

Transport for the North Scrutiny Committee Agenda

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| Date of Meeting | Tuesday 21 November 2023 |
| Time of Meeting | 11.00 am |
| Venue | Virtual |

Filming and broadcast of the meeting

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| 4.0 | Transforming the North To consider the implications of the Government's recent policy statement 'Network North' in the context provided by Transport for the North's role to prepare and publish the Strategic Transport Plan. Lead: Martin Tugwell | 15 - 22 |
| 6.0 | Strategic Transport Plan Implementation To consider the update on the Strategic Transport Plan. Lead: Katie Day | 23 - 32 |

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Meeting: Scrutiny Committee
Subject: Transforming the North
Author: Martin Tugwell, Chief Executive
Sponsor:
Meeting Date: Tuesday 21st November 2023

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1. To consider the implications of the Government's recent policy statement 'Network North' in the context provided by Transport for the North's role to prepare and publish the Strategic Transport Plan.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. In terms of immediate next steps, the evidence suggests the following as being appropriate and Scrutiny Committee is invited to comment on these:
- a) Advise the Secretary of State that until such time as an alternative set of proposals for improved connectivity between the North and the Midlands has been identified, the safeguarding associated with HS2 should remain in place
 - b) TfN should seek to publish the revised Strategic Transport Plan at the earliest opportunity, to ensure that the statutory framework within which specific proposals are brought forward is up to date
 - c) TfN use the Co-sponsorship arrangement for Northern Powerhouse Rail to work with the Department so as to identify and agree what changes, if any, need to be made to the NPR proposal in light of Network North
 - d) TfN should engage with the National Infrastructure Commission on their proposed rail study for the North arising out of the NIA2
 - e) TfN should engage with the Welsh Government in a discussion on the future of the North Wales Main Line
 - f) TfN should seek clarification from the Department on matters of detail arising out of the Network North document
 - g) TfN should work with its partners to identify resource implications arising from the proposals in Network North document.

3. Background

- 3.1. On 4th October the Prime Minister delivered a policy announcement, accompanied by a document entitled *Network North: Transforming British Transport*. The policy announcement confirmed the decision to cancel High Speed 2 Phases 2a and 2b. The high-speed link to the East Midlands Airport area was also cancelled.
- 3.2. At the same time the announcement set out how the funding previously identified for the delivery of HS2 Phases 2a and 2b would be ring-fenced for investment in transport improvements. Subsequent to the announcement, Government has clarified that the proposals identified in the document are suggestions and that it will be for local leaders to identify specific proposals.
- 3.3. The Network North document is clear that any proposal brought will still require assessment and consideration through the normal processes. This means that proposals will require the preparation of business cases and be able to demonstrate value for money. Experience shows that proposals put forward for

consideration in the North can struggle to make the case for investment if the traditional approach to business case development is followed.

- 3.4. It is worth noting that investment by National Highways in the Strategic Road Network will continue to be managed through the Road Investment Strategy, and that determination of the programme for 2025-2030 is reaching its final stages, with a draft RIS for that period expected to be published shortly. It is worth being aware that a number of road investments included within the agreed Major Road Network (MRN) programme are awaiting confirmation of their funding.
- 3.5. Investment in rail maintenance and renewals by Network Rail continues to be determined through the 5-year Control Period, the most recent of which (Control Period 7 – CP7) has just been finalised: this covers the period between 2024-2029. Investment in infrastructure enhancements is managed separately through the Rail Network Enhancement Programme (RNEP).
- 3.6. It is worth remembering that allocations for investment in infrastructure are ultimately set within the framework provided by Spending Reviews.
- 3.7. Reaction to the decision to cancel the latter phases of High Speed 2 has led to renewed calls as to the importance of setting infrastructure proposals within the framework provided by a long-term plan and/or framework. Commentators have emphasised the importance of such an approach in providing confidence to private sector investors to continue to make their own investments.
- 3.8. The Network North document did not specifically mention strategically important infrastructure projects that are already making their way forward into delivery – i.e. TransPennine Route Upgrade and Midland Main Line electrification. TfN will continue to work with Government to ensure these projects are delivered at pace.

4. National Context: National Infrastructure Assessment

- 4.1. The National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) is responsible for providing advice to the Government on long-term strategic infrastructure requirements. Their advice is set out to Government in the National Infrastructure Assessment (NIA), the most recent version of which (NIA2) was published earlier this autumn. Prepared within a financial envelope given to them by HMT on behalf of Government, its recommendation set out how public investment in strategic infrastructure needs to be aligned to enable sustainable economic growth.
- 4.2. The NIA2 notes that the productivity gap between the North and London/South East remains (something identified in the recently updated Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review – NPIER). Key messages within the NIA2 that are relevant to this discussion include:
 - A restatement of the importance of unlocking the productivity of the North's cities and towns, and the role that investment in transport has within these communities
 - A restatement of the importance of improving the connectivity between the North's cities and towns as a means of connecting people and places with services and opportunities
 - Recognition of the need to take into consideration how realising economic potential can be a catalyst for reducing the environmental impact and improving social inclusion
 - Recognition of the importance of aligning investment in strategic infrastructure across policies areas in order to deliver placed based outcomes.
- 4.3. The NIA2 was substantially complete before the publication of Network North, it was therefore prepared based on an assumption that HS2 phases 2a and 2b were to be delivered. In recognition of the Government's decision on HS2 phases 2a and 2b the NIC has identified the need for a further piece to look at the future of

the rail network in the North. The TfN executive is discussing with the NIC how this work will be taken forward.

5. Regional Context: Transport for the North

5.1. Transport for the North (TfN) was established by Government as a statutory body through which the Political and Business leaders would channel the 'Voice of the North' in respect of strategic transport issues.

5.2. The five general functions assigned by Government to TfN are:

- To prepare a transport strategy for its area
- To provide advice to the Secretary of State about the exercise of transport function in relation to its area (whether exercisable by the Secretary of State or others)
- To co-ordinate the carrying out of transport functions in relation to its areas that exercisable by different constituent authorities with a view to improving the effectiveness and efficiency in the carrying out of those functions
- 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
- To make other proposals to the Secretary of State about the role and functions of TfN

In addition to these general functions, TfN's Constitution identifies several additional functions designed to complement and support its role as a statutory body.

5.3. A key focus of TfN's work recently has been the preparation and publication of a draft of the revised Strategic Transport Plan (STP). Once finalised and adopted by the TfN Board the STP will be used to provide advice to Government and to shape and inform the investment plans of national agencies, such as National Highways and Network Rail.

5.4. TfN's additional role – through the Rail North Agreement – to oversee the delivery of rail services provided by the TPE and Northern contracts, provides the opportunity to ensure the requirements of the STP are reflected in the business planning of the two operators.

5.5. The revised (draft) STP is underpinned by an extensive evidence base that ensures it reflects the needs of the North, of particular relevance to this discussion are:

- *Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review (NPIER)* – prepared in partnership with the NP11 and recently published, as noted above the NPIER highlights the extent to which the productivity gap between the North and London/South East remains, whilst identifying the economic potential of the North as being an additional £118bn GVA per annum by 2050
- *Decarbonisation Strategy* – sets out the scale of the challenge facing the North in pursuit of achieving nearly net zero by 2045, TfN's work on Future Travel Scenarios (which are about to be updated) highlighted that central to all plausible future scenarios was the need to double, if not treble the role of rail, whilst recognising the continued importance of investment in the North's highway infrastructure
- *Connected Communities* – building on TfN's ground-breaking work on Transport Related Social Exclusion, the key driver here is the importance of capturing the role of investment in transport within communities to enable people and businesses to realise their own potential.

The evidence base assembled by TfN, working with its partners has enabled the revised STP to identify the key infrastructure issues that need to be addressed in

order to realise the North's potential and to do so in a way that benefits its residents and businesses in a way that is sustainable for the longer-term.

- 5.6. Fundamental to the draft STP is the need to improve connectivity – both within and across the North, and between the North and the rest of the United Kingdom. Decisions in relation to investment in the UK's strategic infrastructure will continue to need to be assessed in the evidence-based context provided by the STP.
- 5.7. Increasingly the technical work undertaken by TfN, working with its partners, has highlighted the extent to which the delivery of preferred outcomes for the transport system requires alignment with investment in other strategic infrastructure networks – of which energy systems and digital infrastructure are arguably the most immediate importance.
- 5.8. The overarching focus of the revised STP is the importance of embedding an outcome-led approach that is place-based and user-centred. In parallel with its work on the STP, the TfN executive has been working with its partners to develop proposals that will improve the implementation of the STP. In both instances, the work of the Metropolitan Combined Authorities and Local Transport Authorities will be key to delivery and TfN's work in respect of implementation seeks to support their leadership in delivering place-based outcomes.

6. Delivering Transformation

- 6.1. The original STP established that transforming the North's transport infrastructure is central to realising its economic potential. And it was in this context that the original document set out the critical role that Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) and HS2, in combination, would have to play.
- 6.2. When the Integrated Rail Plan (IRP) was published by the Government it was seen by the TfN Board as representing progress towards that ultimate end state. In responding to its publication, the TfN Board reaffirmed the need to deliver NPR 'in full' and it welcomed the concept of an 'adaptive pipeline' as the basis on which further elements of the NPR 'in full' might be added to the core proposal set out in the IRP.
- 6.3. In a similar way the publication of the Network North document by the Government should be viewed as representing further progress toward the ultimate end state identified by TfN in the STP.
- 6.4. Aspects of the Network North document that are to be welcomed include:
 - The continuation of funding through the City Regional Sustainable Transport Scheme
 - The provision of enhanced funding for local transport proposals delivered by Local Transport Authorities
 - The extension of support for reduced fares on local bus services
 - The provision of additional funding for road maintenance.
- 6.5. And notwithstanding the lack of detail at this stage, other aspects of the Network North document to be welcomed include:
 - The support given to investing in improving rail connectivity between Liverpool and Manchester
 - The support given to a new rail station serving Bradford (identified as integral to NPR 'in full')
 - The support given to the mass transit system for West Yorkshire
 - The support given to electrification of the railway to/from Hull (previously identified by TfN as a 'quick win')
 - The support for a further round of investment in the (local authority owned) Major Road Network

- 6.6. A key issue moving forward will be to ensure that the delivery of commitments set out in the Network North maximise the opportunities presented by devolution to empower local leaders to bring forward detailed proposals. Every effort must be given to utilising existing working arrangements wherever possible. Indeed, opportunities should be taken to simplify and reduce the administrative arrangements, consistent with the need to maintain an appropriate level of accountability. In this way it should be possible to realise the benefits of investment sooner, at lower overall cost.
- 6.7. In this regard, TfN will continue to support its partners by building on the 'TfN offer' to Metropolitan Combined Authorities (MCAs) and Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) and the Department. TfN will also continue to develop its advice on implementation in parallel with the STP, with a particular focus on how to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of delivery of national funding streams, including potential system reform.

7. Unresolved Matters

- 7.1. The TfN executive has raised several questions with the Department for Transport following publication of the Network North document. The Department has indicated that it will respond to these questions as soon as possible.
- 7.2. In the meantime, there are several matters relating to specific proposals where there is a need for clarification, including but not limited to:
- *Linking the Midlands and the North* – the evidence base underpinning the STP reaffirmed the importance of improving connectivity between the North and the Midlands: it was on this basis that the STP identified the improved connectivity that was to be provided by HS2 'in full' as being important to realising the North's potential. Moving forward after Network North it is essential that the Government work with TfN and other bodies to identify alternative proposals that would deliver a similar improvement in connectivity. Until such time as there is clarity on how that might be achieved it is essential that the safeguarding associated with HS2 should remain in place.
 - *Crewe* – arguably Crewe and its environs is one of the biggest losers following the decision to cancel the latter phases of HS2. This is because the investment by HS2 would have acted as a catalyst for realising wider opportunities within Crewe and its immediate area. There is an urgent need to develop alternative proposals that would enable that potential to be realised.
 - *North Wales Main Line Electrification* – not previously identified by the rail industry as a priority for electrification, there is a need for TfN to engage with the Welsh Government as well as the Government in order to determine the priorities for investment along this corridor, including existing constraints in/around Chester Station.
 - *Manchester (Piccadilly)* – the cancellation of HS2 infrastructure serving Piccadilly Station brings with it a need to assess whether the proposal for a service level station previously put forward by Government remains the most appropriate. In addition, there remains the question of needing to consider an appropriate alternative to the Golborne Link: this work was understood to be something that HS2 was to lead on.
 - *Freight and Logistics* – a particular concern for the North is the implication for rail freight services on the West Coast Main Line, a route that is already acknowledged to be one of the most intensively utilised mixed-traffic corridors in the country and on which the limitations of the existing infrastructure are increasingly obvious.
 - *Trans Pennine Connectivity* – the Network North document identifies the importance of improving rail services between Sheffield and Manchester, an aim supported by TfN. Based on work to date a limiting factor on uplifting

service frequency remains constraints associated with the stations at either end of the route.

- *Leeds Station* – the station layout at Leeds Station remains a major bottleneck, with Leeds regularly appearing in the top 3 locations (alongside with Clapham Junction and Birmingham New Street). Proposals developed as part of the original work associated with Northern Powerhouse Rail offer potential options for consideration moving forward.
- *Leamside Line* – identified by the TfN Board as a core part of the NPR ‘in full’ proposal, there is a need to identify how this piece of enabling infrastructure might be taken forward into delivery at the earliest opportunity.

7.3. In addition, there are a further set of matters that flow from the Network North document which requires consideration, again, including but not limited to:

- *Scheme development* – there is a need to consider whether there is enough revenue funding (and skills) available to enable specific proposals to be developed and brought forward at pace. Such matters are particularly pertinent for many local authorities where financial pressures continue to be particularly high.
- *Investment for rail services* – TfN members, through the Rail North Committee, are particularly aware of the pressures on operators at present. The Network North document identifies ambitions for enhanced levels of service on a number of routes; there is a need for clarity as to whether the additional investment required to enable those services to run will be forthcoming.
- *Union Connectivity Review* – it is unclear how the recommendations set out in Network North relate to recommendations made by the Union Connectivity Review. This is pertinent given that progress with some specific proposals previously identified were effectively put on hold pending a series of studies.

7.4. As noted earlier in this paper, it is important that infrastructure proposals brought forward support and enable the delivery of the ambition set out in the, evidence based, STP. It is also important that in seeking to address the matters set out above, every effort is made to utilise existing working arrangements wherever possible to avoid adding bureaucracy and administrative requirements.

8. Next Steps

8.1. The funding announcements set out in Network North should be welcomed as further steps towards realising the end state set out in the Strategic Transport Plan.

8.2. However, it is important for TfN to remain focused on making the case for the step change in connectivity that would have been achieved through the delivery of HS2 and NPR ‘in full’. The evidence underpinning the STP is clear in that regards as to the critical importance of improving connectivity in order to realise the North’s economic potential and reduce the productivity gap with London/South East. In this regard TfN’s evidence base is consistent with that of the NIC.

8.3. In terms of immediate next steps, the evidence suggests the following as being appropriate:

- a) Advise the Secretary of State that until such time as an alternative set of proposals for improved connectivity between the North and the Midlands has been identified, the safeguarding associated with HS2 should remain in place
- b) TfN should seek to publish the revised Strategic Transport Plan at the earliest opportunity, to ensure that the statutory framework within which specific proposals are brought forward is up to date

- c) TfN use the Co-sponsorship arrangement for Northern Powerhouse Rail to work with the Department so as to identify and agree what changes, if any, need to be made to the NPR proposal in light of Network North
 - d) Engage with the National Infrastructure Commission on their proposed rail study for the North arising out of the NIA2
 - e) Engage with the Welsh Government in a discussion on the future of the North Wales Main Line
 - f) Seek clarification from the Department on matters of detail arising out of the Network North document
 - g) TfN should work with its partners to identify resource implications arising from the proposals in Network North document.
- 8.4. In addition, there are issues that the TfN Board may wish to consider as part of the business planning and budget setting process for 2024/25, including:
- a) The importance of the 'TfN offer' in supporting its partners bring forward proposals for consideration
 - b) The need to develop a new 'playbook' that uses the knowledge and experience held within TfN to ensure that the appraisal system better reflects the needs and opportunities that exist within the North
 - c) The potential to harness TfN's work in support of smart ticketing and connected mobility in support of the ambitions for smart ticketing set out in Network North.

9. Corporate Considerations

Financial Implications

- 9.1. There are no direct financial implications for Transport for the North relating to this report.

Resource Implications

- 9.2. There are no direct resourcing implications to Transport for the North as a result of this report.

Legal Implications

- 9.3. Transport for the North is empowered to carry out all steps identified within the report.

Risk Management and Key Issues

- 9.4. These will be updated when the matter is referred to Board

Environmental Implications

- 9.5. This report does not constitute or influence a plan or programme which sets the framework for future development consents of projects listed in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive and therefore does stimulate the need for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) or EIA. Addressing accessibility of public transport is a fundamental building block of inclusive transport decarbonisation, the focus for Transport for the North within its emerging STP and Decarbonisation Strategy update.

Equality and Diversity

- 9.6. A full Impact Assessment has not been carried out because it is not required for this report.

Consultations

- 9.7. This will be updated when the matter is referred to Board

10. Background Papers

There are no background papers for this report.

11. Appendices

There are no appendices for this report.

| Glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used | |
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|--------|--------------------------|
| a) DfT | Department for Transport |
| b) NPR | Northern Powerhouse Rail |
| c) STP | Strategic Transport Plan |
| d) TfN | Transport for the North |

Strategic Transport Plan: Transforming Implementation

Scrutiny Committee – 21st November 2023

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Agenda Item 6

Background and Purpose

- Strategic Transport Plan (STP) is an outcome focused long-term strategic plan for the North's transport system that makes the case for investment to realise the economic, environmental and social outcomes.
 - It is based on evidence (to define our starting point); uses our technical work to define the North's preferred destination; and shapes the journey between the two. It sets 'right share' metrics that will be used to monitor progress against our outcomes, in this way it looks to help move from mode silos.
 - Implementation of the STP outcomes relies on a combination of statutory advice (to the Secretary of State for Transport), strategic investment, and co-ordinated delivery at the national, regional and local level.
- Page 24 The STP recognises that transport investment alone will not achieve our collective vision: there is a need for **system reform** to the way we plan, develop and deliver transport infrastructure and services to transform our region and achieve the outcomes envisioned.
- TfN has been engaging with partners, and taking feedback during the STP consultation, to develop our thinking on **what** TfN needs to deliver and **how** we reform the transport planning system.
 - Our intention is to bring advice and proposals for implementation of the STP that (subject to Board agreement) will be submitted to the Secretary of State.
 - From 2024/25, we will have a STP Annual Action Plan (AAP) that will enable us to monitor and report progress year on year.

Background: an outcome focused STP

Transforming economic performance

£118bn more GVA by 2050

Decarbonisation of surface transport

Near zero by 2045

Enhancing social inclusion and health

1 million people fewer at risk of TRSE by 2050

The share of trips made by public transport increases to **15% by 2050** (currently 7%)

The share of trips made by active modes increases to **36% by 2050** (currently 27%)

Right share targets

There is **zero overall regional increase in private car vehicle mileage** on the North's road network to 2045, against a baseline of 78.2 billion in 2018.

Double the share of freight (measured as tonne km) carried by rail from **8.5% to 17% by 2050**.

TfN approach to STP implementation: an overview

The draft STP (Chapter 6 – Action and Implementation Framework) identifies three areas of focus:

1. Maximising the impact of committed investment in the North with a focus on capacity, resilience and reliability, and support the growth of travel markets crucial for economic, social and environmental transformation. **The STP set out the required actions by TfN: these will require prioritisation for action.**
2. Communicating clear road and rail investment and policy priorities for the next two funding periods within the existing funding envelopes. **TfN will engage with partners ahead of the next Spending Review to confirm the short to medium term priorities.**
3. Setting out and agreeing with Government the wider roadmap for securing the longer-term investment needed in the North, while advocating the need to simplify funding streams and further devolution of decision making and accountability. **The draft STP included initial ideas for reforms that TfN will work with partners to develop further.**

In addition, there is further work needed with partners across the North and nationally to deliver on actions (beyond transport) to support our ambitions for economic growth, decarbonisation and tackling social exclusion.

STP implementation: TfN required actions

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|---|---|
| Decarbonisation | <p>Emphasise and embed the importance of maintenance and adaptations to climate change on existing networks as well as for new schemes.</p> <p>Continue the 'whole network, whole system' approach as set out in the EVCI Framework to foster partnerships and solutions to ensure charging infrastructure is planned and delivered in an efficient and cohesive manner across transport, energy and spatial sectors.</p> |
| Transport-related social exclusion | <p>Work with partners to ensure that investment in the major roads, rail and local public transport networks deliver reductions in transport-related social exclusion.</p> |
| Rail | <p>Work with Government and industry partners to secure delivery of improved connectivity on a scale that would have been realized through the combination of NPR 'in full' and HS2 - building on the committed investment in the Government's Integrated Rail Plan.</p> <p>TfN will work with industry and DfT to secure a common set of service development proposals against which a pipeline of infrastructure investment can be more coherently developed to ensure an effective and joined-up approach across these schemes and programmes.</p> <p>Actively work with partners to bring all stations in the North up to minimum suggested standards as quickly as possible and meeting desirable standards by 2050.</p> <p>Use the Rail North Partnership to rebuild the confidence of rail passengers in the North's rail services, promote further strong growth in patronage and ensure the next generation of passenger service contracts can meet the needs of the North's communities and businesses.</p> |
| Roads | <p>Work with National Highways to future proof and decarbonise the strategic and major road networks for new technologies (for example, EV, hydrogen and digital communications) and maximise opportunities for freight and improved infrastructure for public transport and active travel.</p> |

STP implementation: TfN required actions

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| Freight and logistics | <p>Utilise our Northern Freight Growth forecast to collaborate with delivery partners to ensure that our MRN, rail network, ports and airports provide the required capacity and capability to support existing and future freight demand, as set out in our Freight and Logistics Strategy.</p> |
| Connected mobility | <p>Support partners in ticketing, digital and fares improvements by supporting analysis for reform fare structures, creation of government systems for multi-operator ticketing, integration of open data sources and defining new zonal fare structures.</p> <p>Continue to work on a new 'Digital Mobility Hub' pilot with a clear focus on improving rural mobility, exploring the viability of demand responsive transport versus the viability of traditional bus services.</p> |
| Local connectivity | <p>Utilise our extensive pan-northern evidence base to provide localised evidence to partners to support the planning and delivery of local transport plans that improve social outcomes, inclusion, equality and decarbonisation.</p> <p>Proactively work with Active Travel England, DfT and local authority partners to secure investment to enhance the provision, accessibility and safety of active modes to deliver modal shift.</p> |
| Buses | <p>Support partners to improve bus journey times, frequency and reliability, by making use of any powers included in the Bus Services Act 2017 through the implementation of Bus Service Improvement Plans, using our analytical capabilities to deliver bespoke support to different typologies.</p> <p>Explore opportunities to develop a targeted policy position that collates evidence on and considers what is required to encourage bus travel across the North.</p> |
| International connectivity | <p>Proactively influence Government to encourage a greater use of the North's airport capacity, within a national aviation carbon budget approach consistent with CCC recommendations.</p> <p>Continue to work with ports, through the Northern Ports Association to ensure that the benefits of Short Sea Shipping routes and the deep-water berthing opportunities continue to see growth and are continually acknowledged at both the regional and national levels.</p> |

Opportunities for system reform

TfN has a statutory role to **advise on opportunities to improve the effectiveness and efficiency** in carrying out transport functions. In developing the STP, three areas of reform were identified:

- 1. Greater collaboration, policy alignment and cross-border/partner working, enabling co-ordination across funding and policy:** transport is a catalyst for change, so we need complimentary and aligned policy support/investment in energy systems, digital infrastructure, education, skills, healthcare and other key sectors if we are to achieve transformational change. We also need to simplify the number of funding streams and the processes associated with them. This is a recommendation of the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC).
- 2. Systems-based approach and greater certainty for local transport budgets:** we need a programme approach that provides devolved, indicative funding envelopes (5-10 years) within which to plan/prioritise: this enables better management of interdependencies as well as giving confidence to supply chains/private sector investors: it will enable earlier delivery, at lower cost and realise benefits sooner.
- 3. Place based approach to transport investment appraisal:** we need to harness TfN's experience of assessing the wider benefit of investment (in terms of social and environmental impacts) to strengthen the case for investment in the North: we need to firmly move away from the 'predict and provide' to a 'decide and provide' approach.

Opportunities for system reform

Short term (to 2025)

- Adopt and embed a 'programme approach' when identifying investment priorities and making submissions ahead of fiscal events, including recommendations in respect of required investment in energy systems and digital infrastructure – to include "quick win" schemes that would make a difference much sooner (such as infill electrification and/or gauge clearance on critical freight paths).
- Continue developing the TfN offer for local transport authorities (LTAs), so we build the evidence base on cross-cutting matters to aid local policy development and planning, and more strongly advocate nationally on key topics (e.g. freight & logistics, EVCI, addressing TRSE, options for demand management, alternative fuels, AI in transport data etc). This may include identifying pilot/proof concept areas as appropriate
- Test flexibility of revised 'Green Book' to take account of wider factors (including environmental and social) in decision making – consistent with being outcome focused ('decide and provide'), by undertaking example appraisals to understand what can be achieved by taking a more placed based approach (including interpretation of 'additionality'), possibly working with the DLUHC.
- For regionally significant infrastructure, consider extending the use of 5-year (+ 5-year indicative) funding settlements (as used by National Highways and Network Rail) by making the case (for the next Spending Review period), with partners, for a pilot to test how it would work (including associated governance) in the North, learning from earlier work on the Northern Transport Charter.
- For nationally significant infrastructure, continue making the case for strengthening the role of TfN in relation to National Highways (modification of the current Licence, recommended by the Transport Select Committee) and the rail sector (ensuring existing devolution under Rail North Agreement is maintained and enhanced).

Potential Opportunities for system reform

Medium Term (2025 - 2030)

- Dissemination of experience from 'pilots' that have tested the flexibility of the Green Book – to embed consideration of wider impacts (strategic objectives/outcomes) as standard in transport investment for the North
- Working with partners, continue to evolve the 'TfN offer' so as to provide the capacity and capability in support of LTAs, Government and national bodies, including potential provision of services and delivery (e.g. business cases) where appropriate.
- Dissemination of experience with 'regional pilot' for a Northern 'indicative funding envelope' and embed a programme approach to the prioritisation of pan-regional investment in transport and other strategic infrastructure.
- Continued to develop TfN's convening role in support of its partners (including the business community) in order to develop linkages with Other Government Departments and national bodies (like UK Investment Bank) – realising the benefit of aligning investment identified in the NPIER as critical to transforming the North's economy.

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