



Cheshire and Warrington Local Transport Body Agenda

Date: Friday, 26th March, 2021
Time: 10.30 am
Venue: Virtual

How to Watch the Meeting

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The agenda is divided into 2 parts. Part 1 is taken in the presence of the public and press. Part 2 items will be considered in the absence of the public and press for the reasons indicated on the agenda and in the report.

PART 1 – MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS PRESENT

1. Appointment of Chairman and Vice Chairman

To appoint a Chairman and Vice Chairman.

2. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies for Absence

The Chairman will open the meeting and welcome attendees to the meeting of the Local Transport Body.

3. Declarations of Interest

For requests for further information

Contact: Sarah Baxter

Tel: 01270 686462

E-Mail: sarah.baxter@cheshireeast.gov.uk with any apologies

To provide an opportunity for Members and Officers to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in any item on the agenda.

4. **Minutes of the Previous meeting** (Pages 1 - 10)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2020.

5. **Public Speaking Time/Open Session**

A period of 15 minutes is allocated for members of the public to address the meeting on any matter relevant to the work of the body in question. Individual members of the public may speak for up to 5 minutes but the Chairman or person presiding will decide how the period of time allocated for public speaking will be apportioned where there are a number of speakers.

6. **Department for Transport Update**

To receive a verbal update from the Department of Transport.

7. **Highways England Update**

To receive a verbal update from Highways England.

8. **Network Rail Update**

To receive a verbal update from Network Rail.

9. **HS2 and Crewe Hub Update**

To receive a verbal update in respect of HS2 and the Crewe Hub.

10. **Northern Powerhouse Rail Update** (Pages 11 - 16)

To receive a report on the Northern Powerhouse Rail.

11. **Transport for the North Update** (Pages 17 - 18)

To receive a report on Transport for the North.

12. **Bus Strategy Update**

To receive a verbal update on the work to develop a sub-regional bus strategy.

13. **Local Authority Updates** (Pages 19 - 24)

To receive updates from each of the Local Authorities on progress on major transport schemes.

14. **Date of Next Meeting**

To confirm the date of the next meeting as follows:-

Friday 25 June 2021.

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**Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership
Cheshire and Warrington Local Transport Body**

Friday, 10th January, 2020 at The Council Chamber -Town Hall, Sankey Street, Warrington WA1 1UH

PRESENT

Graeme Bristow (Chairman)

Councillors C Browne and H Mundry

COUNCILLOR IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor L Gibbon, Chester West & Chester Council

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Sarah Baxter, Cheshire East Council

David Bowyer, Warrington Borough Council

Philip Cox, LEP

Chris Hindle, Cheshire East Council

Steve Hunter, Warrington Borough Council

John Hope, Highways England

Roy Newton, C&WLEP

Sean Traynor, Cheshire West & Chester Council

29 WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor K Shore and Richard Perry (DfT).

30 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

31 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 4 October 2019 be approved as a correct record.

32 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

Stephen Bratt of ASLEF attended the meeting and spoke in respect of HS2 and the reference to 5-7 trains per hour. It was felt that this phrase lacked clarity and needed to be more specific in terms of where trains from Crewe would connect with.

Andrew Needham of CPRE attended the meeting and stated that he was pleased to hear that a member from the TUC would have a role on the Transport for the North Board. He asked where the proposed location for the Crewe North Connection would be.

In respect of the question raised by Mr Needham, Chris Hindle, Head of Infrastructure advised that the junction shown at High Legh was a touch point and not the Crewe North connection. The precise location of the connection was not yet known and as it was a HS2 project the question would need to be referred to HS2.

33 DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT UPDATE

Roy Newton, representing the Cheshire & Warrington LEP gave an update in respect of the Department for Transport. Highlighted within the update was information on the emerging DfT priorities:-

- Same Ministerial team as prior to general election;
- Decarbonisation key - transport had overtaken energy as the number one contributor to CO2 in this UK and that was “not the league table the Department wanted to be leading on”. Although much of this was a result of emissions from road transport it was also important to see decarbonisation in maritime, rail and aviation;
- Big priority was the reform of rail, in particular, White paper this year following the conclusions of the Williams Rail Review;
- Secretary of State noted there were big projects to deliver such as HS2 but he wanted to see Department not just focusing on infrastructure but also on delivery;
- Important to meet the concerns of people about their ability to get around and the importance of properly connecting people and places, especially in our smaller towns and cities.

In the Queens Speech, the key elements with implications for transport included:

- Delivering Brexit by 31 January;
- Maintaining the integrity of the UK (may have relevance to cross Border considerations with Wales);
- investing in the country’s public services and infrastructure whilst keeping borrowing and debt under control;
- prioritising investment in infrastructure and world-leading science research and skills in order to unleash productivity and improve daily life for communities across the country.

- Giving communities more control over how investment was spent so that they could decide what was best for them;
- Ensuring people could depend on the transport network - measures would be developed to provide for minimum levels of service during transport strikes.

Further to this Members were provided with selected highlights relating to the Queen's speech which included:-

- The National Infrastructure Strategy
- Air Traffic Management and Unmanned Aircraft
- Airline insolvency legislation
- Railways minimum service levels legislation
- Rail reform
- The Government had also committed to a number of major investments in the railway, including: Midlands Rail Hub, to improve services around Birmingham and throughout the West and East Midlands; Northern Powerhouse Rail as well as reopening a number of the lines and stations closed under the Beeching cuts in the 1960s; and, significant upgrades to urban commuter and regional services outside London.
- High Speed Rail 2 (West Midlands - Crewe) Bill
- English devolution
- Environment Bill
- Climate Change
- Wales

Councillor C Browne commented that Cheshire East Council were urgently awaiting a decision in respect of the A500 dualling project from the DfT. Whilst Cheshire East continued to commit its own funds this couldn't carry on indefinitely in the absence of a decision from the DfT.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

34 PRIORITISING BUSINESS CASE DEVELOPMENT

Roy Newton, representing the Cheshire & Warrington LEP, attended the meeting presented to the CWLTB the transport projects for the Body to consider recommending to Strategy Committee for funding in the financial year 2020/21.

Councillor H Mundry put forward a request for the CWLTB to consider the possibility of Warrington Borough Council being awarded £50,000 to undertake a feasibility study for all buses to be electric, which could capitalise on funding being made available by central government's for an all electric bus town/city.

It was advised that as the budget was a maximum of £400,000 it wouldn't be possible to include a further scheme costing £50,000, however there was a possibility that the LEP could work with all three Local Authorities to identify and prioritise an order of which schemes should be put forward potentially without requesting a specific amount or by scaling back all existing schemes which could accommodate Warrington's request. It was suggested this could be undertaken with further work by officers and discussed electronically rather than wait for the next meeting of the CWLTB.

It was pointed out that it would be unlikely the full £400,000 would be allocated to all transport schemes and that the Strategy Committee would also want an opportunity for some of the funding to be spent on non transport projects. It was felt it would be helpful if officers could provide the Strategy Committee with a prioritised list which ranked the schemes in order of preference particularly say if only £300,000 of the £400,000 was to be allocated.

Concerns were raised that if Warrington's request was accepted it would not be at the expense of any of the other schemes listed within the report.

It was noted that the A50 Corridor Study did not emerge as a priority and it was asked if it could remain as a consideration for any further round of funding should it become available.

There was funding from Government which set aside money for major route networks like the A50/A51/A500. It was noted that Highways England was very supportive of the A51 corridor.

It was agreed that outside of the meeting officers would look at the schemes and assess them against the criteria as well as taking into account Government priorities and the funding available alongside any match funding.

Furthermore, to avoid introducing delay in decision making, it was agreed that the list would be circulated electronically to members of the CWLTB to agree with an explanation as to the rationale behind the choices prior to being considered at a public meeting of the Strategy Committee.

RESOLVED

That a list, prioritising schemes to be put forward for consideration by the Strategy Committee be circulated electronically to members of the CWLTB to agree alongside an explanation as to the rationale behind the choices.

35 BUS STRATEGY UPDATE

Roy Newton, representing the Cheshire & Warrington LEP gave an update on the bus strategy. He outlined the summary of commitments as follows:-

- National Bus Strategy focussed on passenger priorities;
- Review of the £250 million bus service operators grant to ensure it supported the environment and improved passenger journeys;
- Over £20 million investment in bus priority measures in the West Midlands;
- All new road investments receiving government funding to explicitly address bus priority measures to improve bus journey times and reliability;
- Refreshing the government's guidance to local authorities to provide up to date advice on prioritising those vehicles which could carry the most people;
- Investing up to £50 million to deliver Britain's first all-electric bus town or city;
- Improving information for bus passengers through new digital services and at bus stops
- Challenging industry to deliver a campaign to attract people to buses;
- Incentivising multi-operator ticketing with lower fares;
- Trialling new 'superbus' network approach to deliver low fare, high frequency services and funding 4-year pilot of a lower fare network in Cornwall;
- Ambition for all buses to accept contactless payment for passenger convenience
- £30 million extra bus funding to be paid direct to local authorities to enable them to improve current bus services or restore lost services;
- £20 million to support demand responsive services in rural and suburban areas

Further to this the LEP, the three Local Authorities and bus operators had attended a workshop which identified the following key challenges that directly affect the usage of buses:-

- Traffic Congestion
- Lack of Priority Measures/Infrastructure
- Parking both provision and relative cost
- Complexity of Ticketing
- Lack of Information to passengers
- Perception/Awareness
- Marketing/Promotion
- Environmental
- Journey Times
- Economic
- Reduced town centre footfall
- Service Provision – poor on some routes, evenings, weekends
- Changing work patterns – moving away from Mon-Fri 9-5
- Cross Boundary
- Funding

In addition he outlined the next steps to set up an officer working group to develop options to tackle the identified issues taking account of:

- Bus Services Act 2017 eg opportunities for enhanced partnerships
- National bus strategy and emerging priorities

It was queried as to who was accountable for the bus strategy. In response it was confirmed that ultimately it was the LTB along with officers and the bus companies. It was noted that the strategy was something that the LEP would be interested in and that the draft strategy would be shared for comment with the Chair of the LEP.

It was commented that one of the main reasons for people not using buses related to the cost.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

36 HS2 AND CREWE HUB UPDATE

Chris Hindle, Head of Infrastructure at Cheshire East Council attended the meeting and gave an update in respect of HS2 and the Crewe hub.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

37 NORTHERN POWERHOUSE RAIL UPDATE

Steve Hunter, the Transport for Warrington Service Manager at Warrington Borough Council gave an update on the Northern Powerhouse Rail.

RESOLVED

1. That the CWLTB noted both the progress made to date by the Department for Transport and Transport for the North in the preparation of a Draft Strategic Outline Business Case for Northern Powerhouse Rail.
2. That the CWLTB noted the key issues for Cheshire and Warrington with regard to the Northern Powerhouse Rail proposals.
3. That updates on both of these matters would be provided at future meetings of the CWLTB.

38 TRANSPORT FOR THE NORTH UPDATE

Councillors C Browne and H Mundry and provided an update in respect of the issues discussed at the recent Transport for the North meeting. Key themes reported were as follows:-

- Poor performance of the Northern and Transpennine franchises;
- The East and West link required more joined up thinking;
- Northern Powerhouse Rail-in particular the need for HS2 to consider and take account of the key touch points with NPR;
- The need to look at NPR options for Piccadilly station which are future proofed;
- Inclusion of a TUC representative on the Board;
- Pausing the integrated/smart ticketing workstream and considering a different approach whereby local authorities bid to TfN to create a local ticketing system.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

39 HIGHWAYS ENGLAND UPDATE

John Hope, representing Highways England attended the meeting and gave a verbal update stating that he should hear about any major schemes in March once the budget had been confirmed. In respect of RIS 1 for Cheshire the M62 smart motorway, junctions 10-12 would be opening the end of March 2020. Work on the M56 between Hale and Bowden would commence once the M62 work had been completed. Public information events in respect of this scheme were due to commence 17 January 2020. In respect of the M6 junctions 16-19 work was due to commence in March 2020 to improve the bottleneck issues. Work in relation to the M56 express bridge, junctions 11-12 was due to commence in December 2020. Finally allocation of funding for the next five years was expected to be higher than previous years. Officers were currently working up a programme for year 1 and as soon as the details were available they would be shared with the three Local Authorities.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

40 UPDATE ON LOCAL AUTHORITY MAJOR SCHEME PROGRESS

Updates were provided for each Local Authority area:-

Cheshire East Council

- **Sydney Road Bridge Improvement**-now completed with the official opening ceremony taking place on 4 September 2019.
- **Congleton Link Road**-Scheme progressing. Major earthworks continued until mid-November and work had continued on the construction of several major structures including a crossing of the Rive Dane.
- **Poynton Relief Road**-The procurement process had been concluded and Graham Construction had been appointed as the

design and build contractor for the scheme. The Final Business Case has been approved for submission to the DfT. Subject to DfT's approval of the final business case and the expected satisfactory resolution of the high court challenge, work was expected to commence on site in spring/summer 2020 and the road opening in 2021.

- **Middlewich Eastern Bypass**-Detailed ground investigation was now about to commence imminently after a slight delay due to the very wet weather. A contractor has been identified to deliver the scheme via a construction framework arrangement and the current programme (subject to completion of statutory processes and final funding approvals) is for the main works to start in 2021, with an estimated 30-month construction period.
- **North West Crewe Package**-A contractor has been identified to deliver the highway scheme via a construction framework arrangement and once the two housing planning approvals were achieved, a detailed programme could be published (subject to completion of statutory processes and final funding approvals).
- **A500 Dualling**-Work currently progressing includes land acquisition negotiations and early discussions with the newly appointed design consultant.

Cheshire West & Chester Council

- **A51 Tarvin to Chester Improvement Scheme**-Construction on the main components to commence in Summer 2020 with a Spring 2021 completion date.
- **Sutton Way Boulevard Pedestrian and Cycling Improvements**-Construction commenced in November 2019, with completion scheduled for March 2020.
- **Winnington Swing Bridge/A533 Corridor Improvements**-Consultancy support for this development funding allocation has now been procured and key outputs would be delivered no later than 31 March 2020.
- **Hooton-Helsby**-Work progressing due to be completed by the end of March 2020.
- **Middlewich Rail Study Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC)**-Scheduled for completion in March 2020
- **Middlewich Southern Link Feasibility Study**
- **Funding Stream: Provisional Local Growth Fund 3 (LGF 3) Allocations-Additional Pedestrian and Cycling Improvements**-Two further pedestrian and walking schemes with provisional LGF fund allocations were being developed by CW&CC, which would be taken to future CWLEP P&I Board meetings for full approval early in the New Year. These were the A5117 and Chester and Ellesmere Port canal tow path improvements.
- **Future Funding Stream Opportunity: Local Pinch Point Programme**-The Budget 2018 announced a competitive fund for local authorities to bid for high-impact schemes to help address congestion pinch points and to reduce congestion on local roads.

The fund was £150 million in total, with £75 million in each financial year 2021/2022 and 2022/2023. The DfT had advised what eligible type of projects should include.

- **Future Funding Stream Opportunity: Challenge Fund Programme**-Outcomes awaited regarding bid submissions made by CW&CC.
- **Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)**-CW&CC have now appointed WSP to develop an LCWIP for the borough. The consultation exercise commenced late December 2019 with formal adoption to take place in Spring 2020.

Warrington Borough Council

- **Waterfront Western Link**-Submission case back to Government in late 2022, with any construction stage subject to DfT approval starting in mid-2023 for a period of circa 3 years.
- **M62 Junction 8-Local Growth Fund**-Completed.
- **Warrington East Ph1-Local Growth Fund**-Completed.
- **Centre Park Link-Local Growth Fund**-On site.
- **Warrington West Station-Local Growth Fund**-Opened 15 December 2020.
- **Warrington East-Phases 2&3-Local Growth Fund**-Phase 2 complete and Phase 3 almost completed. Opening ceremony was planned for 13 January 2020.
- **Sustainable Transport Project-Access Fund-Local Growth Fund**-This project proposed the addition or upgrade of three important links on the Warrington strategic cycling and walking network.
- **Omega Local Highways-Local Growth Fund**-Phase 1 construction planned to commence March 2020. Phase 2b construction planned to commence in early 2020. Phases 2a/2c complete. Phase 3b construction has commenced and phase 3c in development.

41 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED

That the date of the next meeting take place on 17 April 2020.

Prior to the close of the meeting it was agreed that Councillor H Mundry be appointed as Vice Chairman of the Cheshire & Warrington Local Transport Body.

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Cheshire & Warrington Local Transport Body

Date of Meeting: Friday 26 March 2021
Report of: Steve Hunter – Transport for Warrington Service Manager
Subject/Title: Northern Powerhouse Rail Update

1. Report Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update on progress made by Transport for the North (TfN) and the Department for Transport (DfT) who have jointly commissioned business case work for Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR). A brief summary is provided below of the main aims and objectives of NPR below and recent progress and current issues are described in Section 2. Section 3 updates on the Integrated Rail Plan and the Implications of National Infrastructure Commission Rail Needs Assessment for Cheshire and Warrington. This is followed by a summary of the key issues impacting on Cheshire and Warrington in Section 4. The recommendations are then summarised in Section 5. Finally, Appendix A shows the emerging vision for the NPR network, which is taken from the TfN Strategic Transport Plan.
- 1.2 Northern Powerhouse Rail is a programme to deliver a transformed rail network in the North of England and bring new opportunities to millions of people and businesses. Featuring a mix of new and significantly upgraded railway lines, it will increase the capacity, speed and resilience of the North's rail network. In doing so, passengers will experience faster and far more reliable journeys between the North's economies and its largest international airport at Manchester.
- 1.3 Northern Powerhouse Rail is the centrepiece of Transport for the North's Strategic Transport Plan and Investment Programme. A Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) for the network has now been backed by civic and business leaders from across the North following its approval by TfN Board in February 2019. Further to this during 2020 and 2021 this has been developed into a Strategic Outline Case (SOC) for the scheme. Further details of this are reported below.

2 Recent Progress / Current Issues

- 2.1 A Draft Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) was submitted to Government following approval at the TfN Board meeting held in February 2019. Further work is underway on a revised version of this SOBC, which is to be referred to as a Strategic Outline Case (SOC) – the final version of this was intended to be submitted to Government by the end of March 2021, however following recent

discussions between the Department for Transport and Transport for the North and a decision made at the TfN Board the completion and submission of the SOC is to be delayed so it can reflect the **Integrated Rail Plan**, which is expected to be published by the Government in Spring 2021.

2.2 The intention is for this **Strategic Outline Case to present a 'clear preferred option' for a NPR network across the North of England**. Work is progressing well to shortlist route options and then arrive at a preferred option. Officers are very closely involved in this work. The choice of preferred option for both the Liverpool to Manchester via Warrington section and also the inclusion of the Crewe North Connection will both be critical issues for Cheshire and Warrington to monitor closely.

3. **Integrated Rail Plan and Implications of National Infrastructure Commission Rail Needs Assessment for Cheshire and Warrington**

3.1 The publication by Government of an Integrated Rail Plan for the Midlands and North of England was originally planned prior to the end of 2020. It is now anticipated to be published in Spring 2021.

3.2 This Integrated Rail Plan (IRP) will be of immense importance to all parts of the Midlands and the North of England as it is expected it will determine a future programme and phasing for the delivery of all parts of HS2, Northern Powerhouse Rail and equivalent transformational rail improvement proposals made by Midlands Connect for the area they cover.

3.3 To assist with the preparation of the IRP, the Government asked the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) to provide it with advice to help them in its preparation. The NIC published its Rail Needs Assessment on 15th December 2020, which set out a range of options for how improvements should potentially be phased.

3.4 The NIC advice has not been well received by Transport for the North and all of its members as none of the options presented would allow HS2 and NPR to be delivered in full, which is of serious concern. A key aspect which governed the advice the NIC has given to Government is the 'Fiscal Remit or Envelope' which the NIC has set out in its National Infrastructure Assessment to Government which is based on recommended levels of spending on major infrastructure projects.

3.5 What is **positive for Cheshire and Warrington** is that in all of the options in the NIC report it is taken as a given that HS2 Phase 1 and 2A (London – Birmingham – Crewe) and HS2 Phase 2B from Crewe to Manchester will all be delivered in full. Further to this in October 2020, the Government announced that it is looking to bring forward a hybrid bill for Phase 2B from Crewe to Manchester by early 2022.

3.6 Further to this as part of the October 2020 announcement, the Government confirmed that following the 2019 HS2 Design Refinement Consultation that the Hoo Green / High Legh 'touchpoints' to allow NPR to connect to HS2 and serve Warrington and Liverpool are to be included in the aforementioned hybrid bill.

- 3.7 It was also announced at this time that a further HS2 Design Refinement Consultation would take place which would look at the adjustments to include the Crewe North Connection and Depot at Wimboldsley, both so critical to Cheshire and Warrington. This consultation closed in December 2020.
- 3.8 In order to protect the interests of the North of England, including Cheshire and Warrington, by securing a transformational improvement in rail infrastructure and services via HS2 and NPR, Transport for the North at its recent meeting held on 18th February 2021 confirmed its Initial Preferred Network and followed this by issuing Statutory Advice to Government, which it is intended they will take into account in the preparation of the Integrated Rail Plan.
- 3.9 **This further emphasises the importance of the Integrated Rail Plan and its publication is keenly awaited.**
- 3.10 What is critical for Cheshire and Warrington is that TfN have very clearly expressed a view that NPR and HS2 Phase 2B are delivered in full and it will be very important for Cheshire and Warrington to ensure that delivery of parts of NPR which are of direct benefit to us: i.e. NPR from the HS2 touchpoints at High Legh to Warrington and Liverpool and the Crewe Northern Connection are not delayed as a result of any announcement on Manchester to Leeds and that they are considered along with the western leg of HS2 Phase 2B from Crewe to Manchester.
- 3.11 Officers are monitoring this work closely and ensuring that Cheshire and Warrington's interests are taken fully into account. Some of the key issues for Cheshire and Warrington are summarised in Section 4 which follows.

4. Northern Powerhouse Rail – Key Issues for Cheshire and Warrington

- 4.1 These can be summarised as follows:
- The need to ensure that Cheshire and Warrington derives the maximum possible benefit from the NPR proposals;
 - That the Crewe North Connection is now being considered as part of NPR, this has important implications for both HS2 Phases 2A and 2B. The timing of the delivery of works to enable this connection and the delivery of this connection itself are key issues. It will be vital to secure the inclusion of this connection in the Integrated Rail Plan;
 - Related to this that the NPR, HS2 and Network Rail invest in the respective networks to ensure service patterns and connectivity are maximised from the Crewe Hub, with 5 to 7 high speed trains per hour on both the HS2 and NPR networks and, in so doing, provide wider access to the high speed network for other locations not served by NPR and HS2;
 - That delivery of NPR from High Legh to Warrington and Liverpool is considered for delivery with HS2 Phase 2B western leg from Crewe to Manchester;
 - That a station for Warrington should be included in NPR in a central location with all NPR services calling at that station and the opportunity is taken to increase the number of HS2 services calling at Warrington, with all London to Liverpool services calling there as well

as ensuring that the 5 to 7 high speed services stop at Crewe as part of the HS2 service patterns at Crewe Hub and for those to be subsequently maintained at Crewe Hub when NPR is delivered;

- That connectivity into the NPR network for Cheshire West and Chester and North Wales is maximised;
- That officers continue to monitor progress closely on NPR, in particular the Liverpool to Manchester Airport and Piccadilly via Warrington section and ensure that Cheshire and Warrington's interests are fully taken into account.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 That the CWLTB notes both the progress made to date by the Department for Transport and Transport for the North in the preparation of a Draft Strategic Outline Case for Northern Powerhouse Rail and that the publication of this will follow on from the publication by Government of the Integrated Rail Plan in order that the SOC reflects its contents.
- 5.2 That the CWLTB notes the key issues for Cheshire and Warrington with regard to the Northern Powerhouse Rail proposals.
- 5.3 That updates on both of these matters will be provided at future meetings of the CWLTB.

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Cheshire & Warrington Local Transport Body

Date of Meeting: Friday 10 January 2020
Report of: Steve Hunter – Transport for Warrington Service Manager
Subject/Title: Transport for the North Update

1. Report Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update on progress made with Transport for the North (TfN). It follows on from a series of written reports considered by LTB meetings held over the last 5 years since the formation of TfN. A brief summary is provided of progress on a number of the work streams in this report and further updates will be reported verbally at the meeting.
- 1.2 The recommendations follow in Section 2 of this report.
- 1.3 Section 3 briefly lists other TfN work streams on which a verbal update will be provided on progress at the meeting. A link is provided within this section to the papers of the most recent TfN Board meeting, which took place on Thursday 18th February 2021. A more recent meeting will have taken place on Wednesday 24th March which can be reported on verbally at this meeting as at the time of writing the papers are not yet available.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the CWLTB note the Transport for the North developments and continuing activities:
1. On the 1st April 2018 TfN became the first **Sub-National Transport Body with statutory powers** (which were awarded under the powers set out in the 2016 Cities and Local Devolution Act);
 2. That membership of TfN consists of the 20 Local Transport / Combined Authorities across the North of England and that therefore Warrington Borough, Cheshire West and Chester and Cheshire East Councils are all members, following the consent given by all of them during 2017.
 3. That the Cheshire and Warrington LEP is also a co-opted member of TfN.
 4. That the Local Enterprise Partnership and all three Local Transport Authorities across Cheshire and Warrington are fully represented on the TfN Partnership Board, TfN Board (Members and LEPs) and Executive Board (Local Transport Authority Officers) by Roy Newton (LEP) Cllr Hans Mundry (Warrington Borough Council), Cllr Louise Gittens (Cheshire West and Chester Council) and Cllr Craig Browne (Cheshire

East Council). Further to this an officer from each of the three authorities sits on the TfN Executive Board.

5. That the LTB notes progress made on all of the TfN work streams as listed and briefly summarised in Section 3 of this report.

3. Work Streams

3.1 Work continues on a considerable number of work streams. TfN is progressing all of these in partnership with the Department for Transport, Highways England, High Speed 2 Limited and Network Rail with considerable support provided by local authority officers from across the North including from across Cheshire and Warrington. A verbal update on progress made on these other work streams is to be provided at the meeting:

- a) Comprehensive Spending Review and Funding Settlement
- b) Investment Programme Benefits Analysis
- c) Strategic Transport Plan
- d) Strategic Rail – (Northern Powerhouse Rail is covered in a separate report)
- e) Decarbonisation Strategy
- f) Electric Vehicle Infrastructure
- g) Strategic Road Network / Major Road Network /Large Local Major Schemes
- h) Integrated and Smart Travel – programme closure
- i) Stakeholder Engagement and Communications

3.2 Further detailed information on the TfN Board and a number of these work streams can be found in the papers for the most recent TfN Board meeting. There is also a link below to details of the TfN Board:

- Details of the TfN Board can be found at:
[Our Board - Transport for the North - Transport for the North](#)
- Papers from the most recent meeting of the TfN Board held on 18th February 2021:
[Board Meeting | 18 February 2021 | Transport for the North - Transport for the North](#)



Cheshire & Warrington Local Transport Body

Date of Meeting: Friday 26 March 2021
Report of: Kristy Littler
Subject/Title: Cheshire West and Chester Council Scheme Update

1. Report Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update on progress made by Cheshire West and Chester Council (CW&CC) on transport schemes.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Cheshire & Warrington Local Transport Body note the progress made by CW&CC on the programme of schemes described in this report.

3. Funding Stream: Local Growth Fund 3 (LGF3) – A51 Tarvin to Chester Improvement Scheme

- 3.1 The A51 is a part of both the Department for Transport (DfT) and Transport for the North's (TfN) Major Road Network. It is a busy route carrying commuter, freight and residential traffic, with the road suffering from frequent and severe congestion throughout the day. As a key strategic link between North Wales, Chester, Crewe, Northwich and Winsford, the A51 also serves as an important network for freight services and is a critical route for both high and heavy abnormal loads. The A51 is central to the TfN West and Wales Strategic Development corridor where significant economic and population growth is forecast; increasing demand and pressures on transport infrastructure.
- 3.2 The cost of the scheme is circa £7.029m, consisting of £3.663m from Local Growth Fund and £3.366m match funding from CW&CC. The Council is using the SCAPE framework to deliver the scheme.
- 3.3 Steel bridge deck/structure frame and beams are being installed across the pillar cappings, with the wingwalls and deck being cast on site. Despite the site being situated within a Flood Plan Level 3 Risk Area, works progressed during adverse flooding in February 2021.
- 3.4 The Tarvin roundabout improvement works are progressing to schedule, with temporary traffic management deployed.

- 3.5 The dedicated website below is updated with scheme progress, <https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/transport-and-roads/highways/major-road-schemes/a51-tarvin-to-chester-improvement-scheme.aspx>
4. **Funding Stream: Local Growth Fund 3 (LGF3) Access Schemes – A5117 Pedestrian and Cycling Improvements**
- 4.1 The business case for the A5117 pedestrian and cycling improvement scheme was approved by the CWLEP P&I Board, in February 2020. The A5117 cycle route (National Cycle Route 5) is a 4.5 km cycleway that links Ellesmere Port and Chester (via the existing canal towpath at Cheshire Oaks) with Thornton Science Park, Essar Stanlow Oil Refinery, Encirc and new strategic Portus cluster employment site encompassing energy intensive industries. The cycle route significantly increases access from employment catchment areas, to the Ellesmere Port Industrial Area along the A5117.
- 4.2 Works commenced in September 2020 upgrading the existing signalised traffic junction at Pool Lane with a new controlled toucan crossing for pedestrians and cyclists. Unfortunately, during the current Covid 19 pandemic, work halted on site for a period to enable the Cheshire Oaks Peak Traffic Management Plan to be deployed and to ensure that works on this major route did not impinge on the [then] predicted increase in retail activity during the 2020 Christmas period.
- 4.3 The scheme will cost £1.044m, consisting of £699,537 LGF and £344,548 match funding from the Council. Ringway Infrastructure Services Limited; our highways maintenance contractor, have been appointed to construct the scheme.
- 4.4 A dedicated website has been set up, which provides scheme progress and drawings: <https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/transport-and-roads/highways/major-road-schemes/A5117-cycle-improvement-scheme.aspx>
5. **Funding Stream: Local Growth Fund 3 (LGF3) Access Schemes – Chester to Ellesmere Port Canal Towpath Pedestrian and Cycling Improvements**
- 5.1 The business case for the Chester to Ellesmere Port Canal Towpath scheme was approved by the CWLEP P&I Board, in February 2020. The towpath asset is well-used by commuters and leisure visitors. The Council holds some maintenance responsibilities along sections of the canal towpath, as such the Council has worked in partnership with the Canal and River Trust (CRT) on this scheme. This involved the refurbishment and upgrade of sections of the towpath to a shared use pedestrian and cycle way. The two parties have entered into a legal agreement which enables the scheme to be delivered by Kier, the CRT's fixed term contractor.
- 5.2 The route provides direct access to several key employment and development sites. These include; Chester Business Quarter, Railway Station, University of Chester (Parkgate Road campus), the Countess of Chester Hospital, New

Bridge Road and central Ellesmere Port and Cromwell Road. The scheme is now largely complete and both CW&CC and the CRT are working with Sustrans and stakeholders to seek additional funding opportunities for upgrading some of the remaining sections along the wider corridor.

- 5.3 A dedicated website has been set up, which provides scheme progress and location plans:

<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/transport-and-roads/highways/major-road-schemes/chester-to-ellesmere-port-canal-towpath.aspx>

- 5.4 The total scheme value is £1.22m, consisting of £460,000 Local Growth Fund contribution and £760,000 match funding from the Council and developer contributions.

6. Funding Stream: Development Funding – Business Case Development: Winnington Swing Bridge/A533 Corridor Improvements

- 6.1 CW&CC procured professional consultancy support (Aecom) for this development funding allocation to assess capacity improvements on the A533 corridor between Northwich and Winnington / Barnton. Key outputs include: -

- Design option development and production of preferred design options for the swing bridge improvements and any mitigation measures required along the A533 corridor.
- Supporting microsimulation model report of potential solutions and assessment of the impact of intervention.
- Outline delivery programme for the scheme and associated mitigation proposals.
- Outline costing of scheme proposals; and
- The preparation of a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) leading to the preparation of a full Outline Business Case (OBC), in accordance with DfT's Five Case Business Case and webTAG guidance.

- 6.2 A draft SOBC was completed in Q4 2020. This has been shared with lead officers and Cabinet Members. Local Members have also been briefed at a District Advisory Panel meeting in late February 2021. Work to progress the OBC is continuing with Ground Investigations and Environmental Surveys taking place during March and a programme of stakeholder engagement scheduled for April. It is anticipated that the draft OBC will be finalised in late spring 2021. Recommendations will also impact on the Council's ongoing dialogue with developers relating to housing development aspirations proposed for the TATA site. A planning application for this site is currently anticipated to be submitted to the Council by Q4 2021.

7. Funding Stream: Development Funding – Business Case Development: Middlewich Southern Link Feasibility Study

- 7.1 CW&CC are a key stakeholder in relation to this initiative, which has been commissioned by Cheshire East Council. The draft SOBC was completed in Autumn 2020. Discussions will be undertaken with CEC and the LEP to seek agreement on how this will be progressed further during 2021.

8 Funding Stream: Development Funding – Business Case Development: Ellesmere Port Industrial Area

- 8.1 Since the original bid was submitted in January 2020 the Council in partnership with Cheshire and Warrington LEP has been working with a consultant team from Savills and WSP on the Ellesmere Port Industrial Area Development and Infrastructure Investment Framework (DIIF).
- 8.2 This DIIF has been developed through close consultation with key stakeholders at Ellesmere Port, including major landowners, occupiers, businesses, and public sector organisations including the Council and LEP. This ensures the scheme meets with genuine local priorities and demonstrates how our local stakeholders are already working together to develop high-value proposals for funding local priorities.
- 8.3 The consultation process has included a range of one on one stakeholder interviews, presentations and meetings with the main business forums and development board for the area; supplemented with an online survey of businesses in the area. The commission has engaged with stakeholders, recognising the importance of canvassing their views and ambitions for the future of this diverse and interesting geography.
- 8.4 The Framework is in its final stages of development and will be finalised in the coming months.

9. Funding Stream Cheshire West and Chester: Hooton – Helsby Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC)

- 9.1 CW&CC commissioned an SOBC for public transport improvement between Hooton and Helsby. The SOBC identifies options to provide better connectivity, both locally to businesses in the study area, and to/from the economic centres of Chester, Liverpool, Manchester, Runcorn and Warrington.
- 9.2 The SOBC has been completed, recommending a rail scheme as the preferred solution and aims to provide the necessary evidence to go through the 'Decision to Develop' gate on the DfT's Rail Network Enhancement Delivery Pipeline (RNEP). The report has been presented to the DfT and Network Rail and guidance on the way forward is awaited from the DfT.

10. Funding Stream: Cheshire West and Chester: Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

- 10.1 The Council's LCWIP was approved in July 2020. Work has now commenced to progress the delivery of the LCWIP. Initial schemes have been identified to take advantage of the Government's Active Travel Fund. The Council is also setting aside an annual budget of circa £100,00 from the Integrated Block to advance LCWIP walking and cycling schemes.

11. Funding award: Challenge Fund Programme

- 11.1 On 24 July 2019 the DfT announced that a further tranche of the challenge fund will be available for 2019 to 2020 and 2020 to 2021, with a total of £198 million

on offer. Local authorities were able to bid for projects that will carry out improvements to the quality of roads and surrounding infrastructure, including bridges and viaducts, to benefit the local economy and make driving safer.

- 11.2 CW&CC made bid submissions by the prescribed deadline of 31 October 2019, relating to Winnington Swing Bridge and Hartford Bridge. An application for maintenance works for the existing Winnington Swing Bridge application was approved. Work has now been completed and the bridge has been strengthened to extend its life for a period of a further five years.

12. Rural Mobility Fund:

- 12.1 An expression of interest submission was made in June 2020 for the DfT Rural Mobility Fund (RMF). In January 2021, an announcement was made that this submission had been selected for a short list to be taken forward as a RMF bid. On 15th March 2021, the government announced that this bid for £1.075m was successful.

- 12.2 The aims of proposal include:

- improving connectivity and encouraging inclusive independent lifestyles for residents of all ages and groups in the trial area, through bringing together peoples' needs and supporting objectives of the CW&C Local Transport Plan;
- trial use of demand responsive flexible public transport services providing; links with existing services for onward travel or for end to end journeys, reviewing current criteria that restricts use of existing transport services towards making them available to all, making use of down-time of vehicles across operators (commercial, public and third sector) and of pooling services to better serve communities are the envisaged solutions

- 12.3 The trial is based upon Helsby, Frodsham and surrounding rural communities including Kingsley, Crowton, Acton Bridge, Norley, Hatchmere, Oakmere, Flaxmere, Commonside, Delamere, Manley, Mouldsworth, Alvanley, Hapsford, Ince & Elton.

13. Active Travel Fund: Tranche 2

- 13.1 The Council has secured funding from the Government's Active Travel Fund to build a number of cycling improvements identified and supported as priorities in the Council's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).

- 13.2 Two schemes are proposed in the Northwich area, a third is proposed to improve links between Helsby and Frodsham. The Council consulted with the public on these schemes during January and February 2021. Over 700 local people have had their say on the proposals. 93% of responses were from local residents and 7% of people responding were part of a cycling group. The Council are now reviewing the results and investigating any design refinements required as a result of the consultation process,

14. Chester E Scooter trial

- 14.1 An E-scooter scheme in Chester was launched as part of a 12- month DfT trial. The scheme is part of an effort to ease the pressure on local public transport services during the COVID-19 pandemic, the DfT wants to explore how e-scooters can complement existing transport options, especially for short trips. As such, the initiative aims to encourage greener travel methods for shorter journeys; reducing pressure on public transport services during the COVID-19 pandemic and helping to tackle climate change.
- 14.2 The trial scheme is run by e-scooter provider Ginger in partnership with Cheshire West and Chester Council and is an additional complimentary measure to help those people; eligible to use the scheme, to get around in a safe, COVID-19 secure manner.
- 14.3 The trial of e-scooters has been operational since the 21 December 2020, with approximately 40 e-scooters available for hire at 26 dock less parking locations; available throughout the City. Journeys are booked using the Ginger Shared Transport App. The e-scooters are being introduced in a phased approach to gradually increase the service area and the number of e-scooters available.
- 14.4 Since the beginning of the pilot in December, over 9,600 journeys were taken, with a total of 29,234 miles travelled on e-scooters, and more than 3,055 local users have registered to access the e-scooters. The average journey distance is 3 miles per journey with an average journey time of 38 minutes
- 14.5 Further information and answers to Frequently Asked Questions can be found on the following link:
<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/transport-and-roads/highways/major-road-schemes/e-scooters/chester-e-scooter-rental-trial.aspx>