

## APPENDIX D

### THE GOVERNMENT DECISION LETTER

In the December 2000 the Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber notified City of York Council (COYC) by letter of the amount of the local transport capital allocation for 2001/02. The letter identified specific areas where the Council needed to clarify, or improve the LTP in certain respects. This appendix gives a summary of the actions taken so far to address these areas and, where possible, show evidence of improvement.

The specific areas mentioned from the December 2000 letter are given below in italics, followed by summaries of the progress made so far in addressing these areas.

#### YORK

##### PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION/OBJECTIVE SETTING

*We note a high level of consultation has been carried out and that the views obtained were used to refine the strategy, with three options used offering different levels of funding with corresponding outcomes. Strong support for key elements of each option was obtained and overall there was support for a radical approach towards tackling pollution problems. It is encouraging to see that all this participation has fed through into how issues are to be tackled and in what order. Though it is good to see such enthusiastic use of public participation, it would be useful to demonstrate the involvement of partners and the public in the development of your objectives.*

*You clearly have a good understanding of the problems and possible solutions which will help achieve your objectives. However, you do need to include issues relating to the wider agenda rather than just transport.*

The high level of public participation that was carried out prior to the publication of the document included public participation in the development of objectives. This happened in guided discussions with key stakeholders in the Stakeholder Working Groups and Key Stakeholder Seminars (for more information see Section 5, and Appendix A of York Local Transport Plan, Main Report and Appendices).

A chapter of the current LTP document is dedicated to the wider issues (see Chapter 13 of LTP Main Report, "Integration with Wider Policies"). It should also be noted that the objectives include the promotion of a healthier society (first objective), the improvement of local air quality (third objective), and the enhancement of the economy (fourth objective).

##### STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

*It is good to see that the overall strategy has been reviewed and strengthened as necessary, a greater emphasis has been placed on the need to improve public transport and we note that measures are in hand to deliver.*

*We note that the strategies now cover a wide breadth of civic life and appear coherent, however you could have made more of the linkages to wider issues, especially health. It is good to see that the plan demonstrates where the linkages between objectives, strategy and measures are in place, where they are being strengthened, and where they need further development.*

Wider issues feature in the current LTP document (see Chapter 13 of the Main Report, "Integration with Wider Policies". Health in particular, is covered on pp 145-147). In the next LTP more attention will be given to highlighting and cross-referencing wider issues in the other sections in the Main Document.

## **IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMME**

*Your implementation plan is quite comprehensive, is easy to follow and to understand how the various elements fit together. However, you could have done more to make explicit the links between the measures proposed and your objectives.*

*It was very good to see that you provided some qualitative statements on what would happen if the allocation was less than bid (-10%) and more than bid (+10%); this was most helpful. You likewise provided indicators of what might be done with even larger increases (+25% or +40%), especially how these might affect the introduction of Option 3 - the preferred strategy of the residents of York, and the most radical solution including the possibility of road user charging. Please keep us informed on this last issue.*

*You have provided some good information on your past achievements and it is now possible to be quite confident that future proposals will deliver what is anticipated.*

The links between the measures proposed and the objectives will be more explicitly made in the next LTP.

With the co-operation of the Council, a research student at the University of Westminster is using the York road network and LTP policies as the basis for an exploratory case study in road user charging. The study will investigate the likely outcome of applying a theoretical model of road user charging to a given road network and set of accompanying policies.

## **PERFORMANCE INDICATORS/TARGETS AND MONITORING**

*You have taken a very robust approach to target setting and performance monitoring and a full set of targets, performance indicators have been established. However, we note that some are not to be monitored, some have yet to be set where you are establishing the baseline position; but it is encouraging to see that the majority of the main headline indicators have targets and monitoring arrangements have/are being put in place.*

*All in all this is a very good effort and you have set out the information in a way that year on year comparisons should be quite simple to achieve, and thus performance measured.*

Over time the necessary data is becoming available to enable progress towards a complete set of performance targets. Where data is required from an external source the Council is in liaison with the relevant organisation. Targets are not being set for some indicators, usually where the Council has a lack of control over the performance of the APR indicator concerned (see Appendix G for more information).

## **ESTABLISH A BUS STRATEGY**

*We are pleased to note that you have made good progress with the Quality Partnership between yourselves and First York.*

*It is good to see that work on your Park and Ride initiative continues a pace and that your Strategy aims for 5 P&R sites providing 5000 spaces by 2006. We note that good use has been made of Rural Bus Grant funds to improve services to outlying communities. Please provide an update on bus issues in your 1st progress report.*

Some encouraging progress has been made in this area. A comprehensive update on bus issues is provided in the main text of the APR (see pages 8, 18 & 19).

## **TAKE ACCOUNT OF CONTRIBUTION OF PASSENGER RAIL**

*We are pleased to see that you have been acting on most of the comments made in the Dec. '99 decision letter, e.g. improvements to rail/bus interchange facilities at York Station including "journey planner" software, submission of a draft Formal Bid submission to SSRA for RPP funds for Haxby and Strensall rail stations. However, you do not appear to have made any assessment of the associated reduction in private car use because of these improvements.*

A combined figure for the associated reduction in car use from both of the proposed stations was included in the RPP funding bid document. The associated potential reduction is 4.04 million car trip kilometres per year. This figure was obtained from SATURN traffic modelling scenarios.

## **THE ROLE OF TAXIS AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES**

*We note that you aim to have a "taxi-friendly" attitude, by allowing use of bus lanes and bus priority facilities, and that you take seriously the issue that this mode can be complementary to more 'conventional' public transport.*

*It is encouraging to see that following the taxi focus group discussion in June '98, a Customer Charter is being developed and consultation is now in progress with the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Groups with a view to publishing this in 2000/01. Also that a contract has now been agreed between rail and taxi operators enabling rail passengers to purchase taxi travel with their rail tickets. Progress with these issues should be included in your 1st progress report.*

Taxi regulation is soon to be reviewed in consultation with taxi operators and the issue will be on the agenda. The York City Station rail operator, GNER, currently offers to book taxis/private hire cars as an additional service to business customers.

## **STRATEGY TO ENCOURAGE CYCLING**

*We note that within the city some 19% of all journeys to work are by cycle and that you are reviewing your Cycling Strategy and updating it as necessary and that you intend designating 200 km of safe cycle routes.*

*On monitoring, you state that you have installed 6 automatic cycle counters on busy cycle routes to accurately monitor the effect on modal shift when the Millennium Bridge opens later this year and to monitor long-term trends, daily and seasonal cycle trends. Please keep us informed with progress with this issue.*

Six automatic cycle counters are now in operation across the city with a further two due to be implemented later this year. Monitoring equipment in place at the Millennium Bridge will ensure that more comprehensive and reliable data will now become available.

A comprehensive audit of the York Cycle Network, including signing, will be completed by October 2001. The resulting programme of works will be evaluated and prioritised thereafter.

## **STRATEGY TO ENCOURAGE WALKING**

*We note that within the city some 16% of all journeys to work are on foot (over 23% in the main urban area) and that you are reviewing your Pedestrian Strategy and that this is taking account of the National Walking Strategy etc. Also, that it encompasses the needs of the mobility impaired and safety issues. Please keep us informed with progress on this issue.*

The York Pedestrian Strategy is still under review. Central government has yet to launch a National Walking Strategy and indications are that this will not be a high priority. The Select Committee Report on Walking in Cities published earlier this year has proved helpful in guiding the review of the pedestrian strategy. Some progress is being made on walking issues in York. An update is provided in the main text of the APR (see page 15).

### **ESTABLISH A ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY**

*We are pleased to note that you have published a Road Safety Strategy that fully supports the National Strategy. Also that a high priority has been given to Road Safety within the authority and this is reflected in the proposals contained in the five year plan capital programme.*

*It is encouraging to see that you set priorities by using FYRR and accident record/history. You appear to have addressed all the points raised last year, overall a very good strategy.*

An update on progress with the Road Safety Strategy is provided in the main text on page 8. A Child Road Safety Audit policy has recently received Council approval and progress towards the targets contained in it has begun. The targets are presented in Appendix A.

### **PARKING STRATEGY**

*We note that the strategy reinforces what was in last years provisional plan, but sets out clearer indications of what is to be implemented. You state that you are to take over parking enforcement and that this should help you keep a firm hold on parking and traffic management, especially in the centre and main residential areas. Please keep us informed with progress with this issue.*

*We are interested to see that you are hoping to link information on parking, with park and ride facilities via VMS to try and influence driver behaviour regarding driving into the central area. Progress on this should be included in your 1st progress report.*

Parking continues to be enforced by the Council with the target for the issue of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) set 20 per cent higher than for the previous year. Charges for PCNs are under review this year and the programme of introducing on-street charging continues.

Linking VMS with the demand for Park and Ride spaces will be investigated this year in a demonstration project along the A64. This will be done in partnership with the Highways Agency and the development of their Route Management Strategy. In the longer term, it is proposed to expand the project into the TCMS project (see Appendix C).

### **PUBLIC TRANSPORT INTERCHANGE**

*Overall a good effort, with comments on the development of York Railway Station covered under "Rail", also apply here. We note that progress is being made with plans for new rail stations (Haxby and Strensall already referred to), please keep us informed of developments. You have provided a clear statement of intent regarding interchange and linkages with broader transport, land use, economic and social policies, this is encouraging. We note that discussions have been held with the developers of a proposed shopping centre in Piccadilly with a view to incorporating a bus interchange within the scheme. Please keep us informed of development.*

The Council has prepared a formal bid for RPP funding to finance the proposed stations at Haxby and Strensall. At the time of publication of the APR the Council is currently awaiting confirmation from Railtrack on several issues prior to submission of the bid.

The progress of a planning application for a shopping centre with incorporated bus interchange facilities (Coppergate II) has been halted after being called in by the Secretary of State.

**CONSISTENCY WITH NATIONAL PLANNING GUIDANCE, RPG/RTS, AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

*We are pleased to see that you have integrated your Local Agenda 21 with the transport strategy and that you have given clear indication of how the LTP integrates with Local Development Plans, and how York Local Plan draws together original local plans. You will need to provide an update on the relationship between RPG/RTS and the LTP in your 1st progress report.*

An update on the relationship between RPG/RTS and the LTP features in the main text of the APR on page 25.

**ESTABLISH A PUBLIC TRANSPORT INFORMATION (PTI) STRATEGY**

*It is good to note that you have reported good progress on the items highlighted in the Dec. '99 decision letter. We note that the recently opened "Bus Info" enquiry centre provides information on other travel modes including walking and cycling. Please keep us informed with progress with this issue.*

Cycle route maps are available free of charge at the Businfo enquiry centre. Longer-term plans exist to integrate cycle and walking routes into the PTI database.

**ESTABLISH AN INTEGRATED STRATEGY FOR REDUCING CAR USE AND IMPROVING CHILDREN'S SAFETY ON THE JOURNEY TO SCHOOL**

*We are encouraged to see that you have continued to build on the provisional plan and that you have produced local targets to monitor Modal Shift and links to road safety targets as requested in decision letter last year. Progress on this issue should be included in the 1st progress report.*

The link between modal shift and road safety targets has proven to be too costly to monitor on the scale necessary for reliable results. Modal shift continues to be monitored in the school travel context and is also being used as a loose proxy indicator for child safety.

**MEASURES TO ENCOURAGE VOLUNTARY ADOPTION OF TRAVEL PLANS BY MAJOR EMPLOYERS**

*We note that travel awareness is being promoted throughout the community with clear aims and targets for the plan period, and with connection to Travelwise.*

*It is good to see that there are links with other policy areas within the authority and that other principal organisations are involved in the transport planning process.*

*We note that there are a clear set of proposals for the improvement of travel awareness through various media and Travelwise, also that partnerships with commercial organisations to promote travel plans are being developed. It is encouraging to see that you have taken the lead in the Target programme on Cycling and Walking and that this is influencing a number of other initiatives, particularly the school transport programme. Please keep us informed of progress with this issue.*

The progress that has been made with these issues is reported in the main text of the APR report (see pages 14, 20 & 21).

## **AIRPORT SURFACE ACCESS**

*You have provided a very clear assessment of the airport surface access requirements of the plan area and it also includes the possible development of Finningley and the potential for impact on York. The Government continues to attach importance to achieving an increase in the proportion of journeys made to airports by public transport. Although there are no major airports within your local authority area, we expect you to continue to work closely with neighbouring authorities, airport operators and other transport operators to help to achieve the targets set out in surface access strategies. Progress with this issue should be reported in your annual progress reports.*

The main access to Manchester Airport is via rail link. It is hoped that a combination of the improvements at Leeds City Station and newly negotiated Trans-Pennine franchise agreements with the rail operating companies will provide an increase in quality and reliability of service for passengers connecting to and from flights. York continues to attend the Regional Assembly Transport Officers Group which discusses airport strategy at a regional level.

## **DISABILITY ISSUES**

*We note you are still using your hierarchy of transport users, where the definition of pedestrians includes those with mobility difficulties, and that you are also emphasising the need to make provisions for people with disability within your Pedestrian Strategy.*

*It is encouraging to see that you, along with partners, are committed in the Quality Partnership to phase in the use of high quality easy access buses and to provide better passenger shelters at popular stops. Also, that you have provided a clear statement of the problems over access for the disabled to taxi services, with a clear statement on your support for the introduction of fully accessible taxis.*

*We are pleased to note the evidence of consultation with the Disabled Persons' Advisory Group.*

Disability issues are particularly important in projects aimed at pedestrian improvements and public transport accessibility. The progress with these projects is reported in the main text of the APR. The Council is now taking account of disabled access in all capital projects being progressed. Ongoing consultation with the Disabled Persons' Advisory Group will continue through the year.

## **MEASURES TO PROMOTE SOCIAL INCLUSION**

*It is encouraging to see that you have set clear objectives to meet the needs of people without cars, with special emphasis on the need within your bus strategy to cater for people with mobility problems or who suffer social exclusion due to the lack of access to a car.*

*You have provided a clear assessment of the problems of social exclusion in the rural parts of the district along with some of the potential solutions and have developed rural bus initiatives to meet the needs of those living in rural areas. We will be keen to see what progress you are making with providing connections from the rural bus services to your proposed Metro system in your progress report.*

The emphasis in the current capital programme is on schemes that are of a type that help to reduce social exclusion.

Services from rural areas are planned to connect into the Metro route system at Park and Ride sites and other key locations. Some service enhancements are planned for the "Connexions" rural bus services. When the "Metro" route services are initiated (see main text of the APR, page 18) the improved rural bus services will connect into this high frequency urban bus network. The effect will be to expand access to employment, education and other services for rural inhabitants.

**CO-ORDINATION WITH AIR QUALITY ACTION PLAN AND ACTION ON NOISE**

*We note that air quality has been set as one of the key goals in the Vision and Objectives of the plan and that you plan to meet the National Air Quality Objectives. You have also given a clear indication of the work you have undertaken on consulting about air quality and economic development and the links with the University on air quality modelling.*

*We note with interest that you propose to use, to be developed, TCMS to advise drivers to use alternative routes to avoid congestion and areas of poor air quality as part of your sustainable transport strategy to develop Air Quality Management Areas.*

*It is good to see that you have made links between the cycling strategy and air quality and the reduction of CO<sub>2</sub>.*

*A clear set of targets has been given along with the current state of air quality in locations around the city, with specific targets to be achieved by the end of the plan period for each substance.*

An update on the action being taken to improve air quality and reducing noise is reported on in the main text of the APR report on page 10 under "Reducing the Environmental Impact of Transport".

**ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

*You have given a clear indication of the thrust of your policies in the plan with clear reference to the links between the LTP and the Local Plan policy on CO<sub>2</sub> and green house gas emissions. This underlines the need to reuse brownfield sites to minimise travel requirements created by new developments.*

York is demonstrating a commitment to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions through a one-year long public awareness campaign. The campaign named 'Planet York' is designed to show how a concerted effort by York households and businesses can help lead to significant greenhouse gas reductions (see page 11 in APR).

York recognises the central role of land use planning in reducing unnecessary travel that can contribute to greenhouse gas emissions. For residential land uses the balance of sites being brought forward was slightly in favour brownfield sites for 2000-1. For sites currently available for employment uses the current stock is around 60 per cent in favour of brownfield sites. The City has tried to ensure that certain brownfield sites that are well located relative to prime bus routes were retained for employment uses, but recently lost a key edge of City Centre site to housing use as a result of the appeal process to the Secretary of State. The City presently also has a shortage of high quality employment sites. It seems probable that to address these issues the Council may have to identify Greenfield sites for development. Nevertheless, in selecting these sites full account will be taken of sustainability issues not least with regard to traffic generation.

**PRINCIPAL ROAD MAINTENANCE STRATEGY**

*We note that you are now using UKPMS and that 16% of the network has zero residual life.*

*It is encouraging to see that you have established a process to prioritise this work.*

Further information on progress with road maintenance is provided in the main text of the APR (see page 22) and in Appendix B.

**BRIDGE STRENGTHENING STRATEGY**

*You have continued to make good progress following a good interim plan. We note that the Assessment Programme will be completed during the current financial year 2000-2001. The Strengthening programme is also nearing completion with the majority of bridges requiring only maintenance.*

The bridge-strengthening programme is now virtually complete with only a single bridge still requiring work at Heworth Green.

**FIVE-YEAR FORWARD LOOK AT MAJOR HIGHWAY PROJECTS**

*None have been proposed.*

**DETRUNKING**

*We note that you are continuing to discuss this issue with the Highways Agency and that you have expressed concern over the maintenance liability of the roads to be detrunked. It is recognised that they will still carry heavy flows and play a major part in the strategic road network around York. Please keep us informed of developments and if we can offer any assistance then please come back to us.*

*We note that you have discussed the state of the bridges to be handed over and are content with their condition.*

It has been agreed with the Regional Highway Authority what roads are to be detrunked and the timescales involved. The amount of funding to be re-allocated from the Highways Agency (HA) to York for taking responsibility for these roads has yet to be finalised. Recent discussions with the HA on this subject have had to be deferred due to internal reorganisation at the Agency.

**RECOGNISE THE PARTICULAR NEEDS AND SPECIAL CHARACTER OF THE COUNTRYSIDE**

*It is good to see that there is a common theme running through your executive summary that highlights rural issues and problems in all policy areas. Also that transport needs for rural areas are seen as a key issue within the plan and that a large-scale consultation exercise with parish councillors about pedestrian facilities in rural areas has been undertaken.*

*We are encouraged to see that as part of the strategy for a local bus network, you propose that easylink buses will connect with Metro services at key points. Also that you are supporting the Community Transport Forum that provides significant amounts of transport in the area and that this is linked through the Rural Transport Development Officers in order that the best use of resources is achieved.*

*You have identified the problems of ensuring that rural communities remain vibrant and sustainable, of other unsuitable traffic travelling through rural areas and of ensuring that vulnerable road users are protected, and are developing appropriate solutions. Please provide an update on this issue in your progress report.*

Progress towards improving environmental conditions for rural communities through schemes funded from LTP capital are reported on in the main text of the APR under the heading of Rural Transport on page 12. Improvements in rural bus services are also described under this heading.

**SUSTAINABLE DISTRIBUTION**

*We note that you are participating in ongoing consultations with the local business to investigate the scope for optimising distribution within the city and are currently looking to develop a FQP with M&S in the Foot Street area.*

*We note that you have an outline freight strategy but that it is still being developed, there appears to be little progress over the last year. You have still not included an implementation programme, or give any details of actual measures for bringing about modal shift, this must be rectified in time for the 1st progress report.*

The council has provided advice to a pedal cycle dispatch, distribution and delivery service that has been set up in the city serving local organisations. It has been estimated that the business substituted 14,000 motorised journeys last year, carrying 250,000 kgs of freight. Unfortunately, little progress has been made in progressing the freight strategy on other fronts. The setting up of a local Freight Forum to enable the process of forming a FQP may be in prospect later in the year.