TRANSPORT FOR THE NORTH

Meeting:	Transport for the North Scrutiny Committee
Subject:	Setting the Scope & Objectives of a Northern Digital Mobility Strategy
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Meeting Date:	10 March 2022

1. Purpose of the Report:

1.1 This report sets out the scope and objectives for a Northern Digital Mobility Strategy (NDMS) as a pragmatic way to update the integrated and smart travel objectives within the Strategic Transport Plan (STP) including helping partners deliver outcomes more quickly by sharing best practice and expertise.

1.2 The report invites Members to consider and agree to the scope and objectives of the NDMS set out within.

2. Background

2.1 Transport for the North's Strategic Transport Plan sets out clear ambitions for smarter and more integrated travel across the North. This took the form of the IST Programme.

2.2 The IST Programme was unfortunately closed at the end of 2020/2021 but it is recognised that partners across the North continue to have clear aspirations to deliver improvements to the way passengers use technology to make their journeys easier

2.3 These aspirations were further evidenced by the ambitious plans for digital interventions and fares reform set out across the Bus Service Improvement Plans developed by partners and in both the Williams-Shapps White Paper and the IRP.

2.4 The NDMS will take the place of the IST Programme within the Strategic Transport Plan and, unlike the central delivery focus of that programme, will instead be prioritised around adding value, capacity and support to the local delivery (through TfN's partners) and local decision making around digital & ticketing interventions.

2.5 A single authoritative document shaped by local priorities will mean the north can efficiently capture local plans, provide robust evidence for interventions, and make the case for further joined-up approaches to, and investment in, the local delivery of digital and ticketing innovation.

3 The Northern Digital Mobility Strategy

3.1 The NDMS will be shaped by Members to inform, facilitate, and empower local delivery of digital and ticketing interventions and to take the place of the IST Programme within the Strategic Transport Plan.

2.2 The overarching aim of the NDMS will be to add value for local partners and it will do this by:

- Sharing and scaling existing best practice across the north.

- Collating and building on the evidence base produced through local pilots and projects.
- Identifying areas for collaboration and the opportunities for joint investment/economies of scale they offer.

2.3   It will also work to support the interoperability and integration of digital systems across internal, regional and devolved national borders and between modes (such as heavy rail and bus).

2.4   It is essential that the NDMS builds on, adds value to and facilitates local ambition, decision making and planning. This means it is key for the scope and scale of the NDMS to be shaped and steered by Members and that, as a strategic document, adding value locally remains the top priority.

2.5   Transport for the North's Executive Board have contributed to the high-level scope but further informal consultation with LTA lead officers is planned to work through the detail and thematic priorities to provide the best benefit.

2.6   The NDMS has the following draft strategy statement:

- "The Northern Digital Mobility Strategy has been shaped by Members across the North to add value to, and build on, the clear ambitions for more digital and joined up systems for passengers and is designed to help scale existing pilots, projects and successes to other areas.

    It provides a robust evidence base, standardised delivery frameworks, common technical and governance standards alongside regional case studies that empowers and facilitates the local decision making and delivery of innovative digital mobility systems.

    The Strategy also makes the case for further collaboration, the opportunities for economies of scale and the clear case for more joined-up capital investment to support cross-boundary, cross-border and interoperable digital systems."

3.   The Proposed Scope of the Northern Digital Mobility Strategy

3.1   It is proposed that the NDMS should align with, and support, members existing and future digital plans to add value to those. This means that:

- The NDMS will look to the medium and long-term approaches and opportunities in delivering digital mobility for passengers to build on, and add to, shorter term implementations and ongoing deployments.

- The NDMS will set out an evidence base developed by Transport for the North and partners, shaped across thematic areas, that intends to support and empower local decision making whilst also identifying the case for more joined up investment in technological delivery.

- The NDMS will include a combination of policy position statements across thematic areas whilst also developing common delivery and procurement frameworks/strategies to support greater efficiencies and economies.

4   The Proposed Objectives of the Northern Digital Mobility Strategy

4.1   The NDMS will have a set of clear objectives against which it will be developed and delivered and the detail within these will be proactively steered by Members.

4.2   Underpinning all of these will be the core principle that the NDMS exists to add value and capability for partners and that it supports more efficient, economical, and collaborative delivery of digital and ticketing interventions.

4.3   The NDMS will therefore:

- be a catalyst for the sharing of best practice and the development of common technical and strategic approaches that support local delivery of digital and ticketing systems.

- help reduce the duplication of effort, cost, and resource requirement across areas as they look to deliver common digital and ticketing innovations and interventions

- set out the case for more efficient investment in the collaborative delivery of digital mobility systems to avoid siloed delivery, duplicated funding asks and enable easier integration across regions and modes

4.4   To deliver against these the NDMS will:

- build on existing innovation, developments, and deliveries to create more common technical standards and frameworks to aid digital and ticketing systems delivery; such as the development of standardised procurement strategies, technical specifications, governance frameworks and operating models to reduce the need for areas to re-invest and duplicate effort across common areas.

- develop an evidence base for a variety of digital mobility interventions to aid localauthorities as they decide what is the most appropriate for their network and their constituents.

- scale and package existing deployments and innovations to make the case that further, more joined-up and collaborative, funding for those and future digital intervention will provide the most economical and efficient benefit across Government and across the North.

5   Structure of the Northern Digital Mobility Strategy

5.1   The NDMS will be shaped around three core themes – these themes will provide a concise structure through which specific technologies, policies and digital systems supporting passengers are explored and considered.

5.2   Firstly, the future of ticketing systems (media, retail, payment and fares reform) for the North of England. This will consider:

- the case for common standards and procurement frameworks for introducing mTicketing, QR Codes & Smartcard by scaling existing deployments.

- best practice around Multi-Modal Integrated Ticketing Fare Structures to simplify implementation and the framework for modal integration between bus, light rail, heavy rail and other modes.

- providing modelling and an evidence base to support passenger focused fares reform & the possible standardisation of age-based definitions within concessions across areas.

5.3   Secondly, the case for, and opportunities created through, the greater adoption of smart and open data systems. This will consider:

- scaling and sharing existing innovation around information provision between areas.

- identifying the opportunities that open data provides in passenger app delivery and other open-source opportunities that will benefit passengers.

5.4   Thirdly, the integration of future mobility systems with traditional ticketing and transit networks. This will consider:

- building on Demand Responsive Transport pilots across the North to set out the case and context for its potential integration into networks.

- potential approaches to, delivering Mobility as a Service (MaaS) or mobility marketplaces that build on existing integrated systems and making the case for common technical standards

- integrating first & last mile micro mobility modes(such as eScooters or eBikes) and active travel into digital and ticketing systems.

- the case for integrating Mobility Credits (where tickets are funded through sale of cars) & electronic Vehicle Charging Integration with integrated ticketing infrastructure and fare structures

5.5   Each theme will likely have a policy position statement, a developed evidence base and, where applicable, a suggested route to delivery or scalable best practice.

5.6   The evidence base for each will comprise of case studies from any regional pilots or existing deployments alongside new research produced under the strategy.

5.7   The routes to delivery will, in the first instance, look to scale and package existing deployments to avoid duplicated effort across partners. Where not possible it will look to identify a collaborative approach/framework that minimises the resource demand on each area looking to deliver.

6   Delivery Timeframes

6.1   Subject to Board ratifying the scope and objectives on 30 March 2022 development of the strategy will begin from 1st April.

6.2   From the 1st April into summer 2022 the evidence base and range of policy positions will be developed to form up the structure of the report.

- The prioritisation of effort will be steered by Members via a Digital Mobility Group which will be made up of LTA lead officers.

6.3   From Autumn 2022 the NDMS will be drafted with a view for it to be issued for consultation in early 2023.

6.4   In tandem the work around this will support the revision of the STP with items taking the place of the IST Programme.

6.5   The NDMS intends to set out the medium to longer term thematic areas of focus and opportunity, but it will inevitably identify areas where collaboration and scale are viable in the short term. Where this is the case the 'Digital Mobility Hub' to be piloted through additional in-year funding will be the avenue through which that is supported to ensure opportunities for rapid delivery can be seized upon prior to the publication of the strategy in full.

7.   Corporate Considerations

Financial Implications

7.1   *Notwithstanding the financial challenges Transport for North faces there may be a need to commission additional work, research, or support in developing the evidence base.*

This will need to be considered as part of Transport for the North's wider business planning and budget setting activities.

Resource Implications

7.2   *Initial planning for the NDMS identified an additional Digital Strategy Officer resource to support the development and delivery of the strategy, alongside matrix analytical support from within the organisation.*

This is still preferred but will need to be considered in the broader context of the resourcing challenges facing Transport for the North currently.

The level of resource will impact on the scale of the evidence base produced or, alternatively, see the timeframe extended further into 2023.

Legal Implications

7.3   *TfN's statutory duty and powers are referred to in the report; there are no further apparent legal implications as a result of this report.*

Risk Management and Key Issues

7.4   *The ability to deliver the NDMS to the level sought by members will be based on Transport for the North's core funding and depending on this and other organisational priorities, the scale and scope may be limited by the organisations ability to bring resource to tasks.*

Environmental Implications

7.5   The NDMS will link through to TfN's decarbonisation objectives, within it's Decarbonisation Strategy (2022) through helping encourage greater mass transit patronage in favour of personal polluting car use and reduced congestion.

7.6   This report does not constitute or influence a plan or programme which sets the framework for future development consents of projects listed in the EIA Directive and therefore does not stimulate the need for SEA or EIA.

Equality and Diversity

7.6   *The NDMS will need to have consideration for how passengers with protected characteristics continue to access ticketing systems – especially as these become more technical.*

8.   Appendices

8.1   NDMS Summary Document for LTA Lead Officers

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.

a)   *NDMS*   *Northern Digital Mobility Strategy*
b)   *STP*   *Strategic Transport Plan*
c)   *IST*   *Integrated & Smart Travel Programme*
d)   *IRP*   *Integrated Rail Plan*