

## **Western Gateway Sub-national Transport Body**

### **Board Meeting**

#### **Paper A**

Date **13th March 2024**

Title of report: **Strategic Transport Plan**

Purpose of report: **To seek approval of the Western Gateway Strategic Transport Plan**

#### **Recommendations:**

The Members of the Board are recommended to:

- i) Approve the Western Gateway Strategic Transport Plan (STP) for publication.
- ii) Agree the production of a subsequent Strategic Investment Plan by the end of 2024/25

If minor amendments to the STP are required, the Board is further recommended to:

- iii) Delegate responsibility for the finalisation, approval and publication of the STP to the STP Project Board (Project Executive – Cllr Thomas)

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 The Department for Transport (DfT) continues to stress the importance of every Sub-national Transport Body (STB) producing and maintaining a transport strategy. The Western Gateway's long term Strategic Transport Plan 2025 to 2050 will provide this.
- 1.2 To date, all the STBs have a long term Strategic Transport Plan, with the exception of Western Gateway and Peninsula Transport. Peninsula intend to approve and publish their STP by the end of March 2024.
- 1.3 At the previous Board meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023, the Board took the decision for officers to produce a short STP by the end of March 2024, to ensure a Plan would be in place before a possible early general election, to avoid potential conflict with local elections taking place in May 2024 and to ensure Western Gateway would not be left as the sole STB without an approved STP. Supporting decisions made at the December meeting included:

- The decision to separate the production of a Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) from the STP and to develop and consult on the SIP later in 2024.
- Agreement on the overarching Vision for the STP: *“A resilient and sustainable transport network that works for everyone and is fit for the future, helping people and businesses throughout Western Gateway to thrive while protecting our environment.”*
- Agreement on seven high-level sift criteria to identify policies and proposals in scope for a regional transport plan (as opposed to national or local)
- Agreement on the broad framing of the STP as contributing to the achievement of the three key aims for transport that DfT have charged STBs with helping to deliver:
  - Growing and levelling up the economy
  - Reducing environmental impact
  - Improving transport for the user
- The delegation of responsibility for production of the STP to a Project Board, with Cllr Thomas nominated to act as Project Executive and take decisions on the day to day development of the document.

## **2. Strategic Transport Plan**

- 2.1 A Strategic Transport Plan has now been produced in accordance with the decisions outlined in section 1. It has been circulated to Members as an attachment to this paper.
- 2.2 The Board is asked to approve the STP for publication (web and print), or, where minor amendments are required, to delegate responsibility for the final drafting and approval of the Plan to the Project Board, under the guidance of Cllr Thomas.

## **3. Strategic Investment Plan**

- 3.1 A key requirement of the Department for Transport is for the Western Gateway to produce a list of Strategic Investment Priorities. The criteria for the initial sift of relevant (regional) proposals was approved at the Board meeting in December 2023.
- 3.2 The Board is asked to agree for officers to commence work on the SIP, for completion by the end of 2024/25, subject to final approval by the Board. A programme plan will be developed and shared with the Board at the meeting in June.

3.3 Subject to agreement with by the Project Board members, it is also recommended that the STP Project Board continue to oversee the production of the SIP.

#### 4. Consultation, communication and engagement

4.1 It was agreed by the Board that public consultation would not take place on the draft STP (an Issues and Options consultation having already taken place in April/May 2023).

4.2 Regular engagement has taken place with a variety of stakeholders during the production of the STP as per the table below:

Stakeholder Group	Engagement Type		
	Workshop	Meeting	Written
STP Project Board		17/01/2024 19/01/2024 30/01/2024 12/02/2024 19/02/2024 29/02/2024	29/01/2024 05/02/2024 12/02/2024 22/02/2024
Western Gateway Programme Team	30/10/2023	13/11/2023 4/12/2023 15/01/2024 12/02/2024 11/03/2024	29/01/2024 05/02/2024 09/02/2024 11/02/2024 22/02/2024
Elected Members (Local Authorities)	14/11/2023	6/12/2023 8/02/2024 13/03/2024	5/02/2024 22/02/2024
Senior Officers Group (Local Authorities)	6/11/2023	4/12/2023 8/01/2024 6/02/2024 5/03/2024	5/02/2024 22/02/2024
Transport Officers Group (Local Authorities)	9/11/2023	11/01/2024 5/03/2024 20/03/2024	5/02/2024 22/02/2024
Transport and Business Forum	30/11/2023	20/02/2024	05/02/2024 22/02/2024
Freight Forum		05/02/2024 07/07/2024 08/02/2024 11/03/2024	
DfT		2/02/2024 19/02/2024 10/03/2024	01/02/2024 22/02/2024

## **5. Equalities Implications**

- 5.1 Delivering the Western Gateway's Strategic Transport Plan will open up new travel opportunities and improve accessibility for everyone. No adverse impact on any protected groups is expected.

## **6. Legal Considerations**

- 6.1 The Western Gateway STB remains an informal non-statutory partnership.

## **7. Financial considerations**

- 7.1 The Western Gateway's Strategic Transport Plan budget for 2023/24 (including an update to the regional transport model) was £134,000.

## **8. Conclusion**

- 8.1 The Board is asked to make a key decision to approve the Strategic Transport Plan as attached.

### **Contact Officer**

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