

Report to: Transport Committee

Date: 1 July 2022

Subject: **Transport Policy Update Report**

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

1. Purpose of this Report

- 1.1 To provide Transport Committee with a quarterly update on relevant transport policy developments not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

2. Information

Transport for the North updates

Transport for the North Board

- 2.1 The Transport for the North (TfN) Board has met on two occasions since the last update to Transport Committee, on 23 February and 30 March 2022.
- 2.2 These meetings have considered the following substantive items:
- **TfN Business Planning** where members have been updated on TfN's budget and business plan for the coming year. A reduced funding envelope, together with the transfer of the shared NPR team to DfT means a refocusing of TfN's activity. Core activity will include revision of the Strategic Transport Plan, enabling the activity of member authorities including via the ongoing management of the Analytical Framework (transport models), and continuing via the Board being the 'voice of the North' on key transport matters.

- **Integrated Rail Plan updates**, which have detailed the work TfN has been doing in response to the publication of the IRP and TfN's transition from co-client to co-sponsor of the Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) programme. A new NPR Joint Sponsorship Board is being established to provide a means for TfN to help champion the need for the NPR project to address the North's ambitions, responds to priorities and provides value for money.
 - **Strategic Transport Plan development**, setting out initial plans for an update of TfN's Strategic Transport Plan (STP). Technical work will be ongoing throughout 2022, alongside a refresh of the Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review.
 - **TfN Freight and Logistics Strategy** was agreed at the March Board meeting. Focus now turns to development of an action plan to support the strategy, which will also feed into the STP update.
- 2.3 The Board has also considered updates on Northern Digital Mobility Strategy and a new modelling approach and evidence base as part of the Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure framework.
- 2.4 The annual meeting of the TfN Board was due to take place on 30 June in Harrogate, after this report was published. An update on any pressing matters will be provided at the meeting.
- 2.5 A link to papers and webcasts of the TfN Board meetings is provided in **Background Documents**.

Rail North Committee

- 2.6 Rail North Committee has met on two occasions since the last update to Transport Committee, on 9 March and 31 May.
- 2.7 These meetings have considered the following substantive items:
- **Rail reform next steps** outlining TfN's ongoing engagement with the emerging Great British Railways organisation. 'Double devolution' is an important part of TfN's proposals, which involves delegating partnership roles to a more local level, corresponding with local ambitions for strong local partnerships with the reformed railway.
 - **Manchester Blueprint for Services and Infrastructure** outlining the latest on proposed timetable changes for services through central Manchester and emerging plans for a pipeline of schemes to increase capacity. At the time of writing, timetable changes to secure more reliable operation are expected in December 2022. Decisions on the next stages of service development are expected to be considered by the Committee in September. A key objective for West Yorkshire is to secure through services from Bradford and Halifax to Manchester Piccadilly and Manchester Airport.

- **East Coast Main Line Services and Infrastructure** covering proposals to secure a pipeline of upgrades to the East Coast Main Line (ECML) north of York to accommodate an increase in Anglo-Scottish services to and from London alongside local and regional services, including regular cross Pennine services and cross-country links to Teesside and the North East.
- 2.8 It has also been confirmed that the next iteration of the Long Term Rail Strategy will be incorporated as part of the refresh of the Strategic Transport Plan.
- 2.9 The Committee has continued to receive updates from the rail operators and Rail North Partnership about the impact of reduced staff availability for a range of reasons. This has led to reduced timetables on Northern and declining reliability at TransPennine Express. More information on the implications of reduced staff availability and industrial action on the railway is provided in the Passenger Experience Update Report at **Item 10**.
- 2.10 A link to papers and webcasts of the Rail North Committee is provided in **Background Documents**.

Recent Transport for the North publications

- 2.11 TfN has published a series of policy statements and reports in recent months following engagement with partners, including:
- **Policy Position Statement: Rural Mobility** recognising there are different types of rural areas across the North and identifying the need for a place-based and targeted approach for individual rural communities.
 - **Policy Position Statement: Active Travel** highlighting the importance of enabling travel by foot and bicycle. It also identifies TfN's role in active travel and links to workstreams.
 - **Policy Position Statement: Multimodal Hubs** identifying the need to join-up transport options across different modes and the potential role of TfN in achieving better integration between Strategic Road Network (SRN), Major Road Network (MRN) and local public transport networks.
 - **The role of Spatial Planning in the development and delivery of the Strategic Transport Plan**, which support partners in development of local plans and strategies, as well as informing the development planning process to consider TfN's pan-Northern ambitions and facilitate cross-boundary collaboration.
- 2.12 These statements and reports support ongoing work to update the Strategic Plan, and are published following engagement with partners. They are available via the link provided in **Background Documents**.

Active Travel Updates

Active Travel Fund 3

2.13 The West Yorkshire Combined Authority and our partner councils are working to deliver a wide-ranging programme of proposals to create more space for cycling and walking, funded through the Department for Transport's Active Travel Funding. Following successful bids to tranche 1 and 2, the West Yorkshire Combined Authority has been awarded £6.9m from the Department for Transport's Active Travel Fund 3. In partnership with local authorities, the Combined Authority will deliver a programme of new cycling and walking measures over the coming year, including:

- Bradford (Darley Street) - An improved walking and cycling environment to enable more and safer walking and cycling
- Leeds (A660 Otley Road) - The project will replace temporary measures to create a safer, more attractive cycle route, reduce the number of HGVs, enhance local heritage and improve bus reliability
- Bradford & Calderdale - Working with Active Travel England and local stakeholders to identify locations for the next round of Active Travel Neighbourhoods
- West Yorkshire - Funding for a development of a further 24 School Streets across the region.

Mini-Hollands

2.14 As part of the government's publication 'Gear Change, A bold vision for cycling and walking' in July 2020, three outer London boroughs with low levels of cycling were chosen through competition as "Mini-Hollands". With intensive, transformational spending on their roads and streetscapes the aim is to make them, over time, as cycle and pedestrian-friendly as their Dutch equivalents. Segregated lanes were installed on main roads, low-traffic neighbourhoods installed, and pedestrians were given thousands of metres of extra space. In the first of the areas treated, cycling increased by 18 per cent and walking by 13 per cent in a single year.

2.15 In July 2021, the Department for Transport invited bids from non-London local authority areas to benefit from intensive investment in mini-Holland schemes on the same model with funding to be awarded for up to 12 areas. The focus will be on replacing short car trips, in places where cycling is currently low and where there is serious political commitment to dramatic change – not just for cyclists, but for everyone who lives and works there.

2.16 Three West Yorkshire councils (Bradford, Calderdale, and Leeds) submitted Expressions of Interest for mini-Holland Feasibility Study funding, with Calderdale progressing to the next stage of the DfT bidding process. The Department for Transport has awarded £79k to the Combined Authority to undertake a feasibility study in support of the bidding process. The scope of

this study is currently being progressed in partnership with Calderdale Council and Active Travel England.

Rail updates

West Yorkshire Rail Strategy

- 2.17 The technical work supporting the Rail Strategy is now largely complete. During May and June consultation on the emerging Strategy has been undertaken with officers from partner authorities, Leaders and Members, as well as industry colleagues. The feedback is being collated and a first draft will be shared with Transport Committee at a Rail Strategy workshop in July.
- 2.18 Following the engagement with Transport Committee members, it is intended to undertake a wider consultation with the public including user groups in August and September. The objective is to agree and publish the strategy in autumn.

Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail: A Consultation on Legislation to Implement Rail Transformation

- 2.19 Government published a consultation on 9 June 2022 setting out the legislative proposals to establish Great British Railways. A link is provided in **Background Documents**.
- 2.20 A West Yorkshire response to the consultation will be prepared and agreed prior to the consultation deadline of 4 August 2022.

Whole Industry Strategic Plan: Call for evidence response report

- 2.21 The Great British Railways Transition Team (GBRTT) published a response report summarising the evidence submitted as part of the consultation it undertook earlier in the year on the Whole Industry Strategic Plan (WISP). It received over 300 responses.
- 2.22 Demonstrating a strong consensus with many of the points submitted in the West Yorkshire submission, the GBRTT has identified the following themes from the consultation:
- the key role rail should play in decarbonising the wider transport network;
 - the need to improve accessibility and the service the railway offers customers;
 - the importance of rail's role in levelling up;
 - the need for much greater efficiency;
 - better integration of rail with other forms of transport; and
 - the need to recognise that rail isn't always the answer.

- 2.23 GBRTT has committed to continuing engagement and is planning to have the first draft of the Whole Industry Strategic Plan ready for the end of 2022. Links to the West Yorkshire submission and the GBRTT summary response report are provided in **Background Documents**.

West Yorkshire Consultation Responses

Transport labour market and skills: DfT call for views and ideas

- 2.24 On the 7 February 2022, the Department for Transport (DfT) published 'Transport labour market and skills: call for views and ideas'; a link is provided in **Background Documents**.
- 2.25 This consultation considers the barriers and opportunities to developing skills and careers across the transport sector. It sets out 5 pillars that form the basis for the work the DfT wants to carry out in collaboration with external partners, including the transport industry, academia and the third sector. These pillars are:
- boosting diversity, inclusion and social mobility
 - improving training and employment
 - promoting careers in transport
 - preparing for future skills
 - building evidence and evaluating progress
- 2.26 The West Yorkshire Combined Authority response highlights that the West Yorkshire Labour Market Report 2021 found that around two-thirds of employers in West Yorkshire have upskilling needs, driven by new working practices, new technology / equipment and regulatory requirements. A link to this report can be found in the **Background Documents**. Employers are most likely to say that managers need upskilling, with digital skills gaps are a key issue for businesses in West Yorkshire, alongside the skills to support the delivering of decarbonised transport systems are increasingly important.
- 2.27 The consultation responses also highlight that while the Combined Authority and LEP already deliver a number of programmes which, whilst not specific to transport roles, seek to improve access and address skills shortage challenges. There is a need to ensure a range of different pathways into the transport sector, from apprenticeships to degrees, which provide the skills to meet the challenges of transport today and in the future. Also, additionally, more needs to be done to ensure attractive career opportunities are available within the transport sector.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1 It is essential that both public transport and walking and cycling networks continue to provide access to employment, training and leisure opportunities across West Yorkshire so that modal shift to public transport and active modes

can happen. Increasing the kilometres walked and cycled through creating more space for walking and cycling infrastructure is recognised as a key action in addressing the climate emergency and meeting the carbon reduction targets set within the West Yorkshire Climate and Environment Plan.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 4.1 It is important that the transport network continues to provide access to employment and training opportunities across West Yorkshire. The Active Travel schemes identified are a crucial transport accessibility component.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 5.1 Ensuring an effective, stable and affordable integrated public transport network is key for equality and diversity. It is important that the transport network addresses the accessibility needs of all communities across West Yorkshire. Equality and diversity will be addressed as part of individual projects and policies, including through specific assessments.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

8. Staffing Implications

- 8.1 There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

9. External Consultees

- 9.1 No external consultations have been undertaken.

10. Recommendations

- 10.1 That the Committee notes the updates provided in this report.

11. Background Documents

Agendas, papers and webcasts of meetings of the Transport for the North Board and Rail North Committee are available via this link:

<https://transportfornorth.com/about-transport-for-the-north/meetings/> .

The recent policy statements and reports published by TfN are available via this link: <https://transportfornorth.com/reports/>

Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail: legislative changes to implement rail reform, CP 660, June 2022 is available on the DfT website here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/williams-shapps-plan-for-rail-legislative-changes-to-implement-rail-reform>

West Yorkshire's submission to the *Whole Industry Strategic Plan Call for Evidence* is included at Appendix 4 to *Rail Strategy*, Item 9, Transport Committee, 4 March 2022. Available here:

<https://westyorkshire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=138&MId=1129>

The Whole Industry Strategic Plan *Call for evidence response report* is available at the Great British Railways Transition Team website here:

<https://gbrtt.co.uk/wisp/>

Transport labour market and skills: call for views and ideas, February 2022, is available on the DfT website here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/transport-labour-market-and-skills>

West Yorkshire Combined Authority Labour Market Report 2021 is available via this link: <https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/media/5966/wyca-labour-market-report-2021-final.pdf>

12. Appendices

None