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**For immediate release**

**WHAT TRANSPORT PLANNERS REALLY THINK**

***Latest TPS member survey shows divisions on airport expansion but strong support for demand management in general and walking and cycling in particular. In tune with this there is far more support for local rail improvements than high speed rail. There is continuing concern over health impacts. Members overwhelmingly favour greater transport powers for England’s city regions but are concerned whether sufficient funds will be available and comment on the inconsistent performance of LEPs.***

The Transport Planning Society annual survey of its members reveals what has changed and what hasn’t in the past year. Results confirm that the private sector is now recruiting and reviving professional development programmes. The responses, from over 20% of the membership, will help to guide our events programme, and inform the policy work planned for 2016, including the TPS Agenda for Change.

*Respondents and attitudes to qualifications*

* Similar sectoral split to previous years for the survey respondents: consultancies 64%, local authorities slightly lower 23% (27% last year).
* In terms of respondents’ location, London and SE important (40% - 39% last year), but other regions well represented (W Midlands 9%, NW 15%, SW 10%). However, other nations low (7%) - possibly due to difference in responsibilities and thus perceived lower relevance
* An overall much higher level of participation in the PDS (25%, was 18% in 2014 but only 6% in 2013)
* Interesting and sometimes trenchant responses to the open ended question on differences between local authorities and the private sector in developing skills – there is serious concern from both sides
* High awareness of the Transport Planning Professional (TPP) qualification (98%) but still a significant number with no plans to apply (46%). Widening gap between local authorities (76% with no plans) and consultancies (33% with no plans). Figures last year were LAs 73% and consultancies 44%.

*Policy priorities*

* In relation to policy priorities, walking and cycling continue as members’ first choice (60%) as in 2012, 2013 and 2014!
* There was also confirmation of members’ priority for non-high speed rail capacity increases (49% - second place to walk/cycle) while high speed rail has fallen from a modest base (17% this year, 22% in 2014)
* Support for major trunk road schemes has risen slightly from a low base back to 2012 levels – now 15% (11% last year and 12% in 2013)
* Top 5 policy priorities in 2015 were:

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| Walking/cycling | 60% |
| Non-High Speed railway capacity improvements | 49% |
| Travel behaviour change (Smarter Choices) | 43% |
| Tackling poor air quality | 33% |
| Road maintenance | 32% |

*Revenue for transport*

In terms of raising funds for transport nationally, members still favour road user charging, the top 5 were:

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| Introduce national road user pricing |
| Increasing VED for the most polluting vehicles |
| Introduce national Lorry Road User Charging |
| Increase the scope and raise the level of tax on aviation |
| Introduce a national parking space levy |

*Policy drivers and governance*

* In relation to policy drivers, using planning to reduce the need to travel was the priority, but last year’s increased priority for linking transport and health was consolidated (89% thought it important or very important – same as 2014)
* Slight rise in support for regional airport expansion rather than SE, but overall fairly even split between the need for more runway capacity in the SE (31%), more regional capacity (37%), or implementing tax reform first (33%)
* Continuing support for reform of appraisal and for the proposal to use land use values (revealed preference) rather than time savings
* Some support for LEPs in relation to jobs (61% positive), evenly split views on their impact on health outcomes, but seen as much more negative in relation to sustainability, but with many comments stressing the high variability of their performance
* Strong preference (77%) for granting new powers to city regions and combined authorities, but serious concerns that these would fail without sufficient funding.

Ends

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