

On 15 February 2017 Profs Tony May and Greg Marsden led a transport workshop for City of York Council members and Officers, on the lines of the two earlier York Civic Trust events.

#### **A. Key problem areas identified:**

1. *Air pollution* – perceived as primarily a city centre issue, during the day time (measurable increases during peaks), this is affected by weather (temperature/humidity/wind/cloud cover) and peak usage times. It is also perceived as ‘lumpy’ – not always same time and place and may depend on freight/bus traffic/weather. Health, social and economic cost implications arise from increased air pollution and poor air quality.
2. *Congestion* – affects journey times, leads to reduced reliability/regularity of public transport and gives a poor impression of City to visitors. It causes delays (deliveries, journeys to work, public transport) with consequent economic and social costs. Consider prioritising use of buses/walking/cycling (and manage any feelings of guilt for not cycling). Investigate making more efficient use of assets, e.g. by using river, cycle, walking and rail more effectively.
3. *Effect of growing population* – affects city-wide and local growth areas. The need for more housing and business premises, thus increased jobs, contributes to increased transport demand and expectations and longer commuting distances. The Local Plan could limit expansion to fit existing urban areas and brownfield sites rather than a wider spread of development. Expected to get worse without more walking/cycling/use of public transport (e.g. bus and rail), increased multi-occupancy of vehicles, reduced dependency on cars, good habits acquired by providing public transport at start of new developments.
4. *Schools* – effects of ‘school run’, school league table changes arising from more academies and free schools, leading to possible increases in journey length, loss of support for transport to faith schools.
5. *Condition/state of highway infrastructure* – perceived as a city-wide problem which particularly affects more vulnerable users e.g. cyclists. Expected to get worse unless infrastructure can be kept in good state. Need better control of key junctions (e.g. where radial routes intersect with inner orbital routes), fabric of city’s roads (e.g. Walmgate Bar) maintained (vibration/noise/fumes etc). Planning should allow for

public right of ways as part of transport network and that the network's limited overall available capacity must be shared between all users.

6. *Limitations of infrastructure (carriageway widths/old buildings)* – seen as primarily a problem of the city centre, but affects most road users. There is a need for integrated lights and signals at junctions and crossing points with appropriate sequencing. There is a public perception of junction gridlock –the Outer ring road is arguably seen as a classic example. In some cases it may possibly be there by design (e.g. Micklegate/Blossom Street junction). Perception of traffic speeds (too slow in some cases, too fast in others) is an issue that can be designed-out using street furniture, signage and vegetation rather than needing carriageway re-engineering.
7. *Accidents* – vulnerable groups (e.g. cyclists). Is there a lack of data, e.g. reports only of accidents and not near-misses? What data is available?
8. *Limitations of public transport services* – affects visitor economy, night-time economy, labour force, business economy. Impact of this could increase unless there is a better park and ride (late evening) service and improved Sundays, early morning, late evening and integration of rural bus services. There is a need to raise awareness of /promote city's evening economy. Funding to extend services could be a problem. For new developments, consider the need to provide mass transit/public transport as alternative to car so as to get residents in the habit of using public transport.
9. *Parking* – city centre vs. out of town. *This* contributes to congestion and air pollution. Pricing is an issue (out of town 'free', charging in city centre), seen as expensive by visitors, though pricing mechanism could support modal shift. Could annual pass pricing re-vamp help? Could pricing for child passengers or for number of vehicle occupants contribute here? Is there a need to re-evaluate ResPark charging, corresponding re-assessment of supply and demand is needed. Inconsiderate or unsafe parking contributes to difficult access for blue light services alongside perceived issues re commuter parking and displacement due to restrictions/pricing/congestion. This is expected to get worse without management, change in perceptions re parking in city centre (not enough spaces/charges too high) although most car parks (not Castle) are under-used except at Christmas and in school holidays, conflict of increase in P+R role helping keep traffic out of

centre vs making parking in centre easier, nature of Respark schemes (pricing, supply & demand). Clarity on Castle Gateway parking solutions may be needed (e.g. on which side of River Foss or possibly Tower Street dual carriageway is it best)?

10. *Cycling* – confidence in infrastructure (increase in individual activity and health improvement), better access (e.g. rail) for increased numbers. Perceived lack of cycle parking – could unused areas in city provide a solution (or possibly wide roads e.g. Micklegate)?
11. *Freight* – perceived increase (70%?) in white van delivery journeys. Consider creating transshipment depot (Askham Bryan/Naburn?), or national transshipment centres. Area to be serviced? Viability? Reduction in city centre delivery hours?
12. *Reduce need to travel* – more personalised journey plans, encourage use of minibuses for clubs, communities and schools.
13. *City Centre* – consider ways of resolving perceived conflict between cars, cyclists and pedestrians. Central pedestrian zone could define (more) footstreets with appropriate timing in medieval city centre and contribute to avoiding build-up of air pollution (e.g. Lawrence Street flats with special ventilation). Need to assess effects of office conversions – student vs residential vs 2<sup>nd</sup> homes vs holiday lets. Establish role of Coppergate route – how changeable?
14. *Behaviour/expectations* – conflict between people vs space: driving standards and expectations, frustration over delays leading to impatient or dangerous driving, possibly causing collisions.

## **B. Review of the LTP's objectives**

Although most attendees felt that the LTP objectives remain appropriate, one group proposed a re-prioritisation based on (1) affordability, (2) hours of access and more pedestrianisation, (3) reliability of public transport, (4) limiting cut-throughs in city centre (e.g. by closure of Lendal Bridge)

### Get people walking, cycling and using public transport:

The majority felt that this objective is still relevant and should have high priority. Encouraging people to walk/cycle leads to health improvements. There is a need to increase supporting infrastructure. (e.g. cycle parking, routes)

Alternative/new objectives – build cyclists' confidence re safety and state/extent of infrastructure, increase emphasis on 'healthy' agenda

Easier to get around overall:

Again, most attendees felt this remains relevant and should have high priority. The need was seen to integrate transport network nodes better and to promote leaving car at home. There is also a need to support economic growth yet sustain existing businesses suffering impacts of congestion. We should plan for reducing congestion and delay wherever possible. It would be helpful to provide cycle routes from A to B.

Alternative/new objectives: We should place more emphasis on the need for better and more competitive priced bus services/routes

Safety/comfort/security:

This objective is still considered relevant and should have high priority. Some felt that the health benefits of active travel could be better argued in the LTP and that the use of 'walking bus' or 'walking train' approaches could reduce school run issues. The effect of school holidays on traffic levels and congestion could be extended by promoting the use of cycling, walking to work or even working from home on a one day in every five basis so as to reduce pressure.

Alternative/new objectives: Consider a changed approach to sharing road space so that cars share with pedestrians and cyclists, constraining drivers to slower/safer driving (e.g. Fishergate triangle)

Equal access to all facilities for all:

This objective was still felt to be relevant and should have a high priority. A small number felt that bus services need improving, not equalising, with the aim of a minimum standards guarantee. There was a common feeling that peak time travel demand needed to be reduced e.g. through staggered hours, reducing the impact of freight/haulage, improving rail access, reducing congestion. Lack of early morning and late evening bus services was considered to affect rural areas, evening economy, socialising, early/late shift working, late study at college etc. Public transport fare levels were seen as a barrier in many cases. It was felt we should consider integrating P+R services with rural services or joining P+R with other bus routes where possible. We should also make full use of technology (eg ticket on phone app, timetable app, smart ticketing/M-card/cross-ticketing)

Alternative/new objectives: Greater emphasis on increased working from home to reduce travel demand at peak times; re-appraisal of impact/influence of P+R growth and infrastructure services

### Combating climate change:

Most attendees felt this objective was still relevant and should have high priority. The commercial delivery of bus transport and (perceived) low patronage remains an issue; better take-up could be achieved by creating new routes/services for existing centres. and new developments to establish habit of using public transport. Many felt that the city's freight strategy should be addressed; the use of transshipment hubs should be considered. We should examine the impact of changing to smaller/lighter/ULEV delivery vehicles on emissions and foot streets.

Alternative/new objectives: Greater emphasis on impact of air pollution. We should aim to create new routes/services for new developments early to establish habit of using public transport.

## **C. Approaches to LTP Strategies**

### Reduce the need to travel:

Increased working from home (travel, personal journey plans); Promoting better ways to travel (times, mode, route used); Helping communities to be more self-supporting; Ensure services and public transport are available for new developments; Consider use of local delivery services e.g. Deliveroo, or use of Amazon drop-off points; Promote/support internet shopping; Promote shared vehicle use (minibuses e.g. 3<sup>rd</sup> sector, car sharing); Use of river; Examine local rail options e.g. halt at Haxby/York Hospital; Expand car-free areas or create pedestrianised city centre; Improve local shops/facilities

### Reduce private car use:

Increased working from home and/or promoting better ways to travel (see under Reduce need to travel); Need credible/cost-effective alternatives e.g. car-sharing to replace ownership; Emphasise use of car sharing/car clubs; Give a clearer steer on parental trips (e.g. school drop-off then work); Discourage non-essential car use; Give explicit guidance (argument not just economic but social and environmental); Consider use of workplace parking levy; Incentivise employers towards home working; Consider congestion charge;

Promote cycle hire; Consider Uber/Whim-based approaches; Investigate guided bus/tram network (e.g. Nottingham); Provide cycle routes from A to B; Limit city centre access

#### Equality of access for all:

Use technology to improve safety through better control and signage; Implement smart ticketing across different modes; Provide orbital bus services to access and/or interconnect P+R sites; Extend P+R hours (also supports evening economy); Reduce car use overall; Incentivise or use 'nudge' approaches to promote behavioural change

#### Improve/maximise highway performance/operation:

Must include provision for pedestrians and cyclists; Use technology to get better junction control and signage; Improve junctions on outer ring road; Consider use of Uber-based approach; Discourage single-occupancy use of cars; Reduce car traffic in city centre; Allow overnight use of P+R sites; Integrated transport system; Improve station entrance/appearance (new entrance on 'teardrop' side?); Provide digital access to transport data, timetables via apps for all generations; Levy congestion charge for freight traffic; Consider use of freight transshipment hub(s)

#### User hierarchy

Most attendees felt this should remain the same.

### **D. Measures to implement individual strategies**

Measures to deliver four different strategies were considered by the groups present.

#### 1. Reducing the need to travel

- i. Integrate/improve access to key local amenities, services, schools and employment – needs to be done for new developments and for sites in Local Plan.

*Barriers:* commercial viability, competition with existing facilities, sources of funding

- ii. Emphasise this as key consideration in urban planning – integrate in creating new/enhancing existing communities.

Barriers: developer 'buy-in', impact on commercial viability (eg number of houses, roads, footpaths, amenity space), Green Belt, overall area of space/land available

- iii. Embedded domestic technology – include fibre/broadband, phone network, utility metering, remote home systems control, placing increased focus on outlying communities.

Barriers: level of provider interest, commercial viability (and limits on planning conditions?)

- iv. Flexible working policies – concentrate on existing businesses and employers, seek ways to include new businesses/employers.

Barriers: public transport services, location (access on foot and effects of existing congestion)

## 2. Reducing non-essential car use and barriers to other forms of travel

Invest more time/money in achieving behavioural change whether by regulation, incentivisation or more subtle 'nudge' approaches

Encourage cross-party working to get common view and wider political commitment

Review city centre areas suitable for pedestrianisation

Demand management approach to city centre traffic. Discourage non-essential car use by providing alternative means of transport.

Take revenue-based approach with capital support. Revenue: cycling training, bus incentives, journey planning/timetables, website signposting to car-share clubs. Capital: integrated ticketing, more/better tarmac on roads, improved/new technology signage, provide bus timetable information on screens

## 3. Improving public transport and take-up

- i. Aim for better integration – timetabling, cost of fares, hubs, flexibility and reliability.

Barriers: Commercial operation after de-regulation, Technology (diesel emissions/leaving engine running in cold weather, ULEV battery life/cost), Viability of/pump-priming this work?

- ii. Provide free/low cost shuttle bus for city centre or possibly free/low cost use of existing routes for city centre only journeys?

Barriers: Cost of provision, booking via hotel or smartcard for residents, inconvenience of broken journey if used for cross-city travel

- iii. Link rural feeder services to P+R.

Barriers: timetabling, length of service day, fare structure

- iv. Provide free services (e.g. University area).

Barriers: cost, route, possibly limited regulatory routes to such a service, credibility/cost of incentivisation approach

- v. Encourage buy-in from major employers, to move towards addressing freight/workforce travel needs.

#### 4. Freight transshipment depot considerations

Issues – One depot or several? Where to site it/them? Who pays? Very few nationally (?6 or 7 and none in W Yorkshire) Is it viable for York alone or would it need to serve larger area? Need to consult business.

How and why – Hours of operation, Size of local vehicles to use (smaller vehicles better), what changes needed for national carriers? Possibly provide drop-box facilities at larger employers for Amazon deliveries. Freight depot might need to cover larger area than just York – best road/area for site? Possibility of CoYC subsidy or subscription by/levy on users? Can CoYC control HGVs, commercial waste vehicles – use of electric vehicles instead?