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**Report of the New Generation Transport Team (City Development)**

**Inner South Area Committee**

**Date: 7 January 2010**

**Subject: New Generation Transport (NGT) Scheme: Current Position and Public Consultation Results**

<b>Electoral Wards Affected:</b> City & Hunslet Middleton Park  Plus various others throughout the City	<b>Specific Implications For:</b> Ethnic minorities <input type="checkbox"/>  Women <input type="checkbox"/>  Disabled people <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Council Function <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Delegated Executive Function available for Call In <input type="checkbox"/>	Delegated Executive Function not available for Call In Details set out in the report <input type="checkbox"/>

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**Executive Summary**

The report outlines progress on the development of the New Generation Transport scheme and provides Members with feedback from the summer consultation process and recent Major Scheme Business Case submission. The next stage and proposed timeframe for submission of the Transport and Works Act Order are outlined.

**1.0 Purpose Of This Report**

- To provide an update on NGT progress since the previous committee attended (23 June 2009)
- To provide a timeline / anticipated forward programme for the scheme
- To provide a summary of key headlines from the Major Scheme Business Case (MSBC) submitted to the Department for Transport on 30 October 2009
- To report back the results of the summer formal consultation and ongoing discussions / consultation
- To outline the current approach to key issues raised by Members and the public during the consultation process
- To outline the Transport and Works Act Order procedure including the Request for Information process

## **2.0 Background Information**

Metro and Leeds City Council are working in partnership to develop a bus-based rapid transit system for Leeds known as New Generation Transport (NGT). The project management board consists of senior officers from both organisations. The NGT scheme represents a major investment in the City of Leeds aimed at providing a high quality transport system to support the ongoing growth of Leeds' economy, to improve the local environment and relieve congestion. It aims, along with other transport and public transport measures, to provide a step change in the way public transport operates within the City. The preferred option is for the scheme to operate using electric trolleybuses running on rubber tyres and powered from overhead wires.

£250 million has been allocated to the scheme in the Regional Funding Allocation. This figure, supplemented by the required 10% local contribution will allow for the initial development of a core 3 line network at an overall cost in the order of £280 million. The local contribution (and any overrun cost) is a joint liability between Metro and Leeds City Council. The Major Scheme Business Case (MSBC) outlines how this local contribution will be accounted for:

- Provision of Leeds City Council & Metro owned land – approx £13m
- Allowance for development costs (including some incurred from the predecessor Supertram scheme) – approx £14.5m

The attached plan shows the proposed routes being developed which incorporate a central loop around the City Centre and the three radial routes:

- North Leeds through Headingley along the A660 to a park and ride site at Bodington
- South Leeds through Hunslet to a Park and Ride site at Stourton
- East Leeds to St James's Hospital

There is also scope for future extensions and alignments to the EASEL and Aire Valley areas as well as West Leeds, although these do not form part of the current funding allocation and design work. The extension to Holt Park is a key aspiration that has been included within the MSBC with powers likely to be sought at the Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO) stage. The current funding does not allow for this £11m extension but should certain high risk costs reduce then it may be possible to integrate this extension into the northern route from the start.

## **3.0 Major Scheme Business Case (MSBC)**

This document is the application to Department for Transport (DfT) for NGT Programme Entry status and was formally submitted on 30 October 2009. The Leeds City Council Executive Board approved a draft MSBC document at their meeting on 14 October 2009, confirming the Council's commitment to the scheme and requirements for the local contribution towards the total scheme cost.

Programme Entry is the next step in the process for confirming funding for NGT which allows the Promoters to go forward to seek approval for the required powers to construct and operate the system. The Promoters have confirmed through this submission that they will

fund the £27m local contribution. Programme Entry status is an indication that the Government regards the NGT proposals as value for money and are minded to provide the Regional major scheme funding allocation of £250m. The DfT has indicated that given the tight scheme programme it will endeavour to approve Programme Entry (if minded to do so), by the end of January 2010. The DfT has indicated that this quick turn-around should be achievable as a result of the detailed consultation and input that has taken place between the Promoters and DfT prior to MSBC submission.

The document fulfils DfT's requirements for a MSBC submission. It sets out NGT's:

- Strategic Case
- Value for Money Case
- Delivery Case
- Commercial Case
- Financial Case

The Strategic Case sets out the scheme context and includes a description of the problems and issues which NGT will help to resolve. It sets out the scheme objectives and describes how the Preferred Trolleybus Option was developed. The Strategic Case demonstrates that NGT will make a strong contribution to meeting national, regional and local policy objectives.

The Value for Money Case demonstrates the economic worth of the project. This includes a Cost Benefit Analysis which shows that with a Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) of 2.6:1 the scheme represents strong value for money and will deliver a high level of benefit against the investment made. The scheme meets the Government's criteria for funding support.

The document concludes with a summary of the appraised NGT options outlining the many benefits of NGT and demonstrating the strong contribution that it will make to the future transport network in Leeds. It highlights the positive impact the scheme will have on encouraging modal shift and more sustainable travel, whilst helping to maximise the Leeds economy by enhancing its competitive position and facilitating future employment and population growth. Finally, the section highlights the contribution NGT will make to improving accessibility from some of the more deprived areas of Leeds to enable improved access to opportunities and an improved quality of life.

The costs input into the Business Case are based on the 'Design Freeze 2' consultation plans dating from July 09. However, the initial Limits of Deviation (extent of land required for works) for the Transport and Works Order submission have been drawn to give flexibility to the ongoing design modifications which will continue to be amended and refined up until and beyond the Transport and Works Act Order application next year.

#### **4.0 Transport and Works Act Order (TWAo)**

The next stage in the process of securing powers, approval and full funding for the NGT scheme is the Transport and Works Act Order (1992) application. This package of plans and reports, in essence is similar to a large planning application, is submitted to the Local Planning Authority but then 'called in' by the Secretary of State.

The TWAO seeks to obtain the powers required to:

- compulsorily purchase land
- designate roads
- operate a trolleybus system
- procure the trolleybus vehicles and operate them
- deliver enforcement strategies including Traffic Regulation Orders and cameras
- remove trees and relocate utilities
- implement mitigation measures (to offset the negative impacts of the scheme)

In conjunction with the TWAO process the Promoters will be seeking:

- deemed planning consent for the whole scheme
- approval of the required Conservation Area and Listed Building applications

The deemed planning consent is comparable to an Outline planning consent with the principle of the extent of works (limits of deviation) approved, along with indicative proposals but with the very detailed measures conditioned. The responsibility of discharging these conditions then lies with the Local Planning Authority.

The TWAO package will contain among other items:

- formal request for the S.90 direction (deemed consent)
- consultation report
- proposed planning conditions
- various plans at different scales and detail
- Design Statement
- Transport Assessment
- full Environmental Statement including Sustainability Appraisal
- Planning Statement

The application will result in local advertisement, local notices and a 42 day period for members of the public and other interested parties to inspect the application and make representations to the Secretary of State, with the probability that these will then be referred to a public local inquiry. All documents will be made available to view at Leeds City Council / Metro offices with a version accessible on-line.

Prior to the TWAO submission further approval will be sought from the Leeds City Council Executive Board, following on from the current consultation with Ward Members and the public including the local Area Committees.

The current anticipated TWAO timetable is as follows:

- June 2010 – TWAO application made
- June to August 2010 – formal objection period
- January-February 2011 – Public Inquiry
- December 2011 – Secretary of State decision

Work has been ongoing through the TWA Order Working Group in developing the extent of the TWA Order submission plans and the limits of deviation. It has been assumed by the group that the limits will remain quite broad until the Promoters are happy that all works to be

undertaken by the Project are contained within the agreed limits. The consequences of broad limits however mean that the number of affected parties remains quite large. To draw in the limits at this stage would restrict ongoing design and restrict opportunity to make amendments in response to negotiations and discussions with potential objectors.

### **Requests for Further Information (RFI)**

The 'Land Referencing' exercise is now entering the next critical stage. Ardent Property Consultants have been appointed by the Project Team to undertake land referencing in order to assist in developing the extent of the Order Limits, identify affected parties and input into the NGT Consultation / Objection Management strategy.

The TWAO 'Rules' require that a 'Book of Reference' must be submitted as part of the application. The Book is required to contain many details including the names of all owners, lessees, tenants or occupiers impacted by the scheme. In order to be able to identify all the parties affected and those who have to be served with notices of the TWAO application it will be necessary to commence carrying out this Request for Information exercise from mid December onwards.

In the first instance, the intention is to send out letters to all affected parties advising them that they could be affected by the scheme, and inviting them to contact the appointed consultants. If no response is received a statutory Request for Information will be served which gives the respondent 21 days to reply.

The initial letter will outline the purpose of the request and also include a 'pack' of information (including who to contact if there are concerns and queries, FAQ, etc) together with an offer of a site visit and explanation of the proposals.

Ward Members will be notified before any RFI's are issued in their Ward.

## **5.0 Public Engagement on the proposed scheme**

A two-stage approach to public engagement on the NGT project has been implemented. The first stage in late 2008 concentrated on high level issues. A more detailed consultation on specific scheme proposals ran for 12 weeks starting on 8<sup>th</sup> June this year.

The initial period of NGT public engagement commenced with a series of public exhibitions held jointly with the Transport for Leeds project in Leeds City Centre in November 2008. The purpose of these exhibitions was to raise awareness of the emerging NGT proposals and to seek feedback from the public on certain key attributes of the scheme. The exhibitions were extremely well attended with over 1,000 people visiting over a four day period.

An NGT project website was also launched in November 2008 to provide general information about the project and to provide an online facility for people to complete the NGT questionnaire. The NGT website can be found at [www.ngtmetro.com](http://www.ngtmetro.com). This website is kept up-to-date with project progress, key reports and future milestones including full reports from both consultations periods.

The summer 2009 consultation consisted of six public exhibitions each lasting two to four days across Leeds including evenings and Saturdays with nearly 1400 people attending. The South Leeds event was at the Penny Centre between 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> June. Information was also available on the internet, in libraries, to local groups and distributed to members of the public on-street. Nearly 19,000 consultation packs were distributed to the public and feedback was sought via a questionnaire which over 2,500 people completed. The questionnaire responses showed a positive reaction to the proposals and 77% of all respondents supported/strongly supported them. The main reasons for such support related to:

- Reduced car use/congestion;
- Environmental reasons;
- Provision of reliable/ quick/ good quality, modern public transport; and
- Positive impact of the scheme on Leeds.

A similar level of support was shown for the use of trolleybuses, which were primarily supported due to environmental reasons. Over 70% of all respondents supported/strongly supported the introduction of Park & Ride sites at the end of the North and South routes; such support was even higher amongst car owners. The feedback questionnaire asked about potential use of NGT and 88% of those living within a ten minute walk of one of the routes said they would consider using it. 42% of car owners responding said they would consider using one of the Park & Rides.

A number of comments and suggestions were received in relation to the NGT proposals. Common themes from all responses included the following:

- A desire for more NGT routes and wider coverage across Leeds;
- The need for low fares to encourage use;
- The need for competitive Park & Ride pricing to encourage car drivers;
- Concern about how NGT would integrate with existing bus services – some feel it is not necessary if existing services are improved; and
- The impact of the scheme on traffic, with some concerns that NGT would create additional congestion.

The 10 most frequently made comments about the South Route were (further details can be found in the consultation report):

- Alternative / additional routes needed (150 comments)
- Welcome idea (112 comments)
- Favour preferred option – railway alignment (56)
- Other concerns (40)
- Park & Ride comment (36)
- Suggestions about scheme (36)
- Route is currently congested (22)
- Need to segregate from traffic (17)
- Not needed (17)
- A waste of money (12)

## **6.0 The City Centre Hub and South Route**

The NGT network is proposed to consist of a City Centre hub with the three lines radiating off this. The City Centre Hub would generally follow the Public Transport Loop along Boar Lane, Park Row, The Headrow, Eastgate, but then diverting through new NGT only link through the proposed Eastgate development and outdoor markets area to York Street. The details of the routing across the city centre has not been finalised, but is likely to be that the North line would run through to the East Line and St James's with the South line operating a one way circular route around the city centre.

The proposed South alignment leaves the City Centre Hub at Lower Briggate crossing over Leeds Bridge. It turns onto Bowman Lane and runs past the Brewery site and Clarence Dock before an off highway section through an existing light industrial area to Hunslet Road. After passing under the new road viaduct the route crosses the A61 close to St Joseph's Primary School. Unlike the predecessor Supertram scheme NGT would then divert onto Whitfield Way and the currently pedestrianised Whitfield Square to Waterloo Road at the back of the Penny Hill centre. The vehicles would then run on street along Church Street and Balm Road before turning onto an alignment adjacent to the railway and partly running on the sidings. NGT would then cross Pepper Road at grade before continuing adjacent to the railway before reaching junction 7 of the M621 and a large Park and Ride site at Stourton.

The key policy and technical issues as well as those raised by Members and the public during the recent public consultation are as follows:

- Lack of extended / alternative routes to Beeston, Middleton, and the Aire Valley
- Potential impact on existing bus services
- Impact on St Joseph's School (some landtake required)
- Impact on Whitfield Square (NGT running through currently pedestrianised area)
- Possible encroachment onto public greenspace (Leasowe Rec) and private rear gardens along railway alignment
- Size and design of Stourton Park and Ride

A fixed £250m has been allocated to the scheme from the Region Funding Allocation and therefore any proposals must fit with this limit (plus the 10% local contribution). The Department for Transport have also been very clear that the money will only be available to fund alignments that would generate significant numbers of passengers along routes which currently suffer from high levels of congestion and significant public transport journey time variations and unreliability. The route priorities have therefore been assessed on this criteria. Should these initial three lines be successful the Project team would envisage that further routes outlined in Section 2 would follow, subject to securing adequate funding. In terms of the Aire Valley regeneration area the issue of securing funding for NGT is being considered as part of the emerging Area Action Plan.

### **Other bus services**

The potential impact of NGT on commercial bus services across Leeds is an acknowledged issue that any publicly controlled rapid transit system must assess and resolve. The project team is giving detailed consideration to this issue. There are a number of complex scenarios

depending on the procurement route taken, potential partners / operators of NGT, the implementation of Quality Partnerships / Contracts, and potential for interchange at the P&R sites. The approach to be taken will become clearer as time progresses and will be considered in some detail at the Public Inquiry.

Unlike other sections of the NGT network there is very little overlap with existing bus routes on the South route, with the exception of buses stopping at the Hunslet District Centre and going to and from the city centre. Significant impacts on and alterations to existing bus service levels and patronage are therefore not expected along the South NGT Route.

### **St Joseph's School**

In order to bring NGT closer to the Penny Hill Centre and within walking distance of a larger number of people the preferred design option requires some amendment to the access arrangements and parking at St Joseph's RC Primary School as well as some potential landtake. Discussions are underway with Education Leeds as well as surveys to ascertain current vehicle and pedestrian movements during the day. Full consultation will also take place with the school before a design is finalised.

### **Whitfield Square**

The proposals involve running NGT through the currently pedestrianised area of Whitfield Square and Waterloo Road. These roads are still classified as adopted highway. Whitfield Square contains housing on both sides whereas Waterloo Road forms part of the Hunslet District Centre. The mitigation measures would involve significant hard and soft landscaping to these areas as well as measures to ensure that only NGT vehicles would be able to use the link.

Whilst the opening up of Whitfield Square to NGT vehicles is likely to raise some concern, it is considered that adequate urban design measures can be incorporated into the design to mitigate the impact on residents. This mitigation together with the introduction of an NGT stop and associated urban design improvements on Waterloo Road would provide a clear opportunity to breathe new life into this neglected part of the district centre (currently dominated by the back of the Morrison's building and service yard wall).

### **Railway alignment**

The scheme is still progressing with various options for the railway alignment between Balm Road and Pepper Road. As previously reported the preferred option is to run mainly within the railway sidings at the bottom of the slope and to incorporate a depot at this location. However this option is complicated by Network Rail having let a long lease on the sidings (which are now in daily use) and by the fact that there is uncertainty as to whether the sidings are of an adequate size for an efficient depot.

While all endeavours will be made to make use of the sidings, the current Limits of Deviation (which indicate the possible maximum extent of the scheme), also allow for NGT to run at the top of the slope which would result in the loss of the existing significant landscape buffering and some encroachment onto the Leasowe Recreation ground and onto several private gardens



## **Stourton Park & Ride**

The demand model for parking spaces at this site has only been finalised as part of the MSBC, allowing layouts to be considered. The model estimates the demand for around 2200 spaces which presents a design and usability challenge. Options include decking of the car park to reduce landtake and locating of the NGT depot on the site. This must be designed in the context of a very open and visible 'green' site upon which there are aspirations (via the Area Action Plan/Sustainable Eco Settlement) for other uses (primarily housing).

Certainly the P&R would require significant internal and boundary landscaping treatment and pedestrian / cycle links to the Middleton Ring Road. Options to allow cars and buses to access the site from the Middleton end, but preventing a through route to the motorway are also being considered.

## **7.0 Implications For Council Policy And Governance**

The scheme is in line with headline Council objectives set out in the Strategic Plan for improving the local economy for the benefit of all residents; improving connectivity for local neighbourhoods; providing a sustainable environment; and engaging local people in decisions about their neighbourhood.

The NGT proposals are being incorporated within the emerging Local Development Framework and Area Action Plans.

## **8.0 Legal and Resource Implications**

A joint LCC and Metro project team is developing the scheme, with a Project Board consisting of senior officers at Directorate level from both organisations meeting on a regular basis.

Scheme development costs are currently being met jointly by Metro and Leeds City Council, but once the Major Scheme Business Case is approved by the Department for Transport a significant proportion of scheme costs will become rechargeable to the Regional Funding Allocation.

## **9.0 Recommendations**

Area Committee Members are asked to:

- Note the contents of this report, and in particular the forthcoming Request for Information process
- Provide any feedback on the consultation / objection management process
- Advise the Leeds City Council NGT Coordinator if further information or briefings are required

## **Background Papers**

South (Inner) Area Committee, 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2009: Emerging proposals for the New Generation Transport (NGT) Scheme: Current position and Public Consultation.