

20 May 2009

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## **Transport Update**

### **Summary**

This paper gives an update on progress made on in relation to transport since the last meeting of the board in March 09.

A draft outline LGA report on implications of severe adverse winter weather conditions in the UK is attached as annex A to this report.

### **Recommendations**

Members are asked to note the report and to comment on the draft outline of the LGA report on implications of severe adverse winter weather conditions in the UK.

### **Action**

To progress the transport work programme and the report into winter weather subject to comments from the Board, and report progress at future Board meetings

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## **Transport Update**

### **Background**

1. This paper gives an update on progress made on in relation to transport since the last meeting of the board in March 09.

### **Effects of recent adverse weather conditions on transport**

2. The LGA is participating in the review process looking at lessons for winter maintenance operations from the severe weather experienced in early February 2009. The review process is being led by the multi agency UK Roads Liaison Group and is due to report to Ministers by the end of July 2009. The LGA is also planning to produce an independent report on the implications of severe adverse winter weather conditions, drawing on feedback from member authorities. Members are invited to comment on the draft outline of the report which is included as annex A to this paper.

### **Changes to Bus Service Operators Grant**

3. In December 2008, DfT proposed a series of changes to the Bus Services Operators Grant designed to provide greater incentives to operators to improve the environmental performance of bus services. DfT have now announced further details of the changes, and confirmed that a 3% increase in the BSOG rate will be payable from April 2010 to operators who achieve improvements in fuel efficiency. In addition, additional payment for Low Carbon Buses will take effect from April 2009.
4. The LGA continues to argue for wider reform to BSOG and has commissioned a report that looking at value for money from bus services to contribute to this debate. We now expect the report to be published in June.

### **DfT funding for Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships**

5. DfT have announced that they will make up to £200,000 available for each Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (RIEP) in the current financial year.
6. The funding will be available for improvement and efficiency programmes across a range of transport issues, including (but not restricted to) a range of areas which reflect DfT priorities. These are:
  - Highways maintenance procurement
  - Asset Management
  - Vehicle procurement and service delivery
  - Improving linkages between transport and land use planning
  - Improving links between the planning of transport and other services

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7. RIEPs are invited to submit proposals for funding by 12<sup>th</sup> June. The IDeA will carry out a central co-ordination role, working closely with the RIEPs to prevent duplication and to ensure exchange learning between the RIEPs.

## **Transport breakout session at LGA annual conference**

The LGA annual conference will include a breakout session on transport. Details of the session are given below.

Time: Wednesday 1 July 2009 13.00 -13.45

Title: Improving local transport – can we act in on the Act?

The Local Transport Act 2008 aims to strengthen councils' ability to deliver more integrated local transport systems. This session will provide the opportunity to learn from council's experience of implementing new approaches to transport and will examine issues such as:

- Will the Act work the way Government envisages and make a real difference to how councils plan, procure and deliver better public transport.
- What challenges do councils face in implementing the new powers over bus services and what support do they need?
- Will new governance arrangements result in more integrated transport systems and will they be taken up across the country?
- How are other national policies, such as Concessionary Fares, and the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Bill impacting on Local Transport policies and plans?

Speakers:

*Stephen Joseph, Director, Campaign for Better Transport*

*David Brown, Director General, South Yorkshire PTE*

*Cllr Lucy Care, Deputy Leader, Derby City Council*

## **Financial Implications**

17. Staffing and other resource implications of the report can be met within current resources.

## **Implications for Wales**

18. The English National Concessionary Fares Scheme does not apply to Wales. Provisions of the Local Transport Act relating to buses do apply in Wales.

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