



Transport North East Committee

Thursday 11th October, 2018 at 2.00 pm

Meeting to be held in a Committee Room, Civic Centre, Newcastle upon Tyne

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SUPPLEMENTAL AGENDA

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4. Transport for the North Update Inc. presentation by Barry White, TfN Chief Executive	1 - 10

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To All Members

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Transport North East Committee

Date: 11th October 2018

Subject: Transport for the North (TfN) Update

Report of: Managing Director (Transport Operations)

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to update TNEC members on progress being made in four areas of TfN activity, namely; the Strategic Transport Plan, the Strategic Development Corridors, Northern Powerhouse Rail and Strategic Rail (formerly Rail North).

On the 1st April 2018, Transport for the North became a Sub-National Transport Body. TfN has the powers to adopt a Strategic Transport Plan (STP). At the beginning of the year, the consultation into the STP launched, officers and members prepared a response to the STP which was issued on the 19th March.

Following the close of this consultation TfN has been working on updating the STP to address these comments. This report summarises the main changes to the STP and recommends that the North East's representatives at TfN vote to approve it.

TfN's Chief Executive, Barry White will be attending this meeting to review progress and answer any questions.

Recommendations

The Transport North East Committee is recommended to note the recommendation that the North East's representatives on the TfN Board should support the adoption of the revised Strategic Transport Plan.

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1. Background Information

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on the progress being made on Transport for the North's Strategic Transport Plan, Strategic Development Corridor studies and the Northern Powerhouse Rail project.
- 1.2 This report is a standing item and members are regularly kept up to date as part of a review of papers circulated ahead of each TfN Board meeting. We are now at a position that programmes of work are approaching decision points and this report summarises the key points for discussion.
- 1.3 The next TfN Partnership Board is taking place on the 6th December and at this meeting, members will be asked to endorse the Strategic Transport Plan, an accompanying Long Term Investment Programme, and a Strategic Outline Business Case for Northern Powerhouse Rail. TfN is then expected to ask its Board to formally adopt the Strategic Transport Plan in February 2018. As a result, this paper updates members on progress of each of these activities.
- 1.4 Barry White, TfN's Chief Executive, will be attending the TNEC meeting to summarise progress on the plan and to answer any questions that members might have.

2 Strategic Transport Plan (STP)

- 2.1 TfN is under a statutory obligation to produce an STP, and in doing so it must take consultation feedback into consideration. Our response focused on:
 - A commitment for the East Coast Main Line between York and Newcastle to be part of the NPR core network, and for NPR services to continue onwards to Sunderland to be considered;
 - Proposed changes to the Major Road Network, as a result of DfT's consultation and the designation of our own Key Route Network;
 - The need for better integration of the STP with local plans and transport plans;
 - Recognition that of the North East's rail routes require investment; and
 - The need to for all Strategic Development Corridors to be undertaken to an adequate level of detail;
- 2.2 Officers have been working with TfN to redraft the relevant chapters of the STP.
- 2.3 Based on the revised version of the STP that we have seen, we consider that TfN has addressed the comments we issued previously, and we believe that the STP

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will support the North East in making the case for the upgrade of our infrastructure.

- 2.4 It is therefore recommended that the North East's representatives on the TfN Board should support the adoption of the revised STP.

3 Strategic Development Corridors (SDCs) and Long-term Investment Programme

- 3.1 A Long-term Investment Programme will be published alongside the STP, containing the high level schemes that TfN believes should be prioritised to achieve the transformational economic growth set out in the STP. Clearly the Long-term Investment Programme will be of great importance when funding is made available by the government, its agencies, and other sources.
- 3.2 The Long-term Investment Programme under development and is being populated through a series of studies known as Strategic Development Corridors (SDCs), which look at the gaps in the current transport network. The initial version of the Long-term Investment Programme is not currently developed enough to be circulated, but it will be shared with members in advance of the adoption of the STP. It is then intended that the Programme will be continually updated through time, as more evidence is produced and updated.
- 3.3 Three of the SDCs cover the North East's transport infrastructure: Connecting the Energy Coasts, Yorkshire to Scotland and East Coast to Scotland. The outputs of the first two SDCs are expected in Winter 2018/19. The third is a rail study and is closely linked with work being carried out by Network Rail to progress the findings of the East Coast Route Study, and TfN's separate work on Northern Powerhouse Rail (see below).

4 Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR)

- 4.1 TfN is developing a business case for a high-speed rail network across the North, known as Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) to facilitate transformational economic growth. In order to achieve this TfN is working in partnership with DfT, Network Rail, HS2 and its own member authorities.
- 4.2 A detailed report was presented to TNEC on the 20 July 2017 outlining the NPR concept as well as providing an overview of the East Coast mainline and HS2. At the meeting, members endorsed support for NPR and its focus on upgrading the East Coast Main Line corridor in relation to services to and from the North East.

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- 4.3 NPR is intended to significantly cut current journey times from the North East as shown in the table below:

Destination	Current journey time	Proposed journey time	Time saving
Leeds	1 hour 30 mins	1hour	30 minutes
Sheffield	1 hour 45 mins	1hour 30 mins	15 minutes
Manchester	2 hours 30 mins	1 hour 30 mins	1 hour
Manchester Airport	2 hours 50 mins	1 hour 40mins	1 hour 10 mins
Liverpool	3 hours	2 hours 10mins	50 minutes

- 4.4 The NPR proposal aspires to establishing four trains per hour from the North East (two west via Leeds, two south via Sheffield) able to achieve the above journey times and accommodate the increased demand, forecast to be up to 130% from our area. All of these services would use the ECML between York and Newcastle.
- 4.5 Members will be aware of the existing challenges around the ECML which is a vital artery for the North East, carrying as it does the all of the area's long distance rail services, along with many freight and local services. The dependency of the area on the ECML is demonstrated when disruption occurs to any part of the line; it can mean that all of the area's rail links to the key economic centres of the UK are severed for several hours.
- 4.6 Perhaps of greater concern over the longer term is that there is the potential for the line's existing condition to act as a constraint on services, as demonstrated by a recent proposal from DfT to reduce the number of Cross-Country services using the line. The ECML's capacity issues are likely to become even more acute in the future as a result of planned growth in services by existing operators, a new 'open access' operator, and longer-term by the arrival of HS2 and NPR services.
- 4.7 Therefore as part of its work on NPR, TfN has committed to taking a lead coordinating role so that all parties involved in planning the future of the ECML are aligned in their understanding of the challenges and the options to resolve them.
- 4.8 Through NPR, TfN has carried out work to identify options to improve line speed and capacity issues on the ECML. Options include the construction of 'cut-offs' to make the line straighter and faster, and ensuring that the entire corridor is 'four-tracked' so that fast-moving traffic can be separated from slow. The main opportunity to achieve four-tracking appears to be the reopening of the Leamside line, along with an upgrade of the existing Stillington line which is freight-only. This could provide to the ECML for freight and would also potentially have spare capacity to allow for new or extended local rail or metro services to use the reopened line.

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- 4.9 TfN is expected to complete the Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) shortly for the consideration of TfN's Board. Following Board approval the SOBC will be forwarded to the government by the end of the year for it to determine whether it wishes to make funding available for the continued development of the scheme.

5 **Strategic Rail**

- 5.1 Following the major timetable change in May 2018 and well-documented disruption to passengers, TfN has been closely monitoring Northern Rail and Transpennine Express performance levels and holding operators to account. The North has seen a gradual re-introduction of services and compensation schemes are starting to feed through to passengers with season tickets. A wider scheme aimed at regular travellers is currently being finalised.
- 5.2 Whilst the North East region has avoided much of the major disruption on Northern Rail's network, the knock-on effect of fewer diesel trains being available from the May 2018 timetable change means that many of the planned enhancements to service frequencies on the Tyne Valley and Durham Coast lines due to take effect in December 2018 have been delayed. We will continue to make the case that these planned enhancements are introduced at the earliest opportunity.
- 5.3 TransPennine Express services have been significantly affected and services are regularly cancelled to and from the North East, often because of delays that were incurred in the Manchester area. TfN is working with the industry to put in place remedial measures to improve performance and get more trains running more regularly.
- 5.4 In mid-September the Secretary of State announced a wholesale review of the country's rail network. This will include the structure of the whole rail industry, including increasing integration between track and train, regional partnerships and improving value for money for passengers and taxpayers. This review will be led by Keith Williams, a former Chief Executive of British Airways. Members will be requested to provide input into the North East's response to this review in due course.
- 5.5 We recently responded to the DfT's consultation over the next Cross-Country rail franchise, setting out our strong objection to a proposal to curtail one of our two hourly Cross-Country services because of capacity constraints on the ECML. As a result of the latest review, the Cross Country franchise tender competition has been postponed.

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6. Proposals

- 6.1 TNEC is asked to note progress on the Strategic Transport Plan, the Long-term Investment Plan and the Strategic Development Corridor studies, and to make any comments at the meeting,
- 6.2 The committee is also asked to note the recommendation that that the North East's representatives on the TfN Board should support the adoption of the revised STP.

7. Reasons for Proposals

- 7.1 TfN's STP will help the North East to make a robust case for investment in its strategic transport infrastructure.
- 7.2 TfN's development of an SOBC for NPR is one such investment case. TNEC is asked to note the progress in the development of the SOBC for approval and submission to Government.

8. Alternative Options Available

- 8.1 The committee could defer this discussion. This is not recommended as it could delay the STP being adopted by TfN's Board, which could harm the case for investment in the North's transport infrastructure.

9. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation

- 9.1 If TNEC agrees to the recommendation in this report, the North East's representatives will have the committee's support to vote in favour of the adoption of the STP by the TfN Board.

10. Potential Impact on Objectives

- 10.1 These actions accord with objectives in the Strategic Economic Plan and emerging Transport Plan, that the North East is a partner of Transport for the North.
- 10.2 It will additionally unlock the potential for funding to be secured for major investments in the North East.

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11. Financial and Other Resources Implications

- 11.1 Other than officer and member time in considering the plans, there are no current cost implications to the authority. As programmes of work progress and schemes become more developed there may be a need / desire to secure local contributions to assist with business case development and resulting funding bids as well as scheme delivery costs.
- 11.2 There are positive potential outcomes with the opportunity for further funding to be attained for the region for schemes identified in TfN's investment plan.

12. Legal Implications

- 12.1 There are no direct legal implications from this report. As workstreams develop into programmes of work and eventually schemes, the legal requirements of these will be considered as and when appropriate.

13. Key Risks

- 13.1 In a national context, the less populated areas often receive less investment than more populated (congested) areas. One of the risks of working as part of TfN is that this situation is repeated but in a northern context, with Manchester, the M62 corridor and the North-West rail network benefitting the most. That said, the TfN Board voting metrics do give some mitigation against the concentration of funding as does the corridor and network approach being taken through the development of the Strategic Transport Plan.
- 13.2 Not being involved in proceedings to agree the plan and SOBC, could result in decisions being taken out of the hands of representatives from the region.

14. Equality and Diversity

- 14.1 The development and delivery of the emerging schemes aim to improve road and rail connectivity for all and as such do not negatively impact on Equality and Diversity.

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15. Crime and Disorder

- 15.1 Safety and Security are fundamental consideration in the design of new services and facilities and thus impacts will be assessed for individual projects at the appropriate stage of development.

16. Consultation/Engagement

- 16.1 The STP response and amendments together with the SOBC have been drafted with input from North East officers and members. The TfN Board has been kept apprised of progress.

17. Other Impact of the Proposals

- 17.1 As each of the projects and plans of TfN become more defined, environmental and economic impacts and analysis will form key considerations when options are being considered. An initial environmental appraisal has been undertaken of the plan which shows environmental effects can be managed.

18. Appendices / Background Information

- 18.1 <https://transportforthenorth.com/stp/>

19. Background Papers

- 19.1 None

20. Contact Officers

- 20.1 Tobyn Hughes, Managing Director (Transport Operations),
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21. Sign off

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- 21.1
- Head of Paid Service: ✓
 - Monitoring Officer: ✓
 - Chief Finance Officer: ✓

22. Glossary

22.1 ECML - East Coast Mainline

TfN – Transport for the North,

STB – Sub-National Transport Body,

NECA – North East Combined Authority,

DfT – Department for Transport,

NPR – Northern Powerhouse Rail,

SOBC – Strategic Outline Business Case

STP – TfN's Strategic Transport Plan.

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