

**West of England Partnership
Joint Transport Executive Committee
1 October 2009**

Multi-Area Agreement: Transport Actions and Asks

Purpose of Report

1. To outline progress with the lighter touch appraisal for Major Scheme Bids and draft memorandums of understanding with the Highways Agency.

Background

2. The Multi-Area Agreement (MAA) is an agreement between the West of England Partnership, Government and its agencies about key commitments in the sub-region to deliver the Partnership vision for 2026.
3. Under Action (3) to improve access and reduce traffic congestion to increase competitiveness and quality of life there are three transport related asks to accelerate the delivery and reduce the cost of major transport schemes, improve rail services and complementary working with the Highways Agency. More detail can be found in Appendix One. Memorandums of Understanding are proposed for the Highways Agency and rail services.

Major Transport Schemes

4. Under this ask the Department for Transport agree to use the North Fringe to Hengrove Package scheme as a national pilot for developing and testing measures to increase the pace of delivery, release capacity and reduce the costs of developing and securing approval for Major Transport Schemes. Engagement with the Department for Transport is ongoing.

Highways Agency Memorandum of Understanding

5. This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is between the West of England Partnership and the Highways Agency. Its purpose is to promote effective co-ordination and co-operation between the three organisations. It includes input into the Joint Local Transport Plan, engagement on the management and development of the strategic road network, protocols for planning applications and co-ordinating data collection. Issues to raise and progress through the MoU process include M5 Junctions 21 and 19, M49, M32 and the M4/M5 managed motorway scheme. It is proposed to hold a workshop with the Highways Agency to agree specific issues and actions. The draft MoU is set out in Appendix Two.

Network Rail and First Great Western Memorandum of Understanding

6. This MoU will be between the West of England Partnership, Network Rail and First Great Western. Its purpose will be to promote effective co-ordination and co-operation between the three organisations. It could include consultation on timetable changes, investment and planning decisions, input into the Joint Local

Transport Plan and co-ordinating data collection. The rail industry will be attending the Joint Transport Executive Committee meeting on 12 November 2009 and a report on the draft MoU will be presented.

Recommendation

Member's views are sought.

Appendices

Appendix One: West of England Multi-Area Agreement - Asks of Government

Appendix Two: Memorandum of Understanding between the West of England Partnership and the Highways Agency

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West of England Multi-Area Agreement Asks of Government

Accelerate the delivery and reduce the development costs of major transport schemes

- Department for Transport (DfT) to agree joint measures with the West of England to increase the pace of delivery, release capacity and reduce costs of developing and securing approval for Major Transport Schemes.
- As a key regional scheme, DfT to agree to use the North Fringe to Hengrove Package scheme as a national pilot for developing and testing these joint measures, e.g. at the outset, through an early inception meeting, ensuring a better and shared understanding of major scheme objectives, elements and timescales; streamlining the detailed questioning process; agreeing and committing to a joint timetable; aligning modelling and appraisal requirements proportionate to risk and complexity; and, co-commissioning and supervision of consultants.
- DfT to consider other measures including:
 - Treatment of preparatory costs incurred in the development of major scheme business cases.
 - Making the cost of land acquisition eligible for funding once Programme Entry is achieved, rather than at Full Approval.
 - Sharing risk to allow more routine elements of Major Schemes to be brought forward, whilst the more demanding elements of the bid are being finalised, to enable early scheme starts and reduced inflation costs. Recent proposals by the DfT (February 2009) to ‘decouple’ packages of schemes are welcome in this respect, although the scope for ‘decoupling’ could be extended.

Improve Rail Services

- DfT to engage at an early stage with the West of England, in the development of any future High Level Output Specification relevant to the sub-region. (This Specification sets out the outputs the railway is expected to deliver in terms of reliability, safety and capacity). This will enable the sub-region to provide evidence on future sub-regional housing and economic growth, other planned investment and priorities to seek to influence the specification.

This engagement will be complemented by Network Rail’s arrangements for taking these factors into account when determining their future investment priorities.

- DfT to engage at an early stage with the sub-region in the development of future franchise specifications as they affect the West of England to enable the sub-region to provide evidence on future housing and economic growth, other planned investment and priorities to seek to influence the specification.

The West of England aims to seek a memorandum of understanding with each of the rail operators in the sub-region to ensure full and timely consultation when they are planning

service policy and investment.

- DfT to work with the West of England Partnership and other partners, to enable the sub-region to deliver outcome and output objectives for local and regional rail schemes including seeking to improve the frequency and reliability of services and cutting overcrowding and short-formed trains.

Complementary working with Highways Agency

- Support the sub-region's formal involvement in the prioritisation of investment by the HA through a memorandum of understanding between the West of England four councils and the HA. Memorandum to include agreeing the programme and phasing of HA and West of England schemes, pricing of joint schemes and working together strategically and operationally.
- Ensure a balanced response from HA, through the memorandum of understanding, to the use and development of the trunk road network, and to local planning applications which deliver economic growth and journey time reliability. This is exemplified by the need for HA support to facilitate development at Avonmouth.
- HA to work with the West of England to achieve the Delivering a Sustainable Transport System (DaSTS) goal to support national economic competitiveness and growth by delivering reliable and efficient transport networks including Strategic National Corridors 6 London to the South West and South Wales and 7 Bristol to the Midlands.

Memorandum of Understanding between the West of England Partnership and the Highways Agency

Purpose

This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is between the West of England Partnership (WEP) and the Highways Agency (HA). The purpose of the MoU is to promote effective co-ordination and co-operation between the two organisations.

The MoU will facilitate HA and WEP priorities being clearly aligned to achieve a balance between the national/regional highways objectives and the improved transport provision needed to accommodate the high levels of housing growth required by the Regional Spatial Strategy and economic growth sought by the regional economic strategy.

The key principles are of openness and understanding together with shared responsibility and ownership of problems and solutions.

The MoU is a supporting document of the West of England's Multi-Area Agreement.

It is not intended to be legally binding.

Agreement

It is hereby agreed that:

The Highways Agency will be key stakeholders in the production of the Joint Local Transport Plan 3 and provide input, expertise and feedback as appropriate and reciprocally the West of England Partnership will be key stakeholders in Highway Agency's strategic plans.

A programme and phasing of HA and WEP schemes for 2011 – 2016 is to be agreed for inclusion in the Delivery Plan of the Joint Local Transport Plan 3 and a joint work stream is to be established to facilitate this.

The HA and WEP will collaborate to develop key milestones towards the Delivering a Sustainable Transport System (DaSTS) goal to support national economic competitiveness and growth by delivering reliable and efficient transport networks, including Strategic National Corridors 6 London to the South West and South Wales and 7 Exeter/Bristol to the Midlands

The HA to provide full and timely and comprehensive engagement on the management of the strategic road network including its forward programme.

The WEP to provide full and timely and comprehensive engagement on the management of the local transport network, including its RFA2 programme of transport major schemes.

The WEP to provide information on planned future sub-regional housing and economic growth and other planned investment and priorities.

A working protocol is to be agreed for processing significant planning applications which deliver economic growth and journey time reliability

The HA and WEP will have due regard to each others networks in making plans for and implementing traffic management measures on their networks. Arrangements will be established to ensure the overall effective operation of the total integrated network.

Quarterly officer meetings between HA and WEP will be established and the HA will provides updates for and attend meetings of the Joint Transport Executive Committee on a twice yearly basis.

The MoU partners will identify a senior contact officer with lead responsibility for the MoU.

Information requests between the MoU partners will be dealt with within 14 working days. Requests are to be as specific as possible.

Where appropriate data collection is to be co-ordinated between the MoU partners to maximise the use of data and enable cost sharing.

A joint framework on communications will be established in order to promote levels of engagement and partnership working between WEP and HA.

Timescale and review

The MoU shall come into immediate effect. The WEP and HA will jointly review the arrangements set out in the MoU at yearly intervals.

Signed

Four Executive Members

Date

Highways Agency

Date