

1. Chief Executives Update

- 1.1. To provide the opportunity for the Chief Executive to update the Board on matters arising from the previous meeting, as well as any other significant issues not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

2. Quarterly Operating Report

- 2.1. The Executive produce a Quarterly Operating Report the purpose of which is to provide an update on progress against the milestones set out in the Business Plan. The QOR is presented to and discussed at the Audit and Governance Committee as part of their regular cycle of meetings. It is also provided to this meeting for information.

3. Rail Reform

- 3.1. A draft Rail Reform Bill was included in the King's Speech delivered to Parliament on 7th November. The draft Bill will legislate for the establishment of Great British Railways as an arm's-length body overseeing the railway sector. The draft Bill will also include changes to national passenger operating contracts, which GBR will oversee and award, and ticketing systems.
- 3.2. The Government announced the draft Bill to enable it to be subject to pre-legislative scrutiny. The scrutiny arrangements have yet to be confirmed, but it is anticipated that this will take place early in the New Year. The draft Bill follows on from the consultation on the scope of the required legislation that took place in summer 2022, to which TfN responded.
- 3.3. TfN's interest in the draft Bill is two-fold: firstly, in terms of TfN's statutory role as a partner to the Secretary of State in terms of advising on investment priorities for rail (and road). And secondly in terms of its role alongside DfT in the oversight of the contracts for Northern and TPE services. In the latter role, TfN hosts the Rail North Partnership team.
- 3.4. TfN will need to respond to the contents of the draft Bill and seek to ensure that its roles are considered as part of the scrutiny process. Timescales are yet to be confirmed for the pre-legislative scrutiny: the Chief Executive will continue to liaise with the Chair and Vice-Chairs in this regard.

4. Buses

- 4.1. The Board has previously emphasised the importance of TfN supporting its partners as they look to secure the role of local bus services. As part of that support TfN launched the 'Better Buses for the North (BBN)' forum on 8th November. This forum allows Local Transport Authorities to share knowledge and experience in the development and delivery of Bus service Improvement Plans and its supporting evidence base. Partners can also provide direction and input into TfN's ongoing bus-related workstreams including work on the TfN Public Transport Model and the Connected Mobility Strategy. The first session was well attended with over 40 representatives from Local Transport Authorities plus guest speakers from

Department for Transport Bus Team, Transport Focus, and the Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT).

- 4.2. Following discussion at the Forum TfN is exploring how Transport Focus data could be applied to TfN's public transport model. Members also shared their experience on driver training, such as the CPT's work with 'Realise' to provide pre-employment training.
- 4.3. Response to the initial Forum, from partners across the North and nationally, has been very positive and its next meeting will be held in January. In addition, the TfN executive is preparing draft statutory advice in relation to local bus services for consideration at the March Board meeting.

5. Road Investment

- 5.1. The next key milestone for the 3rd Road Investment Strategy (RIS3) is publication of the draft RIS: this is expected soon.
- 5.2. TfN's input into RIS3 process to date has built upon evidence of the 'level of service' performance of the Strategic Road Network (SRN) as discussed at the March Board, and TfN's response to the DfT consultation on the Strategic Road Network initial report and National Highways Route Strategies and Connecting the Country masterplan.
- 5.3. TfN's recommendations to DfT and National Highways included the importance of completing the dualling of the A66 from the A1 Scotch Corner to M6 near Penrith, the need for investment to tackle congestion issues in/around North-West Manchester, as well as a programme of smaller scale interventions focused improving safety, reliability, and consistency of regionally important routes such as the A628/A616 Woodhead Pass and the A590.
- 5.4. TfN is also continuing to input into the development pipeline for RIS4, as well as contributing to a National Highways pilot study focused on developing a framework for delivering active travel improvements on the SRN.
- 5.5. The Network North document announced funding for a future programme of local authority owned Major Road Network (MRN) investment, with £1bn of funding identified for the North. TfN will input to DfT guidance on the MRN programme and will coordinate development of a programme of recommended MRN interventions in the North. DfT publication of the MRN guidance is expected in the Spring.

6. Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (EVCI)

- 6.1. TfN's EVCI framework and online visualiser tool is being used by partners to inform their EV strategies and Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) bids. TfN will launch an update to the tool in December, providing TfN partners access to information on current EV charging locations, CO2 emission reductions and forecast demand for chargers mapped to local areas and for rapid chargers on the Strategic and Major Road networks.

- 6.2. A key output from our next phase of work, planned for completion by April is the development of an electricity grid digital twin, providing evidence on the grid capacity needed to support EV charging demand.
- 6.3. An Ordnance Survey member of staff is also being seconded into TfN in January and will work on advancing TfN's spatial and land use data.
- 6.4. Through our Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (EVCI) work, we've engaged with Ofgem and other energy partners to discuss Grid connection and capacity. In the course of this work, we've been pleased to share with Ofgem our experiences, and the benefits of, working pan-regionally to inform their own policy work on the future of local energy institutions and governance.
- 6.5. Specifically, we explained the local knowledge and experience that can be shared through political and business leaders by working at the regional level. Sub-national Transport Bodies (STBs) are referenced in Ofgem's recent publication on this policy work, acknowledging how the STB model provides useful foundations for spatial energy planning. Importantly for TfN, working regionally allows us to connect across infrastructure priorities and join up policy areas like transport, energy and digital, and we continue to explore those opportunities as we update our Future Travel Scenarios.

7. Proposed Pan-Regional Partnership

- 7.1. The TfN executive continues to work with representatives from the NP11 as they look to develop their proposal for a Pan-Regional Partnership. The importance of respecting the statutory role that TfN has with regards to pan-regional infrastructure has been recognised in those discussions. TfN's analytical and research capabilities are key foundations for the North as a whole: something that has also been recognised in those discussions.

December 2023