



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

Friday, 25th June, 2021

**PRESENT**

Annette McDonald LEP Member for Transport (Chair)

**Members**

Councillor C Browne, Councillors K Shore and H Mundry

**Officers**

Sarah Baxter, Cheshire East Council  
David Bowyer, Warrington Borough Council  
Robert Davies, EA Technology  
Chris Hindle, Cheshire East Council  
Stephen Hunter, Warrington Borough Council  
Kristy Littler, Cheshire West & Chester Council  
Roy Newton, C&WLEP  
Jamal Saddique, Department for Transport

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

The Chair introduced herself and welcomed those in attendance. Introductions with officers and Members followed. It was moved and seconded that Councillor C Browne be appointed as Vice Chair of the Body.

Apologies for absence were received from John Hope, Andrew Ross and Sam Wheelan. It was noted that Jamal Saddique would be late.

**RESOLVED**

That Councillor C Browne be appointed as Vice Chair of the Cheshire and Warrington Local Transport Body.

**2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS VIRTUAL MEETING**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous virtual meeting. In terms of the following actions arising from the minutes the Chair queried if guidance on the levelling agenda had been circulated. In response it was reported that government had published guidance in respect of this matter which all local authorities had been sent.

The Chair asked if responses to the questions which had been raised at the previous virtual meeting in relation to service reductions had been circulated. It was confirmed that responses had yet to be circulated but that Roy Newton would ensure answers to the questions raised would be published on the LEP website.

Finally in respect of the Bus Strategy Consultation the Chair asked if work was still in progress. It was confirmed that it was and that the item would be considered later on in the agenda.

### **RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the virtual meeting held on 26 March 2021 be approved as a correct record.

### **4 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION**

Matthew Waterhouse attended the virtual meeting and queried when the last virtual meeting was. He also spoke in respect of a proposal regarding a study of the A51 which had been due to commence over 18 months ago but had not yet been undertaken.

It was agreed that this matter would be considered in more detail later on in the agenda, however Chris Hindle confirmed that there had not been a commitment or any funding to undertake a study.

### **5 NET ZERO TRANSPORT: THE ROLE OF SPATIAL PLANNING AND PLACE-BASED SOLUTIONS**

The Chair gave a verbal update in respect of the Net Zero Transport confirming that a report had been published in January entitled The Role of Spatial Planning and Place Based Solutions. She confirmed that the presentation slides and a link to the report would be circulated after the meeting. Reference was made to a reduction in surface transport emissions, a decarbonisation agenda acting as a catalyst in reducing car dependence and creating healthier and more equitable communities. Furthermore all new developments should be located and designed to generate zero emissions from surface transport. From the chair's perspective the items and recommendations contained within the report seemed appropriate and she asked what if consideration could be given to the role the Body had in shaping and influencing the sub regional placed

based solutions in order to achieve a carbon negative transport in Cheshire and Warrington.

**RESOLVED**

That the update be noted and that the presentation slides and the link to the published report be circulated after the meeting. **ACTION AM**

**6 CHESHIRE AND WARRINGTON SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH COMMISSION - SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT WORKSTREAM**

Robert Davies representing EA Technology attended the virtual meeting and gave a presentation Cheshire and Warrington Sustainable and Inclusive Growth Commission.

Highlighted within the presentation was information on:-

- Meeting or exceeding the UK Government's decarbonisation targets in Cheshire and Warrington by:
  - Becoming a national icon of best practice
  - A marketplace of ideas
  - The voice of the disadvantaged to local and national government
- Deliverables:
  - (i) A zero carbon public transport network before 2050
  - (ii) Supporting rail decarbonisation by 2040
  - (iii) Fastest growing public EV charging network in the UK
  - (iv) Public sector transport leading by example
- Travel patterns
- Travel modes
- Local bus services and the importance of buses
- Electric vehicle charging
- Timescale for delivery
- Funding options
- 6 areas of focus

The following questions and comments were raised:-

- (i) Source of figures in relation to the availability of EV charging points;
- (ii) Lack of integrated working;
- (iii) Sub regionals should have a more integrated system so people who want to come to Cheshire and Warrington can look up in advance where charging points are located;
- (iv) Frustration at priorities set for levelling up funding and the challenges in being able to co-ordinate the bids as a sub region;
- (v) Further thought needed to be given as to how as a Local Transport Body, strategic priorities could be more integrated.

Robert Davies stated that he was happy to invite Rachel Shorney who was a representative on the Commission from Scottish Power to demonstrate the charge project for Cheshire and Warrington which would hopefully provide a geographical map for where the optimal points were across the sub region for location of charging stations. In addition the next phase would be to allow people to click on a map to find out what the cost to connect public or private charging stations to the local electricity network would be.

## **RESOLVED**

- (1) That the presentation be noted and that the report, presentation and source of figures contained with the report be circulated to the Body. **ACTION RD/RN**
- (2) That a meeting with the Local Transport Body and Rachel Shorney be arranged in due course to consider the mapping of EV charging points.

## **7 ROLE OF THE LTB**

Roy Newton, the Transport & Investment Director of the Cheshire & Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership gave a presentation on the role of the Cheshire & Warrington Local Transport Body.

The following comments were made:-

- Meetings with actions and impact, with a clear direction of travel in order to track progress and therefore feel as if adding value and giving momentum;
- Sustainability commission provides an opportunity to put markers in the sand strategically so some of the priorities could start being delivered which would in turn help to set the agenda;
- Agree with action logs. Bit too passive in following up actions and easy to lose track of what has been agreed;
- Helpful when have key items to have more of an interactive session in order to debate where sit in terms of the sub region and to play a more active role in determining the priorities including bringing forward residents priorities;
- Looking at using TfN as a more formal route. Sometimes a disconnect between sub regional priorities and national ones;
- Developing a sub-regional bus strategy important but need do remember the requirement to develop the Bus Improvement Plans falls on local authorities first.
- Making bus services more attractive, however longer term funding from Government would be required;
- Stronger voice into TfN especially as all three local authorities were represented. How this was achieved in a sub-regional way and

how it could be co-ordinated in a way that allowed collective views to be reported to TfN needed further consideration;

- The Body could collectively agree feedback to the TfN, possibly having a standing agenda item;
- Often local authorities report back individual key priorities possibly have one collective report;
- Need to work more strategically;
- Part of updates from local authorities should perhaps focus on genuine cross border relevance;
- Value in understanding what is happening elsewhere;

The Chair asked for a summary of the priorities agreed going back to the three points highlighted within the presentation which referred to the type of updates, items for substantive discussion and format of reports/items.

In response the views of the Body were summarised as follows:-

- Agreement on action logs in order to ensure actions undertaken;
- The idea of having substantive discussions when appropriate with particular focus on key items was welcomed;
- Local Transport Body to provide a sub-regional voice and further work on how this could be achieved needed to be undertaken;
- Updates should focus on key messages from the updates and reporting on and discussing those key messages;
- Focus should be on strategic priorities but also important to incorporate the three local authorities' priorities into the strategic discussions.

The Chair suggested that agendas should include a sub item which outlined the substantive items to be considered at the next meeting and that links to the relevant documents be circulated in advance so it gave sufficient time for members to be informed.

It was also suggested that members could submit any items they wished to see on the agenda a month before the meeting. In addition it was agreed that feedback from the Body to TfN be included on all future agendas as a standing item. Within this item it was suggested that those representatives on the TfN could give advance warning of the issues they were going to raise at TFN Board meetings.

Discussions ensued in respect of each of the authorities priorities. In relation to Warrington the following priorities were put forward:-

- Completion of the Western link;
- All electric bus service;
- Rail decisions and route through bank heath station;
- New rail track between Manchester and Liverpool;
- Cycle and pedestrian routes

In relation to Cheshire West and Chester the following priorities were put forward:-

- Bus Strategy Review;
- Rural Mobility Fund;
- Active travel;
- Northwich railway station including its accessibility;
- Improvements to the Middlewich line and railway access from Chester into Wales and the Wirral;
- Helsby through Frodsham line;
- Improvements to Chester station;
- A51 scheme

In relation to Cheshire East the following priorities were put forward:-

- Bus Strategy;
- Rural Mobility Fund;
- Crewe hub station;
- Mid Cheshire Line;
- Middlewich Eastern Bypass;
- A500 dualling;
- HS2

It was agreed that in terms of the priorities the Body should focus on the strategic objectives based round the integrated rail strategy encompassing HS2, mid Cheshire line, Middlewich Line, the bus strategy and active travel.

It was agreed that Roy Newton would take the above as key headings to work on with further sub headings for the Body to consider in more detail.

## **RESOLVED**

That the comments made in relation to the format and content of future agendas and the key priorities of the Board be circulated to members after the meeting. **ACTION RN**

## **8 PRIORITISING BUSINESS CASE DEVELOPMENT**

Consideration was given to a report on prioritising business cases.

## **RESOLVED**

That endorsement be given to the following recommendations to the LEP's Strategy Programme Board:

- a) £25,000 contribution towards the Warrington Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan
- b) £50,000 contribution towards the Warrington Last Mile – Town Centre Masterplan
- c) £50,000 contribution towards the Crewe Transport Delivery Plan - Feasibility Assessment
- d) £30,000 contribution towards the Mid Cheshire Line Study
- e) £70,000 contribution towards the Hooton – Helsby Grip 3 rail study
- f) £16,666 contribution towards the A51/A500 Corridor Study
- g) £10,000 contribution towards the Bollin Valley Way – Feasibility Study
- h) £50,000 contribution towards the M6 Junction 20 Study

And that the following schemes be considered alongside any non-transport proposals as priorities for any additional funding that may become available this financial year or next financial year:

- a) £167,000 contribution towards the Middlewich Southern Link Outline Business Case
- b) £25,000 contribution towards the A50 Corridor Study

## **9 PROGRESS ON DELIVERING THE SUB-REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY**

Roy Newton, the Transport and Investment Director attended the virtual meeting and gave a presentation on the progress of the delivery and key emerging issues of the sub-regional transport strategy (including the development of the bus strategy) from the LEP.

In addition verbal updates were given from each Local Authority on the delivery and key emerging issues of their Local Transport Plans.

### **RESOLVED**

That the updates be noted.

## **10 DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT UPDATE**

Jamal Saddique from the Department for Transport attended the virtual meeting and gave a verbal update in respect of the Department's key priorities.

He advised that step 3 for reopening of the road map was ongoing and had now been extended to mid-July. Work was being undertaken with local authorities over the country to manage transport pressures and identify any risks. Overcrowding was taking place on light rail and bus, however heavy rail was not really recovering at the moment from the impact of Covid. A social distancing review was due for publication the week commencing the 19th July.

Bus service improvement plans were due to be submitted at the end of the month and a communications campaign alongside it had been devised to support active travel and bus travel over the course of the Summer centrally led to join up with local authority campaigns.

The devolution white paper was now the levelling up white paper which now had a broader focus on levelling up the economy. The Integrated Rail Plan was due out soon and the Transport Decarbonisation Plan was due to be published in the Summer.

The Northern Transport Acceleration Council had one to one meetings with a full meeting taking place earlier in the week. It was felt the meetings had gone well, however any further feedback from Members would be welcomed.

Finally the Highways England Route Strategy work had commenced and local authorities would be contacted in due course if they had not already received communications.

## **RESOLVED**

That the update be noted.

### **11 HIGHWAYS ENGLAND UPDATE**

Roy Newton, gave a verbal update on behalf of John Hope from Highways England who had given his apologies.

Highways England had produced route strategies since 2015 and these have guided the vision, performance expectations and investment plans for the network.

The route strategies would be delivered through three phases:

- Phase 1 – Complete: Baseline review of all interventions identified through previous route strategies and subsequent network changes consolidating into an easily accessible format.
- Phase 2 – Commenced 10<sup>th</sup> June 2021 with the launch of the route strategies process. [\*'Vision for Route Strategies – Planning for the future of our roads'\*](#) We will be arranging workshops and meetings as part of the engagement process with key strategic interested parties from July to November 2021 to understand their future aspirations for the network.
- Phase 3 – 2021/2023: In parallel, undertake a gap analysis between the current state and future requirements for the network. Using the analysis to identify a prioritised list of interventions to inform RIS pipelines, wider investment plans



and strategies, building on the baseline review and operational priorities.

Further to this the following major projects were also confirmed:-

**a. M56 J6 to J8 – Upgrade to SMART Motorway**

- i. Construction commenced Spring 2021
- ii. Estimated date for completion Summer 2022

**b. M6 J19 Improvement Scheme – Linking M6 N/B to A556**

- I. Work on M6 J19 continues to progress well.
- II. No more planned mainline closures
- III. Estimated date for completion late Summer 2021

**c. M6 J21a to J26 – Upgrade to SMART Motorway**

- I. Stopped Vehicle Detection technology to be delivered prior to opening
- II. Speed enforcement through the roadworks was about to commence
- III. Estimated date for completion Spring 2023

**d. M56/A533 Expressway Bridge Replacement (between J11 – J12**

- i. The A533 was in the detailed designed phase and was working towards a start of works date of Autumn 2021

**RESOLVED**

That the update noted.

**12 RAIL UPDATES**

Verbal updates were provided in respect of Network Rail, Manchester Task Force and the Northern Powerhouse Rail.

**RESOLVED**

That the updates be noted.

**13 TRANSPORT FOR THE NORTH UPDATE**

No further update was provided as the matters had been addressed earlier in the virtual meeting, however the Body were advised that the next meeting was scheduled to take place on 27 July 2021.

**14 ANY OTHER APPROPRIATE BUSINESS**

There were no items of other business.

**15 DATE OF NEXT VIRTUAL MEETING**

**RESOLVED**

That the date of the next virtual meeting take place on Friday 10 September 2021.