

Report of Director of City Development

Report to Scrutiny Board (Sustainable Economy and Culture)

Date: 20 September 2012

Subject: LEEDS NEW GENERATION TRANSPORT SCHEME

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. At their 1st December 2011 meeting the Board agreed Terms of Reference for an “inquiry into the impact of existing major sources of travel movements within the City, and the plans being made to address the impact of known future developments on the City’s transport infrastructure”.
2. This report provides an initial update with respect to the Leeds New Generation Transport (NGT) scheme following the granting of Programme Entry status by the Department for Transport on the 5th July last.
3. It is anticipated that as the project is developed through the statutory and procurement processes further updates will be provided to this Board in due course.

Recommendations

4. Members are requested to note and comment on this report.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report provides Members with an update on the Leeds New Generation Transport project following approval by the Government in July this year.

2 Background information

- 2.1 The Leeds NGT scheme has been developed to deliver a rapid transit public transport solution for the city within the context of traffic congestion; the pivotal support transport provides for a strong economy; and the public wish to see Leeds have a quality transport system with a high standard of public transport.

- 2.2 When funding was withdrawn from the former Leeds Supertram scheme in November 2005, recognising that the City still needed a step change in public transport quality and service and with the encouragement of the Department for Transport consideration was given to the alternatives offered by flexible bus based systems rather than a tram network.

- 2.3 This development process led to the identification of a “trolleybus” based system as offering the most appropriate way forward for the city, with key attributes being that it would:

- Provide a higher capacity system on corridors with highest levels of demand
- Fast and reliable journeys from high levels of segregation
- Electrically powered
- Quality waiting environment – shelters, lighting, information provision
- Quality information before and during the journey
- High quality vehicles attractive to users.

- 2.4 And that such a system would be most appropriate in the following area

- On the busiest and most crowded bus corridors with high proportion of standing passengers
- On the most congested highway corridors, experiencing significant peak delay
- Where there is scope to achieve a significant reduction in public transport journey times
- Where there is potential for a significant improvement in journey time reliability.

- 2.4 Subsequently, further evaluation led to the selection of a preferred option for an electric Trolleybus with rubber tyres powered by overhead wires (sometimes referred to as ‘Light Trams’). This provides a mode of transport with many of the best attributes of tram systems with significant cost savings and advantage of more flexible use. This therefore formed the basis for the development of a detailed scheme case and Government funding submission for a high quality, mainly segregated, rapid transit service with higher capacity and faster journey times than conventional bus services, known as New Generation Transport.

- 2.5 With the approval of the Council's Executive Board on 14 October 2009, a Major Scheme Business Case (MSBC) application was submitted to the Department for Transport (DfT) seeking Programme Entry status (in principle support for scheme funding) at the end of October 2009. Following the General Election of 2010 all major transport schemes were subject to review by the Government and accordingly a detailed review of the NGT scheme was undertaken. It concluded that the NGT scheme demonstrated a strong contribution to the future transport network in Leeds with highly beneficial impacts on travel 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. This also confirmed the contribution NGT offered for access to employment opportunities and an improved quality of life.
- 2.6 After detailed engagement with the Department for Transport a revised Best and Final Funding Bid (BAFFB) for the scheme was submitted on the 30th March 2012. This bid provided the Department of Transport with a robust economic case for Government investment in the scheme.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 On the 5th July 2012 the Government announced approval to the scheme business case.

“Leeds will have new state-of-the-art trolleybuses that will be faster, more reliable and greener than their predecessors. They will make public transport in Leeds more accessible and attractive than ever before and I know trolleybuses will be transformational for growth and jobs in West Yorkshire. Investment on this scale in precisely this kind of infrastructure is a recognition of how crucial Leeds and Yorkshire are to the long-term success of the British economy.” Justine Greening, Department of Transport 5th July 2012.

- 3.2 A letter confirming this offer was received from the Department of Transport on the 19th July 2012, stating that the scheme will receive the bulk of the funding (up to £173.5 million) from the Department for Transport with the remainder (£76.5 million) coming from local authority sources. The granting of Programme Entry status for the scheme in the Local Transport Major Schemes Programme now enables the scheme to be progressed to the final stages of detailed development and the preparation and submission of the proposed Transport and Works Act Order (i.e. the statutory consents necessary for the scheme to be constructed).
- 3.3 The attached plan shows the proposed routes being developed which includes a North Leeds, City Centre and South line route. When the trolleybus system is completed it will run from Holt Park in the north to Stourton in the south, linking with two Park-and-Ride sites. The trolleybus will operate in exclusive designated road lanes along more than 40 per cent of its 8.7 mile length.

- 3.4 The main change since the scheme was first submitted for Government approval is that the previous proposals of a central loop around the City Centre and the East Line out to St James have been withdrawn from the first phase of the scheme. This was as a result of the Department of Transport being unable to allocate funding for that element of the scheme at this stage. However, it is considered that the approved scheme has the potential to be the first phase of a wider network with the potential, subject to future funding and value for money assessments, for extensions to the East and Aire Valley areas as well as West Leeds, although these do not form part of the current funding allocation and design work.
- 3.5 As well as the routing and vehicle issue 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. This is something the project team is giving detailed consideration to including the review of 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 Park and Ride sites. The approach to be taken will become clearer as time progresses and will be considered in some detail at the Public Inquiry.
- 3.6 As a result of this approval the joint promoters (Metro and Leeds City Council) have remobilised the project team and commenced development work in order to hit the scheme programme agreed with the aim of moving forward to a Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO) application in Spring 2013 and a Public Inquiry in late 2013.
- 3.7 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)
- 3.8 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
- 3.9 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.

- 3.10 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
- 3.11 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.
- 3.12 Prior to the original scheme submission, the extent of the TWA Order submission plans and the limits of deviation were in preparation. It was assumed at this time that the limits would remain quite broad until the Promoters were satisfied that all works to be undertaken by the Project are contained within the agreed limits. The initial 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 on going design and restrict the opportunity to make amendments in response to negotiations and discussions with potential objectors.
- 3.13 A detailed 'Land Referencing' exercise also forms part of the scheme development process. This was commenced prior to the original scheme submission in 2009. The information will now require updating so that it can form part of the 'Book of Reference' required as part of the TWAO application with key land ownership and interest details.
- 3.14 When the application is made for the TWAO, documents will be made available for inspection by the public. Adverts in local newspapers, a notice to all landowners/properties affected by the compulsory purchase of property and display of notices along the route of any proposed construction sites.
- 3.15 Once the TWAO application is made, there is a right to make a formal objections to the proposals over a six week period. Within 28 days of the objection period ending, the Secretary of State must decide on whether to hold a public Inquiry. A Public Inquiry can be expected where a scheme raises complicated issues and it is therefore most likely that a Public Inquiry will be required for NGT. The current proposed programme for the scheme is indicated below:

Programme entry re approval	July 2012
Remobilisation of team	August/September/October 2012
Design Freeze for the Plans	December 2012
Transport and Works Act Order submission	April 2013
Public Inquiry	Sept 2013 to October 2013
Secretary of State Decision	May 2014
Construction	Summer 2016 to Autumn 2018
Start of NGT Operations	Winter 2018

- 3.16 Creation of local jobs is a key issue for the Council and will be considered as part of the scheme package as it is developed. There are three key areas of potential job creation The scheme business case estimated that approximately 4000 jobs would be created as a result of the NGT scheme. This will be from enhanced local business opportunities and efficiencies of time travel and construction jobs. Additionally it is estimated that 250 jobs will be created from the operation and maintenance of the scheme The ability to employ local labour will be a consideration of the procurement agreement for both the construction and operations elements and these will be explored through the ability to instigate legal local labour agreement.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 Prior to the original submission of the scheme business case an extensive process of consultation was undertaken up to the point the scheme was paused whilst the Government undertook a review in 2010.
- 4.1.2 The initial period of NGT public engagement involved undertaking a series of public exhibitions in Leeds City Centre in November 2008. This process served to raise awareness of the emerging NGT proposals and provide feedback from the public on certain key attributes of the scheme. The exhibitions were well attended with over 1,000 people visiting over a four day period. There was a positive response to the NGT proposals and respondents welcomed the fact that they involve high quality public transport improvements and Park and Ride. The issue of quality was important and the results showed a desire for a scheme that is more than a 'typical bus'.
- 4.1.3 The second phase of NGT consultation ran from June to September 2009. The aim of this second phase was to present the more detailed proposals for NGT at exhibitions along the proposed routes as well as in Leeds City centre to obtain as wide a consultation as possible of the public's views on the scheme. At the same time a series of detailed briefings were given to Ward Members, together with presentations to Area Committees and attendance at Community Forums where requested.

4.1.4 During this second phase a series of public exhibitions were held on each of the NGT routes and exhibition visitors had the opportunity to discuss the proposals with project staff and if desired go through the concept design plans in detail. Overall 20,000 questionnaires were handed out as part of the consultation exhibitions and an online version was also available on the NGT website. The summer 2009 consultation consisted of six public exhibitions each lasting two to four days across Leeds including evenings and Saturdays with nearly 1,400 people attending. Information was also available on the internet, in libraries, to local groups and distributed to members of the public on-street.

4.1.5 It is now recognised that the final detailed development of the scheme for implementation will need further engagement to build on the extensive consultation which underpinned the successful scheme bid. This will also need to reflect the two year gap occupied by the process of securing the Government's support. The next stage of consultation and engagement will therefore focus on the preparations and detailed needed to support the development and submission of the Transport and Works Act application in spring 2013 and the Public Inquiry in late 2013.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

4.2.1 The development of the NGT Major Scheme Business Case and funding bid was accompanied by a full Equality Impact Assessment.

4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities

4.3.1 The development and progression of the Leeds NGT scheme is consistent with the Local Transport Plan and transport strategy and specifically supports the delivery of the City Priorities to:

- Improve journey times and the reliability of public transport; and
- Improve the environment through reduced carbon emissions.

4.4 Resources and Value for Money

4.4.1 This report has no specific resource and value for money implications. Further detailed reports on the progress and development of the scheme will be provided to the Executive Board in due course.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 This report has no specific legal or access to information implications. The detailed legal, procurement and developments issues relating to the scheme are being addressed in the course of the detailed project development now in process.

4.6 Risk Management

- 4.6.1 This report has no risk management implications. Processes for risk and project management are in place for the delivery of the NGT scheme in line with the Council and Metro best practice and procedures.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 This report has presented the current position with respect to the Leeds NGT scheme following approval by the Department for Transport in June this year. The report has set out the current position and the next steps now being followed to progress the scheme through the necessary statutory processes, other procedures and procurement required to move the project forward to implementation.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 Scrutiny Board members are requested to note and comment on this paper.

7 Background documents ¹

- 7.1 The following background documents relate to this report.

- i) Leeds New Generation Transport, Major Scheme Business Case.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available for inspection on request for a period of four years following the date of the relevant meeting. Accordingly this list does not include documents containing exempt or confidential information, or any published works. Requests to inspect any background documents should be submitted to the report author.