



# Cheshire and Warrington Local Transport Body Agenda

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**Date:** Friday, 21st September, 2018  
**Time:** 10.00 am  
**Venue:** Council Chamber, Municipal Buildings, Earle Street, Crewe  
CW1 2BJ

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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. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies for Absence**

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

### **2. Declarations of Interest**

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

### **3. Minutes of Previous meeting (Pages 5 - 8)**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2018 and to consider any matters arising.

### **4. Public Speaking Time/Open Session**

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For requests for further information

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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.

5. **Transport Strategy Consultation** (Pages 9 - 42)

To consider a report on the Transport Strategy Consultation.

6. **Transport for the North Update** (Pages 43 - 44)

To consider an update on Transport for the North.

7. **NPR Update**

To receive a verbal update on the NPR.

8. **HS2 Update**

To receive a verbal update on HS2.

9. **Golborne Link Update**

To receive a verbal update on the Golborne Link.

10. **Crewe Hub Update**

To receive a verbal update on the Crewe Hub.

11. **Mid-Cheshire Line Study Update**

To receive a verbal update on the Mid-Cheshire Line Study.

12. **Department for Transport Update**

To receive a verbal update on the Department for Transport.

13. **Update on Major Scheme Progress**

To receive verbal updates from each local authority on progress of their major schemes.

14. **Any Other Appropriate Business**

15. **Date of Next Meeting**

To confirm the date of the next meeting will be on Friday 21 December 2018 in Chester.

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**CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL****Minutes of a meeting of the Cheshire and Warrington Local Transport  
Body**

held on Friday, 22nd June, 2018 in The Council Chamber -Town Hall, Sankey  
Street, Warrington WA1 1UH

**PRESENT**

Mr P Waterman (Chairman)

Councillor B Clarke (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Rachel Bailey, H Mundry, Newton, Ross, Boyer and Mr B Parker -  
Highways England

Andrew Ross - Cheshire East Council

Cherry Foreman - Cheshire East Council

**Councillors in attendance**

Lynn Gibbon - Cheshire West and Chester Council

Mike Parsons - Cheshire East Council

Bernice Walmsley - Cheshire East Council

**1 WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Philip Cox (CWLEP), Lisa Harris (CWAC) and Richard Perry (DfT).

**2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 April 2018 were approved as a correct record.

**4 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION**

No members of the public wished to address the meeting.

**5 SUB-REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY**

Members were advised that this consultation on this was ongoing and there had been a range of stakeholder events at key locations, the aim being to have an event in each geographic area. A number of useful comments had already been taken on board such as the inclusion of more detail for walking and cycling. People were keen to see delivery and improvements in their local areas.

The part to be played by public transport was discussed and it was reported that Manchester Airport was particularly interested in it for both users of the airport and its workers. The continuing increase in businesses located in and around the airport also reinforced the need for improved public transport links.

## RESOLVED

That a full update on the consultation responses and how they can be acted upon be prepared for the next meeting.

## 6 MID CHESHIRE AND MIDDLEWICH RAILWAY LINES STUDY

Consideration was given to this report and to the comments received at the first Stakeholder Group meeting on 30 May; the main comments of the Group were detailed. Recent advice from the DfT was that the study should aim to produce a strategic outline business case and discussions were currently taking place with CE and CWAC Councils to consider the potential funding implications arising from this.

In addition there was a new process by which the DfT would fund rail enhancements, as described at the last meeting. It remained unclear as to how much funding was available from the DfT to fund improvements and also their guidance indicated the need for local contribution. It was suggested that an additional section on finance and funding be added into the study brief in order to facilitate a wider discussion and also that the brief, with a covering letter of explanation on the ongoing difficulties, be shared with local MPs.

## RESOLVED

That an additional section on finance and funding be added to the study brief and, once updated to reflect the comments of the Stakeholder Group, it also be shared with local MPs.

## 7 RAIL UPDATE

Updates were given as follows:

### 1. Northern Rail

In the light of current issues with the timetable and service limitations, and the contributing factors regarding lack of drivers and appropriately skilled workers, consideration was given to how the position could be improved in the long term. Whilst taking into account historic working arrangements on the railways, and union influences, it was **AGREED** that a request be sent to the LEP for it to do all within its power to influence and improve the skill set available, to encourage and support young people into appropriate training, and to affect a change in the provision of skills and training within the railway industry.

### 2. West and Wales Prospectus

Members were advised that work on this was continuing and would be the subject of a report to a future meeting. Improvements to both the passenger services and rail infrastructure were being considered. CWAC was preparing a business case for improving Chester Railway Station.

### 3. HS2 Phase 2b

Engagement meetings were being held across the area with further consultations to be held in the autumn on environmental impact. The

importance of capitalising on the associated work which would need to be carried out to the existing network to support these aspects was stressed.

#### 4. HS2 Crewe Hub

It was reported that the Bill for this was currently going through the House of Commons. Proposals to use currently disused platforms at Crewe were being explored and planning for the construction, to include a new road bridge, had begun although a funding gap remained.

### 8 **TFN UPDATE**

It was noted that the LEP and each of the three transport authorities had places on the Partnership Board. The TfN Strategic Transport Plan had been completed and the responses analysed. A scrutiny committee had been established to review the report and was due to meet on 30 August. It was expected that it would then be refined and published in December along with its associated investment plan. Work was ongoing on the West and Wales Strategic Development Corridor and on the outline business case for Northern Powerhouse Rail.

### 9 **UPDATE ON MAJOR SCHEME PROGRESS**

#### **HIGHWAYS ENGLAND**

- Positive feedback had been received on improvements to the Croft Interchange/M62. This was a pilot scheme to install traffic signals on the slip roads and would be assessed for its potential for use elsewhere
- M6 J16-19 smart motorway upgrade was on track and due to be operational in March 2019
- Increasing the average speed limit from 50mph to 60mph in motorway roadworks was being trialled with a view to extending its use on a case-by-case basis
- M62 J10/12 contract had been awarded and work was due to start at the end of the year
- M56 J8-10 and M6 J26 work was due to start at the end of the year

#### **CHESHIRE WEST AND CHESTER**

- A51 Tarvin/Chester funding was being sought with the case to be submitted early next year. A new roundabout at the entrance to Chester to be funded by Highways England was also being discussed
- Examination of the CWAC Local Plan Part 2 was due to start in September

#### **WARRINGTON**

- J8/M62 improvements had been completed
- Work at Omega was continuing
- Birchwood highway improvements were due to commence
- The Centre Park Link would begin in the autumn
- Western Link was still being considered by the DfT
- Warrington West Station was ongoing and progressing well

## **CHESHIRE EAST**

- Work on Crewe Green and the Sydney Road Bridge were ongoing
- The preferred contractor for Congleton Link Road was due to be announced that day with work due to begin in early 2019
- Public Examination of the Poynton Relief Road Scheme had now been set for late November
- The planning application for Middlewich Bypass was due to be submitted shortly
- A500 Dualling business case would be submitted to the DfT this week with work on the planning application continuing. Its importance as a construction corridor over the next few years was noted
- Funding to support the provision of 850 houses in Crewe had been received

## **10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that the next meeting be held on Friday 21 September 2018 in the Municipal Building, Crewe.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 11.35 am

Councillor Mr P Waterman (Chairman)



## Cheshire & Warrington Local Transport Body

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**Date of Meeting:** Friday 21 September 2018  
**Report of:** Roy Newton  
**Subject/Title:** Sub-Regional Transport Strategy Consultation Report

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### 1. Background

- 1.1. The draft sub-regional transport strategy is one of a number of plans being developed which set out in more detail how priorities of the Strategic Economic Plan will be delivered.
- 1.2. Transport and connectivity is central to achieving Cheshire and Warrington's aspirations for growth and supporting economic development, in particular to the spatial priorities. Effective transport networks will be crucial for the continued success of the sub region as an attractive place in which to live and do business.
- 1.3. The draft strategy:
  - summarises the economic and spatial context;
  - analyses existing accessibility and travel patterns;
  - identifies transport challenges which need to be tackled to support achievement of the SEP objectives;
  - describes potential key design principles;
  - sets out how the sub-region could address the challenges; and
  - proposes transport infrastructure priorities
- 1.4. Engagement with stakeholders has been a key component of the development of the strategy, providing an opportunity for stakeholders to input and sense check the various elements of the strategy.

### 2. Stakeholder Engagement

- 2.1. Stakeholder engagement on the draft strategy was undertaken from Monday 14 May for 12 weeks, though some comments were received after this period and have also been taken into account. A targeted engagement process was undertaken to avoid stakeholder fatigue and also make best use of available resources. It made use of existing meetings and events, and utilised electronic methods of communication, including:
  - Emailing a copy of the strategy to those organisations engaged during the development of the SEP together with the transport organisations engaged

by Transport for the North as part of their Strategic Transport Plan consultation;

- Placing a copy of the draft strategy on the LEP website;
- Creating a new LEP email address specifically for consultation responses;
- Advertising the launch of the draft strategy through a press release;
- Undertaking one event in each Borough open to the general public similar to the approach used for the SEP; and
- Presentation/discussion of the draft strategy was also undertaken with the following organisations:
  - Cheshire Business Leaders; and
  - Cheshire Association of Local Councils

### **3. Responses**

3.1. Responses have been received from 4 events, 28 organisations and 5 individuals. The main messages are:

- Broad support for the aims of the strategy;
- Support for improving east-west corridors (both road and rail);
- Support for including schemes and identifying short, medium and long-term infrastructure;
- Calls for:
  - more emphasis on improving infrastructure for walking and cycling
  - better bus and rail services;
  - taking more account of the needs of motorcyclists;
  - improving access to Manchester and Liverpool airports;
  - improving rail stations (increasing parking, new stations and improving facilities);
  - focussing on off-peak trips as well as peak trips especially for tourism
  - improving bus journeys – ticketing, real time info, adapting to changing work patterns/demand, serving rural communities;
  - more delivery/quick wins;
  - taking older users more into account – better public transport (access to hospitals and towns, evening services, conveniently located bus stops, more seating at waiting areas, working lifts at stations) plus more parking for families and carers visiting older people;
  - including the role waterways can play in supporting walking and cycling;
- Support for tackling pinch points and highway corridor improvements, particularly along A49, A50, A51, A54 and A537;
- Concerns over ability to fund delivery of the identified infrastructure; and
- Concerns over ability to accommodate transport impacts of development.

### **4. Proposed Changes to the Strategy**

4.1. The comments received have been a mixture of general and specific. Some were simple statements which require no changes to the document. Most of the comments were supportive of the overall direction of the strategy hence fundamental changes are not proposed, however there were a number of suggestions which it is considered would strengthen the strategy. It is

therefore proposed that the strategy be amended to reflect the key issues raised above. The consultation report attached at Annex A sets out the responses and proposed changes for each chapter of the strategy in more detail.

### **5. Next Steps**

- 5.1. Subject to agreement by the Local Transport Body, detailed drafting changes would be developed via the Transport Advisory Group and agreed with the Chief Executive of the LEP in consultation with the Chair of the Local Transport Body. The revised final draft of the sub-regional transport strategy would then be presented to the LEP Board for approval at its meeting on 17 October 2018.

### **6. Recommendation**

- 6.1. The Local Transport Body is asked to:
  - approve the proposed changes to the draft sub-regional transport strategy in principle; and
  - delegate approval of detailed drafting changes to the Chief Executive of the LEP in consultation with the Chair of the Local Transport Body.

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# Strategic Economic Plan Draft Transport Strategy

## Consultation Report

17<sup>th</sup> September 2018

## Quality information

Prepared by	Checked by	Verified by	Approved by
S Telford	R Newton		

## Revision History

Revision	Revision date	Details	Authorized	Name	Position

## Distribution List

# Hard Copies	PDF Required	Association / Company Name

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background to the Consultation

Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership has developed a draft Transport Strategy in support of its Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) to underpin the growth strategy for the sub-region.

The Draft Transport Strategy sets out how transport provision within Cheshire and Warrington should develop over the next 20 years. The proposal underpins the LEPs' objective of making the area a £50 billion a year economy by 2040 through a focus on identifying strategic transport priorities for the sub-region.

This report summarises the outputs of the stakeholder consultation that has been completed for the draft Transport Strategy.

### 1.2 Structure of Report

Following this introduction the following sections are covered

- An overview of the consultation exercise and approach for classifying and reporting on the analysis.
- An overview of the responses received
- Summary of comments made and recommended revisions
- The next steps for finalising the strategy

## 2. The Consultation

### 2.1 Purpose of the Consultation

The objectives of the consultation were:

- To seek informed, meaningful and constructive responses to help to shape the final strategy;
- To understand any concerns and objections; and
- To identify any potential areas and issues that were missing.

### 2.2 Consultation approach and methods of response

The views of stakeholders were sought through the following methods:

- Stakeholder events
- Written responses
- Email

A targeted engagement process was undertaken to avoid stakeholder fatigue and also make best use of available resources. It made use of existing meetings and events, and utilised electronic methods of communication, including:

- Emailing a copy of the strategy to those organisations engaged during the development of the SEP together with the transport organisations engaged by Transport for the North as part of their Strategic Transport Plan consultation;
- Placing a copy of the draft strategy on the LEP website;
- Creating a new LEP email address specifically for consultation responses;
- Advertising the launch of the draft strategy through a press release;
- Undertaking one event in each Borough open to the general public similar to the approach used for the SEP; and
- Presentation/discussion of the draft strategy was also undertaken with the following organisations:
  - Cheshire Business Leaders; and
  - Cheshire Association of Local Councils

Table 2.2 identifies the consultation events that were held within the consultation period.

**Table 2.2: Consultation Events**

Consultation Event	Date	Location
CHALC Transport Strategy Conference	12/06/2018	Canalside Conference Centre, Middlewich
Transport Strategy Consultation - Cheshire West	19/06/2018	The Queen hotel, Chester - Victoria Suite
Transport Strategy Consultation - Cheshire East	28/06/2018	Alderley Park, Alderley Edge, SK10 4TG - Helix Room 1&2
Transport Strategy Consultation - Warrington	29/06/2018	The Park Royal Hotel, Stretton, Warrington

## **2.3 What was asked**

Primarily sought views on

- Overall vision
- Transport challenges
- Infrastructure priorities

## **2.4 Our approach to classifying and reporting the analysis**

Looked to classify consultation responses

- General or
- Specific responses

Identify option for considering responses

- Log without further action
- Update strategy on the basis of comments
- Share consultation responses with other stakeholders

### **2.4.1 Dates and duration**

The consultation ran for 12 weeks; from 14<sup>th</sup> May to 6<sup>th</sup> August 2018. Owing to the summer holiday period, comments received up to the end of August have also been considered.

## 3. The Responses

### 3.1 Number of responses

Responses were received from 28 organisations and 5 individuals. The table below shows what proportion of responses were from the public, stakeholders or businesses.

**Table 3.1. Respondents**

Respondents	Total	%
Public responses	5	15
Stakeholder responses	23	70
Business responses	5	15
Total		

### 3.2 Methods of responding

Table 3.2 shows the number of responses that were received via email and letter.

**Table 3.1. Respondents**

Respondents	Total
Email	32
Letter	1
Total	33

Note: Excludes responses received at workshops

### 3.3 Events

One event was held in each Borough open to the general public similar to the approach used for the SEP and one event was held with the Cheshire Association of Local Councils.

Comments from events were logged and considered alongside written and email Responses

## 4. Summary of comments made and recommended revisions

### 4.1 Introduction

This section provides an overview of the responses to the consultation. It summarises comments made by stakeholders, members of the public and businesses and sets out the issues that have been commonly raised.

The comments received have been a mixture of general and specific. Some were simple statements which require no changes to the document. Most of the comments were supportive of the overall direction of the strategy hence fundamental changes are not recommended, however there were a number of suggestions which it is considered would strengthen the strategy.

In this section comments have been consolidated by theme and by relation to the relevant sections of the strategy. Within these themes comments have also been attributed to the proposed interventions referenced in the document where relevant.

### 4.2 Context for the strategy and existing transport challenges

#### 4.2.1 General Comments

Many respondents agreed that transport and connectivity will be central to achieving Cheshire and Warrington's aspirations for growth and supporting economic development, in particular to these spatial priorities and that effective transport networks will be crucial for the continued success of the sub region as an attractive place in which to live and do business. They agreed that the Transport Strategy should focus on enabling economic growth in the sub-region.

A number of respondents considered that the Transport Strategy presents a detailed view of most problems and suggests ways of dealing with them, but at present lacks the control and finance necessary. Several respondents considered devolution is important and that elected mayors can help bring money in e.g. Merseyside and Greater Manchester. There were also views that the strategy should reference the finite nature of land available and cover air quality. It was noted that the Strategy is until 2040, but suggested that what is needed is a short-term ambition to work on a number of problems, particularly those of the existing rail and road networks. Some respondents recommended that the transport challenges should include improving air quality, accommodating development growth without using the Green Belt, keeping gaps between settlements, accepting the importance of retaining agricultural land and taking the lorry licensing system into Local Authority control. They considered that the system is out of date and undemocratic as elected councillors cannot comment and there needs to be cumulative numbers available for planning considerations.

Other respondents pointed out that the Northern economy is dependent on, and that the strategy should take advantage of, the global imperative to transition to low carbon energy and transport solutions with the first imperative being for emissions reduction by improving the efficient and cost-effective movement of goods and people, and importantly improving the direct linkage (including capacity and reliability) between economic assets to enable the adoption of the most efficient (measured by time, energy and emissions - which all contribute to productivity and cost) mode and route for the end-to-end journey. It was suggested that this reinforces the need to resolve bottlenecks such as those on the 'last mile' to ports and airports which result in alternative longer journeys being chosen.

It was pointed out that the Cheshire and Warrington LEP area has many advantages simply due to its' geographical location. Key amongst those advantages are the opportunities

presented by its significant neighbours. Amongst those neighbours and within what should constitute a convenient commute, are Liverpool, Greater Manchester, Stockport, North Wales and of course Manchester Airport. Whilst one challenge is for LEPs to focus down on delivery in their local area, another is to reach out to neighbouring authorities to deliver wider and more comprehensively integrated infrastructure. One respondent agreed with analysis of the problem but questioned the will to resolve, suggesting that ideas be used from Manchester and Liverpool. A number of respondents made reference to links to adjacent sub-regions, especially North Wales and North Staffordshire and considered that some of the enhancements within Cheshire & Warrington will be of considerable value to these adjacent areas and hence there must be merit in engaging relevant authorities in such areas to vigorously support these proposals. Some respondents were concerned about the number of strategies and consultations and were keen to ensure that organisations speak to one another.

A number of respondents supported the references to transport being key to supporting housing growth and considered that to support sustainable economic growth throughout all sections of the economy, a range of housing types, tenures and locations need to be planned for and provided in urban, outer urban and rural locations. This was reinforced by one respondent considered that there are some people who would like to downsize and move closer to the shops and transport but there is nothing suitable currently available. One respondent commented that houses have already been built or allocated via Local Plans and that what is needed now is the infrastructure.

One respondent was particularly concerned about the ability of the transport network to accommodate proposed growth in Warrington. They were particularly concerned about loss of green belt and already congested roads and lack of public transport in south Warrington.

Several respondents were critical about the ability to deliver the strategy. They considered that things get talked about but don't happen. They suggest that the private sector is clambering to grow and that planning authorities need to say yes with the LEP then working with developers. A number of respondents expressed concern that they have seen little delivery since LEPs were formed eight years ago. They recognise that some schemes have been delivered, but those have mostly been schemes which were already "on the books". They question what the LEP can achieve in addition to what would have been achieved anyway.

Some respondents noted that the Transport Strategy is written to 2040 and whilst they appreciate the need to look far in advance for major schemes, they consider that that 20+ year horizon also serves to deflect attention away from the critical delivery impetus which must surely be the next 5 years. They consider that the interventions set for the next 5 years are invariably just studies or scheme development i.e. design consultation, business case etc. They assert that it may have been an acceptable position if the LEP had only just come into being, but it stands as an indictment when one considers that the 5 year horizon will coincide with the LEP having been in existence for almost 15 years. Other respondents considered that whilst the Strategy and interventions should be based on a long term economic plan, the infrastructure priorities should be flexible and adaptable to changing circumstances such as the allocation of land for development.

Several respondents raised the need to engage with private developers and landowners to make things happen. Others suggest helping planning committees to say "yes" to appropriate development and engaging with neighbours to deliver strategic cross boundary infrastructure. A number of respondents identified assembling the land necessary to enable development as a major obstacle and considered that it will be the larger landholdings which can more easily assemble useful packages of land and reduce the complexities associated with multiple ownerships. They suggested that it will also be the larger landholdings which have the ability to look beyond the piecemeal impacts and mitigations associated with small scale development, towards more comprehensive and strategic solutions. A number of respondents suggested that the LEP should increase engagement with local land owners

and private developers to assemble land ownership packages to enable development and infrastructure. They also suggested that the two concepts of developer led aspirations and best fit infrastructure improvements should not be seen as mutually exclusive - where aims align, the additional impetus which development funding and private developer delivery programmes can bring, should be seen as positive and helpful.

Other respondents concluded that if transportation infrastructure is the foundation of the Northern Powerhouse, then the many thousands of planning applications which will be necessary to deliver homes, schools, leisure, office etc. must surely be the individual and essential building bricks. They were concerned that local planning authorities review planning applications on a local basis and suggested that it would assist their considerations around the planning balance, if the LEP was to provide a consultation response on planning applications where the proposed development would deliver transport or sustainable travel enhancements towards achieving the LEP and wider aspirations. They consider that the LEP should provide an indication of support for planning applications which would potentially play a part in delivering wider economic growth aspirations for both the LEP area but also for wider Northern Powerhouse aspirations.

A number of respondents considered that the Strategy should appreciate the fact that the Green Belt is not empty land hanging around doing nothing, but a Green Lung and a source of food. This will be more important in the future, with climate change and Brexit affecting food security.

*Recommendation – the comments above are predominantly statements which do not require changes to the text within the strategy but should be considered by the LEP and local authorities when delivering the strategy.*

## 4.2.2 Innovation

Concern was expressed that a move to electric vehicles will have impacts upon the electricity supply network and also have environmental impacts e.g. they are 40% heavier than standard cars and will still create road side pollution from tyre wear, brake pads etc. It was recommended that people should still need to be encouraged to use cars less.

Given that the provision of fast charging points available to the public in Cheshire & Warrington is very limited it was considered that the strategy must consider the means to achieve the capacity enhancement of local electricity distribution networks in order to meet the load demand for fast charging of multiple vehicles, both at domestic residences and at public locations.

It was considered that it will still be some years before fully autonomous vehicles are widely used on the public highways. However such vehicles could disruptively change the means of transport for many people and for freight transportation. It was recommended that major long term investments need to consider the possible implications related to the introduction of autonomous vehicles, in particular the potential for change to the demand for bus services and taxi services could be dramatic.

*Recommendation – include reference in Chapter 4 to the trend of change to electric and autonomous vehicles, the potential impacts identified above, and noting national policy.*

## 4.2.3 Walking and cycling

Several comments were received highlighting a general lack of integration of walking/cycling with public transport and the need to make people feel safe when walking/cycling.

A specific comment was received about the linkage between walking and cycling and public health being expanded to read 'public health and wellbeing' and the strategy supporting greater use of waterways for active travel and recreation as this has the potential to deliver significant benefits to the health of the surrounding population.

*Recommendation – expand Chapter 4 to include the issues of integration with public transport, safety, well-being and use of waterways.*

## 4.2.4 Public transport

Issues relating to public transport generated the most responses and were mostly concerned with the cost, poor quality, long journey times and/or lack of availability.

A specific issue was raised with regard for the strategy to take account of the needs of older users particularly to reduce isolation, in particular poor access to hospitals and towns, lack of evening services, inconveniently located bus stops, lack of seating at waiting areas, lifts not working at stations. It was pointed out that the new guidance of the Department of Transport proposes that community transport drivers will need commercial driving licenses at a cost of over £1,000 per driver which will potentially affect hundreds of charities as well as schools and sports clubs. Community transport is a vital lifeline for many older people nationwide who do not have access to a car and are unable to use public transport. Age UK launched a campaign in July 2018 trying to prevent this happening. One respondent pointed out that the impact of the ageing population on services is hard to predict and that it may lead to increased costs but also pointed out that the growing number of older people could create new economic and social opportunities with good decision making.

*Recommendation – expand Chapter 4 to cover the transport issues facing older people.*

### Bus

Several respondents raised the issue of the difficulty travelling around the area using public transport in a timely manner (services either don't exist or services stop at a certain time/day e.g. in Winsford, the buses run north to south (Crewe to Northwich) but not east to west (Macclesfield to Chester) and there is no bus to Chester at all from Macclesfield.

Several respondents highlighted that since deregulation companies will not provide a service that does not make a profit and will focus on core routes and core times. Concerns were expressed that services serving the suburbs and rural areas require subsidies to make them viable. Hence, unless there is a realistic expectation that a much higher level of subsidy (or other significant incentive to use buses) in the future there is no value in proposing additional services in rural and semi-rural areas which applies to a large portion of Cheshire.

Business respondents pointed out that that weak bus services and patronage can be an obstacle to employment and that addressing this challenge will be of economic benefit to the region.

A number of respondents pointed out that access to rail stations using bus services is weak in Mid Cheshire. The bus network has grown (and shrunk) piece-meal over many years, and we suggest it is time for a comprehensive re-planning of bus services across Cheshire & Warrington to meet modern needs. Some important housing and business development zones have no bus links. Some bus routes cease operation too early in the afternoon/evening, meaning they cannot be used for travel home from work. One respondent considered that you can't work sensible or flexible long hours or visit at night without a car or a taxi.

Other respondents pointed out that there is increasing village parking on the street to catch buses.

*Recommendation – expand Chapter 4 to extend references about poor connectivity, highlight the impact on employment, parking issues and include the issue of services finishing too early.*

### Rail

There was widespread support for improving rail services, especially east-west services, but many respondents considered that there is much work to be done to make the existing systems fit for purpose for both business and leisure. Respondents considered that proximity to Liverpool, Greater Manchester, Stockport, North Wales and Manchester Airport presented opportunities for rail to offer a convenient commute, but felt that delivery of improvements will be challenging. The need to reach out to neighbouring authorities to deliver wider and more comprehensively integrated infrastructure was highlighted.

Concerns were expressed about the recent timetabling issues of Northern Rail and the wider under provision of rolling stock. Concerns were raised about a number of recent decisions including backtracking on electrification, moving the Trans-Pennine service from the line through Warrington to the Chat Moss Line and building the Ordsall Chord without appropriate platform provision at stations.

Many respondents were supportive of the benefits that HS2, Northern Powerhouse Rail and Crewe Hub could bring in terms of greater opportunity for movement within and to/from the area but emphasised that short-term improvements need to be delivered in advance of HS2 to support the future opportunities. Respondents pointed out that both Macclesfield and Wilmslow currently have an hourly train service from both stations to London and emphasised the need to ensure that both residents and businesses in these areas do not lose out following the introduction of HS2 services. Other respondents would like to ensure that the opportunity to build on HS2 between Phase 2a and 2b is not missed, and that the supporting road, rail, and bus service improvements are planned and implemented as a matter of urgency to ensure that the greatest benefits can be derived from this short window. One respondent emphasised that HS2 must not be at the expense of support for existing rail services. Several respondents were concerned about the environmental impacts of HS2 on villages, particularly along the Golborne Link.

There was support the reopening of the Middlewich line for passenger traffic and the 'Western Link' to Manchester Airport from the Mid-Cheshire line.

Lack of parking available at stations was a frequently raised issue.

Several respondents complained about the quality of some of the rolling stock, especially Pacers with reports of break downs, leaking through windows and roof, rattles and awful seats.

Specific concerns were raised about the rail needs of Neston: the Transport Strategy should identify TfW as the franchise authority/franchise administrator for all rail services serving Neston; and it should recognise the importance of the Welsh Government's proposals for improving the interchange between routes at Shotton as this will enable Neston to be robustly connected with Chester and beyond. Support is sought for improved connectivity via a Liverpool-Bidston-Wrexham service.

Respondents pointed out that growth needs to be underpinned by the delivery of significant development and infrastructure, whether that be homes, schools, hospitals, roads, TransPennine Rail etc, however concerns were expressed about the ability to deliver the necessary infrastructure.

*Recommendation – expand Chapter 4 to make reference to rolling stock, parking and service issues raised above and include text on commuting opportunities arising from geographic location*

## **4.2.5 Highway**

Most respondents raised the issue of congestion and lack of journey time reliability on the Strategic Road Network, and the consequential issues of people diverting onto the local road network to avoid the congestion. Similarly the congestion arising from diverting traffic arising from incidents on the SRN was also raised as a main issue. Many respondents considered that the road network in general is unreliable due to congestion, accidents and roadworks

and concerned that the current capacity and resilience of the network to cope with future growth if significant modal shift is not achieved or new road capacity is not created. Other respondents were concerned that this would constrain economic growth. Some respondents considered that there has been insufficient investment in Cheshire's A-road network for the last 50 years; many towns, even Warrington, have no bypass and rely instead on the motorway; in consequence there is very little resilience in the road network and incidents on the M6 quickly spread across the district, congesting towns and A-roads and hence we need to argue for investment in resilience, even on the north-south axis.

The following specific locations were raised by respondents as particularly congested routes/areas:

- M6
- The Birchwood area
- M56
- Grosvenor Bridge into Chester
- A6 corridor through Disley village
- A34 and the A523, plus consequential impacts on the A538 and the B5358 through the village of Mottram St Andrew trying to avoid the congestion on the A34 and A523
- A54 between Winsford and M6 J18
- A51 - the route is used when the M6 is busy as well as for local traffic and is used by HGVs as a direct route to Chester, North Wales and the Port of Holyhead
- Warrington town centre

*Recommendation – amend Chapter 4, section 2 to clarify that congestion and unreliability affects A roads as well as the motorway network.*

#### **4.2.6 Rural connectivity**

A number of respondents considered that there was a lack of focus on rural areas. Concerns were expressed about the lack of public transport and connectivity in rural areas and concerns that areas which don't have development will be left behind.

Several respondents pointed out that the low use of public transport, both bus and rail, is not surprising due to the lack of rural transport services and the lack of adequate car parking at or near railway stations with most car parks full by about 8am. This causes motorists to continue their whole journey by road adding to road congestion.

One respondent highlighted the need to ensure the provision of digital infrastructure to support the environment for rural businesses.

*Recommendation – amend Chapter 4, section 5 to specifically reference issues of low frequencies of services, lack of parking at stations and the need for digital infrastructure.*

#### **4.2.7 Access to airports and ports**

A number of respondents considered that the major flow of commuters from Cheshire & Warrington to/from Greater Manchester is in spite of the fact that present public transport links are somewhat limited and highways congested (i.e. M56 and M62). They pointed out that access to Manchester Airport by public transport from Cheshire & Warrington (and from North Wales, North Staffordshire and Shropshire) is presently very limited even though they are key catchment areas for air travel. The number of people travelling to and from Manchester Airport (workforce, passengers and workforce at adjacent businesses) is already very significant and is set for further major increases.

It was pointed out that Manchester Airport and the huge level of development, job creation, logistics, and High Speed infrastructure there presents the LEP with an opportunity to capitalise on the jobs created and the work being undertaken right on its border.

Respondents considered that the LEP should seek to create and enhance transport links to the Airport such that the LEP area can benefit from improved connectivity to those economic opportunities.

A number of respondents pointed out that the Northern and UK Economy is dependent on corridors that extend beyond the North and its immediate neighbours - The role of ports and airports as international gateways for trade is increasingly recognised as critical to the success of the UK economy post Brexit: a. Transport for the North commissioned an Independent International Connectivity Report; b. the Government commissioned a recently published Port Connectivity Study, chaired by Sir John Randall, to demonstrate the importance of ports and raise their profile so that they are always part of investment decision making; c. the Government is developing a new Aviation Strategy for the UK “to make the country’s aviation sector world-leading in prioritising passengers, fostering sustainable growth and promoting trade.” Respondents welcomed the recognition of the benefit that ports and airport bring to the subregional economy in the draft Transport Strategy.

Respondents also pointed out that the UK economy relies on international aviation connectivity for trade, inward investment, movement of labour, education, tourism, and the visitor economy. In 2017, 43.7 million passengers passed through eight airports in the north of England. This compares to 173.8 million passengers passing through airports in south east; Heathrow and Gatwick individually handled more than the total number of passengers passing through the eight airports in the North. The number of passengers passing through the eight northern international airports per head of population (2.73, based on c.16 million population) currently lags behind the national average (4.31) and is around a third that of the eight airports in the South East (7.90, based on c.22 million population).

Respondents considered that Liverpool John Lennon Airport currently plays an important role for the Cheshire and Warrington sub-region. It is currently of a similar scale to Newcastle and Leeds Bradford Airports, but building upon its recent success, the Airport has ambitious plans to serve more destinations including long haul, with passenger forecasts indicating the potential to grow to 7.8 million passengers per annum (mppa) by 2030 and 11mppa by 2050. It is more accessible from Cheshire now that the Mersey Gateway Bridge has opened. It remains the only airport in the North of England and one of just three across the UK to achieve a 5 star rating for flight punctuality. This coupled with the journey time reliability to the airport and the Airport’s service standards helps it live up to its aim of being the region’s faster, easier, friendlier Airport.

Some respondents consider that growth of services from local airports will help reduce longer road and rail journeys, thereby easing congestion across the sub-region, north west and UK transport networks. They consider that Cheshire and Warrington should use the opportunity of the Transport Strategy, and the government’s new Aviation Strategy, to promote the role of and connectivity to all northern regional airports, not just Manchester Airport, as both a means to support trade, inward investment and the visitor economy in their area and to support customers’ desire to travel via their local airport. Cheshire and Warrington should be careful not to confuse Manchester Airport’s existing role as an intercontinental hub with being the ‘international gateway’ – links between regional airports and Heathrow, and other foreign hub airports and major cities such as Schiphol, Paris CDG, Dubai and New York, perform the same function while also providing greater international visibility and connectivity for northern cities and more direct and convenient access for international visitors, students and business travellers.

*Recommendation – add a section in Chapter 4 for access to airports and ports covering their economic importance and connectivity issues*

#### **4.2.8 Freight and logistics**

Respondents considered that there is a lack of a regional view and control of the numbers of proposals for logistics facilities in the Green Belt along our motorways - they are in different local authorities and are often presented in isolation rather than through their cumulative

impact. Some respondents considered that they do not add to the vision of a Cheshire Science Corridor. Other respondents considered that companies should be encouraged to use electric vehicles for local delivery by funding incentives when buying new vans.

It was highlighted that the Northern and UK Economy is dependent on corridors that extend beyond the North and its immediate neighbours - Cheshire and Warrington's success post Brexit will be dependent on connectivity to international trading partners and the rest of UK (beyond the immediate neighbours recognised in the draft Transport Strategy). Currently, a significant proportion of sea freight arrives and leaves the UK via ports in the South, often making the domestic leg of their journey more expensive than the international leg. Similarly, a significant proportion of freight is travelling via airports in the South East and Midlands. Both situations impact the costs and therefore competitiveness of northern businesses, raise traffic levels on road corridors into and out of the Cheshire and Warrington, and support southern services and assets at the expense of northern assets and economic activity.

Respondents considered that the change in supply chains due to border processing and controls means short sea shipping connections to Ireland and mainland Europe are likely to play a greater role post Brexit. Coupled with growth in trade to the west, Brexit provides greater opportunities for the Port of Liverpool to address the economic imbalance and competitiveness issue raised above.

It was recommended that Cheshire and Warrington LEP should build on the work captured in Transport for the North's Enhanced Freight and Logistics Analysis Report to develop a more detailed understanding of trade flows (freight and passenger) within, into and out of the sub-region, and to/from international destinations via each international gateway to better map end-to-end journeys and help target efficient integrated transport solutions to support growth in international trade post Brexit. It should also seek to identify and remove transport-related barriers to trade and inward investment and improve the competitiveness of the North as a place to operate, make new investments and set up new businesses.

It was also pointed out that the Government's National Policy Statement for National Networks, December 2014, recognises the potential growth in rail freight to 2033 as a means to promote low carbon growth and support shift to more sustainable modes of transport.

Respondents considered that the Manchester Ship Canal already plays a crucial role for industry in the sub-region, particularly in the lower reaches. Other parts of the sub-region are well connected to the Ship Canal and the potential of this to accommodate freight movements should be recognised in the challenges and interventions.

*Recommendation – add a section in Chapter 4 for freight and logistics covering the economic importance of national and international connectivity and the need to provide good connectivity to local ports and airports and the potential of the Manchester Ship Canal. The LEP and local authorities should consider undertaking a multi modal freight study to inform solutions.*

## **4.2.9 Developing an evidence base**

Economic, Spatial, Demographic and Transport Modelling and Planning – A number of respondents recommend that transport planning must not be trend based but work hand in hand with spatial planning and other influences on business and population change, such as digitally enabled work patterns and online business. In order to improve overall efficiency and plan for new routes and capacity in the right place, they also consider it is critical to understand the actual demand for the end-to-end journey, not just the traffic on existing routes. They point out that no data on actual end-to-end journeys and their mode share has been published as part of the strategy and consider that Cheshire and Warrington, working with Transport for the North and neighbouring authorities, need to include an on-going workstream in their planning to build a better understanding of actual and forecast demand for end-to-end journeys, for passengers and freight (including air freight), and not just rely on existing measures of volumes of traffic on a particular stretch of road or rail coupled with

traditional modelling techniques. One respondent questioned what assumptions underpin the thinking on economic growth e.g. service employment in Greater Manchester, light industrial units in Warrington.

Respondents consider that once more information is available with respect to specific schemes, which is often only available after funding is achieved, they will be able to better understand the potential impacts of development on our infrastructure and, as a result, it may be necessary to coordinate the delivery of development with the timing for delivery of infrastructure improvements. They wish to build a strong partnership with all stakeholders to aid sustainable development and growth within the region and proactively identify future development needs and recommend that information is shared as part of developers' early preparation for individual schemes.

*Recommendation – add a section in Chapter 4 to reference the need to continue to develop the evidence base, working closely with TfN, neighbouring authorities, DfT and developers.*

### **4.3 Transport Design Principles**

Respondents recommended that the strategy needs to enable and promote the decarbonisation of transport and noted that whilst they are partially touched on within the Key Transport Design Principles on page 19, the climate change and energy policy drivers appear to be missing from the Transport Strategy's objectives. They consider that energy, emissions and air quality issues and objectives should be included in the Transport Strategy with positive action to support technologies such as hydrogen fuels and electric vehicles that can be delivered with additional economic benefit to the sub-region's economy. Respondents consider that as a minimum the Transport Strategy should promote the adoption of lower emission modes and technologies, and support innovation in integrated transport networks to resolve current issues that lead to lower emission modes, such as rail and waterborne freight, being less competitive than road transport for many journeys.

*Recommendation – include a design principle for the promotion of decarbonisation of transport.*

### **4.4 Addressing the Challenges**

#### **4.4.1 General Comments**

Some respondents considered that the transport priorities focus on Chester, Warrington and Crewe with insufficient reference to North East Cheshire including the principal towns of Macclesfield and Wilmslow.

#### **4.4.2 Innovation**

Provision of multi-vehicle recharging in parking areas (cars, small commercial vehicles, electric bikes/scooters) should be encouraged. Targets for a major increase in availability should be set over the next 5 years together with a guideline process for how this will be achieved. The strategy must consider the means to achieve the capacity enhancement of local electricity distribution networks in order to meet the load demand for fast charging of multiple vehicles, both at domestic residences and at public locations.

*Recommendation – Chapters 6 should be amended to reference the need to develop a strategy for encouraging more charging points and accommodating the associated electricity demand.*

#### **4.4.3 Walking and Cycling**

Several comments were received highlighting the desirability of facilitating more walking and cycling and integration with public transport. Respondents also considered that it is important to improve networks for safe short journeys and "first and last mile" for longer

public transport journeys. The need to make people feel safe when walking/cycling was seen as a key component as was treating walking/cycling as an opportunity rather than a problem.

It was recommending that the strategy should promote increasing walking and cycling with the LEP working closely with Local Planning Authorities and other organisations, such as the Canal & River Trust, to promote and increase walking and cycling. Respondents considered that it is crucial that active travel modes such as walking and cycling form part of the integrated transport network.

Respondents also considered that opportunities to secure funding to improve and upgrade walking and cycling routes and access to these, should be maximised to develop a comprehensive and easy to understand cycle and walking networks, which include the use of waterways. Legibility, through appropriate direction to and signage of routes will also be important to delivering this. Furthermore, respondents considered that the future provision of travel information - and the associated use of digital technology – should also include details of walking and cycling routes, including waterways.

*Recommendation – Chapter 6 “improving local transport” should be amended to specifically reference the promotion of walking and cycling and highlight the need for integration with public transport, safe design, and use of waterways and greenways.*

#### **4.4.4 Public Transport**

##### General Comments

The main general comments related to:

- Calls to improve
  - multi-modal integration
  - access to educational institutes/places of work in the area
  - flexibility to match changing work patterns/demand and leisure
- Increasing investment
- Accommodating the needs of older users particularly to reduce isolation:
  - access to hospitals and towns,
  - evening services
  - conveniently located bus stops
  - more seating at waiting areas
  - working lifts at stations
- Reducing the need to interchange and improving interchange when it is necessary
- Need to consider leisure/tourist travel more in addition to the issues with the “work” commute
- Providing transport that is regular, affordable and comfortable
- Considering joining Merseytravel or Transport for Greater Manchester as an option for improving public transport

*Recommendation – the introduction to Chapter 6 should be amended to reference the consultation and the main comments raised.*

##### Bus

Many respondents considered that bus travel needs to be made more attractive to cater for economic growth. There were a number of different suggestions; some respondents pointed out that the key challenge in respect of bus services is that, other than those serving the suburbs of substantial towns and cities there is a need for subsidies to make them viable, hence, unless there is a realistic expectation that a much higher level of subsidy (or other significant incentive to use buses) will be available in the future there is no value in proposing additional services in rural and semi-rural areas which applies to a large portion of

Cheshire. Other respondents suggested introducing bus franchising or considering joining Merseytravel or TfGM. A number of respondents consider that weak bus services and patronage can be an obstacle to employment and that addressing this challenge will be of economic benefit to the region.

Some respondents consider that buses provide an opportunity for short term gains, given that much of the Transport plan requires high levels of capital investment with timescales stretching to 2050, but buses could use existing infrastructure and make an immediate impact. They would deliver gains in air quality by reducing the volume of traffic and using energy efficient buses that are coming to market now. It was pointed out that Cheshire is a large rural, low population density area and buses are the only cost effective solution for many residents.

A number of respondents stated that the bus network has grown (and shrunk) piece-meal over many years, and suggest it is time for a comprehensive re-planning of bus services across Cheshire & Warrington to meet modern needs. They consider that some important housing and business development zones have no bus links and noted that some bus routes cease operation too early in the afternoon/evening, meaning they cannot be used for travel home from work.

*Recommendation – given the importance of bus and the significant issues surrounding the financing of bus services it is recommended that a more detailed bus strategy be developed, looking at the options available and working with the bus industry to identify sustainable financing options going forward.*

## Rail

A number of respondents referred to TfN's emerging vision for Northern Powerhouse Rail. This includes a proposed new link from Liverpool via Warrington to the main HS2 North/South line and additionally a spur is proposed from Warrington to connect to the HS2 route to Manchester Airport. At present there is very little detail as to the scope of work involved, in particular whether it would be an all new route, or partly use existing tracks upgraded, and what is intended for stations both at Liverpool and Warrington. Their concern is that the potential cost is very significant and consequently may never proceed. For Warrington it is important to know whether the new route will utilise an upgraded Bank Quay station or will require a completely new station and also the routeing of track works as these will inevitably impact on other proposed development around the town. They also consider that assuming the development of an appropriate rail interchange hub at Crewe proceeds, then it will be difficult to also justify the development of another at Warrington.

Many respondents support the investment in rail infrastructure and services, particularly to support modal shift on key freight and commuter routes. In particular, a number of respondents support the objectives of Growth Track 360 to make improvement on the Liverpool to Chester routes via Bidston and Liverpool South Parkway. They also support the improvements in the Hooton to Helsby line to reduce travel times and better serve local business and residential communities and improve connectivity to the rest of the North, Wales and wider UK.

Other respondents generally welcomed the proposals relating to rail in the draft strategy, in particular the plans to work with the key neighbouring transport authorities (TfN, TfW and Midlands Connect) to develop their plans in conjunction with them. One of the key issues they considered is often missing from current transport planning is a lack of strategic thinking such that whilst a relatively minor project may not have much impact on a local level, when the bigger picture view is taken, benefits may then be realised that can feed back to make the project better value for all. A number of respondents were pleased in particular to see a plan in place for the area to be able to take advantage of both HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail when these arrive in the north.

Other respondents noted that there is a unique window of opportunity for the regeneration of Crewe in the period between the completion of HS2 Phase 2a and Phase 2b during which

Crewe will be the most northerly point on the HS network. They would like to ensure that the opportunity to build on HS2 between Phase 2a and 2b is not missed, and that the supporting road, rail, and bus service improvements are planned and implemented as a matter of urgency to ensure that the greatest benefits can be derived from this short window. Other respondents were concerned that Phase 2a would substantially reduce capacity at Crewe, impacting on local and regional services, especially a reduction of service to Manchester.

A number of respondents strongly support the re-opening of the Middlewich Line to passenger traffic, stating that it will enable people in North Cheshire to connect with HS2 directly by rail and provide congestion relief on the highway network around Crewe. They also strongly support the delivery of a 'Western Link' to Manchester Airport, noting that the land at the airport is still safeguarded for this link (but concerned for how long), and the station has been built to anticipate it. They point out that it needs political support to get it to happen.

*Recommendation – the LEP and local authorities should consider the points above during the development of the rail sequencing work.*

## 4.5 Strategic Transport Interventions

### 4.5.1 Studies

Respondents noted the reference to the need for further studies relating to many of the key priorities. Given the number of studies indicated, respondents considered that there is a need to develop (prior to finalisation of the overall strategy document) a set of priorities for the studies, identification of the parties to be involved, and a target date for completion of each study. Prioritisation needs to address both the importance of each study and also the probability that the study findings are relevant input to other potential enhancements. It is wholly impracticable to aim to address all studies concurrently.

*Recommendation – the LEP and local authorities should prioritise the studies and set out the justification for the priorities.*

### 4.5.2 Highways priorities – Strategic Road Network

A number of overarching comments were made relating to the Strategic Road Network and opportunities to improve the network. These included the following:

- Increasing capacity of the SRN
- Improving journey time reliability
- Extending the network of Smart Motorways and targeting improvements at pinch points

The following SRN corridors have been identified by respondents as routes where there is a particular need for improvements:

- The M56
- The M6
- The M53

The impact of HGVs on the SRN is acknowledged in some responses with the number of HGVs using the M6 highlighted as a particular issue. Reducing the number of HGVs is identified as being an opportunity to reduce overall traffic on the M6.

In addition to online congestion, network resilience has been highlighted as an issue by some respondents. Incidents on the M6 in particular are highlighted as having a significant impact on the wider road network. Improved traffic management, monitoring and advanced warning (signs) are highlighted as options to help reduce local impact. The M56 between M53 (J15) and Daresbury (J11) including the crossing of the River Weaver has also been

identified as an area where greater network resilience is required (in particular when considering the growth potential of the Cheshire Science Corridor).

A number of specific interventions have been identified to address some of the issues identified above:

- Widening the M6 to increase the number of lanes;
- Addressing network resilience on the M56 between M53 (J15) and Daresbury (J11);
- Reviewing the potential for new junctions on the M56 (including a new Junction 13)

*Recommendation – the LEP and local authorities should consider whether additional schemes to reflect the proposals/address the issues above should be added to the list of priorities.*

### **4.5.3 Highways priorities – Major Road Network**

A need to tackle congestion on MRN routes was specified as an issue by a number of respondents.

Responses incorporated the identification of MRN routes where congestion is considered a particular problem. Priorities for improvement included the following MRN corridors:

- The A51;
- The A550;
- The A523;
- The A34;
- The A538;
- The A54 along its full length including support for rural connectivity;
- The A41 (in particular into and around Chester); and
- The A49.

For some routes the responses included recommendations for improvements. For the A49 and the A51, between Chester and the A500 (East of Nantwich), the upgrading of the routes to dual carriageway was identified as a solution for addressing congestion. For the A50 it was acknowledged that a study was required to identify improvements with a particular focus on the section from Arclid to Knutsford and the route to Junction 20a of M6. One respondent recommended that the A51 should become part of the Strategic Road Network.

Specific comments were received in relation to the proposed Middlewich bypass. Whilst there was recognition that there was an issue to be addressed, there were two comments that suggested that additional works would be required to address constraints in the area. This included a recommendation that the scheme should be extended to Congleton and a further comment recommending that the scheme should be extended to bypass Winsford and support access to Northwich.

The Warrington Western Link Road and New City developments were supported strongly by one consultee. This link is seen as helping addressing town centre congestion and supporting development at Warrington Waterfront and Port Warrington

The construction of a new route to the south and west of Chester (Chester Relief Road) was recommended as the solution to existing congestion and air pollution issues in this area. It was acknowledged that this would require a new river crossing. This route is also highlighted as being of particular importance should planned housing development be brought forward.

The consultation responses included an identified need to improve network resilience including through identifying alternative routes to the MRN when there are incidents.

In addition a number of specific congestion pinch points were identified as particular constraints on the network to be addressed. This included the following locations:

- The A483 crossing of the River Dee;
- Accessing onto the M6 at Junction 17, in particular for traffic approaching from the east;
- The A533 in Winnington; and
- The A556 at Rudheath (Gadbrook Park).

It was noted that the first four bridges over the River Weaver South from the Mersey Estuary are swing bridges, except the M56 bridge which cause congestion when the bridges are in operation. The role of the MRN in supporting access to and unlocking development was also acknowledged as an area of opportunity for the Transport Strategy. In relation to the A51, the need for a new bypass was considered needed with, or without, the introduction of new housing.

*Recommendation – the LEP and local authorities should consider whether additional schemes to reflect the proposals/address the issues above should be added to the list of priorities.*

#### **4.5.4 Highways priorities – Improving Local Highway Infrastructure**

In addition to the strategic routes local highway congestion was identified as a concern by a number of respondents. In addition to general comments about congestion this included the identification of specific areas or pinch points.

A number of respondents identified concerns about congestion in city, town, or local, centres and the constraints this causes for local access. The following locations were identified as having traffic and congestion concerns:

- Traffic congestion in the centre of Wilmslow;
- Traffic congestion and inappropriate routeing of traffic through Holmes Chapel. Sandbach and the route between Sandbach and Holmes Chapel;
- Traffic congestion through Macclesfield (in particular the A537) and the impact of planned housing growth on already congested networks;
- The centre of Knutsford. As well as congestion, the number of HGV's and issues with air quality were referenced as adversely impacting on the town centre;
- Local routes accessing into Chester. Local congestion is likely to increase in significance with planned housing growth;
- Traffic congestion in central Warrington;
- On the A6 in Disley and neighbouring High Lane (in Stockport).

For Holmes Chapel, respondents included recommendations for improving conditions in the centre of Holmes Chapel. This included:

- Improve pedestrian provision in particular for the A50;
- A reduction in the speed limit on the A54 and A50;
- A relief road for Holmes Chapel. The additional traffic resulting from any improvements to the A54 will increase the importance of a new link.

A bypass scheme was also identified as a potential solution to congestion in the centre of Knutsford. For the A6 around Disley reference was made to previous work that has been completed as part of SEMMMS and the need to bring forward the delivery of a scheme in this location.

The A540 was identified as being in need of improvement and it was suggested that the route should be included as part of the future Major Road Network.

Whilst new development was identified in some comments as a factor that will increase existing congestion issues, the local road network was also identified as a facilitator for

future development. It was suggested that this could be achieved through addressing congestion hot spots and ensuring access can be provided.

*Recommendation – the LEP and local authorities should consider whether additional schemes to reflect the proposals/address the issues above should be added to the list of priorities.*

#### 4.5.5 Improving Rail Infrastructure

The following comments/suggestions were submitted by respondents:

- Electrification of the Crewe to Chester Rail line and consider opening new stations along this line;
- A specific plan to re-open stations across the region including the Beeston/Tarporley station on the Crewe to Chester line feeding traffic in to the new HS2 hub at Crewe and reducing then need for people to drive in to Crewe.
- Develop Crewe, Chester & Warrington stations as key interchanges; improve east-west rail frequencies and journey speeds. Maintain existing London links and frequency, Better connectivity to Liverpool John Lennon, ensure they are integrated into the HS2 plans. Fully use the Halton curve.
- Rail link to Cheshire Oaks (Ellesmere Port to Helsby service with a stop at Cheshire Oaks with a shuttle from Cheshire Oaks) – service would be an extension of Liverpool Ellesmere Port service providing onward link to North Wales and east to Manchester. Restoration of Halton Curve would allow completion of circle to Liverpool and LJA. Also potential stop at Encirc Plant if a service between Ellesmere Port and Helsby
- The Manchester Airport Western Link is vital to ensure we have better access to the airport. We need it sooner rather than later. Easy access to a truly global airport is essential to the economy of any city. As well as making the route more direct we also need more than one train an hour. If the airport is included in HS2 perhaps the route could double as an access point to fast services to London?
- We also need more than one train per hour on the new route to Liverpool via Liverpool South Parkway, to improve access to Liverpool Airport.
- It would bring no benefits to the Borough of Warrington and if HS2 is to be built then it would be better for our town to spend the money upgrading Bank Quay station. There is a need for more expenditure on east / west electrification to connect the major cities of the north and for improved rolling stock.
- Identifying TfW as the franchise authority/franchise administrator for rail services serving Neston; clearly identifying and supporting an improved interchange at Shotton (being progressed by the Welsh Government) and promoting the build of additional Stadler Class 777 trains (in conjunction with Merseytravel and the Welsh Government) to realise the once in a generation opportunity for direct trains between Neston and Liverpool.
- Provision of good train services from both Macclesfield and Wilmslow to London by the use of HS2 compatible trains.
- Support for the provision of Middlewich Station on the Sandbach-Northwich line which could also serve the people of Holmes Chapel by providing new journey opportunities. This should be pushed to the delivery stage much quicker than seems to be proposed, i.e. both the capacity improvement and the re-opening of the Northwich to Sandbach line to passenger services should be taken forward.
- Rail Short Term Priorities, P.38 onwards - We support these priorities and are pleased that the links most needed for Mid Cheshire are included, but we think the timescales for some of these interventions are not ambitious enough. For example it is suggested (P.42) that the Middlewich line improvements (re-opening) might take place in the 5-10 year timescale, but this is a simple project needing only modest infrastructure work which we should aim to have open in less than 5 years. The Manchester Airport Western Link has an indicative timeframe for delivery of more

than 10 years, but it will be vital that this link is open (to relieve congestion on the Stockport-Manchester railway and free up capacity for HS2 trains there) by 2027 when HS2 reaches Crewe. We should plan for this. Compared to HS2 this is a small project which should be deliverable well before HS2 itself. We believe that the Strategy should aim to deliver these interventions much sooner to support the sub-region's growth ambitions.

- A new rail station building at Holmes Chapel
- Improved links to the Crewe hub, this applies now, because Crewe is a major hub even before HS2.
- The distance between WBQ & Warrington Central on the CLC line is as a result of history, however, there is an opportunity (albeit that it would not be cheap) to move WBQ northwards to where it crosses the CLC line in order to create 1 interchange station for Warrington. This would have the benefit of improving the access to WBQ which at the moment is problematical & congested by road traffic at times along with releasing land for development at both stations. You seem not to have included this as an option in your plan, unless I have missed it.
- More local rail services connecting to Crewe. In particular reopening the line between Northwich and Sandbach to passenger services would provide connectivity for a significant area of mid Cheshire and possibly access to the airport (see 13 below). It is probable that with the advent of HS2, direct services between North Wales/Chester and London will be reduced or possibly eliminated. In either case it will be essential that a frequent, fast connecting service to Crewe is established. If Crewe is to be upgraded as proposed a major redevelopment of the station is needed. This work should be completed in time to accommodate HS2 and other interconnecting services from 2027 (Completion of HS2 phase 2a).
- The scope of HS2 phase 2b includes a spur from the main North/South route to serve a new station at Manchester Airport and then via a tunnel to an extended Manchester Piccadilly. Given that the cost of this element of the project, which includes two new stations and a 12km tunnel, will be very significant (At least £2Bn) it will be vital that its value is maximised. Projections suggest 5 HS2 trains per hour in each direction, which will be nowhere near to the capacity of the route; so there will be considerable scope for adding value via additional services. Providing a connection to the existing mid-Cheshire railway would be transformative for value to Cheshire for that route including access to the airport.
- If the proposed Liverpool – Manchester Airport link (per Northern Powerhouse Rail – see comment 12 above) is not constructed then a service between Liverpool and Manchester Airport could be routed via Runcorn, Northwich and crossover to HS2 to give a journey time of around 45min (vs. 1hr 20min. at present). The cost of the needed works would be relatively low, comprising a cross over to/from HS2 located to the south of Ashley station and another cross over on the approach to Piccadilly to allow (non HS2) trains to access the existing platforms as opposed to the new HS2 platforms.
- Some thought should be given to looking at new rail corridors across the south of the region connecting the town of Macclesfield (which is identified as a key cluster for the emerging digital economy) with others across the region. This could be helped by the opening of a new north to west curve connection at Kidsgrove to allow direct trains from Macclesfield to Crewe and beyond
- Related with this, a new connection to Manchester Airport via a Western Link is an essential scheme in our view, existing connections to the Airport from the south are limited and providing this route would enable through journeys that would also assist in better utilising the platform capacity at Manchester Airport station (i.e. less trains terminating requiring platform capacity to turn round), so we think the impetus should be to move the project on as quickly as possible to the delivery stage.
- Another key route is that from Liverpool – Chester and in the current new Wales and Borders franchise just let, its proposed that the existing shuttle services provided by class 150's or similar are replaced by new class 230 trains which we understand are

limited to 60 miles per hour which we think would limit capacity further, so some thought should be given to replacing these with faster trains in the short term (possibly by redeploying class 185's shortly to be released from the Trans- Pennine franchise) and in the longer term, as part of a rolling programme of electrification of the line (to Holyhead ultimately), making all these services electric. This may mean transfer of services from the Wales & Borders franchise; in our view it makes little sense that these services, wholly within England, are provided by a franchisee who's main focus is delivering train services in Wales.

- With regard to short term rail infrastructure improvements there is no reference to the Buxton to Manchester rail link.
- There is no mention of the Handsacre link from Phase 1 to Stafford, Stoke and Macclesfield. On the other hand the CEC report (attached) recognises this: The arrival of HS2 to the region in 2027 with a full HS2 hub station at Crewe and classic compatible services to Stafford and Stoke-on-Trent will see the Constellation Partnership become one of the best connected regions in the UK. These classic compatibles would go onto Macclesfield as proposed by DfT.
- Consider the potential to support new services and destinations, served from Macclesfield Station.
- The Strategy repeats the Wales & West Prospectus's statement that the key investments they seek all rely in the first instance on the Crewe hub. We think this is not the best approach. For the great majority of journeys on the Wales and West axis which need journey time improvements - such as Chester/Wales to Manchester Airport and Manchester city centre - travelling via a Crewe hub, needing a change of trains there, is not the best strategy. Our preferred strategy is to build the 3.5 mile Airport Western Link and upgrade the signalling and line speeds on the Mid Cheshire Line. This will deliver fast journeys from Chester/Wales to the Airport and Manchester without change of trains, and unlike routing via Crewe, this brings big benefits for Mid Cheshire too. Moreover, it is quite possible that the Airport Link, being a much smaller project than HS2, could be completed and deliver benefits even before HS2 reaches Manchester.
- urges the authors to raise the priority rating of the Borderlands line within its plan and
- Rail park and ride
- Provision of adequate and reasonably priced parking at or close to Macclesfield and Wilmslow railway stations.

*Recommendation – the LEP and local authorities should consider whether additional schemes to reflect the proposals/address the issues above should be added to the list of priorities, and take the proposals into account during the development of the rail sequencing work.*

#### **4.5.6 Connected Communities**

The following comments/suggestions were submitted by respondents:

- Following a cut in bus services, there is now a problem with connectivity with Knutsford. Why not have a bus service link Knutsford to Warrington to Crewe? Look at where people want to travel to, have a review of the routes.
- Ensure that the bus services through Holmes Chapel are fully considered as part of the overall bus strategy in the LEP area, giving particular consideration to services that could provide transport for residents working in key locations such as Alderley Park and NW Crewe.
- Crewe Railway Station Re-development - A method of resolving traffic queues in Gresty Rd & around the station at peak rail travel times would be to construct a multi storey park & ride facility at the junction of Whitby way & the A500. It could have a two option parking system, one for long stay (12hrs or over) & a short stay (4 hrs) with a shuttle bus operating between the park & ride, station & the bus station, this service could vary through the day dependent on demand. It would also provide a dedicated

service to the station using buses capable of accommodating passengers with cases with low level access.

- Manchester Airport off site car parking - It would be a good incentive to Manchester Airport users if they had a safe & secure long stay park & ride that was safe to leave their vehicle at while they travel the world. This could be achieved with funding from the Airport owners & CEC by providing a long stay multi-storey car park at Hand forth & Wilmslow as you have the A34 & the A538 Style a M56 link Road corridor & the A555 airport link road which could be used as feeder roads to the park & ride car parks.
- As a minimum the Transport Strategy should promote the adoption of lower emission modes and technologies, and support innovation in integrated transport networks to resolve current issues that lead to lower emission modes, such as rail and waterborne freight, being less competitive than road transport for many journeys.
- The section on connected communities (p40) relates to increasing the role of active travel, we consider that the following could be added Within the Stanlow Enterprise Zone (EZ) the canal corridor could play an important role in connecting communities and providing access to jobs, education, shops and services as well as for leisure and recreation purposes. To maximise the canal corridor some improvements to access points, surfacing, orientation signage and where appropriate low-level lighting would be required. Such investment in the canal towpath is sustainable and affordable with costs significantly lower than for highway improvements. Quality cycling and walking routes also contribute to the visitor economy.
- The distance between the Stanlow EZ and the nearby city of Chester is just 8 miles. The canal links Ellesmere Port and the City of Chester (including Chester University). Along its route are also the major attractions of Chester Zoo, Cheshire Oaks and the National Waterways Museum. All have the potential to be hubs for cycle hire, potential water taxi and improved links to other transport networks.,
- Furthermore, the provision of quality blue/green infrastructure in an industrial area such as Stanlow, provides a refuge for wildlife and people and enhances the environment. This contributes to an attractive, aspirational, successful place to live. Retaining employees close to their place of work reduces commuter traffic and therefore vehicle emissions. Our own research shows that 'safety' is a key barrier to use of pedestrian routes such as towpaths and an attractive and good quality environment helps to break down these negative perceptions

*Recommendation – the LEP and local authorities should consider whether additional schemes to reflect the proposals/address the issues above should be added to the list of priorities.*

#### **4.5.7 Freight and logistics**

The following comments/suggestions were submitted by respondents:

- Given that one of the objectives of the HS2 project is to facilitate more rail freight on the conventional network, then the corollary to this is the need for more intermodal terminals. At present there are no road/rail intermodal freight terminals within C & W.
- Rail freight Intermodal Hub. In addition to the proposed hub at Crewe station for passenger interchange, there is potential to create a freight intermodal hub to the south of Crewe station which has excellent access to the A500 and hence to the M6

*Recommendation – the LEP and local authorities should consider whether additional schemes to reflect the proposals/address the issues above should be added to the list of priorities.*

## 5. Next Steps

### 5.1 Introduction

This report sets out the issues raised during the public and stakeholder consultation of the draft transport strategy. It contains recommendations for changes to the content of the strategy for consideration by the Cheshire and Warrington Local Transport Body (LTB).

### 5.2 Finalising the Transport Strategy

Following the completion of the public and stakeholder consultation exercise, the LTB will consider the recommendations in this report at the meeting being held in public on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2018. Updates agreed by the LTB will be incorporated into a final version of the transport strategy which will be presented to the LEP Board for approval at its meeting on 17 October 2018.

## Appendix A

### List of events held

Cheshire Association of Local Councils  
Cheshire East Transport Strategy Consultation  
Cheshire West & Chester Transport Strategy Consultation  
Warrington Transport Strategy Consultation

### List of organisations that responded individually (over and above comments raised at the events)

British Motorcyclists Federation (BMF)  
Bunbury Parish Council  
Campaign to Protect Rural England  
Canal & River Trust  
Chartered Institute of Marketing  
Cheshire Business Leaders  
Cheshire East Council  
Cheshire West and Chester Borough Council  
Cheshire West and Chester Older Peoples Network  
Crewe Town Council  
Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council  
Disley Parish Council  
Handbridge Park Ward  
High Legh Parish Council  
Holmes Chapel Parish Council  
Knutsford resident  
Lymm Parish Council  
Mid Cheshire Development Board  
Mid Cheshire Rail Users Association  
Mottram St Andrew Parish Council  
Neston Town Council  
Peel Group  
Protos LLP  
Railfuture  
Tatton Estate  
Westminster Park Residents Association  
Wrexham-Bidston Rail User's Association  
United Utilities

In addition responses were received from 5 individuals



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## Cheshire & Warrington Local Transport Body

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**Date of Meeting:** Friday 21 September 2018  
**Report of:** Steve Hunter – Transport for Warrington Service Manager  
**Subject/Title:** Transport for the North Update

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### 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 meeting held over the last 3 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, with progress reported on two key items, the formation of TfN as a Statutory Sub National Transport Body and on preparation of its Strategic Transport Plan. 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 13<sup>th</sup> September.

### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the CWLTB note the Transport for the North developments and continuing activities:
1. On the 1<sup>st</sup> 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 19 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 Pete Waterman (LEP) Cllr Terry O'Neill (Warrington Borough Council), Cllr Sam Dixon (Cheshire West and Chester Council and Cllr Rachel Bailey (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) Governance
- b) Strategic Transport Plan and Investment Plan / Funding
- c) Strategic Rail – including Northern Powerhouse Rail
- d) Rail Performance in the North
- e) Strategic Roads
- f) Strategic Development Corridor work
- g) Integrated and Smart Travel
- h) Stakeholder Engagement and Communications

3.2 Further detailed information on a number of these work streams can be found in the papers for the three TfN Board meetings which have taken place since TfN became a statutory body on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018. Links to these papers are shown below:

- Details of the TfN Board can be found at:  
<https://transportfornorth.com/about-transport-for-the-north/our-board/>
- Meeting held on 5th April 2018 (this was the inaugural meeting and full details of the constitution and working arrangements are included):  
<https://transportfornorth.com/calendar/tfn-board-5apr18/>
- 28<sup>th</sup> June 2018:  
<https://transportfornorth.com/calendar/transport-north-board-28-june-2018/>
- 13<sup>th</sup> September 2018:  
<https://transportfornorth.com/calendar/transport-north-board-13-september-2018/>