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Report to: Transport Committee
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Subject: Road Networks Update

Is this a key decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, state paragraph number of Schedule 12a, Local Government Act 1972, Part 1	

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To seek agreement to a Memorandum of Understanding for the collaborative management of a Key Route Network for West Yorkshire.
- 1.2 To provide an update on work by Transport for the North to create a Major Road Network for the North and endorse further work on our priorities for investment.
- 1.3 To agree to hold a workshop session on our important road networks with Transport Committee and Portfolio Holders to provide updates on activity and to input to actions and priorities.

2 Information

- 2.1 The West Yorkshire District Councils and West Yorkshire Combined Authority have been developing proposals for the collaborative management of a West Yorkshire Key Route Network of the busiest and most important local roads in West Yorkshire. Enhanced coordination of network operations and planning is expected to deliver greater efficiency and reliability on this network.
- 2.2 Transport for the North (TfN) is developing a proposal to create a Major Road Network for the North, to provide a focus for investment decisions for improvements to roads (other than the Strategic Road Network) that are the most economically important to securing the North's productivity and growth.
- 2.3 To help with definitions:

- **West Yorkshire Key Route Network (KRN)** - a network locally identified by West Yorkshire authorities. The WYKRN includes 661km (400 miles) of road within West Yorkshire. This represents 7% of all of West Yorkshire's roads, which carry 60% of all the traffic. The criteria used to identify this route included vehicle flows and strategic function;
- **Major Road Network (MRN) for the North** – a network identified by TfN, in collaboration with local authorities across the North of England, as important for connecting important economic centres across the North, including towns, cities, ports, airports, enterprise zones, universities and other key employment sites. The MRN for the North totals 3,389 miles. TfN does not have, nor seeks to acquire, an operational network role;
- **Strategic Road Network (SRN)** - a national network of around 4,400 miles long and made up of motorways and trunk roads, the most significant 'A' roads. Highways England manage this network which represents around two per cent of all roads in England by length, but it carries a third of all traffic by mileage.

Key Route Network for West Yorkshire

- 2.4 The collaborative management of a West Yorkshire Key Route Network (KRN) is a policy of the West Yorkshire Transport Strategy. The development of the Transport Strategy and its policies was overseen by this Transport Committee and endorsed at its meeting of 7 July 2017 meeting. The Transport Strategy was adopted by the Combined Authority at its meeting of 3 August 2017.
- 2.5 The intention with the identification of a Key Route Network is to focus attention on improving journey times and reliability on the busiest and most important local roads that are the most susceptible to congestion and delay, regardless of district boundaries. The proposal for the West Yorkshire KRN is that the individual District Councils continue to manage their own full road network, but that the creation of the KRN recognises a smaller number of roads of strategic or cross boundary importance where enhanced collaboration and consistency to manage this network could bring benefits in:
- Delivering greater journey time reliability for road users;
 - Coordinating travel information, particularly to better deal with delay and disruption across the wider network;
 - Facilitating development and economic growth through upgrades and additions to the network, including coordinating and accelerating the delivery of West Yorkshire plus Transport Fund schemes;
 - Supporting the delivery of the adopted West Yorkshire Low Emissions Strategy through assisting the integration of sustainable modes (e.g. bus, cycle, walking) on the network.
- 2.6 A map of the West Yorkshire KRN is attached as **Appendix 1**. A proposed Memorandum of Understanding setting out set out the approach and responsibilities for the management of the KRN is attached as **Appendix 2**.

- 2.7 The KRN includes 661km (400 miles) of road. This represents 7% of all of West Yorkshire's roads, which carry 60% of all the traffic. The criteria for designing the network is described in the Memorandum of Understanding. The criteria used vehicles flows and strategic function and is consistent with criteria applied to agreeing similar networks in Greater Manchester and South Yorkshire. Beyond West Yorkshire it is intended that the KRN links seamlessly links into neighbouring Key Route Networks. Local Authorities already work on operational issues across boundaries and through the work on the KRN, it is intended that this co-operation would be enhanced further.
- 2.8 The KRN Memorandum of Understanding is proposed to include:
- Schedule 1 – the plan showing the extent of the proposed KRN;
 - Schedule 2 – Proposed operating model - setting out areas of collaboration;
 - Schedule 3 – Proposed governance arrangements - using established Local Transport Plan governance arrangements with reporting to Transport Committee;
 - Schedule 4 - Implementation Plan - with the intention that progress with the identified Tasks is reported to Transport Committee.
- 2.9 The parties to the Memorandum of Understanding would be the five West Yorkshire District Councils, as the Local Highway Authorities, and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority as the coordinating Local Transport Authority for West Yorkshire. All of the West Yorkshire Districts have been involved in the development of the WYKRN and setting the scope of the Memorandum of Understanding. The MoU would not be legally binding or remove accountability or powers from the existing Local Highway Authorities. Provision is made for the Memorandum of Understanding to be amended as the collaboration evolves and/or in response to changing circumstances (e.g. Devolution discussions).
- 2.10 Enhanced collaboration, guided by the Memorandum of Understanding, is expected to deliver improved performance on West Yorkshires most important roads. Enhanced collaboration around a Key Route Network is also expected to assist the West Yorkshire authorities in closer working with the Department for Transport, Highways England, Transport for the North and other Combined Authorities on strategic road management and the identification and delivery of prioritised road improvements, and in supporting discussions with the UK government on the devolution of transport powers and funds.

Major Road Network for the North

- 2.11 The Department for Transport (DfT) published its Transport Investment Strategy in July 2017, setting out the government's approach for future transport investment decisions framed in the context of its earlier publication of the Industrial Strategy Green Paper (January 2017). The Transport Investment Strategy links investment in a more reliable, less congested transport network to the delivery of national and local economic plans for rebalancing the economy, enhancing productivity, encouraging inward investment and unlocking new housing development.

- 2.12 Key features of the Strategy were the identification that from 2020/21 the government will direct all revenue raised from Vehicle Exercise Duty (VED) to a new National Roads Fund to invest back into improving road infrastructure, proposals for the creation of a Major Road Network (MRN) and a proposed role for the Sub-National Transport Bodies, such as TfN, in influencing priorities for allocating the National Roads Fund to the Major Road Network. The proposals for the use of VED suggest a multi-billion pound improvement fund, with UK VED totalling £5.8 billion in 2016-17.
- 2.13 The proposals for the MRN highlight the disparity between the funding and planning of the Strategic Road Network (SRN) managed by Highways England, and local roads managed by Local Highways Authorities. Nationally there are 4,400 miles of the SRN which carry one third of England's road traffic on 2% of its road network. Local authority roads (184,100 miles) comprise the remaining 98% of the road network.
- 2.14 The MRN would form a designated middle tier of roads that sits between the national Strategic Road Network and the local road network, and feature the busiest and most strategically important local authority roads. The DfT proposes that these roads deserve special recognition because of their importance to the economic wellbeing of regions and the country as a whole, and that at present there are no specific arrangements to coordinate funding for these roads. The Strategy clearly states, however, that the government does not plan for sub-national transport bodies to become network operators or highway authorities, and that responsibility for MRN roads would remain with the existing Local Highway Authorities.
- 2.15 The DfT will consult on the principles for the MRN, including how best to arrange the management of the MRN at the regional level, including providing a role for sub-national transport bodies in tandem with local authorities. The date for consultation is not yet confirmed, but it is anticipated that it will take place in late 2017.
- 2.16 TfN has been developing a proposal for a MRN for the North and published an Initial Major Roads Report in June 2017 as part of its engagement on its collected evidence base (- reported to the Transport Committee Meeting of 7 July). The report sets out TfN's thinking on the role of the MRN. The TfN background material can be found at this website address: <http://www.transportforthenorth.com/wp-content/uploads/TfN-Initial-Major-Roads-Report.pdf>.
- 2.17 A high level map of the initial Major Road Network for the North is provided as **Appendix 3**. The West Yorkshire KRN was provided as an input to work to identify the MRN, and the majority (74%) of the KRN is included in the MRN.
- 2.18 TfN's identification of a MRN concentrates on the economic role of roads rather than analysis of traffic flow or other traffic metrics, taking as its starting point the identification of 200 current and future Important Economic Centres across the North, including towns, cities, ports, airports, enterprise zones, universities and other key employment sites. That list was collated from the Northern Powerhouse

Independent Economic Review and with by the input of TfN's partners including the West Yorkshire Districts and WYCA. The roads identified for the MRN link these important economic centres. The MRN for the North totals 3,389 miles (excluding the SRN, and 4,908 miles including the SRN). TfN however proposes that the MRN is a live network which will evolve to meet the emerging needs of the Northern Powerhouse and its connectivity priorities.

- 2.19 TfN is also developing a set of Conditional Output indicators that will be used to assess performance on the MRN and inform investment decisions. TfN have identified four key areas that TfN expect to have influence over in the context of pan-Northern journeys. These are:
- Journey Reliability;
 - Network Efficiency, including a measure of average delay, enhanced use of technology and vehicle occupancy as a proxy for people's behavioural change;
 - Network Resilience;
 - Journey Quality including information provision and asset condition.
- 2.20 Work is progressing to develop the methodology for the collection of data and to establish the baseline position. WYCA and the West Yorkshire Districts are involved in this process and there are potential opportunities and advantage in applying these indicators to our local networks.
- 2.21 TfN will consult on the detail of the MRN and the related Conditional Output indicators within their formal consultation on their Strategic Transport Plan, which is anticipated to take place in January/February 2018.
- 2.22 TfN will work with its partners, including WYCA to develop business cases and secure funding for investment in the MRN. Funding sources could include the National Roads Fund, the private sector and local sources e.g. Combined Authority and LEP funding programmes. TfN has commenced discussion with the DfT and Highways England to scope their ask of national funding sources for the MRN.
- 2.23 TfN has commissioned a study for the Central Pennines Corridor, to be commenced in August 2017 and completed by Autumn 2017. The Central Pennines Corridor has direct impact for the Leeds City Region. This study will look at options for improving road, rail and waterborne passenger and freight movements within the Central Pennines corridor, which broadly extends from Lancashire through to West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire, East Riding and Hull, and includes links to Liverpool City Region Atlantic Gateway, Leeds North West Quadrant and to North Yorkshire's east coast. This is a multi-modal study and WYCA's agreed priorities of upgrades to existing east-west rail corridors and the M62 corridor are included within the scope of study. The study will also give consideration to other major road corridors. From this study TfN propose to develop Strategic Outline Programme business cases, which are likely to comprise a robust Strategic Outline Case and the identification of the interventions required on these corridors to support economic growth. WYCA is a partner in this study. A report will be provided to a future Transport Committee

meeting on the outputs of the study. Alongside this work, it is recommended that WYCA carries out further work to identify and prioritise what WYCA and the Districts want from the SRN and MRN.

- 2.24 There are overlaps and dependencies in the work to create a Key Route Network for West Yorkshire and a Major Road Network for the North. As a majority of the KRN is part of the MRN, the physical overlaps are clear. It is important WYCA and TfN now consider how the work on both networks can align to achieve our objectives of improving reliability, efficiency and resilience. For example, it would be beneficial to have a consistent approach to monitoring the performance of the two networks, to establish a common set of priority investments where the two networks overlap and to work collaboratively to consider approaches for improving how we manage the network. This work is at an early stage. It is proposed that as the individual workstreams progress a workshop session is held with Transport Committee and Portfolio Holders on the KRN and MRN to provide input to actions and priorities.

TfN Statutory Body

- 2.25 On 3 August, WYCA consented in principle to the Secretary of State making regulations under section 102E of the Local Transport Act 2008 to establish Transport for the North (TfN) as a Sub-national Transport Body (STB). WYCA delegated authority to WYCA's Managing Director, in consultation with the Chair of WYCA and with WYCA's representatives on the Transport for the North Partnership Board, to consent to the regulations once they were finalised.
- 2.26 WYCA have now seen further versions of the draft regulations including the provision for some powers for TfN in relation to highways. WYCA is seeking further clarification about the use of these highway powers and is liaising with officers in the Local Authorities to identify the implications and has asked that they flag any concerns. The Secretary of State for Transport will write to WYCA seeking consent to the regulations in early September.

3 Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no financial implications as a result of this report

4 Legal Implications

- 4.1 The Memorandum of Understanding in respect of the West Yorkshire Key Route Network would not be legally binding or change accountability or powers for any of the signatory parties.

5 Staffing Implications

- 5.1 Districts have agreed to work collaboratively within existing resources to take forward the actions in the West Yorkshire Key Route Network Memorandum of Understanding.

6 External Consultees

- 6.1 The West Yorkshire Districts, including Chief Executives, have been involved in the development of the West Yorkshire Key Route Network and Memorandum of Understanding. Each authority has briefed its Portfolio Holder on the approach and contents of the WYKRN Memorandum of Understanding.

7 Recommendations

- 7.1 That the Memorandum of Understanding for the collaborative management of a Key Route Network for West Yorkshire be agreed.
- 7.2 That the work by Transport for the North to create a Major Road Network for the North be noted and that WYCA undertakes further work to identify and prioritise priorities.
- 7.3 That a workshop session on Key Route Network implementation and Major Road Network proposals is held with Transport Committee and Portfolio Holders to provide updates on activity and input to actions and priorities.

8 Background Documents

- 8.1 None.