

report

meeting:	JOINT COMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC PLANNING AND TRANSPORT	
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from:	JOINT OFFICERS STEERING GROUP	

TRANSPORT UPDATE

Purpose of Report

1. To inform the Committee of key transport issues for the Greater Nottingham Local Transport Plan (LTP) area.

Submission of the second Greater Nottingham LTP (2006/7-2010/11)

2. Joint Committee members will recall that the provisional Greater Nottingham LTP was submitted to Department for Transport (DfT) in July 2005. The results of the Local Transport Capital Settlement 2006/07 were set out in a letter of 14 December 2005 received from the Transport Director at Government Office for the East Midlands.
3. The Greater Nottingham Provisional LTP was assessed as 'very promising' against the 6 headline criteria and 35 sub-criteria. The assessment of 'very promising' indicated that the provisional LTP was an excellent platform for the development of the final version of the LTP. It was deemed to be strong on analysis and involvement, with wide support from stakeholders; however, a number of proposed improvements were outlined.
4. Guided by the requirements set out in the DfT guidance for LTPs and the assessment of the provisional plans, further development work was undertaken prior to the submission of the final LTP in March 2006, particularly focusing on the accompanying 'Accessibility Strategy'; Strategic Environmental Assessments and public consultation; major local transport schemes; indicators, targets and trajectories; the five-year programmes; and the Transport Innovation Fund.
5. A Nottinghamshire County Council report of 23 February 2006, and a Nottingham City Council report of 27 March 2006, approved the submission of the final LTP and its accompanying accessibility strategy.
6. Assessment of the final document is expected in early December 2006, at the same time as the Local Transport Capital Settlement 2007/8.

Submission of the Delivery Report for the first Greater Nottingham LTP (2001/2-2005/6)

7. As part of the DfT's assessment of performance in LTP delivery, local authorities were required to submit a Delivery Report to the DfT by 31 July 2006, detailing impacts and achievements in key strategy areas during the first LTP period (2001/02-2005/6). The authorities have submitted Annual Progress Reports (APRs) covering each of the first four years. The Delivery Report provides an overview of performance over the whole plan period. Along with the second LTP the Delivery Report is publicly available on each authority's website and a summary of the document was included in a report to Nottinghamshire County Council Cabinet on 26 July 2006.
8. Along with the second LTPs submitted in March 2006, the assessment of the LTP1 Delivery Report will determine future capital funding performance awards and Comprehensive Performance Assessment scores.

Transport Innovation Fund

9. The Transport Innovation Fund (TIF) is a new means of allocating some of the DfT's future budget. TIF has two main strands:
 - 'congestion schemes' for which bids are invited from local authorities
 - 'productivity', for which the Government will identify schemes following consultation with the Regional Development Agencies.
10. Substantial funding is to be made available for TIF schemes, rising from £290million in 2008/09 to over £2billion in 2014/15. Most (around 90%) of the funding is expected to be directed towards the productivity strand.

Congestion TIF

11. The Government is offering 'pump priming' financial support to a limited number of authorities to assist them in working towards the introduction of a national road pricing scheme. They are particularly interested in the issues associated with 'polycentric' schemes covering a relatively wide area and including a number of different urban areas or other traffic generators.
12. Considerable development work was undertaken between February and July 2006 by Nottingham City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, Leicester City Council, Leicestershire County Council, Derby City Council, Derbyshire County Council, the Highways Agency and the DfT to prepare a pump-priming bid for just under £2 million. This would allow a computer-based traffic model to produce a better understanding of existing and future congestion problems in the area, together with an assessment of the potential role for road charging to address these problems. The TIF bid was submitted to the DfT on 31 July 2006.
13. The study is not intended to examine the exact form that charging might take as the Government has accepted that proposals for charging need to adopt a common national (and as yet unspecified) method of charging. It will be a

matter for individual authorities, in consultation with the other partners, to determine their response to the study's findings.

Productivity TIF

14. In early 2006, all Regional Development Agencies were approached to put forward bids under the TIF Productivity strand to support schemes that are expected to make a substantial contribution to the UK's national and international competitiveness through increased productivity. These bids were submitted at the end of March and a decision was announced at the end of June 2006.
15. EMDA identified six road and rail schemes that it considered to be of inter-regional and strategic significance. The only scheme from the region to progress to business case development is rail freight gauge clearance from Nuneaton to Peterborough.

Regional Funding Allocations (RFA) for major transport schemes

16. In 2005, the DfT developed a new prioritisation process for major transport schemes which included taking advice from the regions. Consequently, the East Midlands Regional Assembly (EMRA) was tasked with working with local transport authorities to develop a methodology which prioritises the region's transport schemes and programmes them against a regional budget. The region's priorities were submitted to the DfT at the end of January 2006 for approval.
17. In early July 2006 EMRA received confirmation that the DfT accepted the transport priorities agreed by the region, and confirmed funding for schemes in the first three years of the RFA period (2006/07-2008/09), including the following schemes in the Greater Nottingham area:

Schemes underway

- Turning Point (City)
- A612 Gedling Integrated Transport Scheme (County)

Approved schemes not yet underway

- A453 Widening M1 J24 to A52 Nottingham (Highways Agency)

Schemes which do not yet have approval

- Hucknall Town Centre Improvements (County)
- Nottingham Ring Road (City)

18. Further details of the above schemes and their relationship with the regional funding allocations for transport can be found in a Nottinghamshire County Council Cabinet report of 26 July 2006.

19. The approval letter from the DfT states their intention to revisit the prioritisation process again within two years, when it will seek further advice on regional priorities from EMRA.

East Midlands rail franchise and Cross County rail franchise

20. In June 2006 the DfT launched their consultation on the new East Midlands and Cross Country rail franchises, which will completely replace Central Trains and Midland Mainline's operations. The new franchises will affect all services to and from Nottingham, and the two authorities submitted their comments on the draft franchise specifications in August 2006.
21. The authorities' submissions focussed on aspirations set out in the second LTP:
- Capacity and speed improvements to London
 - A direct service to Leeds
 - Faster trains to Birmingham
 - Support for Nottingham Station Masterplan
 - Improvements at Beeston Station
 - Later weekday evening services on the Robin Hood Line (RHL)
 - Sunday services on the RHL
 - More trains on the Newark/Lincoln line, especially at Collingham
 - Various other small improvements
22. A briefing on current rail issues was held for County Members on 18 September 2006. The 'pre-qualified bidders' have since been announced as follows:
- *East Midlands franchise:* Arriva Trains East Midlands Limited (Arriva Group); First East Midlands Limited (First Group); NXE Trains Limited (National Express Group); Stagecoach Midland Rail Limited (Stagecoach Group)
 - *Cross Country franchise:* Arriva Trains Cross Country Limited (Arriva Group); First Cross Country Limited (First Group); NXC Trains Limited (National Express Group); Virgin Voyager Trains Ltd (Virgin Rail Group)
23. The timetable for the franchise process is as follows:
- Late October 2006: DfT will issue final specification, and invite bids
 - February 2007: Deadline for submission of bids
 - Summer 2007: Announcement of successful bidders
 - November 2007: New franchises commence
24. The authorities continue to work with DfT officers and bidders to negotiate possible improvements for the Greater Nottingham area to be included in the final specification.

East Midlands Parkway station

25. Network Rail has taken over the responsibility for the construction of a new East Midlands Parkway station, and the finance is allocated in their current business plan. Preliminary works have commenced, with an official opening date of December 2008. The station will have platforms on all 4 tracks, and 500 car park spaces. The draft specification for the new East Midlands franchise provides for 3 trains per hour in each direction:
- Nottingham - Beeston - East Midlands Parkway - Loughborough - Leicester - and 5 intermediate stations to London
 - Nottingham - East Midlands Parkway - Loughborough - Leicester
 - Derby - East Midlands Parkway - Loughborough - Leicester - London

NET Phase 2

26. The DfT is currently giving consideration to the joint request from the City Council and County Council for Programme Entry Approval (PEA) for NET Phase 2. It is understood that a report has been prepared for Ministers and that the DfT is seeking a view from HM Treasury. Although the DfT has been unwilling to commit to a date by which time a decision will be made it is expected that this will be in the early autumn.
27. If PEA is secured in autumn 2006, by early 2007 the Councils would need to confirm the scheme proposals and decide whether to apply for a Transport and Works Act Order (TWAo) to gain the powers to buy land, build and run NET Phase 2.
28. The TWAo process would trigger a Public Inquiry, which could take place in autumn 2007. If Government approves the TWAo application, the Councils can then ask private companies to bid for the work of building and running NET Phase 2.
29. It could take over a year to negotiate the commercial contracts and get the final proposals agreed by Government. The new company – who would take over running NET Line 1 as well as building and running NET Phase 2 – could start work by 2010, with trams running on the extended system by 2013.

Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the Joint Committee notes the content of this report.

Background papers

Background papers are detailed in the body of this report.

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