

# WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

DATE: 27 JULY 2007

AGENDA ITEM NO: **14**

**SUBJECT: PLANNING WHITE PAPER**

## **Report of the Passenger Transport Executive**

### **1. MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION**

1.1. A consultation response to the Government's Planning White Paper.

### **2. INFORMATION**

#### Background

2.1. At its meeting on 22 June, the Authority considered a report setting out the Government's proposals in the white paper 'Planning for a Sustainable Future'. As most issues affect all PTA/Es, it was proposed to submit comments through the Passenger Transport Executive Group (pteg) following consideration at the July meeting of the Authority.

2.2. The white paper includes the following key points:

- Introducing a new streamlined planning process for infrastructure projects of national importance (i.e. major energy, water, waste and transport schemes (roads, airports and ports);
- Streamlining the Planning Application process;
- Emphasising the need to deliver sustainable development (through sustainable spatial policies and provision of microgeneration of renewable energy);
- Streamlining the Local Development Framework and potentially introducing a Planning Gain Supplement (relating investment in transport to the uplift in land values).

2.3. The workings of the planning system affects PTA/Es at three key levels:

- As developers/promoters of schemes (e.g. Light Rapid Transit, bus and rail infrastructure) and as applicants for planning consent
- As non-statutory consultees on planning applications

- As consultees on Planning Policy Statements, Regional Spatial Strategies, Local Development Frameworks and other high level strategies that have transport implications.
- 2.4. In general terms, the White Paper presents an opportunity to closely integrate land use and transport planning, promote the creation of sustainable communities, take into account the need to tackle climate change and make best use of strategic assets. Whilst most of the measures in the White Paper are a step in the right direction, it could be stronger on the integration of transport and land use planning and the role of PTA/Es in that process. The links to funding process and the draft Local Transport Bill should also be more explicit.
  - 2.5. The anticipated review of the secondary legislation that supports the main Town and Country Planning Legislation would be a good opportunity to reconsider the role of PTA/Es in the planning process. PTA/Es should be recognised as statutory consultees in the planning process, which is entirely consistent with the principles embodied within the Local Transport Bill on the strengthening of the role of PTAs and more integrated decision-making.
  - 2.6. The consultation document includes a list of 40 questions to which responses are invited. The consultation document is included as Appendix A. The full documentation is available from [www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk) or from the Deputy Clerk to the Authority.
  - 2.7. Not all questions are relevant to PTA/Es and therefore it is proposed to only response to those questions that are directly relevant. Appendix B sets out the relevant questions and main points of the proposed response.

### **3. FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1. None as a result of this report.

### **4. STAFFING IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1. None

### **5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1. None as a result of this report.

### **6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1. That the points set out in this paper (including the responses in Appendix B) are included in a pteg response to the Planning White Paper.

Director General  
West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive



### Proposed input to the Planning White Paper consultation response

#### ***IMPROVING THE WAY KEY INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS ARE DEALT WITH***

##### *Q1: The proposed package of reforms*

- Simplification and greater certainty through the proposed Infrastructure Planning Commission system is welcomed
- PTEs should have the opportunity to be fully involved

#### ***NATIONAL POLICY STATEMENTS***

##### *Q2: Introduction of national policy statements*

- Having a series of "national policy statements" could complicate matters if not carefully linked, ideally to a national planning framework or to a national spatial strategy
- There needs to be a move towards a national framework to ensure that large-scale infrastructure projects are located in a way that supports PSA targets, and specifically, help to reduce pressure on the overheating and congested south east of the UK.

##### *Q3: Content of national policy statements*

- The opportunity should be taken to include a safeguarding policy to protect strategic locations related to national infrastructure projects e.g. disused rail lines, rail freight terminals

##### *Q4: Status of national policy statements*

- These would need to be statutory documents and link into the planning framework at the national, regional and local levels.

##### *Q5: Consultation on national policy statements*

- PTEs should be a statutory consultee on relevant planning proposals that have a significant impact on transport-related proposals affecting city regions.

## **PREPARING APPLICATIONS FOR NATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS**

### *Q12: Consultation by promoters*

- PTEs should be a statutory consultee on relevant planning proposals.

### *Q14: Consulting other organisations*

- Again, PTEs should be a statutory consultee on relevant planning proposals

## **DETERMINING APPLICATIONS FOR NATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS**

### *Q20: Scope of infrastructure planning commission*

- It is important that there is no perceived bias towards road, port and airport schemes and therefore there should be clear reference to rail and transit schemes where these require infrastructure development.
- There should be an extension in the scope of the provisions of the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO), and for greater clarity in relation to works that can be carried out as “permitted development” on operational railway land.

### *Q24: Rationalisation of consent regimes*

- The possible rationalisation of decision-making at a sub-regional level is supported;
- Any local consent system to extend to sub-regional schemes, which affect more than one local authority.
- Unified planning consent mechanisms for schemes of regional and sub-regional significance should be explored by DCLG as part of this process unified planning, highways, CPO and Listed Building consent.

### *Q32: Commission's skill set*

- Transport expertise should be reflected in the initial appointments to the new Commission.

## **STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN PLACE SHAPING**

### *Q34: Joined up community engagement*

- Speeding up and making the planning process more transparent is supported provided it does not compromise the ability to consider all issues fully.
- The emphasis on the town centre first approach for development is supported, as this generally supports both environmental sustainability and social equity
- The proposed new policy framework and planning application process should explicitly identify any particular impacts on that would help or hinder the equalities agenda/community cohesion with appropriate remedies where necessary

### *Q36: Removing the requirement to list Supplementary Planning Documents in Local Development Schemes*

- The review of the 2004 development plan system, and moves towards more sub-regional core strategies in metropolitan areas are welcomed
- The removal of the requirement to list SPDs in Local Development Schemes (LDS) is welcomed provided PTEs are made aware of SPDs.
- Better integration between Local Development Frameworks and Community Strategies is be welcomed