

To inform the STSG meeting and the report, wider research has been undertaken of shared services on the transport agenda. In December, DfT have published “Delivering Sustainable Transport for Housing Growth – Case Studies from Local Communities” and this provides some useful work on the benefits of cross boundary work which will be covered in the final report. Additional examples come from:

- Capital Ambition, the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership for London
- Gloucestershire
- Kent
- South Yorkshire

Full details were covered in the STSG paper and will be included in the main report. Any examples known to RTF members would be welcome and can be sent to me at the e-mail address above.

Moving Forward

Discussion at the 5 November STSG meeting suggested that it would be useful to learn more about what is already happening as a potential platform for further sharing in the future.

It was noted however that the financial context for local authorities is also causing a range of responses to joint working. While some local authorities are looking to share staff and services, some are withdrawing from joint projects and partnerships. Others, by responding to the cutbacks through new business models, will make shared services with other local authorities more complicated to pursue and potentially offer less resource and flexibility to pursue it.

It was also recognised that much of the shared activity in the region is taking place through RTF, EEDET and STSG and that this needs to be included in the report.

In conclusion it was felt that it was very useful to understand more about what is happening both in the region and outside to inform RTF and service delivery in 2011/12 and beyond when greater clarity about funding and structures is reached.

A report was prepared to the RTF in December which was of course postponed due to the weather. As the CURE programme only runs to March 31 2011, it was decided to begin the research for the report, update in January with a view to the research being complete in February and the report being presented in March 2011.