

# **Strategic Transport Plan: Transforming Implementation**

Scrutiny Committee – 21<sup>st</sup> November 2023

# Background and Purpose

- Strategic Transport Plan (STP) is an outcome focused long-term strategic plan for the North's transport system that makes the case for investment to realise the economic, environmental and social outcomes.
- It is based on evidence (to define our starting point); uses our technical work to define the North's preferred destination; and shapes the journey between the two. It sets 'right share' metrics that will be used to monitor progress against our outcomes, in this way it looks to help move from mode silos.
- Implementation of the STP outcomes relies on a combination of statutory advice (to the Secretary of State for Transport), strategic investment, and co-ordinated delivery at the national, regional and local level.
- The STP recognises that transport investment alone will not achieve our collective vision: there is a need for **system reform** to the way we plan, develop and deliver transport infrastructure and services to transform our region and achieve the outcomes envisioned.
- TfN has been engaging with partners, and taking feedback during the STP consultation, to develop our thinking on **what** TfN needs to deliver and **how** we reform the transport planning system.
- Our intention is to bring advice and proposals for implementation of the STP that (subject to Board agreement) will be submitted to the Secretary of State.
- From 2024/25, we will have a STP Annual Action Plan (AAP) that will enable us to monitor and report progress year on year.

# Background: an outcome focused STP

**Transforming economic performance**

£118bn more GVA by 2050

**Decarbonisation of surface transport**

Near zero by 2045

**Enhancing social inclusion and health**

1 million people fewer at risk of TRSE by 2050

The share of trips made by public transport increases to **15% by 2050** (currently 7%)

The share of trips made by active modes increases to **36% by 2050** (currently 27%)

**Right share targets**

There is **zero overall regional increase in private car vehicle mileage** on the North's road network to 2045, against a baseline of 78.2 billion in 2018.

Double the share of freight (measured as tonne km) carried by rail from **8.5% to 17% by 2050**.

# TfN approach to STP implementation: an overview

The draft STP (Chapter 6 – Action and Implementation Framework) identifies three areas of focus:

1. Maximising the impact of committed investment in the North with a focus on capacity, resilience and reliability, and support the growth of travel markets crucial for economic, social and environmental transformation. **The STP set out the required actions by TfN: these will require prioritisation for action.**
2. Communicating clear road and rail investment and policy priorities for the next two funding periods within the existing funding envelopes. **TfN will engage with partners ahead of the next Spending Review to confirm the short to medium term priorities.**
3. Setting out and agreeing with Government the wider roadmap for securing the longer-term investment needed in the North, while advocating the need to simplify funding streams and further devolution of decision making and accountability. **The draft STP included initial ideas for reforms that TfN will work with partners to develop further.**

In addition, there is further work needed with partners across the North and nationally to deliver on actions (beyond transport) to support our ambitions for economic growth, decarbonisation and tackling social exclusion.

# STP implementation: TfN required actions

<b>Decarbonisation</b>	<p>Emphasise and embed the importance of maintenance and adaptations to climate change on existing networks as well as for new schemes.</p> <p>Continue the 'whole network, whole system' approach as set out in the EVCI Framework to foster partnerships and solutions to ensure charging infrastructure is planned and delivered in an efficient and cohesive manner across transport, energy and spatial sectors.</p>
<b>Transport-related social exclusion</b>	<p>Work with partners to ensure that investment in the major roads, rail and local public transport networks deliver reductions in transport-related social exclusion.</p>
<b>Rail</b>	<p>Work with Government and industry partners to secure delivery of improved connectivity on a scale that would have been realized through the combination of NPR 'in full' and HS2 - building on the committed investment in the Government's Integrated Rail Plan.</p> <p>TfN will work with industry and DfT to secure a common set of service development proposals against which a pipeline of infrastructure investment can be more coherently developed to ensure an effective and joined-up approach across these schemes and programmes.</p> <p>Actively work with partners to bring all stations in the North up to minimum suggested standards as quickly as possible and meeting desirable standards by 2050.</p> <p>Use the Rail North Partnership to rebuild the confidence of rail passengers in the North's rail services, promote further strong growth in patronage and ensure the next generation of passenger service contracts can meet the needs of the North's communities and businesses.</p>
<b>Roads</b>	<p>Work with National Highways to future proof and decarbonise the strategic and major road networks for new technologies (for example, EV, hydrogen and digital communications) and maximise opportunities for freight and improved infrastructure for public transport and active travel.</p>

# STP implementation: TfN required actions

<b>Freight and logistics</b>	Utilise our Northern Freight Growth forecast to collaborate with delivery partners to ensure that our MRN, rail network, ports and airports provide the required capacity and capability to support existing and future freight demand, as set out in our Freight and Logistics Strategy.
<b>Connected mobility</b>	<p>Support partners in ticketing, digital and fares improvements by supporting analysis for reform fare structures, creation of government systems for multi-operator ticketing, integration of open data sources and defining new zonal fare structures.</p> <p>Continue to work on a new 'Digital Mobility Hub' pilot with a clear focus on improving rural mobility, exploring the viability of demand responsive transport versus the viability of traditional bus services.</p>
<b>Local connectivity</b>	<p>Utilise our extensive pan-northern evidence base to provide localised evidence to partners to support the planning and delivery of local transport plans that improve social outcomes, inclusion, equality and decarbonisation.</p> <p>Proactively work with Active Travel England, DfT and local authority partners to secure investment to enhance the provision, accessibility and safety of active modes to deliver modal shift.</p>
<b>Buses</b>	<p>Support partners to improve bus journey times, frequency and reliability, by making use of any powers included in the Bus Services Act 2017 through the implementation of Bus Service Improvement Plans, using our analytical capabilities to deliver bespoke support to different typologies.</p> <p>Explore opportunities to develop a targeted policy position that collates evidence on and considers what is required to encourage bus travel across the North.</p>
<b>International connectivity</b>	<p>Proactively influence Government to encourage a greater use of the North's airport capacity, within a national aviation carbon budget approach consistent with CCC recommendations.</p> <p>Continue to work with ports, through the Northern Ports Association to ensure that the benefits of Short Sea Shipping routes and the deep-water berthing opportunities continue to see growth and are continually acknowledged at both the regional and national levels.</p>

# Opportunities for system reform

TfN has a statutory role to **advise on opportunities to improve the effectiveness and efficiency** in carrying out transport functions. In developing the STP, three areas of reform were identified:

- 1. Greater collaboration, policy alignment and cross-border/partner working, enabling co-ordination across funding and policy:** transport is a catalyst for change, so we need complimentary and aligned policy support/investment in energy systems, digital infrastructure, education, skills, healthcare and other key sectors if we are to achieve transformational change. We also need to simplify the number of funding streams and the processes associated with them. This is a recommendation of the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC).
- 2. Systems-based approach and greater certainty for local transport budgets:** we need a programme approach that provides devolved, indicative funding envelopes (5-10 years) within which to plan/prioritise: this enables better management of interdependencies as well as giving confidence to supply chains/private sector investors: it will enable earlier delivery, at lower cost and realise benefits sooner.
- 3. Place based approach to transport investment appraisal:** we need to harness TfN's experience of assessing the wider benefit of investment (in terms of social and environmental impacts) to strengthen the case for investment in the North: we need to firmly move away from the 'predict and provide' to a 'decide and provide' approach.

# Opportunities for system reform

## Short term (to 2025)

- Adopt and embed a 'programme approach' when identifying investment priorities and making submissions ahead of fiscal events, including recommendations in respect of required investment in energy systems and digital infrastructure – to include "quick win" schemes that would make a difference much sooner (such as infill electrification and/or gauge clearance on critical freight paths).
- Continue developing the TfN offer for local transport authorities (LTAs), so we build the evidence base on cross-cutting matters to aid local policy development and planning, and more strongly advocate nationally on key topics (e.g. freight & logistics, EVCI, addressing TRSE, options for demand management, alternative fuels, AI in transport data etc). This may include identifying pilot/proof concept areas as appropriate
- Test flexibility of revised 'Green Book' to take account of wider factors (including environmental and social) in decision making – consistent with being outcome focused ('decide and provide'), by undertaking example appraisals to understand what can be achieved by taking a more placed based approach (including interpretation of 'additionality'), possibly working with the DLUHC.
- For regionally significant infrastructure, consider extending the use of 5-year (+ 5-year indicative) funding settlements (as used by National Highways and Network Rail) by making the case (for the next Spending Review period), with partners, for a pilot to test how it would work (including associated governance) in the North, learning from earlier work on the Northern Transport Charter.
- For nationally significant infrastructure, continue making the case for strengthening the role of TfN in relation to National Highways (modification of the current Licence, recommended by the Transport Select Committee) and the rail sector (ensuring existing devolution under Rail North Agreement is maintained and enhanced).



# Potential Opportunities for system reform

## Medium Term (2025 - 2030)

- Dissemination of experience from 'pilots' that have tested the flexibility of the Green Book – to embed consideration of wider impacts (strategic objectives/outcomes) as standard in transport investment for the North
- Working with partners, continue to evolve the 'TfN offer' so as to provide the capacity and capability in support of LTAs, Government and national bodies, including potential provision of services and delivery (e.g. business cases) where appropriate.
- Dissemination of experience with 'regional pilot' for a Northern 'indicative funding envelope' and embed a programme approach to the prioritisation of pan-regional investment in transport and other strategic infrastructure.
- Continued to develop TfN's convening role in support of its partners (including the business community) in order to develop linkages with Other Government Departments and national bodies (like UK Investment Bank) – realising the benefit of aligning investment identified in the NPIER as critical to transforming the North's economy.