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**Meeting:** Scrutiny Committee

**Subject:** Major Roads Report

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**Meeting Date:** 4 November 2021

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**1. Purpose of the Report:**

- 1.1 To inform a discussion on the role of Major Roads and seek comments on the Major Roads Report.

**2. Recommendations:**

- 2.1 That Scrutiny Committee provide comments on the draft Major Roads Report, which will be reflected in the Major Roads report to TfN Board on 24 November.

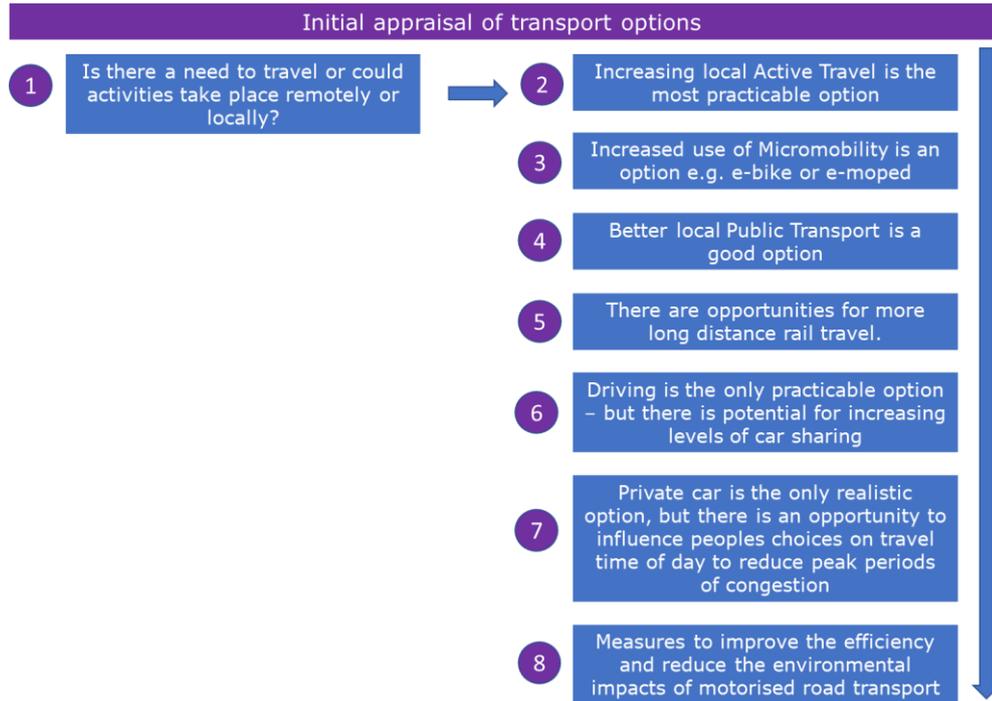
**3. Main Issues:**

- 3.1 TfN's 2021/22 Business Plan includes a commitment to publish an updated Major Roads Report (MRR), following DfT publication of the national Transport Decarbonisation Plan and the TfN Decarbonisation Strategy. Both of these documents have now been published, with the final version of TfN Decarbonisation Strategy scheduled to be considered at Scrutiny on 4 November and TfN Board on 24 November.
- 3.2 The Major Road Network (MRN) plays a critical role in connecting people, businesses and communities, and put simply, major roads are indispensable to supporting economic activity, access to services and our overall quality of life.
- 3.3 Roads are used by pedestrians; cyclists; horse-riders; motorcyclists; drivers of cars and vans; and passengers in cars buses and coaches. In total, 97% of all personal journeys are made by these modes, amounting to 88% of distance travelled. 87% of freight movements are by road.
- 3.4 The MRR draws upon TfN's Strategic Transport Plan and TfN's more recent work on Future Travel Scenarios, the Transport Decarbonisation Strategy and Freight Strategy.

- 3.5 The MRR aims to present a balanced view of how we should manage, operate and invest in our transport networks to reflect the needs and priorities of communities in the 21st century. This includes the 85,000 km of roads in the North (6,844km of MRN).
- 3.6 The MRR provides a comprehensive update on national and regional policy, current and future requirements of the MRN, links with wider transport investment (HS2, NPR, integration with local transport networks etc.) and the need to adapt to new technologies and emerging trends.
- 3.7 The MRN accommodates 69% of vehicle-km in the North on just 7% of our roads (including the 2% of roads classed as Strategic Road Network, managed by National Highways).
- 3.8 Future plans for investment in our roads must be viewed within the context of the urgent need to decarbonise transport and take account of the need for wider policy initiatives to reduce emissions from road transport.
- 3.9 Transport is the largest contributor to UK domestic GHG emissions, contributing 28% of UK domestic emissions in 2018, with UK emissions from road transport amounting to 109 MtCO<sub>2</sub>e per annum, 88% of domestic transport carbon emissions. Policies to reduce emissions from road transport are therefore critical to achieving ambitions for net zero carbon by 2050 or earlier.
- 3.10 The MRR draws on evidence from TfN's Decarbonisation Strategy setting out the scale and pace of change required to decarbonise our transport system. This will require a wide-ranging package of policy measures and both public and private investment targeted at:
- a) Promoting more sustainable transport behaviours, for example through better integration of the MRN with public transport and the provision of high-quality infrastructure for active travel modes;
  - b) Investment in improving access to/from intermodal rail freight depots and local freight hubs facilitating low and zero emission 'last mile' deliveries;
  - c) Rapid investment in infrastructure to underpin the need for a speedy transition to zero emission vehicles, including a comprehensive network of Electric Vehicle Charging Points and where evidence demonstrates the need, hydrogen re-fuelling;
- A programme of measures and investment increasing the attractiveness of public transport in comparison with travel by car. These factors are modelled within TfN's Future Travel Scenario's and fall within the remit of national government and local transport authorities. For example, changes to public transport fare structures and how road users are taxed.
- 3.11 With almost nine out of ten passenger miles travelled by road and 87% of freight goods moved by road, roads are an integral part of our

economy and wider transport system. Even with huge investment in other transport and ways of working, most journeys will still be made by road in 2050.

- 3.12 Investment decisions and policy choices impacting on the way we use, manage and maintain our roads are therefore critical to supporting our ambition for “A thriving North of England, where world class transport supports sustainable economic growth, excellent quality of life and improved opportunities for all.”
- 3.13 Roads are and will remain critical to the functioning of our society, and within this context national policy on phasing out of all petrol and diesel vehicles means Government must consider new fiscal models for generating the lost tax revenues from fuel duty and Vehicle Excise Duty and on how revenue raised is used for investment in our transport networks. TfN is ready to work with Government on considering new approaches to taxation and how revenues can be used to fund improvements across all modes of an integrated transport system. Transparency and public trust in a fair system of charging and the allocation of tax revenues should be key measures of success for a new approach to taxing and funding transport. We believe this is an opportunity to ensure customers are better informed of the true cost of a journey via different modes, enabling people to make better choices on which forms of transport to take, resulting in more efficient and environmentally friendly journeys.
- 3.14 Planning for future transport investment, including on new and improved roads should take a holistic and hierarchical account of all options for improving access for people and goods.
- 3.15 Figure 1 below outlines the recommended process for considering an initial transport options appraisal, starting with a question on whether there is a need to facilitate more travel, and consideration of a range of options before deciding on whether there is a clear need for new road capacity.



- 3.16 The MRN's primary role is to facilitate inter-urban journeys, with a general presumption that MRN routes should not extend directly into the main urban centres (city and town centres). However, urban development over many decades has resulted in a network of major roads extending into urban areas. TfN will work with Local Highway Authorities to support plans for the MRN that are aligned with local place-based objectives, taking account of the role of the MRN in a particular location. For example, that could be facilitating movement of traffic but with a focus on creating sustainable, healthy and resilient places, focusing on people (everyone who uses the street) rather than primarily on vehicles.
- 3.17 The application of Future Travel Scenarios within Investment Programme Benefits Analysis using TfN's multi-modal analytical framework goes a long way in exploring the strategic and economic need for investment in the North's road and rail networks. Outputs from that work, scheduled for 2022 will inform TfN's recommendations for investment in road and rail interventions.
- 3.18 In practice solutions are likely to include a package of measures, and in some circumstances major investment in new or improved roads will still be required, for example to accommodate new housing and jobs growth, access to international gateways and to take traffic away from core urban areas.
- 3.19 The MRR is a key TfN document we will share with National Highways (formerly Highways England) as supporting evidence for their work on

SRN Route Strategies and the RIS3 Programme. And which will support TfN in meeting our Northern Transport Charter (NTC) ambition to 'Lead strategic transport delivery' in making recommendations for investment in the Major Road Network.

#### **4. Corporate Considerations:**

##### ***Financial Implications***

4.1 There are no direct finance implications as a result of this report.

##### ***Resource Implications***

4.2 There are no direct resource implications as a result of this report.

##### ***Legal Implications***

4.3 There are no apparent legal implications as a result of this report other than outlined in the report.

##### ***Risk Management and Key Issues***

4.4

##### ***Environmental Implications***

4.5 This report does not constitute a plan or programme which sets the framework for future development consents of projects listed in the EIA Directive and therefore does stimulate the need for SEA or EIA. In addition, all new major road infrastructure development (as defined within the EIA regulations) will be subject to EIA screening to be carried out by the scheme promoter.

##### ***Equality and Diversity***

4.6 An equality and diversity impact assessment has not been undertaken. Transport investment and policy measures have the potential to lead to uneven distributional impacts and it will be important that the appropriate level of equalities impact assessment is undertaken where legislated. As part of TfN's Investment Programme Benefits Analysis - the programme level appraisal of options for future transport investment will include a high-level assessment of societal distributional impacts.

##### ***Consultations***

4.7 The MRR has been developed in consultation with TfN's constituent partner authorities, National Highways and the DfT.

## **5. Background Papers**

5.1 Major Roads Report and summary version of the report.

## **6. Appendices**

6.1 Summary Major Roads Report

6.2 Foreword to Major Roads Report

6.3 Full Major Roads Report

6.4 Slides – Scrutiny Committee

### **Glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used (*if applicable*)**

*Please include any technical abbreviations and acronyms used in the report in this section. (Please see examples below.) This will provide an easy reference point for the reader for any abbreviations and acronyms that are used in the report.*

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|------------------------|---|
| a) MRR                 | Major Roads Report                        |
| b) MRN                 | Major Roads Network                       |
| c) RIS                 | Road Investment Strategy                  |
| d) GHG                 | Green House Gas                           |
| e) MtCO <sub>2</sub> e | Metric tonne of carbon dioxide equivalent |