

**SOUTH EAST ENGLAND
REGIONAL TRANSPORT BOARD**

Date: 24 January 2008

Subject: **European Commission Green Paper:
Towards a new culture for Urban Mobility**

Report of: Regional Planner
South East England Regional Assembly

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Board approve the consultation response in Annex A for submission to the Department for Transport and European Commission.

Purpose of Report:

To inform the Board of the content and implications of the European Commission's, Green Paper on Urban Mobility and to agree a consultation response.

Key Issues:

The Board has identified the importance of regional leadership in taking forward the mobility management framework that is set out in Regional Transport Strategy. A key part of the challenge associated with this issue is the issue of behavioural change.

The European Commission's Green Paper forms part of an initiative at Community level to take the debate on urban mobility the next stage. In particular its focus on the need to facilitate and encourage the creation of a new culture when it comes to thinking of urban mobility chimes well with the issues of mobility management and behavioural change that are being championed by this Board.

The region's experience to date in transport delivery provides it with valuable experience that could help shape the next stage in the work of the Commission. In particular it provides practical experience of the importance of providing leadership at a strategic level while leaving delivery on the ground to local partners, in particular the Local Transport Authorities. Furthermore the region's experience on prioritisation of funding has the potential to help the Commission to develop its approach to the allocation of funding in a way that supports the policy objective of a new culture on urban mobility.

1. Context

- 1.1 The European Commission published its Green Paper entitled 'Towards a new culture for Urban Mobility' in September 2007. The Commission is consulting on the contents of the document until 15 March. In addition the Department of Transport is running a separate consultation exercise on the Green Paper in order to inform the UK Government's response to the Commission. The DfT's consultation runs until 28 January.
- 1.2 Regional Assembly officers met representatives from the European Commission and the UK permanent representation in Brussels in developing the draft response. Those discussions, which were focused on an early version of the suggested response, were extremely encouraging and positive with regards the value of the region responding to the consultation. More importantly the approach proposed was seen by them as adding value to the debate.

2. 'Towards a new culture for Urban Mobility'

- 2.1 The Green Paper sees integration as key to successful urban transport policies that create "a situation where towns and cities are less polluted and more accessible and where traffic within them flows more freely".
- 2.2 The paper acknowledges that the majority of transport related issues occur at local level; in particular issues relating to air and noise pollution and fatal accidents. However the cumulative impact of these local issues has consequences throughout the European Union. The Green Paper highlights the importance of co-operation and co-ordination at Community level but recognises the need to avoid top-down solutions that may not be appropriate in all local situations.
- 2.3 The five key challenges identified in the Green Paper are:
- Towards free-flowing towns and cities;
 - Towards greener towns and cities;
 - Towards smarter urban transport;
 - Towards accessible urban transport; and
 - Towards safe and secure urban transport.
- 2.4 The Green Paper suggests that potential added-value arising from actions at the Community level may be derived through; exchange of good practice; the establishment of common standards and, if appropriate, harmonisation; financial support for those in greatest need; encouragement of research; simplification/repeal and replacement of European legislation.

3. A regional response

- 3.1 The Green Paper includes 25 open ended questions arising from the discussion of the issues identified by the Commission. These questions in turn form the basis of the Department for Transport's consultation.
- 3.2 Rather than seek to address the specific issues raised in each question the draft response (Annex A) is focused on those issues that are relevant to taking the agenda forward at the Community level and on which this Board has practical experience that it can draw upon.
- 3.3 In that context the draft response focuses on three overarching principles that need to be taken into account in seeking to foster the new culture in urban mobility envisaged in the Green Paper:
- i) Ensuring an integrated and coordinated policy framework;
 - ii) Reducing the barriers to implementing mobility management; and
 - iii) Prioritising transport investment based on outcomes.
- 3.4 The response accepts that there is a leadership and facilitation role at the Community level that would bring added value in supporting action at the local level.
- 3.5 The key messages set out within the draft response are:
- i) The Commission must respect the principle of subsidiarity and avoid getting drawn into matters relating to delivery that are more appropriately addressed at the local level;
 - ii) The importance of targeting Community funds to support continued sustainable economic growth in the Community's power house economies (such as South East England) as part of the Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas;
 - iii) The need for there to be encouragement at the Community level for Member states to set targets to reduce the emissions for the transport sector, following the 'polluter pays' principle;
 - iv) The Commission should adopt and actively promote the principles of 'manage and invest' and 'mobility management' as part of the commitment to encourage the new culture in urban mobility;
 - v) The need to ensure transport policy at the European level reflects the principles of spatial planning and supports delivery of wider policy objectives;
 - vi) The need for the Commission to review the processes by which Community funds are invested with greater emphasise to targeting resources on the basis of the contribution to delivering policy outcomes. As part of that debate to give greater recognition as to the

importance of revenue investment in transport measures that encourage the new culture in urban mobility;

- vii) The importance of facilitating the sharing of good practice, providing monitoring information on the impacts of mobility management, supporting stakeholders in implementation, and encouraging research, while avoiding duplication of work done at national/regional/local levels.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1 Following this consultation the Commission is planning to present an action plan in early autumn 2008 that will identify a series of discrete actions and initiatives designed to encourage sustainable urban mobility. The Green Paper indicates that for each proposed action, a time line for implementation will be identified, and responsibilities for its implementation will be ascribed to specific stakeholders.

Fiona Thorp
Regional Planner
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Contact: Fiona Thorp, Regional Planner
T: 01483 555228 E: fionathorp@southeast-ra.gov.uk

EUROPEAN COMMISSION GREEN PAPER “TOWARDS A NEW CULTURE FOR URBAN MOBILITY”

Draft Response

1. Context

- 1.1 The South East England Regional Transport Board (RTB) welcomes the European Commission's (the Commission) Green Paper on urban mobility and supports the culture of the Green Paper, which aligns with the RTB's own objectives and work. We also welcome the opportunity to contribute to the development of the policy framework for this issue at the European level, given its importance in establishing the context for delivery of action at the local level.
- 1.2 The RTB is chaired by the South East England Regional Assembly; the Regional Planning Body for South East England. The Assembly is responsible for producing and implementing the Regional Spatial Strategy (known as the 'South East Plan'). The South East England Regional Development Agency (SEEDA) is also a member of the RTB. SEEDA is responsible for producing and implementing the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) that sets the framework for economic development within the region.
- 1.3 The RTB is responsible for advising the UK Government on transport investment in South East England. Its experience and leadership in transport delivery at the regional level provides the basis for this response, which was agreed by the RTB at its meeting on the 24 January 2008.
- 1.4 Delivering sustainable economic development is central to the regional policy framework set out in the South East Plan and the RES. This framework has been developed within the context set by the region's sustainable development framework (the Integrated Regional Framework). Delivery of the policy framework is being taken forward on an integrated basis through the development of a regional implementation plan that co-ordinates investment across the spatial planning and economic development agendas.
- 1.5 The need to change citizens' behaviour is central to the delivery agenda in a number of policy areas; behavioural change in citizens' travel choices is arguably one of the most significant challenges facing us. It will require continued efforts to decouple transport growth from economic growth.

2. Responding to the Challenge: Overarching Principles

- 2.1 The Commission identifies potential European added-value in the Green Paper as:

- Exchange of good practice at local/ regional/ national level;
- Establishment of common standards and, if appropriate, harmonisation;

- Financial support for those in greatest need;
- Encouragement of research; and
- Simplification/ repeal and replacement of legislation.

2.2 We believe that the Commission's role in providing leadership on and facilitating urban mobility should focus on three key principles:

- iv) Ensuring an integrated and coordinated policy framework (related to question 15 of the consultation);
- v) Reducing the barriers to implementing mobility management (related to question 20 of the consultation); and
- vi) Prioritising transport investment based on outcomes (related to question 21 of the consultation).

These three principles relate to the areas of added value identified in the Green Paper, and are discussed in further detail below. Although the main questions to which these principles relate are identified above we believe that some of the issues are equally applicable to other questions identified in the consultation document.

2.3 We would like to draw attention to the differing legislative and operational frameworks within Member States, meaning that a 'one-size-fits-all' approach is not always appropriate or practical.

2.4 We agree that the value of action at EU level lies in taking a leadership role in embedding a new culture in transport planning; a culture that focuses on achieving a change in travel choices in support of the Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas. Most matters relating to delivery are more appropriately addressed at the local level.

3. Ensuring an integrated and coordinated policy framework

3.1 Transport is a derived demand; it allows citizens to undertake their daily routines and is fundamental to enabling Member states to realise their economic potential. Transport is central to enabling the Community to compete in global markets. However, therein lies the challenge. Emissions from transport are already a major concern. A 'business as usual' approach to transport in support of future growth is therefore incompatible with the Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas.

3.2 Realising a change in citizen's travel choices is fundamental to delivering sustainable economic growth and is both an economic and a social opportunity. Meeting citizen's travel needs within the context of reduced resource consumption needs to be viewed as an opportunity for fulfilling economic potential, not as a constraint on future growth. It is also a way to improve social inclusion.

3.3 The emphasis on influencing travel choice and encouraging more sustainable forms of transport is important in promoting modal shift for both passenger and freight movements. This in turn is fundamental to tackling climate change.

There is a need for long-term leadership and support from the Community level on the long-term game of changing travel behaviour in order to give local delivery agencies confidence when taking action. The strategic impact of freight transport at Community level should be considered in the action plan, and linked as appropriate to the Freight Transport Logistics Action Plan (adopted in October 2007).

- 3.4 The Regional Transport Strategy for South East England provides the transport policy framework for the region. Its central theme is one of 'manage and invest' through which the objective is to achieve a reduction in car dependency. Using the concept of spatial planning as a means of ensuring the effective integration of land use and transport planning is critical to realising this objective.
- 3.5 Although policy makers have advocated such an approach for some time, progress to date has been patchy. Our experience in preparing the South East Plan and RES has served to emphasise the importance of giving more explicit consideration to the transport implications of land use activities. It has also highlighted that changing existing travel patterns is a more significant issue than the impact of new development.
- 3.6 Spatial planning designations in the regional policy framework, such as the identification of 'hubs' as centres of economic development and 'transport spokes' linking the hubs, provide a transparent and robust basis for identifying future transport investment priorities. They also serve to identify locations where other policy areas – for example health, education – need to review their activities in view of their transport implications. Integration of these respective services is also important to ensure that objectives within different policy areas ultimately serve the common objective of sustainable economic development and do not undermine one another.

Role and actions for Europe / the Community

- 3.7 One of the biggest barriers to encouraging a change in urban mobility culture will be the concern that measures applied in one Member state will put it at a competitive disadvantage, both within the EU and in global markets. A consistent approach at a Community level would therefore add value to initiatives at the Member state level. It would provide clear evidence of the critical importance of realising the new urban mobility culture and its benefits.
- 3.8 It is essential that the integrated approach to service development and delivery that underpins spatial planning at the regional level is also reflected at both the Member state and Community level. However, at those levels the emphasis should be on ensuring a consistency of policy approach that helps remove barriers to internal competition rather than seeking to deal with matters of detail.
- 3.9 Taking the example of road charging, the role at European level would be to outline the legislative mechanisms and policy frameworks to allow road charging to be implemented, and also to promote harmonisation of Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) to ensure interoperability of different systems across

the Community. Delivery and fiscal issues should be left to individual member states and local authorities.

- 3.10 Climate change is another area where the Commission should set objectives and the framework to achieve behavioural change, with more responsibilities for decision making and action devolved to local agencies. A broad Community framework to address such urban mobility challenges would allow Member states and local government the flexibility to make decisions appropriate to particular legislative and / or operational frameworks, taking local circumstances into account.
- 3.11 The Commission should consider the potential advantages of extending the spatial planning principles applied in South East England at the Community level. The identification of a network of 'hubs' and 'spokes' could be used as the basis for allocating investment available at the Community level on a more transparent basis. It would also enable the Commission to work with Member states to explore investment opportunities that encourage a change in travel choices for inter-regional movements. Good connections within the Community are important for economic growth.
- 3.12 The identification of a network of 'hubs' at a Community level would serve to emphasise the importance of the urban areas to act as the driver for sustainable economic growth. At a community level the 'hubs' are likely to take the form of regions within Member states, whilst the TENs could form a helpful starting point for identifying the 'spokes', recognising that some prioritisation of routes within the existing network will be necessary.
- 3.13 Such a spatial context at the Community level would serve to emphasise the importance of a greater focus on urban mobility. It would reinforce the importance of a new urban mobility culture in tackling climate change by better integrating land use and transport. In particular it would serve to emphasise the importance of targeting investment in measures that reduce citizens' dependency on the car. However, recognition of the fact that the majority of the fiscal incentives and regulatory regimes associated with such measures must be decided by Member states should remain explicit. Establishing a spatial context, as described above, at the Community level will provide a strong policy context that can be carried through to delivery at the local level.

4. Reducing the barriers to implementing mobility management

- 4.1 Encouraging modal shift away from private car use to more sustainable forms of transport is important in tackling climate change. The 'manage and invest' approach seeks to rebalance the transport system in favour of non-car modes. Whilst recognising that the application of new technologies (ITS), alternative fuels and 'greener' urban transport can make an important contribution to addressing the challenges of urban mobility, they cannot alone achieve the vision for a new urban mobility culture given the reality of economic growth. Fundamental behavioural change is key to realising

sustainable economic development which, in transport terms, can be addressed through mobility management.

- 4.2 Mobility management is a term in common use across the Community. It is a term that should be promoted by the Commission as part of the new urban mobility culture as it is positive in terms of improving travel choice. Mobility management is the on-the-ground manifestation of the 'manage and invest' philosophy. It involves both 'demand management' and 'smarter choices'.
- 4.3 'Demand management' typically seeks to enforce a change in travel choice through measures that reduce the amount of travel by a particular mode. Measures include fiscal mechanisms such as parking charges or road tolls, but measures that limit the capacity of a particular mode could also count as demand management.
- 4.4 'Smarter choices' typically means seeking to encourage a change in travel choice through measures that improve the relative attraction of alternatives to the private car. Measures include improvements in travel information, the introduction of car sharing schemes, travel planning and flexible working practices. They also include investments made in public transport services and facilities.
- 4.5 Clarity and consistency in the use of terminology relating to urban mobility at the Community level would be of considerable benefit. For example, clarification on terms such as urban mobility, mobility management and low-emission zones will ensure common understanding. This will be of particular benefit in the application of ITS.
- 4.6 Mobility management should be promoted as a central theme of the new urban mobility culture. There is great potential for small-scale transport measures within the urban environment to deliver significant policy benefits beyond the transport agenda. The promotion of this potential would, for example, enable the wider health benefits of reduced dependency on the car to form part of the new urban mobility culture. There is also potential for the application of ITS within many mobility management projects.
- 4.7 In taking forward the Green Paper the Commission has the potential to help address some of the barriers that prevent the full potential of mobility management being realised, specifically:
 - i) Mobility management requires a combination of demand management and smarter choice measures to be implemented. Decision makers often view demand management measures as being unpopular and politically undeliverable;
 - ii) Strategic policy tends to be investment driven and so does not always adequately reflect the importance of achieving behavioural change as part of any future investment package;
 - iii) A significant proportion of smarter choice measures are focused at the level of the individual citizen and require revenue, as opposed to capital,

investment. Traditionally transport investment is predominantly focused on capital investment;

- iv) A citizen's travel choice is affected by a number of factors, not exclusively limited to those associated with the transport system. It can be difficult to attribute changes in travel choice directly to specific transport measures. Decision makers are therefore less likely to take forward innovative measures where the direct impact of the measure is uncertain.

Role and actions for Europe / the Community

4.8 The significance of mobility management in achieving behavioural change is not in doubt. However, the focus for delivering mobility management must remain at the local level. Action at the Community level should seek to assist local decision makers by:

- i) Encouraging Member states to set targets to reduce emissions from transport. Positive encouragement should be given to use regulatory and legislative frameworks within Member states as a means of delivering the targets. Such an approach should seek to ensure that the costs of transport are more fairly attributed to the source of the emission, in line with the 'polluter pays' principle;
- ii) The Commission should adopt and actively promote the principle of 'manage and invest' as the basis for its transport policy;
- iii) The Commission should adopt and actively promote the concept of mobility management as embracing both demand management and smarter choice measures;
- iv) The Commission should ensure that transport policy at the European level reflects the principles of spatial planning and supports delivery of wider policy objectives;
- v) The Commission should review the operation of funding streams managed at the Community level (e.g. TEN-T budgets, structural and cohesion funds) to ensure that their allocation better reflects the need to deliver specific policy outcomes. Priority should be given to targeting a greater proportion of resources towards smaller-scale projects that are specifically designed to encourage a change in travel behaviour. The Commission should provide leadership by supporting revenue investment in addition to capital investment where this delivers measures that encourage a change in travel behaviour;
- vi) A system for monitoring the impacts of mobility management and supporting stakeholders in implementing such measures should be developed. Monitoring arrangements should seek to build upon the experience of existing European pilot projects (e.g. CIVITAS) with a view to ensuring that decision makers are better informed of the impacts of mobility management measures.

4.9 The concept of a European Observatory on urban mobility is potentially attractive but its purpose and function should be clarified. It is essential that prior to any proposal being taken forward the added value of such a facility is clearly demonstrated. The Observatory could act as a mechanism for pooling information on mobility management good practice and impacts (monitoring) at a Community level. Developing and applying a consistent approach to data collection and monitoring information (statistics and data) may have added value provided that any such regime does not add unduly to the information gathering processes in individual Member states. In order to add value, any Observatory should build on and coordinate existing centres where similar information/ facilitation functions are already provided e.g. the European Local Transport Information Service (ELTIS).

4.10 Other potential functions for the Observatory could include:

- Benchmarking good practice, building on the outputs of previous projects funded by the Commission;
- Supporting innovation by providing and facilitating sharing of good practice on the application of ITS in mobility management and the potential of ITS to influence modal shift, e.g. convenience offered by smartcard technology and how this can be applied to other aspects of citizen's lives;
- Harmonisation of definitions (see paragraph 4.5 above) used in urban transport;
- Providing examples of new ways to disseminate information and promote a new urban mobility culture, e.g. through on-the-job training; capacity building/ facilitating politicians; exchange visits between authorities; working with universities in training the next generation of planners and transport planners; working with other education establishments to teach young citizens about the new urban mobility culture, and to entrench more sustainable travel choices and habits;
- Encouraging research, for example into innovative transport financing (e.g. land value capture and internalising the external costs of transport).

5. Prioritising transport investment based on outcomes

5.1 The allocation of investment at the Community level will have a significant influence on whether it is ultimately possible to create a new urban mobility culture. This is likely to require the Commission to 'break the mould' when it comes to the allocation of its investment funds. It will be necessary to move away from the traditional project focus towards one which is focused on the delivery of outcomes.

5.2 This new approach to the allocation of investment funds would require the Commission to adopt a prioritisation process that assesses potential

investment proposals more explicitly in terms of their contribution towards delivering agreed policy objectives.

- 5.3 South East England pioneered a prioritisation process for regional transport investment in England. The process requires information on proposed projects to be submitted by the scheme promoter. The information is provided using an easy to complete pro-forma that establishes the linkage between the proposal and delivery of the regional policy framework. The prioritisation process enables the relative merits of different types of proposals to be assessed on a consistent basis. It is transparent and has been proved to be robust.
- 5.4 The outcome from the prioritisation process is used by the RTB in its capacity as decision maker on allocation of investment funds across the region. Where we have sought to give emphasis to a particular policy outcome the prioritisation process enables us to target resources in an effective way and on a transparent basis. This approach has made it possible for the RTB to make difficult decisions in the allocation of investment funds in a way that commands confidence amongst local delivery agencies. It has, for example, enabled the RTB to take a leadership role in promoting mobility management at the regional level; an emphasis that will be reflected in future allocations of funds.

Role and actions for Europe / the Community

- 5.5 We strongly encourage the Commission to adopt a similar approach to that pioneered by South East England in the future allocation of investment funds managed at the Community level.
- 5.6 The adoption of a prioritisation process focused on the delivery of outcomes has the added benefit of the potential to allow a simplification of existing funding streams. Rationalising existing funding streams into a single funding 'pot' offers the possibility of reducing the administrative costs associated with investment programmes. This in turn will enable a higher proportion of the funds available to be used for investment in proposals for the benefit of citizens across the Community. A rationalisation of existing funding streams would also reduce the burden on project promoters that arises with the need to submit proposals for consideration by the Commission.
- 5.7 If a new urban mobility culture is to be achieved then it will require the adoption of a more flexible approach to the allocation of funds; one that is focused on ensuring that funds are targeted at the delivery of outcomes. A spatial planning approach recognises that delivery of sustainable economic growth requires a number of policy initiatives to be integrated in a more effective way. In a similar way, investment funds must be managed more flexibly. The adoption of a more rigorous and transparent mechanism for the allocation of funds is therefore fundamental to achieving the new urban mobility culture, whilst not forgetting the importance of investing in the Community's more successful regions to ensure continued economic performance.

- 5.8 The following action at Community level would assist delivery of improved urban mobility at local level:
- i) The Commission should make urban transport more of a priority in structural and cohesion funds – the allocation of funds at Community level is a helpful signal for policy makers in delivering desired outcomes;
 - ii) CIVITAS should be promoted as a more permanent programme in innovative transport financing;
 - iii) The Commission should encourage research and share information and examples of innovative forms of financing transport, e.g. land value capture, internalisation of external costs, and hypothecation;
 - iv) Funds should be targeted at projects requiring co-finance (partnership funding) to unlock other funding sources;
 - v) Allocating funding to the operational costs of projects (revenue funding) and smaller-scale projects that can be depreciated over 3 or 4 years, rather than large capital infrastructure projects that are depreciated over 25 years or more.

6. The Regional Transport Board's Mobility Management Action Plan

- 6.1 Recognising the importance of mobility management in delivering the changes in travel behaviour that are critical to implementing the South East Plan, the RTB has produced a mobility management action plan. Four 'work packages' from this action plan are currently being taken forward, including:
- A. Production of guidance to ensure the key transport elements of the South East Plan's Regional Transport Strategy (for example the principles of 'manage and invest', mobility management and 'hubs and spokes') are carried through into local policy documents;
 - B. Exploring ways of encouraging rail travel, by looking at door-to-door journeys and how opportunities for and experience of rail travel can be improved through the implementation of rail station travel plans;
 - C. Considering the opportunities available for introducing integrated ticketing and travel information at a sub-regional level as a way of encouraging use of more sustainable forms of transport;
 - D. Providing a resource centre for the region including examples of mobility management good practice, key stakeholder contact details, opportunities for pooling monitoring information and key publications in a single location.

6.2 The action plan and work packages identified above seek to:

- Ensure an integrated and coordinated policy framework between the regional and local levels;
- Reduce the barriers to implementing mobility management through raising awareness of the concept and its potential for bringing about a new urban mobility culture, whilst taking advantage of the opportunities offered by ITS
- Bring forward mobility management projects through prioritising transport investment based on outcomes.

6.3 In taking the Commission's agenda forward, we would be happy to discuss the priority and timings of the actions identified in this response further, particularly in relation to the review of the RTB's forward programme of investment, which will be taking place during 2008.

7. Conclusion

7.1 Transport is a derived demand. It is also a demand that can be, and is, influenced by the investment decisions we make in a wide range of policy areas, not just transport.

7.2 Investment in the Community's transport system is essential in order to deliver the Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas. It is critical to reducing internal barriers to trade, helps improve productivity, allows the labour market to operate more efficiently and helps reduce business costs by improving access to international gateways that enables the Community to compete in global markets.

7.3 The Community's urban areas, particularly those that form the major regional centres (such as South East England), are the power houses of sustainable economic growth. Delivery of the Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas requires continued investment by the Community in these regions. It also requires that investment to deliver the new culture in urban mobility.

7.4 Investment by the Community in mobility management is consistent with the new urban mobility culture. It will also ensure that the Community takes a leadership role in ensuring that economic growth is de-coupled from growth in our dependency on the car.

SOUTH EAST ENGLAND REGIONAL TRANSPORT BOARD January 2008

Contact: Fiona Thorp, Regional Planner
T: 01483 555228 Email: fionathorp@southeast-ra.gov.uk