

Report to: Transport Committee

Date: 14 October 2022

Subject: **Mini-Budget – Accelerated Schemes**

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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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input 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 This report provides details on the projects/programmes that were highlighted in the recent 'mini-budget' which were stated as having potential for accelerated delivery, and includes details of areas where we believe scope may exist for acceleration.

2. Information

Mini-Budget

- 2.1 A 'mini-budget' was held on Friday, 23 September and included publication of The Growth Plan 2022. This included commitments to accelerate key transport projects around West Yorkshire, including Transpennine Route Upgrade, Leeds Station Enhancement, Northern Powerhouse Rail, new stations at White Rose and Thorpe Park, West Yorkshire Mass Transit, Leeds City Centre Cycle Improvements, and A650 Tong Street, Dawson's Corner Junction and Stanningley Bypass.
- 2.2 In August 2020, the Department for Transport established an Acceleration Unit. It's stated mission is to speed-up the delivery of transport infrastructure projects and the implementation of policy initiatives and programmes to deliver against the government's agenda to build back better, greener and faster from COVID-19, level up the UK and decarbonise transport. The 'mini-budget'

announcement follows up on this initiative in respect of projects where elements of the scheme funding have direct DfT oversight.

- 2.3 It should be noted that the majority of the Combined Authority's transport infrastructure funding has been devolved, such as through the West Yorkshire Transport Fund, Transforming Cities Fund and City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement. Progress on these programmes is monitored and reviewed through our own assurance process and reported to government. The schemes listed in the 'mini-budget' are those where there are elements of direct DfT oversight in terms of progress and/or project approvals.
- 2.4 The current status for each of the named schemes is provided below, including details around where we see potential for acceleration in terms of expedited project delivery.

Transpennine Route Upgrade (TRU)

- 2.5 TRU is a programme of investment to deliver a high performing, reliable railway for passengers, with more seats, more trains and faster journeys between Manchester and York via Huddersfield and Leeds. An update on the programme is included in Item 12.
- 2.6 The funding envelope for TRU has already been confirmed by government in the recent DfT announcement (from £2.9 billion to £9 billion). The project programme is well-developed and is entering into delivery phase with some physical works having already commenced. Construction and disruption will continue from now on all the way to late 2020s.
- 2.7 In terms of acceleration, DfT has already applied acceleration to the recent Transport and Works Act Order (TWAo) process between Huddersfield and Westtown in which Network Rail received TWAo approval 6 months in advance of the anticipated programme.
- 2.8 Opportunities for acceleration relate to future TWAos which will be coming forward, including near Church Fenton, East of Leeds and Stalybridge to Marsden. Similar swift decisions will be required from Government in respect of these.

Leeds Station Enhancement

- 2.9 This is a programme to address the capacity issues for pedestrians and passengers within Leeds station to meet the requirements of the anticipated rail investment such as TRU and Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR), as well as the projected growth in demand. We are waiting for government's confirmation of funding to progress further development works and enabling works as well as main construction works.
- 2.10 We have worked closely with DfT for a number of years on this project, and whilst the funding for the main construction is yet to be agreed, we understand the funding for further design and enabling work (£36.6 million) is awaiting

Ministerial sign off. Scope may therefore exist for an accelerated decision by DfT.

Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR)

- 2.11 The Integrated Rail Plan (IRP) published in November 2021 set out a £96 billion investment programme covering HS2, TransPennine route upgrade (TRU), Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) and the East Coast Main Line. The IRP in its current form, aside from commitments to deliver TRU and upgrading the Calder Valley line between Leeds and Bradford, does not deliver the investment or infrastructure required to transform the North's rail offer. In the IRP, Bradford is excluded from the core NPR network and there is no commitment to a new HS2 station in Leeds, beyond a proposal to ensure that HS2 services will be extended to the city.
- 2.12 We are pleased therefore that in both a recent ITV Calendar interview and leadership hustings, the Prime Minister has recently committed to delivering NPR in full, with the promise of a new line between Liverpool and Hull via Bradford. The Prime Minister also said that the exact details would be released 'in due course'. What is less clear is if there is a similar commitment to deliver the rest of the NPR network which includes upgrades North of York and much improved links between Leeds and Sheffield. HS2 East would have delivered the NPR network between Leeds and Sheffield, a new station in Leeds and a new link to the East Midlands but the Government is silent on HS2 East proposals.
- 2.13 At the time of writing, we still have not seen the scope / terms of reference for the IRP studies looking at extending HS2 services to Leeds, Bradford – Leeds electrification and Leeds station capacity. In addition, whilst we support the positive announcements around NPR, it is not clear how these will be funded, the timescales or potential impacts they may have on the TRU programme given the £96 billion funding ceiling in the IRP or indeed if the latter is now superseded.
- 2.14 In terms of the scope for acceleration on NPR, it is encouraging that a new 'acceleration board' is being established in response to recent statements made by the Prime Minister. In terms of NPR development with DfT (previously through TfN), the Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) which includes Bradford NPR options, is due to be completed by the end of the year. We are not in a position to accelerate NPR. but line upgrades and a new Bradford station could be delivered faster.

White Rose rail station

- 2.15 This scheme which will deliver a new rail station at the White Rose Office Park in Leeds forms part of Government's 'Project Speed' (Swift, Pragmatic and Efficient Enhancement Delivery) initiative which was launched in Summer 2020 following the establishment of DfT's Acceleration Unit. This has involved close partnership working to expedite delivery of the scheme. The scheme utilises £5 million of new Stations Funding (NSF), together with a mix of wider

TCF funding and a developer contribution. Construction works at White Rose railway station commenced in March 2022 and are due to be completed by Summer 2023. This is with a view to the station being entered into service by December 2023.

- 2.16 Due to the scheme currently being on site, this presents limited opportunities for acceleration, although it will be used as a case study in looking at ways in which similar projects can be delivered more efficiently in the future.

Thorpe Park rail station

- 2.17 Work is underway in developing proposals for a new station at Thorpe Park on the Trans-Pennine line to the east of Leeds. The current (indicative) programme estimates construction works at Thorpe Park railway station to be underway on-site during Summer 2023 with a view to being completed by Autumn 2024. This could enable the station being entered into service by December 2024. These projected timescales will be confirmed by a contractor before the end of 2022.
- 2.18 The scheme is funded through WYTF and Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme (LPTIP) as well as £7 million from NSF. The Project Speed principles from White Rose station are also being applied here. Timely decisions and pragmatism are required from DfT in terms of agreeing solutions in terms of the interface between the station and TRU at this location. This includes key decisions around station design and seeking assurances around associated over-costs linked to ensuring that designs between the two schemes are fully future-proofed.

West Yorkshire Mass Transit

- 2.19 The West Yorkshire Combined Authority in collaboration with partner councils are developing a mass transit system which will offer a new public transport option and an attractive alternative to car travel. Following the submission of our City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement bid for £930 million in November 2021, the Combined Authority received its condition letter from the Department for Transport in April 2022 confirming that it had received an allocation of £830 million over the next five years, with £200 million of this being allocated to Mass Transit.
- 2.20 Work is underway with business case development, which is aiming to culminate with an Outline Business Case submission in 2025 and a TWAO submission in 2025/26. Lead times for the development and construction of any Mass Transit scheme are relatively lengthy. We are working with our delivery partners and district colleagues to streamline the development and delivery programme.
- 2.21 A key potential opportunity for programme acceleration is working closely with Government (DfT and HMT) to streamline the assessment of the business case and the TWAO. We are currently working with government to scope the best approach to providing government advanced access to the development of the business case and TWAO, and to jointly develop the process for

assessment. We will seek to agree with Government an upfront the timetable for their approvals and decisions to provide clarity of deliverability timescales.

Leeds City Centre Cycle Improvements

- 2.22 This scheme comprises c£7 million of short sections of cycle route across Leeds city centre plugging the gaps in previous delivery. Some elements have been delivered, some are on site and others due to come forward in the coming months for delivery.
- 2.23 At Full Business Case stage, the scope was required to be cut back to fit the available budget, which was approximately £3 million short of the overall £10 million cost. Scope for acceleration is therefore limited, other than exploring alternative sources to close the current funding gap.

A650 Tong Street, Bradford

- 2.24 City of Bradford MDC are developing the proposed improvements along a focused 1.5 km section of the A650 Tong Street between Knowles Lane and Westgate Hill (A651), which includes capacity, cycling and walking enhancements. This is a scheme that is part funded by WYTF (£4 million) and has applied for £20 million Major Route Network (MRN) funding from DfT through an Outline Business Case that was submitted to DfT in September 2020.
- 2.25 On 23 September 2022, DfT wrote to CBMDC to notify them that this scheme is on their list for acceleration, which will include “reducing the burden of environmental assessments, reducing bureaucracy in the consultation process and reforming habitats and species regulations, while still protecting individual rights and environmental needs. We will also be looking at business case and DfT internal governance processes”. In terms of potential for future project acceleration, we will be holding discussions with DfT to seek to gain devolved decision-making on this scheme going forward as falls within their stated thresholds. Beyond anticipated OBC approval a review of the project programme will also be undertaken to assess where further potential exists to expedite progress.

Dawson’s Corner Junction and Stanningley Bypass, Leeds

- 2.26 Leeds CC have developed proposals for proposed capacity, cycling and walking improvements to the Dawson’s Corner junction in West Leeds. This is a £46.363 million scheme that is part-funded by WYTF (£8.348 million) and has applied for £38.015 million of MRN funding from DfT through an Outline Business Case that was submitted to DfT in September 2020.
- 2.27 As with the above Tong St scheme, on 23 September 2022 DfT wrote to Leeds CC to notify them that this scheme is on their list for acceleration, which will include “reducing the burden of environmental assessments, reducing bureaucracy in the consultation process and reforming habitats and species regulations, while still protecting individual rights and environmental needs.

We will also be looking at business case and DfT internal governance processes". In terms of potential for future project acceleration, we will be holding discussions with DfT to seek to gain devolved decision-making on this scheme going forward as falls within their stated thresholds. Beyond anticipated OBC approval a review of the project programme will also be undertaken to assess where further potential exists to expedite progress.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1 One of the key aims of project development and delivery is to facilitate the decarbonisation of the transport sector, as well as encourage more travel by walking, cycling, bus and other sustainable modes in order to tackle the climate emergency
- 3.2 The Combined Authority has taken action to ensure all decisions we make include Climate Emergency considerations. For Combined Authority-led schemes, we have strengthened how clean growth and climate change impacts are considered as part of all schemes that come through the Combined Authority's Assurance Framework

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 4.1 One of the key aims of our projects and programmes is to improve connectivity and support the region's inclusive growth ambitions.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 5.1 Supporting Equality and Diversity through ensuring the transport is attractive, inclusive and accessible for all is a key aim of projects that we develop and deliver.
- 5.2 Public engagement will prioritise engaging with seldom heard groups and, where possible, obtaining data on protected characteristics from participants, in order to strengthen the insights, it provides to support Equality and Diversity. Equality Impact Assessments are undertaken for all Combined Authority projects.

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 None arising through this report.

10. Recommendations

10.1 That the Chair of Transport Committee writes to the Secretary of State, Transport to provide an overview of the progress that we are making on the named schemes, and to set out what government input is required to support the principles of accelerating projects.

10.2 That Transport Committee welcomes the establishing of an NPR 'Acceleration Board' locally to support expedited decision-making and progress on this key scheme.

11. Background Documents

There are no background documents referenced in this report.

12. Appendices

None.