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**Meeting:** Transport for the North Board  
**Subject:** A Northern Digital Mobility Strategy  
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**Sponsor:** David Hoggarth, Strategic Rail Director  
**Meeting Date:** Wednesday 30 March 2022

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**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 enable the integrated and smart travel objectives within the Strategic Transport Plan (STP).

**2. Recommendation:**

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

**3. Background:**

3.1 Transport for the North's Strategic Transport Plan set out clear ambitions for smarter and more integrated travel across the North. These ambitions were reflected in the IST Programme.

3.2 The IST Programme was unfortunately closed at the end of 2020/2021 but the partners across the North continue to have clear aspirations to enable smart and integrated travel solutions that benefit users.

3.3 This is evidenced by the ambitious plans for digital interventions and fares reform set out across the Bus Service Improvement Plans developed by partners.

3.4 Whilst TfN is not a delivery body, it remains a key role in enabling the ambition set out in the Strategic Transport Plan. Unlike the central delivery focus of the previous IST programme, the approach underpinning the NDMS is to add value, capacity and support to the local delivery and local decision making around digital & ticketing interventions.

3.5 The NDMS will be a single authoritative document shaped by local priorities that means the North can efficiently capture local proposals, 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.

3.6 Transport for the North's Scrutiny Committee considered the scope and objectives of the NDMS on the 10<sup>th</sup> March 2022. This provided valuable feedback which is summarised as:

- Highlighting the facilitative, supporting and coordinating role of Transport for the North in empowering the local delivery of digital delivery.
- The need to ensure links in with steps to encourage visitor economic recovery.
- The need to ensure a broad range of modes are covered by the facilitative works – including micro-mobility, ferries and other geographically specific modes of transport as relevant.
- The need to support more joined-up systems and the role Transport for the North can have in encouraging the standardisation of systems and their interoperability for passengers.

## **4. The Northern Digital Mobility Strategy**

4.1 The NDMS will inform, facilitate, and empower local delivery of digital and ticketing interventions.

4.2 Its overarching aim is to add value for local partners 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.

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

4.4 It is essential that the NDMS builds on, adds value to, and facilitates local ambition, decision making and planning.

4.5 Transport for the North's Executive Board has helped shape the high-level scope but further engagement with partners is planned as work on the detail and thematic priorities is taken forward.

4.6 This approach is summarised in the 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."*

## **5. The Scope of the Northern Digital Mobility Strategy**

5.1 The NDMS will align with, and support, members' existing and future digital plans. 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 develop an evidence base, 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 develop a combination of policy position statements across thematic areas whilst also developing common delivery and procurement frameworks/strategies to support greater efficiencies and economies.

## **6. The Objectives of the Northern Digital Mobility Strategy**

6.1 The NDMS will set clear objectives against which the detail can be developed and delivered.

- 6.2 Underpinning 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.
- 6.3 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
- 6.4 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 authorities 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.

## **7. Structure of the Northern Digital Mobility Strategy**

- 7.1 The NDMS will be structured using three core themes – with these in turn split into other areas of thematic relevance.
- 7.2 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 standardisation of age-based concessions across areas.
- 7.3 Secondly, the case for, and opportunities created through, the widespread 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.
- 7.4 Thirdly, the integration of future mobility systems with traditional ticketing and existing 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 and active travel into digital and ticketing ecosystems.
- The case for integrating Mobility Credits & EV Integration with integrated ticketing infrastructure and fare structures

7.5 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.

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

7.7 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.

## **8. Delivery Timeframes**

8.1 Subject to Board ratifying the scope and objectives on 30 March 2022 development of the strategy will begin in the new financial year. Initially the focus will be on pulling together the evidence base to enable the development of policy positions. Officers from TfN's partners will steer work on the NDMS via a Digital Mobility Group. It is envisaged that a draft NDMS will be prepared during the autumn for subsequent consideration by the Board prior to public consultation in early 2023.

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

## **9. Corporate Considerations**

### ***Financial Implications***

9.1 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***

9.2 The level of resource allocated through the Business Planning process will impact on the scale of the evidence base produced or, alternatively, see the timeframe extended further into 2023.

### ***Legal Implications***

9.3 There are no legal implications as a result of this report.

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

9.4 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 organisation's ability to bring resource to tasks.

### ***Environmental Implications***

9.5 The NDMS will link through to decarbonisation objectives through helping encourage greater mass transit patronage in favour of personal polluting car use and reduced congestion.

## ***Equality and Diversity***

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

## **10. Appendices**

- 10.1 NDMS Summary Document for 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.*

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|---------|-------------------------------------|
| a) NDMS | Northern Digital Mobility Strategy  |
| b) STP  | Strategic Transport Plan            |
| c) IST  | Integrated & Smart Travel Programme |