

## Scrutiny Committee

**Subject:** TfN Decarbonisation Strategy

**Author:** Peter Cole, Principal Environmental and Sustainability Officer

**Sponsor:** Tim Foster, Interim Strategy and Programme Director

**Meeting Date:** Thursday 4 March 2021

### **1. Purpose of the Report:**

1.1 This report provides an update for members on the development of the TfN Decarbonisation Strategy.

### **2. Executive Summary:**

2.1 Building on the commitment to develop a decarbonisation pathway to 2050, TfN is preparing a Decarbonisation Strategy for agreement, consultation and publication during 2021.

2.2 The Strategy will illustrate existing emissions from surface transport in the North, a number of future plausible emissions scenarios and an agreed regional Decarbonisation Trajectory. The strategy document will then present a policy analysis to understand the strength of policy commitment needed and the types and mix of measures that could be used for the region to bridge the policy gap.

2.3 The Strategy document will also include chapters on embodied carbon and climate change resilience and adaptation, as well as identifying a number of activities that TfN proposes to undertake in the short term, up to 2025. As part of the latter, we are undertaking a high-level review of the key opportunities for TfN to support clean growth opportunities and LEP strategies in the North, in relation to the decarbonisation of our transport system.

2.4 Engagement with Partner officers, industry, academia (in particular the DecarboN8 network) and other Sub National Transport Bodies, has been instrumental in the development of the Strategy.

### **3. Consideration:**

3.1 TfN's Strategic Transport Plan committed to the development of a 'Decarbonisation Pathway to 2050' so that a zero-carbon transport network is at the heart of public policy making and future investment

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decisions in the North. The draft Strategy is currently being prepared by TfN officers for agreement with members at the TfN Board in March.

- 3.2 A key element of the strategy will be an agreed end date for the whole of the North to achieve net zero emissions on surface transport. The Board have previously agreed that this should be earlier than the government's stated date of 2050.

### **Developing the Strategy**

- 3.3 The Decarbonisation Strategy will build on the Strategic Transport Plan commitments with a holistic, pan-Northern approach to achieving net zero. Our development work has helped us define and prioritise the key areas for focus, and engagement with Partners, DecarboN8 and other STBs. The strategy will be based on the following key elements.

- 3.4 Firstly, the strategy will introduce TfN's Decarbonisation Trajectory, defining:

- What is included within the trajectory the rationale for the agreed end date and how TfN intends to use the trajectory.
- An illustration and breakdown of the region's current emissions from surface transport, and an introduction to TfN's Future Travel Scenarios. These will be combined to provide a series of plausible future baseline emission scenarios.

- 3.5 Secondly the strategy will define the 'policy gap' between each future scenario and TfN's agreed Decarbonisation Trajectory, including:

- Which existing policy commitments will need to be strengthened at both a national and local level to bridge the policy gap between a number of our plausible future travel scenarios and our required trajectory.
- What combination of new policy measures, at both a local and national level, will be needed to achieve the demand and vehicle emissions intensity objectives defined within our decarbonisation pathway under each future travel scenario.

Detailed work is currently underway to identify where national support is required as well as baskets of policy measures that could be utilized by local policy makers.

- 3.6 Within the policy section, we will also consider a number of other important elements:

- The potential co-benefits and also unintended adverse consequences associated with the main transport decarbonisation policy levers.

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- TfN's approach to embodied carbon and how it will be considered within our decision making at both a strategic level and at a project level.
  - Climate change adaptation, resilience and the consideration of the impacts of climate change within our business case development including a light touch review of relevant national and local guidance.
- 3.7 Finally, the decarbonisation strategy will identify the proposed priority actions for TfN to undertake in the next few years. TfN will focus on those actions best taken at a pan-northern level that will help our Partners along their decarbonisation journey through the provision of evidence, data and implementation strategies.
- 3.8 Alongside the agreed actions for TfN will be a number of indicators to be incorporated into TfN's evolving Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, through which we can measure:
- The regions progress in terms of decarbonisation of surface transport.
  - The success of specific measures and actions committed to within the Decarbonisation Strategy.

### **Consideration of Clean Growth Opportunities within the North**

- 3.9 A current area of focus in the development of the Strategy is to understand compatibility of the main decarbonisation policy areas with LEP strategic plans, including Local Industrial Strategies.
- 3.10 As part of this process we are also carrying out an initial high-level review of clean growth opportunities in the North and identifying the key areas and ways in which TfN can best support those opportunities.
- 3.11 It is important that our Decarbonisation Strategy is cognisant of, and where possible supports, the wide range of clean growth initiatives and opportunities that already exist in the North.

### **Engagement**

- 3.12 Engagement with Partners, industry, other STBs and DecarboN8 have been essential in terms of shaping the Strategy, and in particular the subsequent priority actions for TfN, being developed currently. A workshop was held with Partner officers in late November to help define these actions.
- 3.13 TfN has also engaged actively with those Partners who are currently developing their own place-based trajectories and policy measures to ensure that proposed actions are complementary and to understand how best TfN can support those Partners in achieving their objectives.

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- 3.14 The DecarboN8 network has also played an important role in helping us to define TfN's role in terms of decarbonisation, peer reviewing our evidence base and progressing early research in several areas.
- 3.15 In addition, the contents and intent of the Strategy has been informed by the substantive discussion, with Partner officers and elected members, that helped shape TfN's response to DfT's Transport Decarbonisation: Setting the Challenge consultation.

### **Defining the Trajectory**

- 3.16 Local Authorities across the North have adopted whole economy net zero targets ranging from 2030 to 2050, with some authorities yet to develop or adopt targets. The 'starting point' for decarbonisation for different places in the North in terms of per capita emissions from transport, is similarly varied.
- 3.17 The adopted targets, costs of action, mix of solutions and pace of change in relation to the decarbonisation of transport will show significant variance between different places. A regional trajectory needs to reflect this variation and ensure it supports all our Partners.
- 3.18 The different high-level trajectory options considered in forming our recommendation include:
- Option 1 achieves a close to zero date by 2050 and assumes a Climate Change Committee consistent trajectory.
- Option 2, a more ambitious trajectory that reflects recent carbon budget analysis by the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research.
- 3.19 The Northern Transport Charter defines the requirement for a 'close to zero' emissions date, earlier than 2050. We are asking the Board to agree to our recommendation of adopting a provisional trajectory for surface transport emissions, in line with **Option 2**. Option 2 reflects an appropriate level of ambition whilst also being inclusive of all our Partners across the North and mindful of the varying pace of change which each can achieve.
- 3.20 It is expected that different places will have different decarbonisation trajectories and that these would be accommodated within the Northern trajectory. For example, it would be possible to reflect earlier dates set locally in some largely urban areas.
- 3.21 Our Decarbonisation Trajectory and pathways analysis will:
- Act as a benchmark for TfN's projects and programmes, allowing us to make more informed and better decisions.
  - Allow us to form evidenced based policy positions, particularly in terms of the level of national support needed.

- Allow us to account for longer distance journeys (that typically may be considered 'through traffic' at smaller spatial governance scales).
- Enables us a better understanding of how best we can support Partners in achieving their own ambitions – through focussing our research, evidence gathering and lobbying.

### **Next Steps**

3.22 A key task is to complete our decarbonisation pathway modelling work and our policy analysis, for which there are two main activities remaining:

- Testing the carbon reduction envelopes associated with key high-level policy actions. We have commissioned a specialist consultant who is currently assisting with this task.
- Incorporating the latest national policy commitments following recent government announcements in relation to the phase out of internal combustion engine sales (2030) and, most recently, a 2030 whole economy carbon reduction target. This work will also need to incorporate the findings from the Climate Change Committee's 6<sup>th</sup> Carbon Budget.

The Government's Transport Decarbonisation Plan (TDP), originally due for publication in late 2020, is now due in Spring 2021. Once this is published, we will review our trajectory and pathway in light of any new/changed recommendations or assumptions.

## **4. Conclusion**

- 4.1 The final Decarbonisation Strategy, incorporating TfN's Decarbonisation Trajectory will be presented TfN Board in March for final agreement, followed by consultation version of the document which will be presented for review.
- 4.2 Subject to the Board's agreement, the required public consultation is currently planned to commence in late May/early June 2021. We will ensure that members and partner officers have the opportunity to review consultation materials in advance of the public consultation. This version would also incorporate any late changes as a result of late publication of the governments TDP.
- 4.3 Following the public consultation, we expect to bring the final Strategy to a Board meeting in the autumn of 2021 for formal adoption.

**5. Recommendation:**

- 5.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the progress made and the agree to TfN continuing the preparation of its Decarbonisation Strategy, utilising the recommended provisional Decarbonisation Trajectory, incorporating a close to zero date in advance of 2050 with a view to agreeing both at TfN Board in March 2021.

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**List of Background Documents:**

There are no background papers to this report.

**Equalities:**

Age	Yes	No
Disability	Yes	No
Gender Reassignment	Yes	No
Pregnancy and Maternity	Yes	No
Race	Yes	No
Religion or Belief	Yes	No
Sex	Yes	No
Sexual Orientation	Yes	No

<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Director</b>
Equalities	A full Impact assessment has not been carried out because the report concerns the preparation of a Strategy, rather than endorsement of a final Strategy document. Note that the Strategy will include a commitment for further action in relation to avoiding Transport Related Social Exclusion as a result of transport decarbonisation policies.	Peter Cole	Tim Foster

**Environment and Sustainability**

Yes	No
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<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Director</b>
Sustainability / Environment – including considerations regarding Active	A full impact assessment has not been carried out because the report is not concerned with a subject that requires development consent	Peter Cole	Tim Foster

Travel and Wellbeing	(thus EIA is not required), and the Strategy is not likely to lead to any significant adverse effects not anticipated by the Strategic Transport Plan and the SEA that accompanied it.		
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### **Legal**

Yes	No
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<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Director</b>
Legal	There are no obvious legal implications other than any addressed within the report.		

### **Finance**

Yes	No
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<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Director</b>
Finance	TfN Finance Team has confirmed there are no financial implications.	Paul Kelly	Iain Craven

### **Resource**

Yes	<b>No</b>
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<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Director</b>
Resource	The HR Team has confirmed there are no direct resourcing implications as result of this update.	Head of HR	Director of Business Capabilities

### **Risk**



Yes	No
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<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Director</b>
Risk	A risk assessment is not required for this report.	Haddy Njie	Iain Craven

### **Consultation**

Yes	No
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<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Director</b>
Consultation	A consultation has not been carried out but is scheduled to be undertaken during the Summer of 2021 following sign off of the Consultation Version by TfN Board.	Peter Cole	Tim Foster