

**REPORT TO: JOINT COMMITTEE**

**DATE: 28<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2017**

**REPORT TITLE: TO NOTE DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF A JOINT LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN**

**AUTHOR: BASIL JACKSON, INTERIM HEAD OF TRANSPORT**

**1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To set out terms of reference for the preparation a Joint Local Transport Plan (JLTP) covering the Combined Authority area and North Somerset.
- 1.2 The JLTP is crucial to ensuring that appropriate infrastructure is provided to secure future development proposals as contained within the emerging JSP. Board members should note that a paper detailing terms of reference for the preparation of the Bus Strategy and the KRN is being considered by WECA Committee. Funding related to the Bus Strategy and the KRN will apply to the Combined Authority administrative area. However, Bus Strategy and KRN policies will be relevant to the region as whole and, as such, will be contained within the JLTP.

**2 ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

**Background**

- 2.1 The formation of the Combined Authority confirmed WECA as the Local Transport Authority for its area with a number of powers pertaining to the provision of local bus services. These include powers and duties contained within parts 3 and 4 of the Transport Act 1985, and Part 2 of the Transport Act 2000 (as amended), which can be summarised as:
  - duty to produce a Local Transport Plan;
  - production of a Bus Strategy;
  - rights to franchise local bus services within its area, subject to the completion of the process set out in the Bus Services Act 2017;
  - powers to enter into quality bus partnerships (QBP) and enhanced partnerships;
  - responsibility for the provision of bus information and the production of a bus information strategy;
  - role of Travel Concession Authority;
  - financial powers to enable the funding of community transport; and
  - powers to support bus services (this power is held jointly with constituent councils).
- 2.2 Powers associated with the Combined Authority are in two parts; namely, Mayoral powers and Combined Authority powers:

## Mayoral powers

The directly elected Mayor of the West of England will:

- a. Take responsibility for a devolved and consolidated local transport budget, with a multi-year settlement. Functions are devolved to the Combined Authority accordingly, to be exercised by the Mayor.
- b. Have the ability to franchise bus services in the city region, This will support the Combined Authority's ambitions in delivering a high quality bus network and in enhancing the local bus offer. This includes the delivery of smart and integrated ticketing, local branding and provision of minimum standards across the network.
- c. Take responsibility for a Key Route Network of local roads, which will be defined and agreed by the constituent local authorities and will be managed and maintained at a city region level. The management, maintenance and improvement of the Key Route Network will be supported by devolving all relevant local roads maintenance funding as part of the Mayor's consolidated, multi-year local transport budget. This will also support the delivery of a single asset management plan for the local authority network across the Combined Authority area, and streamlined contractual and delivery arrangements.

## Combined Authority powers

In addition and as part of the Devolution deal:

- a. Appropriate local transport functions has been conferred to the Combined Authority (to be exercised by the Mayor). The Combined Authority has become a new single policy body to determine the Mayor's transport plans and the delivery of an integrated public transport network for the city region.
- b. To support better integration between local and national networks, the government and the West of England Combined Authority will enter into joint working arrangements with Highways England and Network Rail on operations, maintenance and local investment through a new Memorandum of Understanding.
- c. The Combined Authority will bring forward proposals that would enable the Mayor and Combined Authority to implement Clean Air Zones in the Combined Authority area. This will help achieve Air Quality Plan objectives at both the national and local level.

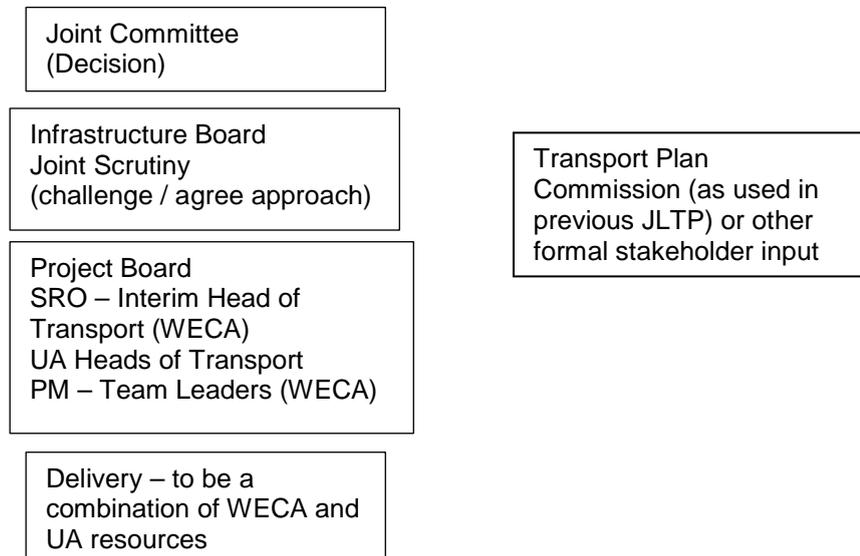
2.3 A meeting of the West of England Combined Authority on 15<sup>th</sup> March considered a report on Transport Delivery and agreed the WECA transport functions as summarised above and set out in Appendix A. There is a statutory duty placed on WECA and North Somerset Council to produce a Local Transport Plan. This is a vital tool to help transport authorities, their partners and their local communities, plan for transport in the way that best meets the needs of the area. The document is crucial to ensuring that appropriate infrastructure is provided to secure the future development proposals as contained within the emerging JSP.

2.4 It is important to note that, whilst the Combined Authority takes on the role of Transport Authority for the WECA area, Constituent Authorities remain the highway authority. Thus a fully collaborative approach is required between constituent councils and WECA in order to maximise benefits and build on the success of the two previous JLTPs. It is envisaged that the JLTP will invariably cover policies for which the Combined Authority is not responsible (e.g. parking, bus lane enforcement and road maintenance); therefore, it will be necessary to consider the role of sign-off within the councils as part of the programme of work.

## JLTP Terms of Reference

- 2.5 Working with constituent councils and North Somerset Council, advice will be sought from the Infrastructure Advisory Board on the scope of this work, including:
1. New JLTP based around the existing JLTP objectives updated to support the Joint Spatial Plan.
  2. Develop the existing Joint Transport Vision to provide further technical evidence and direction for the JLTP.
  3. Outline of a prioritised implementation plan.
  4. New Strategic Environmental Assessment to ensure a JLTP which minimises its impact on the environment.

## GOVERNANCE



- 2.6 In developing the JLTP for sign-off, Joint Committee will be supported by the Infrastructure Advisory Board and Joint Scrutiny Committee. Officers will form a project board (as detailed in the diagram above) to oversee all aspects of this work and ensure its timely delivery.

## DRAFT TIMESCALES

- 2.7 It is anticipated that the delivery of a number of tasks detailed above will be undertaken in tandem, but successful delivery is dependent on availability of resources. Draft timescales for key milestones are as follows:
- May to June 2017 - Scope/Terms of Reference drawn up for LTP
  - October 2017 – West of England Combined Authority/Joint Committee sign off consultation plan for JLTP
  - January to March 2018 - Consultation on JLTP
  - July 2018 onwards – delivery of work packages including the undertaking of a bus network review and assessment of operating framework options as included in the powers provided to the combined authority.

### **3 CONSULTATION**

- 3.1 No formal consultation has been undertaken at this stage. Timescales for a future statutory consultation process is provided in the report.

### **4 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 N/A. The production of a Local Transport Plan (and a number of its daughter documents) is a statutory requirement.

### **5 RISK MANAGEMENT/ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1 Duties in relation to the LTP fall to the West of England Combined Authority. To not deliver an LTP would be a failure to meet a statutory duty and is thus likely to be frowned upon by Government. In addition, the region would struggle to adequately plan for transport in order to meet the needs of the region in the most effective way.

### **6 PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTIES**

- 6.1 Feedback will be sought from affected communities and statutory consultees to meet the authorities' duties under the Equality Act 2010 as the JLTP and its daughter documents are developed. This includes a 3 month consultation period; the results of which will be used in an equality impact assessment.

### **7 ECONOMIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1 All economic impacts resulting from this work will be considered during the JLTP's development and EIAs developed as appropriate.

### **8 FINANCE IMPLICATION**

- 8.1 Work is currently underway to identify the amount of resource and type of skills required for timely delivery of the JLTP work-stream.

Advice given by: Tim Richens, Interim Section 151 Officer, WECA

### **9 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 *None arising from this report.*

### **10 LAND/PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 None arising from this report.

### **11 HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 Work is currently underway to identify the amount of resource and type of skills required for timely delivery of the JLTP work-stream.

Advice given by: William Harding, Interim HR Director, WECA

**12 RECOMMENDATION**

- 12.1 Committee is asked to note the terms of reference, including proposed governance arrangements, as detailed in this paper.

**Report Author: Basil Jackson (Interim Head of Transport, WECA)**

**West of England Combined Authority Contact: Basil Jackson**

**Background Documents**

15<sup>th</sup> March 2017 West of England Combined Authority, Agenda Item 8, Transport Delivery

## **APPENDIX A – SUMMARY OF WECA’s TRANSPORT POWERS**

### **Duty to produce a Local Transport Plan**

The Local Transport Act 2008 places a statutory duty on WECA as the Local Transport Authority, to produce a Local Transport Plan for its area. This should contain a long term transport strategy and a short term implementation plan with proposals for delivery.

The West of England already has a history of colligate working on such policies. The current LTP is the second such joint plan and was approved in 2011 by the four West of England authorities, including North Somerset Council. The current JLTP covers the years 2011 to 2026. The West of England Mayor has powers to commence the update of a joint LTP for the WECA, but can agree an updated JLTP with North Somerset Council. Board members should note that a paper covering terms of reference for the preparation of the third Joint Local Transport Plan (including its links with the Joint Spatial Plan (JSP) policies) covering the WECA area and North Somerset Council is being considered by Joint Committee

### **Bus Strategy**

The Transport Act 2000 requires the Combined Authority to consult on and produce a Bus Strategy, setting out the requirements for bus provision in the region. The West of England Combined Authority has a number of powers pertaining to the provision of local bus services. These include powers and duties contained within parts 3 and 4 of the Transport Act 1985, and Part 2 of the Transport Act 2000 (as amended), which can be summarised as:

- duty to produce a bus strategy;
- rights to franchise local bus services within its area, subject to the completion of the process set out in the Bus Services Act 2017;
- role of Travel Concession Authority;
- financial powers to enable the funding of community transport; and
- powers to support bus services (this power is held jointly with constituent councils).

### **Provision of bus services**

WECA has joint powers with Constituent Authorities to support bus services, including formulating policies for the provision of socially necessary services. This means that both West of England Combined Authority and the Constituent Councils can use the relevant powers in the Transport Act 1985, with the approval of the other organisation, but cannot use the powers unilaterally. Nevertheless, the nature and role of these services will need to be considered through the development of the Bus Strategy which is a West of England Combined Authority responsibility to progress. For the current financial year, funding is being passported back to the three constituent councils in the West of England Combined Authority area. A decision on any change to this situation from 2018/19 has yet to be made.

### **Bus Partnerships**

Upon its creation, West of England Combined Authority has the powers available in Part 2 of the Transport Act 2000 to enter into bus partnership arrangements within the West of England Combined Authority area. Prior to the West of England Mayor taking up office, Members of the West of England Joint Transport Board (JTB) agreed to the making of a Quality Partnership Scheme for the network of MetroBus services across the three authorities delivering the MetroBus schemes. Going forward, the West of England Combined Authority has the responsibility for finalising this under the new legislation as an Advanced Quality Partnership Scheme and for developing future bus partnerships for services within its area (where necessary in combination with North Somerset Council).

**Bus information**

West of England Combined Authority is now responsible for the production of a Bus Information Strategy and the provision of bus information. Real Time Information (RTI) and the TravelWest website are currently managed by Bristol City Council (BCC) on behalf of 4 councils (including North Somerset). To date, Bristol City Council has led on the procurement of a new RTI contract on behalf of the 4 councils. Production and updating of roadside timetable displays, data verification, local management of Traveline (SWPTI) and publicity leaflets for contracted bus services are functions currently being carried out by the constituent councils.

**Key Route Network**

Among the transport powers devolved to the Mayor of West of England Combined Authority is the identification and maintenance of a Key Route Network (KRN). Subject to agreement, the KRN will serve the main strategic demand flows of people and freight across the region and provide connections to the national strategic road network. It may also serve large local flows which use main roads to provide good access for local businesses reliant on road based transport.

Closely linked to the KRN will be the new Joint Transport Asset Management Plan. The asset management plan will help authorities in the region to understand the condition of its asset (roads, footways, bridges etc) in detail. This will mean that service improvements can be accurately targeted and the timing of maintenance planned such that further deterioration is minimised. As such, funding requests can be supported with hard facts.