

Transport for the North Board Meeting - Item 14

Subject: Decarbonisation Update

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Sponsor: David Hughes, Strategy and Programme Director

Meeting Date: Thursday 12 March 2020

1.0 Purpose of the Report:

- 1.1 This report presents a summary of the continued work on decarbonisation across Transport for the North and makes recommendations in terms of key areas of activity for FY2020/21.

2.0 Executive Summary:

- 2.1 The Strategic Transport Plan (STP) commits to lead the scoping and development of a 'Decarbonisation Pathway to 2050.' The Northern Transport Charter (NTC) further commits to producing a trajectory for the North's transport network to deliver an absolute zero carbon network before 2050.
- 2.2 Since the publication of the STP, a number of discrete projects have been undertaken to develop the evidence base and inform future policy development. This has included issuing a decarbonisation call for evidence to partners as well as revising the future travel demand scenarios, further detail of TfN's work to date on decarbonisation is provided in section 4 of this report.
- 2.3 The paper also sets out the immediate next steps and planned policy milestones for next financial year (2020/21) including modelling a series of trajectories of the decarbonisation pathway, issuing statutory advice to government to influence their emerging decarbonisation plan and developing a TfN decarbonisation strategy. Further detail is outlined in section 5 of the report and is subject to approval of the TfN business plan.

3.0 Context:

- 3.1 Climate change and social inequalities are widely seen as some of the key defining challenges of the 21st Century. The context and

momentum has been changing quickly and has seen a systemic shift in awareness of the issues since Transport for the North was established in 2015.

- 3.2 The 2018 Paris Climate Agreement collectively committed to limit global average temperature rise to well below 2°C, with an ambition to limit the rise to below 1.5°C. The Paris agreement also saw world leaders sign up to ensure sharing the emissions reductions in an equitable way. In response to this in May 2019 the UK government legislated a NetZero greenhouse gas emissions target for 2050. Climate emergencies have been declared across many Northern authorities, many with timelines before 2050.
- 3.3 The STP position is being reinforced by the Northern Transport Charter work that makes clear that reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the transport network, at a pan-Northern and a local level, is key priority. That said, it is important to note that, as things stand, decarbonisation of strategic road and rail will rely to a large extent on national decision making and strategy and would not sit within TfN's current powers as national government holds all the significant levers e.g. Vehicle Excise Duty, fuel duty, electric vehicle tax incentives, funding of rail operations and regulation. DfT has committed to publish its Transport Decarbonisation Plan in Autumn, and to lead into this a challenge statement is expected to be published alongside the March budget. The rail industry has established a decarbonisation taskforce to explore the deployment of battery, electric and hydrogen technologies across the national rail network; its report is due for publication in October. Highways England is also developing its evidence base regarding decarbonisation and is undertaking a series of discrete research projects to explore what can be done to improve air quality and decarbonisation of the national network.
- 3.4 TfN welcomes the recent announcement from central government regarding accelerating the cut-off date for petrol and diesel vehicles from 2040 to 2035. We intend to respond to DfT's consultation on this issue, outlining we believe this acceleration is essential and something we called for within our Strategic Transport Plan.
- 3.5 In terms of TfN's role in tackling the climate emergency, the Strategic Transport Plan commits to the scoping and development of a 'Decarbonisation Pathway to 2050'. An acceleration towards a zero-carbon transport network must therefore be at the heart of TfN's investment programme planning and appraisal processes. The primary objective of the 'Pathway to 2050' will be set out how this can be achieved, based on a clear (and Member endorsed) framework of targets, parameters and policies, which aligns with policy and planning frameworks at both the national and local levels. In this context it is worth noting that the ambition of the Northern Transport Charter of developing the pathway before 2050 is more stretching than currently committed to at the national level and will prove challenging to deliver given as described above that key policy levers to deliver the ambition

can only be delivered by clear central government policy, regulation and incentives.

- 3.6 Following completion of the pathway work we see TfN's role as threefold;
- i. To work with partners and other STB's to agree policy positions on decarbonisation which we will use to provide statutory advice to central government to influence DfT's emerging decarbonisation plan.
 - ii. To ensure decarbonisation criteria are embedded in the appraisal of our Investment Programme and Assurance Framework.
 - iii. To push forward pilot projects and thought leadership on specific issues.

4.0 Summary of work to date

- 4.1 The focus of Transport for the North activity across financial year 2019/20 has been to develop the decarbonisation evidence base in preparation for undertaking the development of pathways including;
- Issuing a decarbonisation "call for evidence" across Combined Authorities and Local Transport Bodies to gain a comprehensive understanding of existing policies, targets, infrastructure and programmes.
 - Revising the future transport demand scenarios, this will identify plausible travel demand scenarios which can be mapped against carbon emission intensities to develop an adaptive Decarbonisation strategy that is resilient to different potential futures.
 - Commissioning environmental experts to develop a series of briefing notes to build our evidence and make a series of recommendations to TfN on how we can develop the pathways.
- 4.2 Appendix 1 provides a comprehensive summary of TfN's work to date.

5.0 Next Steps

- 5.1 A number of next steps have been identified to maintain pace with the development of our decarbonisation pathway (Appendices 1). These tasks have been prioritised in line with TfN budgets identified within the 2020/21 TfN business plan.
- 5.2 To build internal capability and reduce dependency on external support, TfN will recruit an environmental adviser to lead on decarbonisation and continue the programme of evidence gathering and dissemination, working with programme partners the N8 research partnership, who are made up of the 8 most intensive research universities in the North of England, and government.

- 5.3 A series of activities and engagement with partners are proposed throughout 2020/21, full details and a timeline for delivery are included in appendix 2, some of the planned activity includes;
- Working with other Strategic Transport Bodies to identify collective policy positions across a range of areas including decarbonisation of rail, future mobility etc.
 - Submitting statutory advice to the Department for Transport to steer their Decarbonisation plan which will be published in Autumn 2020 in advance of COP26.
 - Lead the development of a TfN Decarbonisation strategy.
- 5.4 It would be helpful in discussion to draw out members views on what areas they think would be most helpful for TfN to further develop and bring back to board for decision in due course. Which will then be brought together in a first pan-Northern Transport Decarbonisation Strategy or evidence report for publication.

6. Recommendations:

- 6.1 The Board are asked to note the update.

7.0 For Discussion:

Members are asked to discuss:

- 7.1 Whether there are particular aspects of transport decarbonisation that we should focus on:
- In our advice to DfT in advance of them forming their national strategy?
- 7.2 - In our decarbonisation strategy?

Whether TfN should consider working with partners to build evidence on specific decarbonisation areas, some examples being decarbonisation of freight or piloting battery and hydrogen trains?

8.0 Appendices:

- 8.1 Appendix 1 – Decarbonisation work to date
8.2 Appendix 2 – Decarbonisation proposed 2020/21 work programme

Required Considerations

Equalities:

Age	Yes	No
Disability	Yes	No
Gender Reassignment	Yes	No
Pregnancy and Maternity	Yes	No
Race	Yes	No

Religion or Belief	Yes	No
Sex	Yes	No
Sexual Orientation	Yes	No

Consideration	Comment	Responsible Officer	Director
Equalities	A full Impact assessment has not been carried out at this stage.	Head of Economic Advice	Strategy and Programme Director

Environment and Sustainability

Yes	No
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Consideration	Comment	Responsible Officer	Director
Sustainability / Environment – including considerations regarding Active Travel and Wellbeing	A full impact assessment has not been carried out at this stage of development	Head of Economic Advice	Strategy and Programme Director

Legal

Yes	No
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Consideration	Comment	Responsible Officer	Director
Legal	Legal implications in relation to the Climate Change Act 2008 and other relevant legislation will be kept under review within the context of TfN's work.	Julie Openshaw Head of Legal	Julie Openshaw Head of Legal

Finance

Yes	No
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Consideration	Comment	Responsible Officer	Director
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Finance	Proposals are resourced within proposed budget for 2020/21.	Gareth Sutton	Iain Craven
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Resource

Yes	No
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Consideration	Comment	Responsible Officer	Director
Resource	Proposed recruitment activity is agreed and in line with 2019/20 budget and plans for 2020/21	Stephen Hipwell Head of Human Resources	Dawn Madin Director of Human Resources

Risk

Yes	No
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Consideration	Comment	Responsible Officer	Director
Risk	A risk assessment has been carried out and decarbonisation has now been included in the corporate risk register.	Haddy Njie	Iain Craven

Consultation

Yes	No
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Consideration	Comment	Responsible Officer	Director
Consultation	With Executive Board.	Principal Policy officer	Strategy and Programme Director.