
Meeting: Transport for the North Board
Subject: Socially Inclusive Transport Strategy
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Meeting Date: Thursday 29th September 2022

1. Purpose of the Report:

1.1 To consider and approve the draft *Socially Inclusive Transport Strategy* for consultation.

2. Recommendations:

2.1 That TfN Board approves the Socially Inclusive Transport Strategy (Appendix 1) for public consultation.

3. Main Issues:

3.1 The *Socially Inclusive Transport Strategy* is a key component in ensuring that TfN's work contributes to achieving a socially inclusive transport system. This reflects, and builds on, the research on Transport-Related Social Exclusion (TRSE) in the North of England that TfN has conducted over the last 18 months.

Context

3.2 TfN's research indicates that 3.3 million people in the North – 21.3% of the population - live in areas where there is a significant risk of TRSE. These are areas in which there is the combination of poor access to key destinations by public transport and active travel, and high vulnerability to social exclusion based on local economic conditions, the demographics of the population, and multiple deprivation. These areas are widely distributed across the North, but are particularly concentrated in manufacturing and mining legacy areas, coastal communities, rural-urban fringes, and in industrial and multi-ethnic communities.

3.3 TfN's research shows that TRSE is caused by the combination of fragmentation, unreliability, and high costs in the public transport system; poor conditions for walking, cycling, and wheeling in car-dominated environments; and the high levels of car dependency that result from this. This leads to poor access to key destinations for those primarily dependent on public transport and active travel, alongside forced car ownership, in which households feel compelled to have access to a car, despite the costs of car access causing them significant hardship. A summary of key findings from TfN's research is given in Appendix 2.

3.4 Given the strength of the evidence on TRSE, and the implications for enabling access to economic and social opportunities for people and communities across the North, TfN has developed a Socially Inclusive Transport Strategy to sit alongside the Decarbonisation Strategy and NPIER in informing our high-level strategic objectives in the second Strategic Transport Plan currently being developed. The draft Strategy is built around the following key features.

Strategy Purpose and Structure

3.5 The draft *Socially Inclusive Transport Strategy* sets out a baseline of the extent of TRSE in the North (pgs. 5-7 of Appendix 1), and the challenges relevant to this issue in the Northern context (pgs. 8-9 of Appendix 1). It then defines TfN's role

in achieving a socially inclusive transport system, drawing on TfN's Strategic Transport Plan, other TfN positions and Strategies, and the wider transport inclusion agenda (pgs. 9-15 of Appendix 1).

Baseline & Monitoring

- 3.6 TfN's data tool provides a rigorous means of estimating how the risk of TRSE varies across areas and communities in England. TfN will use this tool to measure progress towards an inclusive transport system, and the impact of the set of actions provided in the draft Strategy. TfN will monitor the following metrics:
- (1) The size and proportion of the population of the North living in areas with a high risk of TRSE.
 - (2) The inequality in the proportion of the population living in areas with a high risk of TRSE between the three regions of the North.
 - (3) The inequality in the proportion of the population living in areas with a high risk of TRSE between the North and the rest of England.
- 3.7 In developing the next Strategic Transport Plan, TfN will make recommendations to the Board in December as to how these metrics should be incorporated into the vision and objectives for the next STP.

Actions for TfN

- 3.8 The proposed set of actions for TfN are set out on pgs. 15-17 of Appendix 1. These focus on the further development of the evidence base, the integration of TRSE metrics into TfN's Analytical Framework, the development of minimum public transport service standards that are consistent with social inclusion, the development of a social inclusion checklist to support business case development, the improvement of access to decision-making for population groups affected by TRSE, and the development of tools to better identify severance on the Major Road network and rail network.

Broader Policy Themes

- 3.9 While there is a significant role for TfN to play in enabling an inclusive transport system, the draft Strategy acknowledges that the majority of the policy changes and investment required to achieve this will need to be delivered in a place by its partner(s). Reflecting this, the draft Strategy sets out the ways in which other organisations – including Local Authorities, DfT, National Highways, Active Travel England, and Network Rail - can act to achieve a more socially inclusive system (pgs. 17-21 of Appendix 1). The draft Strategy highlights both the nature of these actions, and the organisations most relevant to each, spanning public transport, active travel, and road transport.

Next Steps

- 3.10 If approved by TfN Board, the draft Strategy will then be subject to a short non-statutory public consultation in October and November. The purpose of the consultation is to ensure that the public and relevant representative groups can comment on the Strategy. Officers will report back to Board in December if any substantive changes are required. The Strategy is expected to be formally published before the end of the 2022/23 financial year.

4. Corporate Considerations:

Financial Implications

- 4.1 The actions required in 2022/23 are to be addressed within the approved budget. Any resources of expenditure for 2023/24 will be considered as part of the budget and business planning process for that year.

Resource Implications

- 4.2 The actions for TfN proposed in the draft Strategy have resource implications that will require consideration in business planning for 2023/24. These relate predominantly to ensure the necessary capacity within the Research & Economics and TAME teams to implement additional research and analytical requirements.

Legal Implications

- 4.3 There are no apparent legal implications arising from this report.

Risk Management and Key Issues

- 4.4 There are no apparent risk implications arising from this report

Environmental Implications

- 4.5 This report does not constitute or influence a plan or programme which sets the framework for future development consents of projects listed in the EIA Directive and therefore does not stimulate the need for SEA or EIA. All proposed public transport infrastructure developments will be subject to screening for the need for EIA by the relevant development authority as part of the design development and consenting process.

- 4.6 This Strategy strongly supports the requirement for a fair transition to a low carbon transport network as a fundamental pillar of TfN's Decarbonisation Strategy.

Equality and Diversity

- 4.7 The Socially Inclusive Transport Strategy identifies population groups and area types that are relatively more exposed to social exclusion specifically because of issues with the transport system. This includes people with disabilities, those on low incomes and in insecure work, and those living in coastal communities and rural-urban fringes. Through identifying these inequalities and setting out actions for TfN and other transport stakeholders, this Strategy contributes to reducing inequalities between the diverse populations and areas of the North.

Consultations

- 4.8 Following TfN Board, it is intended that a light touch consultation process is undertaken with members of the public and with stakeholders relevant to inclusive transport in the North of England context.

5. Background Papers

- 5.1 None

6. Appendices

- 6.1 Appendix 1: Draft Socially Inclusive Transport Strategy

- 6.2 Appendix 2: Summary of research findings

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) TRSE | Transport-related social exclusion |
| b) NPIER | Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review |