

TRANSPORT BOARD

4/09/2020

ROADS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND APPROACH TO THE KEY ROUTE NETWORK

Purpose of Report

To update the Board on the status of the Roads Implementation Plan and to discuss some of the core issues within the document.

Thematic Priority

Secure investment in infrastructure where it will do most to support growth.

Recommendations

That members of the Transport Board:

- Note the work undertaken to date with Local Authorities to develop the SCR Roads Implementation Plan
- Comment on the proposed 'all users' approach which focuses on a balanced and efficient use of road space
- Confirm the proposed Key Route Network of regionally significant roads set out in the Plan
- Consider benefits and any disadvantages to further development and utilisation of the KRN approach for planning, investment, collaboration or coordination.

1. Introduction

- 1.1** As reported at previous Transport Board meetings, work is underway to develop the future work programmes to deliver the policies in the Transport Strategy. This report provides an update on the Roads Implementation Plan, which has been developed in partnership with the Local Authority Transport Leads and SYPTE.
- 1.2** As the MCAs Active Travel Implementation Plan (ATIP), the Bus Review Response work and meeting our Net Zero targets all rely on interaction with the SCR's road network, the Roads Plan has a significant role in the delivery of our Transport Strategy objectives. Pedestrians, cyclists, bus passengers, freight operators and others all use our roads, but it is cars that currently dominate. The Plan aims to redress the balance amongst road users taking a new approach, to develop a network that allows public transport services to operate efficiently and create space for active travel. This 'all users' approach to roads is a departure from the current situation where cars are generally given priority over other modes on SCR's road network. The new approach prioritises the most efficient use of limited road space.

- 1.3** A Key Route Network (KRN) of regionally significant roads has been defined within the Plan. The KRN map has been developed in partnership with Local Authority stakeholders.

The SCR Devolution Deal allows for greater collaboration on the management of the KRN across the city region by the respective Highways Authorities in partnership with the SCR Mayor. Responsibility for resourcing maintenance and operational management of the network remains the responsibility of the respective highway authorities.

The KRN could for example be used to plan and identify MCA investment priorities across the SCR in the future linked to a new set of principles for our road network, which embed the 'all users' approach identified in.

- 1.4** To enable completion of the Plan, the Board are asked to consider these two key issues – the 'all users' approach and the objectives and benefits of collaboration on the management of the KRN to offer guidance to shape the final version.

2. Proposal and justification

- 2.1** The Roads Implementation Plan is one of a series of Implementation Plans to deliver the policies and goals of the SCR Transport Strategy. The development of the Roads Plan was paused to enable the ATIP and the Bus Review Response work to progress as both rely on efficient use of the regions road network to meet their objectives. The alignment of the Roads Plan with the ATIP is reflected in the 'Purpose of the Plan' section of the document, where it is proposed that addressing issues such as congestion, poor air quality, meeting our net-zero targets and creating a better public and active travel network, all require a wider view of road space to be taken.

- 2.2** At present, cars are generally given priority on our roads over the needs of other users, however the Roads Plan proposes a rethink of how and what we invest in on our network, to improve the range of options for all road users. The response to the pandemic has shown that re-allocating our road space enables people to use more sustainable modes of transport and as we move into the pandemic recovery phase, we are seeking ways to 'lock in' these benefits. The flexible use of our roads during recent months indicates that an appropriate balance needs to be struck between the creation of new road infrastructure and making better use of the existing network. Whilst some new road infrastructure will be needed, changes in travel demand and securing the reduction in car use currently experienced on our network, will help us to meet our net-zero targets.

- 2.3** To reflect these challenges, and to redress the balance amongst the users of our road network, our Plan commits to;

- Making best use of our existing roads, before building new ones
- Considering how we use the road space available for all users, not just for cars
- Redesigning roads to join up better with local transport
- Delivering carbon emissions reductions, improved air quality and biodiversity

When there are competing demands for road space, it is proposed that our decisions reflect the lessons we have learned in recent months and the focus set out above, particularly the wider objectives around promoting public and sustainable transport, which is also in line with the sustainability theme in our Strategic Economic Plan (SEP).

- 2.4** To ensure our decisions reflect our Roads Plan commitments and the 'all users' approach to the network, it is proposed that a set of core principles are developed to guide investment in our road network. These principles would support investment in roads to;

- Address congestion,
- Improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions,
- Design in measures that positively promote alternative options to the private car,
- Retrofit and enhance green infrastructure as standard,
- Apply the highest level of design and mitigation in all cases to ensure stronger protection for the landscape and heritage assets from road infrastructure,
- Ensure communities or wildlife habitats are not severed by roads,
- Incorporate environmental design principles within new or upgraded facilities to improve flood protection and reduce emissions.

2.5 In developing the Roads Plan, a Key Route Network (KRN) for the SCR has been defined. The KRN reflects the important role that our road network plays in supporting the economic recovery of the SCR and the interplay between the operation of the road network and the public transport system. The criteria for the inclusion of a route on the KRN are;

- Access to regional hubs – roads that connect the key economic centres defined in the Mayor's Vision for Transport
- Access to key public transport hubs – roads that provide direct access to public transport hubs, interchanges or park and ride sites
- Access to Local Growth Areas – roads that provide direct access to any of the growth areas identified in the SEP that are not identified as regional hubs
- Access to non-SCR growth areas – any road which provides direct access to neighbouring areas of proposed economic activity

The proposed KRN also includes roads with an inbound frequency of 6 or more buses per hour (or either direction is linking to a SCR growth zone) – these are, and will remain, the principal public transport corridors. To this network, we have then added the Strategic Road Network (SRN) and the Major Road Network (MRN) as defined by others, to recognise the importance of these national and pan-regional connections to, and within, the SCR.

2.6 The composition and definition of the KRN has been developed with Local Authorities partners. Board members are invited to comment on if and how this designation supports delivering improved transport and other outcomes through greater collaborative management. The draft Plan includes a proposed set of principles to govern the operation and investment in our KRN for consideration.

2.7 The KRN could for example be used to plan and identify investment priorities in the future, linked to the new set of objectives and principles proposed in the Roads Plan. This approach could enable the MCA to support those projects that align with the SCR Transport Strategy objectives and contribute to our Net Zero commitments. The KRN could be the location of prioritised investment in new technology designed to improve transport outcomes or future mobility initiatives.

3. Consideration of alternative approaches

3.1 The Board may not support the proposed 'all-user' approach to the region's road network and the aim of redressing the balance amongst all road users. This approach would hinder the delivery of the region's wider Transport Plan objectives as the reallocation and flexible use of road space is integral to the success of the region's Implementation Plans.

4. Implications

4.1 Financial

There are no immediate financial implications from this report. Future decisions on the adoption of the proposals may necessitate a review of how road investment decisions are currently made

4.2 Legal

The development and operation of a KRN will require the parties to exercise their functions and powers collaboratively. The legal implications of specific interventions will be considered on a case by case basis

4.3 Risk Management

The development of the Roads Implementation Plan reduces the risk lack of coordination and prioritisation poses to the delivery of the aspirations set out in the SCR Transport Strategy.

4.4 Equality, Diversity and Social Inclusion

The 'all users' approach in the Roads Plan proposes a more inclusive use of the regions roads, bringing benefits for all roads users.

5. Communications

5.1 None as a consequence of this report.

6. Appendices/Annexes

6.1 1 – The Roads Implementation Plan

Report Author	Chloe Shepherd
Post	Senior Programme Manager - Transport
Officer responsible	Mark Lynam
Organisation	Sheffield City Region
Email	mark.lynam@sheffieldcityregion.org.uk
Telephone	0114 220 3445

Background papers used in the preparation of this report are available for inspection at: 11 Broad Street West, Sheffield S1 2BQ

Other sources and references: n/a