
Meeting:	Scrutiny Committee
Subject:	Transforming the North: Strategic Transport Plan implementation and monitoring & evaluation
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1. Purpose of the Report:

- 1.1 To outline the proposed approach to monitoring and evaluation for the Strategic Transport Plan (STP) and provide an update on the development of statutory advice to Government focused on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of implementation of the STP.

2. Recommendations:

- 2.1 It is recommended that Scrutiny Committee:
- a) Notes the proposed approach to monitoring and evaluation for the STP and provides any feedback/observations on the planned approach
 - b) Notes the updates in developing statutory advice to government on the implementation of the STP.

3. Background

- 3.1 The draft STP, supported by our draft monitoring and evaluation strategy, set out how the objectives, measures of success and key performance indicators in the STP would be assessed in terms of their impact at a local and pan-northern level, as well as responding to new and emerging policy areas.
- 3.2 The original intention was to produce an annual action plan that would be incorporated into our business planning processes. The action plan was intended to clearly articulate how we are performing against our headline and core objectives as well as setting out what we have done as an organisation to support delivery of our vision.
- 3.3 However, following the revisions to the STP post-consultation, we are intending to use the TfN business planning process and annual report to present the annual action plan. This paper sets out the proposed arrangements for feedback from members.
- 3.4 At the December 2023 TfN Board meeting, a progress report was provided on the development of statutory advice to Government improving the efficiency and effectiveness of implementation of the STP. TfN's advice will focus on:
- The role of TfN in enabling and supporting implementation
 - System reform
 - The development of a strategic (pan-regional) infrastructure pipeline.

This paper provides an update on progress in developing this advice.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

- 4.1 As part of the evidence base for the STP, we will publish our Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy in March 2024. The draft strategy was published during the

consultation on the STP and has been subject to some minor adjustments, in line with the consultation feedback.

- 4.2 The strategy consists of a series of headline, core, and supplementary metrics developed in collaboration with partners that can be used to monitor progress against the STP. The headline metrics underpin the STP vision and its three strategic ambitions (economic growth, decarbonisation and reducing transport related social exclusion (TRSE)).
- 4.3 Core and supplementary metrics provide additional intelligence on progress and challenges across the North's transport network. When taken in totality, we will have a picture of progress against the STP – illustrating where more/different action may be needed year on year – and this can be used to inform TfN's advice to government and national delivery bodies, as well as support local transport planning.
- 4.4 Reporting on these metrics will be undertaken on an annual basis. This will include a summary of data linked to the headline objectives, and a breakdown of which core metrics are moving in a positive or negative direction compared to the base year. We will include a summary of performance against the headline and core metrics in our annual report.
- 4.5 There are already structures in place, via the TfN business plan and annual report, that enable us to report and set priorities for our work. We therefore judge that the purpose an "annual action plan" for the STP (as originally envisaged) can be effectively met via these existing publications with some adjustments/augmentation.
- 4.6 In addition, a STP performance dashboard has been developed, which will be used annually (each autumn) to show progress against the key metrics and identify where further actions/policies may be necessary to support our STP trajectory. These outcomes will inform TfN's annual business plan.
- 4.7 The dashboard will be available to TfN partners to support their own local planning, and opportunities are being explored to enhance the dashboard - including with more locally available data. A demonstration of the dashboard has been provided to a number of TfN Officer groups and it is our intention to share with TfN Board members at a separate meeting.
- 4.8 The dashboard will be publicly available on the TfN website. It will show the current baseline position (as per the metrics in the STP) and the most current available data to support the metrics at the end of February 2024.

5. The role of TfN in enabling and supporting implementation

- 5.1 The STP identifies actions for TfN to take which will support its partners in its implementation (table 6.2 of the STP). These actions have a particular focus on those issues of truly pan-regional significance, including consideration of cross-cutting matters. This includes policy areas such as: transport-related social exclusion; freight and logistics; international connectivity; rural mobility; and decarbonisation.
- 5.2 In line with table 6.2, the annual TfN business plan has been prepared (agenda item 4). This has been informed by areas for further work highlighted by the STP consultation to enhance our evidence base; existing commitments such as those within our Connecting Communities strategy to address TRSE; and planned work, already agreed with partners, such as updating the regional transport decarbonisation strategy.

6. System Reform

- 6.1 The STP recognises that transport investment alone will not achieve our collective vision for the North: there is a need for system reform to the way we plan, develop, and deliver transport investment if we are to transform our region. Reform is needed to simplify processes, remove inertia, and enable more decision making closer to the people and places it affects. The STP (Chapter Six) indicates opportunities for system reform (such as more local devolution and the need to exploit the greater flexibility possible within the appraisal system), as well as identifying the opportunities where TfN might itself support its partners in delivery of the STP.
- 6.2 The first part of our work on system reform will focus on developing an approach to scheme appraisal that goes beyond the economic focus of Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) and better meets the needs of the North. Our existing Analytical Framework goes a considerable way to providing us with the tools and techniques to take appraisal of schemes beyond the traditional economic benefits to incorporate social and environmental factors.
- 6.3 A Northern Appraisal Framework will be critical to delivering the strategic objectives and outcomes from the STP. We have already shared some of our thinking with DfT and DLUHC and plan to start discussions with the Treasury. Discussions will also be initiated with other departments, such as Defra.
- 6.4 The first stage of this work will be to identify case studies and pilots that can trial this new approach, whilst continuing to research best practice from elsewhere (particularly within the devolved administrations, and network operators). The case studies will include pan-regional schemes that have already been delivered, and will compare their original BCR with (a) the benefits that have been delivered once the scheme has been completed; and (b) what the wider benefits of the scheme are that were not captured in the original business case.
- 6.5 There may also be the opportunity to use the framework to appraise some projects that have not yet undergone traditional business case assessment, as a test case for how their cases could be strengthened. This could include road, rail, bus and light rail schemes across rural and urban areas.
- 6.6 Internal work to develop this approach is underway and initial feedback has been sought from our Executive Board. We are intending to bring a further update on the development of the Northern Appraisal Framework to the Board in June 2024.

7. The development of a strategic (pan-regional) infrastructure pipeline

- 7.1 With a Spending Review on the horizon at a time of continued pressure of public sector finances, it is important that TfN can set out the strategic (pan-regional) interventions required to transform the North's transport system.
- 7.2 As part of the implementation of the revised STP, an "Investment Pipeline" will be developed. This will be a shorter list of pan-regional or regionally significant interventions, with indicative cost envelopes. All the interventions should clearly demonstrate how they contribute to delivery of the STP, including the social, environmental and economic objectives and outcomes.
- 7.3 The investment pipeline will consider, with partners, the pan-regional interventions needed in 0-5, 5-10 and 10+ year periods. It will consider a broad range of interventions, across modes and also policy recommendations, where appropriate. We expect it to include both capital schemes and revenue interventions (such as funding rail services and rolling stock to take advantage of new infrastructure).

7.4 The pipeline will need to consider the work which has already been undertaken with partners to inform recent funding rounds, such as the RIS3 and RNEP recommendations, and we will build on earlier work with partners that informed the more detailed "investment programme" for the first STP (2019). Whilst deliverability – and inclusion in national spending programmes for the next 10 years – will be a key factor, it is important that the pipeline considers whether there are new transformational schemes/interventions that will contribute to delivery of the STP.

7.5 We will engage with local transport authorities and partners throughout the Spring, and it is anticipated that early advice will be provided to the Board for consideration at its June meeting.

8. Corporate Considerations

Financial Implications

8.1 Resources to prepare STP implementation advice will be provided via current TfN Executive and 24/25 business plan.

Resource Implications

8.2 Resources to prepare STP implementation advice will be provided via current TfN Executive and 24/25 business plan.

Legal Implications

8.3 Legal implications have been considered and have been included in the report. As implementation advice develops, legal advice will be sought as needed.

Risk Management and Key Issues

8.4 TfN's Corporate Risk Register includes a risk associated with the adoption of the revised STP. This has been updated as the STP has progressed and following Board approval in March 2024, the risk will be mitigated and retired. The intention is to develop a new risk on the corporate register to accompany the implementation of the STP as part of the business planning process for 2024/25.

Environmental Implications

8.5 This report does not constitute or influence a plan or programme which sets the framework for future development consents of projects listed in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive and therefore does not stimulate the need for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) or EIA.

Equality and Diversity

8.6 A full Impact Assessment has not been carried out because it is not required for this report but will be completed as individual workstreams are progressed.

Consultations

8.7 We have been engaging with partners through the Strategic Oversight Group and Executive Board, which has informed the proposals in this paper. We will continue to engage and work with partners to roll out our M&E arrangements and continue developing this STP implementation advice. An update will be provided to the Board in June 2024.

9. Background Papers

9.1 Strategic Transport Plan – update on implementation advice, December 2023 Board paper.

10. Appendices

10.1 N/A

Glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used (if applicable)

a) TfN	<i>Transport for the North</i>
b) STP	<i>Strategic Transport Plan</i>
c) BCR	<i>Benefit Cost Ratio</i>
d) RIS	<i>Roads Investment Strategy</i>
e) RNEP	<i>Rail Network Enhancement Pipeline</i>
f) EIA	<i>Environmental Impact Assessment</i>
g) SEA	<i>Strategic Environmental Assessment</i>