



Cheshire & Warrington Local Transport Body

Date of Meeting: Friday 21 December 2018
Report of: Roy Newton
Subject/Title: Draft Work Programme for 2019

1. Report Summary

- 1.1. The LEP Board approved the Transport Strategy at its meeting on 14 November 2018. This report sets out suggested elements of work for 2109 which are designed to take key elements of the strategy forward:
- Developing a Bus Strategy;
 - Developing Infrastructure Investment Priorities, including prioritising studies/business cases and sequencing rail investment priorities;
 - Supporting the Development of the Local Industrial Strategy;
 - Supporting the delivery of Crewe Hub; and
 - Continuing Engagement with HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The Local Transport Body is recommended to approve the work programme for 2019, subject to any amendments the LTB wishes to make.

3. Proposed Work Programme for 2019

Developing a Bus Strategy

- 3.1. The Transport Strategy emphasises that travel by bus will be crucial for the success of local economies but is currently underutilised as a mode in the sub-region. A significant contributor to the underutilisation of bus use across the sub region is the poor quality of connections and frequencies currently displayed across the network. The limited nature of services is encouraging greater dependency on car use as the dominate mode of travel, which is putting greater pressure on parking facilities at stations and places of employment. The changing economy from traditional 9-5 to more flexible employment means that poor bus connectivity is also constraining job opportunities, because many services are not operating in alignment with changing shift patterns or accommodating more flexible working (e.g. part time work or working across multiple locations).
- 3.2. The introduction of the Bus Services Act, (June 2017) provides new bus powers and obligations that provide different models for managing the local bus market and enhancing the passenger experience. The Strategy proposes that the LEP works collaboratively with the local authorities and bus industry to identify how the bus network can meet the changing needs of users and business including how it can appropriately accommodate the specific needs of older and disabled people.
- 3.3. The aim of the Bus Strategy will be to identify how we can collectively improve the quality and frequency of public transport links to and from key locations such as educational institutions, places of work, hospitals, and towns and cities. It will seek to identify opportunities to reduce the need to transfer between bus services across the network where possible, but where a change is necessary it will look at how the quality of integration and interchange can be improved. A key component of the strategy will be to identify measures which are affordable to deliver and which will attract additional usage to make services sustainable over the long-term. It will also need to identify solutions which accommodate older users, particularly those experiencing isolation.
- 3.4. It will also be necessary to work closely with Merseytravel and TfGM to align cross boundary strategies.

Developing Infrastructure Investment Priorities

- 3.5. The work undertaken to develop the sub-regional prospectus also identified a long-list of infrastructure requirements, a large proportion being transport proposals. These are consistent with the schemes identified in the Transport Strategy. From a transport perspective the next step will be to identify the timing of and funding for business case development and is discussed in a separate paper on the agenda. The work currently underway to identify the sequencing of rail investment will also need to be completed in 2019 and feed into the overall investment priorities.

Supporting the Development of the Local Industrial Strategy

- 3.6. Cheshire & Warrington has been chosen as one of six areas to take part in the second wave of Local Industrial Strategy development. Key themes for the strategy include maintaining our competitive advantage, raising productivity,

increasing earning power and increasing the resilience of our business base. Work has been underway to develop a robust evidence base, which from a transport perspective has been drawn from the work undertaken to develop the Transport Strategy. The work on investment priorities will need to feed in to and be influenced by the developing LIS alongside ensuring that the LIS considers the “Grand Challenge” of the “future of mobility” which will need to take account of likely changes in how people, goods and services move around the towns, cities and countryside, driven by innovation in engineering, technology and business models. It will also need to consider the implications of Connected and Autonomous Vehicles and opportunities for digital technology to help improve customers’ experience, drive efficiency and enable people to move around more freely.

Supporting the delivery of Crewe Hub

- 3.7. It will be important to continue to engage with DfT, HS2 and the rail industry to ensure that Crewe Hub is delivered in a way which allows us to achieve our ambitions on sub-regional connectivity in order to maximise the benefits of HS2. As stated in the wider regional response to the Crewe Hub consultation this means:
- Providing a high quality interchange with platforms adjacent to the existing station, not on the independent lines.
 - Accommodating 5-7 HS2 trains per hour stopping at Crewe, connecting to Manchester, Birmingham and London;
 - Having flexibility for HS2 to serve other destinations including Chester, North Wales and further services to Warrington, utilising the splitting of trains at Crewe to serve the widest range of destinations;
 - Accommodating enhanced regional rail services and freight; and
 - Building in flexibility for the future in order to respond to other infrastructure projects e.g. Northern Powerhouse Rail, any potential changes to HS2 Phase 2b.

Continuing Engagement with HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail

- 3.8. As with Crewe Hub it will be important to continue to engage with DfT, HS2 and the rail industry to ensure that the sub-region maximises the benefits of HS2 and minimises its environmental impact. This also includes the need to ensure that a station is provided at Manchester Airport to improve access to the airport and the development opportunities in its vicinity plus ensuring that HS2 provides additional capacity together with Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) to ensure that growth in the area is not constrained.
- 3.9. Transport for the North will shortly be publishing a Strategic Outline Business Case for NPR. It will be important to continue to engage with TfN to ensure that the option selected best serves the sub-region.