

GREATER MANCHESTER INTEGRATED TRANSPORT AUTHORITY
REPORT FOR RESOLUTION / INFORMATION

COMMITTEE: POLICY AND RESOURCES
DATE: 11 SEPTEMBER 2009
SUBJECT: REGIONAL CENTRE TRANSPORT STRATEGY
REPORT OF: CLERK OF THE AUTHORITY AND INTERIM CHIEF
EXECUTIVE OF THE GMPTE

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform members of the Regional Centre Transport Strategy and to outline the consultation process that will seek views from stakeholders.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are recommended to:

1. Note and comment as appropriate on the report,
2. Delegate authority for approving the consultation draft of the Regional Centre Transport Strategy to the Clerk of the Authority and the Interim Chief Executive of GMPTE, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Authority and the Leader of the Opposition;
3. Agree that consultation drafts be issued to members of the Authority as soon as they have been approved;
4. Endorse the outline consultation proposals as set out in Section 4 of this report; and,
5. Request a further update report on this subject be prepared for the next Authority meeting on the 16 October

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Prosperity for all: Greater Manchester Strategy, AGMA, August 2009.
Manchester Independent Economic Review, MIER Commission, 2009.
Strategic Plan for Manchester city centre 2009-2012, Manchester City Centre Management Company, 2009.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In December 2007, Manchester City Council and GMPTE carried out a consultation on a Regional Centre Transport Strategy (RCTS). Its main function was to set a framework for the delivery of the transport infrastructure and services that would be required to deliver the TIF investment in the city centre. The result of the referendum meant that further work on a TIF informed strategy was set aside, although it was recognised that a forward looking transport strategy that could effectively support the efficient operation of a thriving regional centre would still be required in due course.

2. Context

- 2.1 The publication of the Manchester Independent Economic Review (MIER), the Greater Manchester Strategy (GMS) and the emerging work on city-region governance together with the new challenges and opportunities presented by the Greater Manchester Transport Fund (GMTF) and Accelerated Package mean that a fresh approach is now required to understand how transport can support the ongoing growth of the Regional Centre.
- 2.2 The GMS identifies the regional centre as a key driver of growth that will benefit the entire city-region, given the fact that an increased density of well-connected people and firms is highly correlated with strong economic performance and improved environmental outcomes.
- 2.3 Complementing the GMS, Manchester City Council (MCC) and the City Centre Management Company are now finalising their Strategic Plan for Manchester city centre 2009-2012 (SPMCC). The Plan recognises that Manchester and its city centre are competing internationally. Capital is global and investment decisions are based on a range of factors, not least of which is a city's transport infrastructure. The SPMCC also stresses the need to pursue strategies to develop transport to ensure that economic growth is not constrained or inhibited, and to provide access to the employment opportunities that will be created.

3. The draft Regional Centre Transport Strategy

- 3.1 The regeneration and revitalisation of regional centre economy, as evidenced by the significant year on year increases in employment over the last decade, must be sustained if Greater Manchester is to meet the objectives set out in the GMS. The nature of the economic growth of the regional centre is people-intensive, requiring continued access to both a breadth and depth of skills if its competitive advantage is to be maintained now and in the post-recession period. Therefore the basic premise of the RCTS is to ensure that transport infrastructure

and services are capable of providing the local, regional and national forms of connectivity, across all modes, that will be required in the longer term.

- 3.2 As outlined within the wider context set out above, the principal objectives of the RCTS can be summarised as to support the regional centre's:
- economy
 - environment
 - optimal operation
- 3.3 The regional centre has already achieved a critical mass of economic activity and the Manchester City Region Development Programme sets out a plan to deliver further jobs by 2021. In practice, this will mean providing the capacity to intensify essential labour market connectivity without creating more economy-sapping congestion. Given the current modal split between non-car and car modes is 61/39, with the current LTP target raising this to 65/35, there is a need to provide considerable extra public transport capacity on all modes to cater for the significant extra trips that will be generated through economic growth.
- 3.4 In addition, there is a pressing economic argument that places a high value on enhancing linkages from across the regional centre, and also connecting areas of deprivation with areas of opportunity and employment. Therefore the RCTS, and in particular the Cross City Bus Package, will facilitate previously difficult trips from one side of the regional centre to the other, such as from the Oxford Road Corridor to Middleton, Salford to the south of the regional centre, etc.

Environment

- 3.5 The Authority and the City Council's climate change obligations mean there will be an even greater pressure to shift the modal share further toward low carbon modes, principally public transport. The net effects of this shift are likely to entail a continuing, significant role for bus, as one of the most flexible carbon efficient modes, particularly in the medium to long term context where Metrolink and Rail services may approach capacity following the current tranches of investment.
- 3.6 Also of key importance is ensuring that the quality of the environment within the regional centre, for example in terms of air quality and general ambience is of the highest order, notwithstanding the intensity of activity throughout the day, evening and night-time. This is particularly significant given the growing residential population which is estimated to reach around 25,000 in 2012.

Optimise the operation of the Regional Centre

- 3.7 Finally, it will be vital that the public transport and highway provisions are fully co-ordinated to support and sustain the ongoing developments

as well as the myriad of functions – from street cleansing to festivals, conferences to sporting events, night-time economy to retailing, etc – that regularly take place within the cosmopolitan regional centre.

4. What happens next?

- 4.1 Public consultation on RCTS will take place in close parallel (although not necessarily contemporaneously) with the planned GMPTE consultations on the Second City Centre Metrolink Crossing and the Cross-City Bus Package. Although closely related, the three consultations are different in nature. RCTS is looking to develop a broad strategic framework that will guide the development of transport infrastructure and services over the next 10 years or so in a way that will support the ongoing development of the Regional Centre. And, whilst the Second City Crossing and the Cross-City Bus package are clearly of strategic importance, the more detailed nature of the proposals will be of great interest to, and closely scrutinised by, frontagers and other interested parties along the routes.
- 4.2 At the time of writing this report, the consultation draft RCTS is still 'work in progress.' It is however, expected to be ready for publication before the next ITA meeting on 16 October. In the circumstances, it is recommended that the Authority's agreement to publish the consultation draft is delegated to the Chair and Vice Chair of the Authority together with the Leader of the Opposition. Once published, electronic copies of the draft RCTS will be forwarded to all members of the Authority. Should members request, it may be appropriate to have a more detailed briefing, or a workshop, on the Strategy during the consultation period.
- 4.3 The RCTS consultation is programmed to last for 8 weeks during which period there will be a series of presentations to key stakeholders and meetings with interested parties. At the end of the consultation period the responses received will be analysed and MCC and GMPTE officers will draw up recommendations for any proposed changes to the draft to be presented to the MCC Executive and to the GMITA.
- 4.4 A final version of RCTS is expected to be published in Spring 2010.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 A full set of recommendations appears at the front of this report