



Bee Network Committee

Date: Thursday 27th July 2023
Subject: Transport for the North - Strategic Transport Plan 2
Report of: Martin Lax, Transport Strategy Director, TfGM

Purpose of Report

To advise Committee members on Transport for the North's draft Strategic Transport Plan 2 which had been published for public consultation. The report summarises the draft plan, and the key feedback areas for inclusion in Greater Manchester's response to the consultation. The report also references a number of consultations being carried out by National Highways and the Department for Transport which TfGM is responding to.

Recommendations:

The Bee Network Committee is requested to:

1. Note TfN's draft Strategic Transport Plan;
2. Note and endorse the key points for inclusion in Greater Manchester's response;
3. Delegate approval of the final consultation response to the Chief Executive of TfGM and GMCA; and
4. Note that TfGM officers are responding to a number of relevant consultations being carried out by National Highways and the Department for Transport.

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Equalities Impact, Carbon and Sustainability Assessment:

N/A

Risk Management

N/A

Legal Considerations

N/A

Financial Consequences – Revenue

N/A

Financial Consequences – Capital

N/A

Number of attachments to the report: 0

Comments/recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee

N/A

Background Papers

[Strategic Transport Plan | Transport for the North - Transport for the North](#)

Tracking/ Process

Does this report relate to a major strategic decision, as set out in the GMCA Constitution?

No

Exemption from call in

Are there any aspects in this report which means it should be considered to be exempt from call in by the relevant Scrutiny Committee on the grounds of urgency?

N/A

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

N/A

1. Introduction

1.1. This report covers the following issues:

- Consultation by Transport for the North on their second Strategic Transport Plan (STP2)
- Consultation by the Department for Transport and National Highways on key documents relating to strategy and plans for the Third Road Period (2025-2030)

2. Transport for the North Strategic Transport Plan 2

2.1. The role of Transport for the North (TfN) was established in the "[The Sub-national Transport Body \(Transport for the North\) Regulations 2018](#)", which stated that:

"TfN has the following general functions:

- (a) to prepare a transport strategy for its area;
- (b) to provide advice to the Secretary of State about the exercise of transport functions in relation to its area (whether exercisable by the Secretary of State or others);
- (c) co-ordinate the carrying out of transport functions in relation to its area that are exercisable by different constituent authorities, with a view to improving the effectiveness and efficiency in the carrying out of those functions;
- (d) if TfN considers that a transport function in relation to its area would more effectively and efficiently be carried out by TfN, to make proposals to the Secretary of State for the transfer of that function to TfN;
- (e) to make other proposals to the Secretary of State about the role and functions of TfN

2.2. Transport for the North adopted its first Strategic Transport Plan in 2019, setting out an investment programme spanning 2020-2050.

2.3. TfN has been developing the second Strategic Transport Plan (STP2). A public consultation on the draft STP2 commenced on 25th May, running through to 17th August. STP2 is available for download on the TfN website, at <https://transportfornorth.com/our-north/strategic-transport-plan/>

- 2.4. TfGM, along with the other LTAs in the north of England, have been provided with draft content of the STP2 during its development for review and comment.

3. Transport for the North STP2 - Key Points

- 3.1. TfGM, working with the GM Local Authorities, is reviewing the consultation draft of the STP2. The following list summarises the key topics planned for inclusion in response to the consultation.
- 3.2. **Priorities for Transport Investment** – Unlike the first STP, the version currently out for consultation does not set, and map out, priorities for investment in the north, such as those relating to Strategic Highways (Road Investment Strategy 3), where TfN has been working the LTAs on the case, and priorities, for investment. Neither does it set out Local Highways Authorities Major Road Network Schemes. We will request that this information is included.
- 3.3. On rail, “Our strategic priorities” and “The North’s strategic rail priorities” are separate sections, the latter being a series of studies. As with the road network, it does not map out what the issues are giving rise to the studies, nor the particular priorities for investment.
- 3.4. **Rail Investment and HS2/NPR** – STP2 welcomes the commitments in the Integrated Rail Plan for the Midlands and the North, stating that the version of Northern Powerhouse Rail set out in that plan is a foundation for “delivery of Northern Powerhouse Rail in full’. As the transport strategy for the North of England, making the strategic case for investment in transport infrastructure here, STP2 could be more explicit in setting out the strategic case for the TfN and Northern Leaders preferred option for NPR, differences between the two, and how the gap can be delivered.
- 3.5. The form of station for HS2 and NPR at Piccadilly is not mentioned in STP. The firm GM position is that it is imperative that an underground station be provided at Piccadilly, which would allow NS2 and NPR services to travel through between Liverpool / Manchester Airport to Leeds / West Yorkshire / North East without reversing. We will look for this to be included in the final version.

- 3.6. Given GM's current and planned future role at the heart of the rail network in the North, our consultation response will set out what the GM city-region needs and how future plans and their impacts need to be fully understood to ensure the right investment is brought forward.
- 3.7. **GM Devolution Deal** – The document does not reflect announcements in the Spring 2023 Budget and the GM Trailblazer Deal. We will look for this to be reflected in the final version.
- 3.8. **Local Transport Plans** – The policies and priorities of the STP2 should have strong links through to Local Transport Plans (LTP). GM's Local Transport Plan is the GM Transport Strategy 2040. New LTP guidance is expected from Government this summer. We will work with TfN to ensure that any future LTP guidance and potential new GM LTP (refreshed GM Transport Strategy 2040) ensures good alignment from sub-national policy and strategy to the local transport level and vice versa.
- 3.9. **Vision Zero** – The plan includes a commitment to adopt Vision Zero across the north, setting out an ambition for zero deaths and serious injuries on roads in the North of England by 2050. Greater Manchester's local highways authorities have raised concerns at this ambition being set by TfN. Greater Manchester is developing a strategy with a view to potentially adopting Vision Zero for GM, in a way that works for the GM city-region, with the 10 Local highways authorities working in collaboration with TfGM. This approach recognises the important role of GM Local Highway Authorities.
- 3.10. **Bus** – There is mention of some Combined Authorities seeking to gain more control over their bus networks. It is considered this could be strengthened, highlighting the leadership of GM with bus franchising and the opportunity to establish truly integrated transport networks – in GM through the Bee Network.
- 3.11. **Funding** – Issues related to the uncertainty of future transport funding in the North are set out in STP2. Increased long term investment in transport interventions, the simplification of funding streams and new settlement arrangements are supported. We will work with TfN to ensure the final STP2 is aligned with GM's position on long term financial sustainability of transport.

4. National Highways Road Investment Period 3

- 4.1. National Highways and DfT are consulting on three key documents in respect of the Third Road Investment Period – 2025-2030
- a) Strategic Road Network Initial Report (SRN IR) 2025-2030
 - Statutory consultation on policy, Feedback to inform draft RIS3
 - b) “Connecting the Country”
 - Long Term Strategic Plan to 2050
 - c) Route Strategies Initial Overview reports; 2 relevant to GM
 - London to Scotland West (North) – M6 through Wigan
 - South Pennines (West) – Rest of SRN in Greater Manchester
- 4.2. An officer response has been made on behalf of GM to the SRN IR consultation which closed on 13th July. Responses in relation to the Long Term Strategic Plan and Route Strategies are in progress, for submission by 11th August.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1. Subject to feedback from Committee members, TfGM officers will continue to engage with Local Authority officers to develop the final response to the consultations referred to in this report.
- 5.2. Some Greater Manchester local authorities have indicated that they may submit their own responses in respect of some of the consultations.
- 5.3. The formal GM response on Transport for the North’s STP2 will be submitted by Thursday 17th August, when the consultation closes.