TransportPlanningSociety

**Summary of results of Member Survey on "Motoring of the Future" (September 2014)**

## The Survey

TPS responded to a Select Committee on Transport consultation on "Motoring of the Future". Our response was informed by a member survey designed to seek the broad views of the membership on selected topics.

The Select Committee set 10 questions but in order to make the survey quick and easy to respond to, responses were sought only to the two questions most relevant to transport planning. Under each question, members were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with 10 statements.

## The Response

181 members responded by the deadline. This was an excellent response given that only one week was allowed for responding and that was immediately after the August Bank Holiday (a timescale dictated by the consultation deadlines).

Members had firm opinions on the topics raised. The percentage of responses ticking the "no opinion" or "neutral" box was generally less than 20%, and less than 10% on half the statements. In addition, 65 supplementary comments were submitted, amplifying the tick-box responses made or raising additional points.

On 15 of the 20 statements, a clear majority of members expressed the same opinion (at least 66% of respondents either agreeing or disagreeing) while opinion was more divided on the remaining five issues.

The Policy Group within the TPS Board (which prepared the consultation response) is very grateful to all who responded. The results are summarised below.

*Tim Morton (TPS Board Member)*

**Question 1 : How trends in motoring and patterns of vehicle ownership might shape transport planning, policy making and provision?**

This question was focused on likely future outcomes for motoring given current trends (which is not necessarily the same as identifying the outcomes that would be most desirable).

On that basis, 71% of respondents considered that there will be an increasing demand for motorised transport, driven by population growth if nothing else. However, spatial planning, alternative travel options, driving costs and affordability will be strong influences on the rate of growth.

86% of respondents considered that this increasing demand will require demand management measures to be increasingly applied, with 66% envisaging the introduction of road user charging. However, enthusiasm for road user charging was tempered by a realisation of the political obstacles to its introduction.

In terms of increasing highway capacity, respondents were divided (almost 50/50) on the likelihood of significant new or improved interurban road links being constructed.

85% of respondents considered that new technology will continue to increase highway capacity and 59% considered that parts of the road network will be allocated (or constructed) in the future for use by autonomous cars.

Current trends in vehicle safety and emissions mean that 68% of respondents foresee that cars will become less environmentally unacceptable. 70% of respondents foresee a continuing reduction in road casualties.

Views were divided on the impacts of improved car technology and vehicle sharing on car ownership levels. Improved technology might be expected to attract new car owners and vehicle sharing might be expected to reduce car ownership rates, but respondents were divided on the matter or perhaps felt that the impacts would be small.

> *In summary, the majority TPS view is that there will be an increasing demand for motorised travel. Cars will become less environmentally unacceptable and there will be fewer road casualties. Increased demand will be addressed by increasingly applying demand management (including road user charging) to control car use, the increased application of technology to increase highway capacity and possibly the enhancement of interurban road links.*

**Question 2 : Whether current transport planning, policy making and provision are taking likely future developments into account and how planning, policy making and provision might need to change in the future?**

The Select Committee had in mind making provision for new technology, lower emissions and safer vehicles. However, TPS took a wider view in its response and looked at a range of other issues.

91% of respondents considered that transport policy will need to adapt to changing circumstances and 72% considered that we will have to make different provision for motoring in the future than we do today.

91% of respondents considered that transport planning will need to move away from extrapolating the past and will need to understand new behavioural responses to new types of vehicles and policies. 73% considered that scheme appraisal will need new tools to evaluate the environmental effects of low emission, technology-assisted and safer vehicles.

88% of respondents considered that we will need a better understanding of the factors influencing car ownership by different sectors of the population, including society's response to ultra low emission and autonomous vehicles.

75-90% (two questions) of respondents considered that we will need to better understand the factors affecting car use in the future such as improvements in alternative modes, travel demand management and other factors such as health objectives. An overwhelming 94% of respondents agreed that the links between spatial planning and transport provision must be strengthened so that the two can be coordinated in a more sustainable way.

On technology, 64% of respondents consider that autonomous cars could attract new types of car owner (eg those who have difficulty driving conventional vehicles or those who wish to make alternative use of their driving time). Automotive technology is advancing supported by government grants, and 66% of respondents consider that the technology companies are likely to become greater drivers of transport policy as their products transform what is possible in motoring.

> *In summary, the majority TPS view is that that the future of motoring will be significantly different to what it is today. We as transport planners will need to understand the behavioural responses to new vehicle types and new motoring policies that will impact on future car ownership and car use. Spatial planning must be more strongly linked with transport.*