

# Transport for the North Board – Item 5

**Subject:** Economic Recovery Plan (ERP)

**Author:** Owen Wilson, Major Roads Strategy Manager

**Sponsor:** Peter Molyneux, Major Roads Director

**Meeting Date:** Thursday, 11 June 2020

## **1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 This report seeks the feedback and endorsement of the Board on a proposal to write to the Secretary of State for Transport making the case for accelerated transport investment in the North, as a central part of an Economic Recovery Plan (ERP).

## **2. Executive Summary:**

- 2.1 The impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic looks likely to result in the sharpest economic slowdown in living memory.
- 2.2 It is unclear as to when life will be able to start to return to some form of normality, or 'new normality', in the UK, but already it seems clear that the economy, health and wellbeing of citizens will have suffered a seismic shock.
- 2.3 As social distancing restrictions start to be lifted there will be an urgent need to stimulate economic activity, boosting business confidence and supporting jobs.
- 2.4 Using the evidence from work on the Investment Programme that TfN has developed with partners, the North is in a strong position to put forward an urgent and compelling case for accelerated delivery of transport infrastructure and other investment. A well-planned stimulus should provide an immediate economic boost and lay the foundations for the long-term advancement of a sustainable economy, including levelling up of economic disparity across the UK.
- 2.5 TfN can draw upon evidence from work on sequencing the Northern Investment Programme, Long Term Rail Strategy, from the NPR programme and from input into Network Rail and Highways England delivery programmes.

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- 2.6 However, given the need for a rapid economic stimulus the ERP should not be constrained to just considering schemes in the Investment Programme and TfN will work with partners in identifying proposals for other schemes that could be mobilised quickly and make the most of opportunities as they arise.
- 2.7 Although Government has yet to announce proposals for an Economic Recovery Plan (ERP), or when that would be agreed, we need to ensure the North is prepared to make a strong case for accelerated investment and therefore propose to prepare a Transport ERP for consideration at TfN Board in July.
- 2.8 Board members are asked for their views on whether TfN should write to the Secretary of State setting out the work that is underway on the ERP, and on the key messages the North should put across to Government at this time.
- 2.9 Attached with the letter, we can also identify a list of 'quick win' schemes that have already been submitted to the DfT for consideration. These could include SRN, MRN, Large Local Majors, rail or ticketing interventions.
- 2.10 This report briefly sets out the process by which TfN plans to develop, with partners, a realistic but ambitious package of transport interventions.

### **3. Recommendation:**

- 3.1 The Board is asked to:
- a) Endorse TfN's proposal to develop a proposed Economic Recovery Plan, for accelerated investment in Northern Transport schemes
  - b) Endorse the proposed timetable for developing the plan and seeking support from TfN Board
  - c) Endorse writing to the Secretary of State, seeking development and implementation funding for a number of "quick wins" schemes and interventions.

### **4. Background:**

- 4.1 A strong case for early investment will need to demonstrate clear alignment with strategic objectives, including delivery of a more resilient and sustainable transport network, and critically strong evidence of the benefits of, and feasibility of accelerated delivery.
- 4.2 Transport interventions identified within the Strategic Development Corridor (SDC) Programme have very recently been assessed using the

qualitative sequencing framework endorsed at TfN Partnership Board in January 2020. TfN will work with partners, building upon the evidence in the sequencing report to identify potential accelerated 'early delivery' schemes. This list of schemes will need to be both realistic and ambitious.

4.3 Given the need for a rapid economic stimulus the ERP should not be constrained to just considering schemes in the Investment Programme. For example, interventions that could be mobilised quickly and have lasting benefits might include, 'spend to save' initiatives, including: -

- a) Investment in decarbonising transport
- b) Greater digital connectivity
- c) Improving the flexible ticketing offer for public transport customers
- d) Major maintenance programmes, particularly where improving transport reliability and resilience
- e) Taking forward aspects of the Long-term rail strategy hitherto not well advanced by the industry and
- f) Investment to support rail services and recovery from the current crisis.

There could also be opportunities to propose funding for up-front development work, for example where there are evidence gaps in meeting the conditional outputs in the Long-Term Rail Strategy.

4.4 In order to maintain a consistent approach, we propose to use the key principles of the Sequencing Framework to consider schemes put forward for the Economic Recovery Plan (ERP), and to use the same four-point qualitative assessment principles used for the SDC sequencing. However, TfN will need to be flexible in its approach if Government ask for investment priorities sooner than the proposals set out below.

4.5 The qualitative sequencing framework applied a three tiered approach to assessing schemes in the Investment Programme up to 2050. The work on the ERP is focused on short to medium term scheme delivery, and can therefore be streamlined to a two tier assessment. The proposed assessment framework and qualitative assessment principles, which has been agreed with Executive Board, are attached as appendix 1.

4.7 Given the sense of urgency the streamlined assessment we are proposing for the ERP should include the following key principles:

- a) Engagement and shared thinking with LTAs, HE, NR and DfT
- b) Taking into account rapid changes in travel patterns and behaviours and how transport networks need to adapt to that change

- c) The need to be ready to operate at scale and pace to deliver benefits
- d) The importance of long term 'sustainability' of schemes linked to the economic recovery, including active travel and decarbonisation of motorised transport
- e) Opportunities for 'spend to save' initiatives, including digitisation and broadband, (including for the more rural areas.) and schemes to support efficiencies in rail operations.

4.8 The work will require engagement and candid feedback from TfN Partners. This is a process that has already worked for the SDC work, and in 2019 worked very well, when identifying and short-listing highway schemes for the TfN Major Road Network (MRN) Regional Evidence Base.

4.9 Should Board members agree it would be appropriate to write to the Secretary of State, setting out the work that is underway on the ERP then with the letter we would propose setting out principles for the ERP and identifying a list of 'quick win' schemes.

Our proposed principles are that the ERP should:

- a) Stimulate economic activity, supporting key sectors of the construction industry and generating jobs.
- b) Focus on delivery of 'no regrets' schemes, delivering immediate and longer-term benefits.
- c) Reflect the challenges of Covid-19, particularly for public transport, and include investment to support recovery of the transport network.
- d) Recognise the opportunity to embed sustainability in to how we plan and deliver transport in the North, and more widely. For example, supporting investment in Active Travel, in new lower Carbon technologies and in improved digital connectivity.
  - Part funding 1Gb/s fibre in less populated areas as recommended by the National Infrastructure Assessment to allow all communities to be able to work flexibly and helping reduce the need to make journeys.
  - To fund active travel on a sustained year in year out basis to embed the opportunity for modal shift away from cars
  - To part fund fast charging EV technology in less populated areas to ensure early EV adoption is not held back by
  - To back technology trials such as hydrogen trains, battery trains and HGV decarbonisation to pathfind new approaches.
- e) Be co-produced, led by TfN working in partnership with our constituent partner organisation
- f) That major schemes already in government processes, including road schemes in RIS2 such as the A66 and A63, and rail schemes such as the Transpennine Route Upgrade and the Central

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Manchester Corridor, are progressed with all reasonable speed.

- 4.10 Potential 'quick win' schemes, could include SRN, MRN, Large Local Majors, rail or ticketing interventions.

Examples are:

- a) New River Tees Crossing
- b) A34 Cheadle MRN scheme
- c) A500 dualling (Meremoor Moss – M6 J16)
- d) Tyne Bridge & Central Motorway MRN scheme
- e) RIS3 Programme schemes moved forward to RIS 2 (e.g. A1 upgrade Doncaster – Darrington / A64 Hopgrove)
- f) Comprehensive availability of 'flexible season tickets' (offering volume discounts for irregular travellers) on rail across the North
- g) Equipping all stations in the North with EMV<sup>1</sup> enabled Platform Validators and/or EMV gate upgrades as appropriate to allow smart flexi-season tickets to be rolled out further and as preparation for greater use for future contactless travel
- h) Introduction of capped contactless travel on all light rail/metro systems in the North
- i) Expansion of the scope of TfN's Open Data Hub to make available information that increases passenger confidence in using public transport, for example, data on seating capacity and crowdedness.
- j) Strategic rail interventions e.g. investment in rolling stock and stations such as Darlington Station.
- k) Bringing forward aspects of committed schemes in the Rail Industry Enhancements Pipeline such as schemes to address congestion at key hubs and improve reliability across the North.
- l) Accelerating partner promoted rail schemes, such as the Cumbrian Coast Line and Middlesbrough Station.
- m) Developing and implementing quick win reliability/ journey times projects on rail aimed at reducing the long-term costs.

## **5. Conclusion and next steps**

- 5.1 Through working together as 'One Voice' the North is in a strong position to put forward an urgent and compelling case for accelerated delivery of transport infrastructure.
- 5.2 TfN is in a unique position to coordinate development of an Economic Recovery Plan for the North, has started initial work so that we are ready to table a fully worked up ERP proposal for consideration at TfN Board in July.

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<sup>1</sup> Europay, Mastercard, Visa (EMV) is a standard for credit cards and bank cards providing the technology used to authenticate card and smartphone/smart watch transactions.

## **6. Options Considered:**

- 6.1 Not applicable at this stage as there are no options to be considered.

## **7. Considerations:**

- 7.1 The proposal to write to the Secretary of State and the approach to developing an Economic Recovery Plan (ERP), as detailed in this report.

## **8. Preferred Option:**

- 8.1 That Board endorse the proposal to write to the Secretary of State and to develop an Economic Recovery Plan (ERP), within the timescale set out in this report.

## **9. Appendices:**

- 9.1 SDC Phase 2 documents:  
1. Proposed ERP assessment framework

## List of Background Documents

TfN Qualitative Sequencing Report

## Required Considerations

*Please confirm using the yes/no options whether or not the following considerations are of relevance to this report.*

### 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	An Impact assessment has not been carried out as this report is seeking endorsement for the approach to developing the ERP	Owen Wilson	Peter Molyneux

### Environment and Sustainability

Yes	No
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Consideration	Comment	Responsible Officer	Director
Sustainability / Environment	Sustainability / environmental risks and opportunities will be considered at a high level, using a qualitative assessment to develop the ERP.	Owen Wilson	Peter Molyneux

### Legal

Yes	No
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Consideration	Comment	Responsible Officer	Director
Legal	TfN Legal Team has confirmed there are no obvious specific legal implications. TfN Board has power to make the recommended decision.	Julie Openshaw	Dawn Madin

### Finance

Yes	No
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Consideration	Comment	Responsible Officer	Director
Finance	The Finance Team has confirmed that at this stage there are no immediate financial implications for TfN.	Gareth Sutton	Iain Craven

### Resource

Yes	No
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Consideration	Comment	Responsible Officer	Director
Resource	TfN HR Team has confirmed at this stage there are no resource implications.	Stephen Hipwell	Dawn Madin

### Risk

Yes	No
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Consideration	Comment	Responsible Officer	Director
Risk	A risk assessment will be carried out when work on the ERP commences and any key risks will be included in	Haddy Njie	Iain Craven



	the corporate risk report.		
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### Consultation

Yes	No
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<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Director</b>
Consultation	The ERP will be developed through engagement with TfN partners. As work has yet to commence there has been no consultation at this stage.	Owen Wilson	Peter Molyneux