

Item 7

Transport update

Purpose of report

For discussion and direction.

Summary

This paper updates members on recent transport announcements and events

Recommendation

Members are asked to consider the future role of local government in relation to decision-making on the whole road network.

Action

Officers to take actions as directed.

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Transport update

New Minister

1. The new ministerial team at DfT is set out in **Appendix 1** to this report.
2. An initial letter requesting a meeting for the Board with the new Secretary of State, Rt. Hon. Patrick McLoughlin MP, has been sent by the LGA Chairman. The Board might also want to seek an early opportunity to meet with the new roads minister and the minister with responsibility for rail devolution.

Local Majors Scheme funding devolution

3. On 18 September the government formally published its plans for devolving Local Majors Scheme funding. The plans are as outlined in the Government's response to the consultation which was published on 31 January. The key features of the scheme are:
 - 3.1 The primary decision making bodies on the use of the devolved funding will be Local Transport Bodies (LTBs), voluntary partnerships of local transport authorities, local enterprise partnerships (LEPs) and possibly others.
 - 3.2 LTBs will have non-overlapping boundaries, to be broadly based on the geography of LEPs and ideally determined by local agreement.
 - 3.3 LTB membership must be open, as a minimum, to all the constituent local transport authorities (LTAs) that are within the LTB area, and to the primary LEP or LEPs upon whose geography the LTB is based.
 - 3.4 Representation of other bodies such as District Councils, other public bodies and NGOs should be for local decision.
 - 3.5 There will be no funding retained at the centre as a top-slice for larger schemes, which, if required, will need to be funded by a combination of pooling LTB resources and securing contributions from other sources.
 - 3.6 There will be no centrally imposed minimum cost threshold for schemes but the Department encourages the setting of local thresholds appropriate for the LTB.
 - 3.7 The available funding will be distributed on a simple per-capita basis. Indicative figures for planning assumptions will be provided for each LTB in October 2012. Confirmation of the actual level of funding available will be made following the next Spending Review.
 - 3.8 LTBs will need to operate within assurance frameworks that meet minimum standards of governance, financial management, accountability, meeting value for money and environmental considerations. The frameworks will need to be approved by the Department and we will set out the minimum requirements in more detailed guidance shortly.

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- 3.9 LTBs must have a high degree of transparency, including routine and timely publication of all key documents, as well as arrangements for involving local stakeholders that are not represented on the LTB.
- 3.10 The Department's Transport Business Case guidance and WebTAG, the DfT appraisal framework must be used for all schemes considered by LTBs for funding. The Department will provide support and advice on how WebTAG may be used in a proportionate way.
4. Local areas have been asked to confirm the geographical basis for their local transport bodies by 28 September 2012.
5. In general there are still some concerns about the approach to geography taken by the DfT — the LGA called for the money to go directly to councils. There is also concern that the DfT is insisting on the use of the WebTAG appraisal framework, which does not easily admit broader economic and social factors into its cost benefit analysis.

Stopping up orders

6. Stopping up orders allow roads to be closed when development makes this necessary or desirable. The Government announced on 18 September that following the outcome of a consultation that ended on 24 August it will seek an early legislative opportunity to implement changes which will allow stopping up and planning applications to be made concurrently.

Traffic Management Act

7. In 2011 the Board challenged DfT's claim that there was little demand for the powers to enforce moving traffic offences under Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act to be made available to councils outside London. We successfully encouraged those councils who wished to use these powers to lobby the DfT using our template letter (which at least one bus operator also adapted and sent). In July, DfT Minister, Norman Baker MP's latest letter on the subject accepted that there is demand for these powers in the sector, but claimed that the evidence available on the benefits in terms of safety and reduced congestion (as opposed to increased compliance) is not sufficient to satisfy the requirements of the regulatory review processes the Government has put in place. The minister is therefore working with Sheffield and Nottingham on modelling exercises as part of the city deal process. The LGA has responded, refuting these arguments and asking for a meeting between DfT, LGA, our Technical Advisory Group, Association of Directors of Environment Planning and Transport and the British Parking Association.

Reform of Bus Subsidy System

8. In March, the Government published 'Green Light for Better Buses', in which it set out plans for reforming local bus subsidy arrangements and regulations in England outside London. An 8-week consultation on these plans was launched on 13 September. Officers are working on a response for members to consider.

Transport Ministerial Team

Following the government reshuffle earlier this month, there is now a new ministerial team:

Rt Hon Patrick McLoughlin MP Secretary of State for Transport

- Overall responsibility for department
- Transport strategy, including economic growth and climate change
- Transport security, including Transec
- High speed rail

Rt Hon Simon Burns MP Minister of State for Transport

- Rail
 - London - including Crossrail
 - Europe and international engagement
- Aviation - including Air Accident Investigation Branch

Norman Baker MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport

- Rail - commercial and operational performance
- Buses - including concessionary fares
- Taxis
- Light rail and trams
- Smart ticketing including rail fares and ticketing
- Regional and local transport - including local roads, maintenance, major projects, winter resilience
- Natural environment - including biofuels
- Sustainable travel - including walking and cycling
- Accessibility and equalities
- Traffic management
- Alternatives to travel
- SMEs and growth

Stephen Hammond MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport

- Strategic roads and Highways Agency
- Motoring agencies
- Road safety and standards
- Freight and logistics, including lorry road user charging
- Maritime and dangerous goods, including Maritime and Coastguard Agency
- Better regulation