

## **The Transport Planning Society**

### **AGENDA for CHANGE for the New Government**

#### **Introduction and Summary of Recommendations**

##### ***The Transport Planning Society and the approach to preparing this Agenda for Change***

The Transport Planning Society (TPS) enables professional development and provides a meeting place for all those working in the transport planning sector, and takes a leading role in responding to emerging policy challenges. We are dedicated to facilitating, developing and promoting knowledge, understanding and best practice in transport planning. We work closely with other professional bodies in transport and planning, who are represented on our Board of Directors. TPS provides the professional qualification for transport planners (the TPP) jointly with the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation and runs the industry-wide Professional Development Scheme (PDS) for transport planners.

Before the 2010 election, we produced a 'Manifesto' setting out general principles. Following the 2015 election, we want to explore in more detail some of the issues which we consider the incoming administration should begin to tackle, with the idea that this will provide the framework for a constructive dialogue between the Society and the new Government. In preparing this 'Agenda for Change', we have referenced a range of appropriate sources, including the following.

- Recent policy responses by TPS to Government consultations.
- Proceedings of relevant events from the TPS 2014/15 programme covering areas such as: aviation policy and the Davies Commission; appraisal and modelling; transport and health; and a variety of consultation meetings focused specifically on the draft 'Agenda'.
- The results from the TPS Annual Member Survey undertaken at the end of 2014.
- Reports produced as part of the TPS Bursary scheme – where young professionals produce a short research report on a specified theme. The 2014 topic was what an incoming Government should do to improve planning for transport.
- Direct input from TPS members on the draft 'Agenda' through our website and discussion forum.

Before providing detail on the key areas that have emerged, we want to set out some overall principles that have underpinned much of the Society's policy work since it was founded.

##### ***Key principles***

Firstly, we consider that the Department for Transport in the UK should set out:

- clear high-level objectives that transport can help achieve, to enable rational decision-making;
- a coherent framework within which transport decisions can be made by all actors, including private companies and individuals, national funding Departments and agencies, and local authorities.
- standards for the design, assessment and monitoring of the impacts of transport planning interventions, and procedures to ensure that the skills and quality controls are in place to achieve the intended outcomes.

Secondly we consider that planning for the UK's transport must be based on three key tenets:

- the need for land use and transport to be planned in a genuinely integrated manner – the disposition of land uses creates potential transport demand and the provision of transport networks creates opportunities for new land uses
- the need for transport networks to be well maintained and managed, and for demand for their use also to be managed, is integral to ensuring they achieve their wider objectives
- there must be real and significant reductions in transport-related external (non-user) costs, from local townscape to global climate change – the environment is no longer a 'free good'.

### ***Key issues and recommendations***

This Agenda for Change covers the whole context within which transport (and spatial) planning should be discussed. In such a wide ranging document, not every detail of every problem, or subtlety in terms of solutions, can be covered; and neither can each individual member's position can be fully represented. As a Society, we have tried to set out a fair representation of our members' views and concerns while going beyond a set of generalisations which might be hard to disagree with, but which would do little to directly address the key transport planning issues we face.

What follows in section 2 is an account of the Context within which this Agenda for Change is set. In section 3, we establish and address a series of key questions under the heading 'Moves in a new direction'. These questions, and the recommendations we arrive at, are as follows.

#### ***1) How can we link up transport with land use planning – with new transport and planning guidance and combined powers?***

Our key recommendations are:

- a) New guidance is needed to promote growth not only in terms of development, but also in terms of the sustainable transport networks which are needed to maintain it.
- b) The scale and location of all development should be related to the accessibility of the site by sustainable modes
- c) If developers wish development of a larger scale, then the planning application should include proposals for a corresponding increase in site accessibility by sustainable modes.

#### ***2) What new governance and funding is required, especially in England? What about combined authorities, Highways England and beyond – fewer competitions and more consistency and integration?***

Our key recommendations are:

- a) A compatible approach for smaller scale spending, and to schemes with high revenue content, to that for large scale capital spending, where the argument for greater longer term consistency of funding seems to have gained ground. The former is often the key to sustainable transport schemes and demand management.
- b) Much greater coherence between transport and land use planning, both through national guidance, and at local level, either through new and binding duties to co-operate across authority boundaries to comply with that guidance, or the creation of combined authorities at least for these functions.
- c) Without a new "top down" total reform of local government, the evolution of a simpler and accountable structure for transport spending, across capital and revenue, building on the emerging combined authorities and city deal arrangements, but ensuring the inclusion of sustainable transport at its core.

3) ***Transport and Health – how do we recognise the importance of transport and active travel, but include the disbenefits of inactive travel?***

Our key recommendations are:

- a) A systems-based approach is needed to addressing the adverse health impacts of transport, with all impacts being considered in combination
- b) There needs to be a long-term strategy and funding for addressing transport-related health issues
- c) The health benefits of reduced car dependency need to be recognised and fully taken into account in project appraisal

4) ***A new approach to appraisal – how do we create a realistic approach to economic, health and social benefits but without double counting? How can transport forecasting be made more transparent, recognise the value of demand management, and engage with the profession to understand changes in demand on a whole journey basis?***

Our key recommendations are:

- a) The Government needs to encourage a more structured and integrated approach to transport planning with multimodal strategies being developed to address a wide range of problems in an area. All elements of the strategy then need to be implemented within a consistent timescale, not just selected schemes
- b) We need a more fundamental approach to understanding the impact of transport changes on economic growth, and to ensure that benefits claimed for one scheme are not simply being abstracted from another area
- c) The benefits of Smarter Choices and demand management need to be fully taken into account in appraisal and in national traffic forecasts

5) ***Intelligent motoring - building on the TPS submission on Motoring of the Future what is the role of the car? Within that, how can we support car use where needed?***

Our key recommendations are:

- a) More work needs to be done to reduce the external disbenefits of car use (safety, health, environment, land needed for parking)
- b) Some aspects of car use, particularly parking, could be made easier to access using new technology without compromising sustainability
- c) The benefits of car use can be made more available using schemes such as car clubs while enabling more sustainable choices overall
- d) Land use planning must recognise the need to reduce car dependency
- e) A clear national policy on parking provision is needed, balancing the need for car use where it is essential with discouragement of car use where more sustainable alternatives are or can be provided
- f) Any expansion of road capacity should take full account of changing lifestyles, new technology and the potential for demand management to reduce car use.

- 6) ***How do we give freight issues the focus they deserve - better planning for interchanges including ports as well as rail, being pro-active on vehicle sizes and standards, and Lorry Road User Charging - achievable in a Parliament and a game changer for demand management?***

Our key recommendations are:

- a) Port strategy and port development should take full account of the implications for land transport of goods to and from the ports, most notably congestion and environmental issues.
- b) Lorry Road User Charging should be introduced as a means of compensating for the external costs of HGV movement, encouraging a better match between vehicle and load size, and imposing fairer costs on foreign hauliers

- 7) ***Demand management:***

***By price? National user charging may not be achievable but parking is an obvious alternative – what is the long term plan to replace fuel duty?***

***Travel behaviour change in its own right: can this be reinstated in national forecasting and funding and in the planning system at local level?***

***How can we promote non-motorised travel? Is there is a need to understand differences between walking (which has many non-travel benefits) and cycling, and that the creation of active travel through these modes has many benefits?***

Our key recommendations are:

- a) Demand management of motorised passenger transport must be an integral part of any overall transport strategy
- b) Government must make a realistic estimate of future carbon reductions, loss of fuel tax revenue, and any change in user pricing which is required
- c) The impacts of travel behaviour change must be fully recognised and there should be a sustained and funded programme to implement it
- d) As required by the Infrastructure Act, the Secretary of State should implement a Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy

- 8) ***Do we need a national spatial and transport strategy? For major infrastructure investment in air, rail and road - how do we know where and how much to build if we haven't implemented demand management yet?***

Our key recommendations are:

- a) Transport strategy must embrace maintenance, management and improvement
- b) A national framework for spatial development and long-distance travel embracing all modes is needed, but one within which local and regional bodies can function effectively and which respects the progress of devolution as it proceeds
- c) The recommendations of the Eddington Report are as important now as they were 10 years ago, and should be a key driver of national transport policy and major transport infrastructure development.