

## **TRANSPORT WORKSHOP**

### **20<sup>th</sup> May – Regional Transport Group Workshop**

**10.00am-12 Noon at Merseytravel HQ, Number 1 Mann Island**

#### **Purpose and Format**

The purpose of the workshop was to formulate a NW Chambers transport policy manifesto across the key areas of:

1. Aviation
2. Road access/ freight
3. SuperPort
4. Rail

This manifesto will enable the transport priorities of members to be identified and to provide a focus for lobbying activity in the coming year from both Chambers. The issues in question will reflect regional priorities and issues.

The delegates were welcomed by Cllr Liam Robinson, Chair of Merseytravel. Each area of transport infrastructure was then introduced by a member of the group who outlined the issues within the specific sector

Delegates then debated the issues, tasked with considering not only the issues, but at whom lobbying activity should be directed, and from where any required funding would be sourced. Each in turn then fed back to the plenary session

#### **Keynote Speakers**

Robin Tudor, Head of PR and Communications, Liverpool John Lennon Airport

**Key issues: Connectivity for airports into the South East; Surface Access to airports; Air Passenger Duty making UK less competitive; Regional Connectivity Fund – usage and impact?**

Paul Young, British International Freight Association (BIFA) NW Representative

**Issues for road freight: Long Haul – impact of congestion based on need for investment in new roads and proper maintenance, impact of accidents, access to delivery points via suitable link roads including suitable parking; Final Mile – lack of loading bays, parking enforcements; Access to Ports – need for efficient processes and adequate parking at peak times. Unsuitable road access to ports; need for greater rail linkages east/west; statistics required to support business case for funding from government.**

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Bernard Molloy, Chair of the LCR LEP SuperPort Committee

**Liverpool Superport will more than double its freight capacity by 2020 but at least 2021 until road access to the port can be improved, UK Industrial Strategy is welcomed but is undermined by a lack of access and infrastructure strategy.**

Roy Chapman, Rail Services Planning Officer at Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM).

**Current situation has North's rail network over capacity after 40%+ growth (70% in city regions), old and insufficient rolling stock, the need to improve ticketing and revenue protection BUT there is significant investment underway through Northern Hub, electrification programme and the development of HS2 plans. Focus for the future: filling in the gaps in electrification; rolling stock and station improvements; use of additional capacity especially for freight.**

### Feedback from the work-groups

#### Table 1

- The speakers had raised some key issues
- Port growth and growth in general v important. Not just in Liverpool, but projects such as OMEGA, Port Salford etc, putting pressure on the existing network
  - Demand led results is often the result
  - L2 development, need to consider rail and road based access
  - 2nd Mersey crossing a positive result
  - Still congestion is increasing
- Public transport
  - Buses and coaches vital for getting people to work and also for tourism and culture. Coach parking and layover/stopping for pick up/set down is minimal.
- Retail
  - Big growth in van use – need a road network that can cope
- Need to target MPs, Local Authorities and also local businesses
- For funding:
  - Need to exploit commercial opportunities such as China. Maximise inward investment.
  - Also ensure Govt spends available resources in right areas

#### Table 2

- Speakers' subject matter had been wide ranging. Covered the fundamental basics behind growth.
- The length of time to deliver anything remains a problem – wider regulation/devolution?

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- Rail North falling short of its original aims for full devolution
- More intense lobbying on devolution. Not just Rail (North), other modes too e.g. Roads, buses.
- How can businesses themselves help more, through tax revenues, proving their worth to the economy
- Rebalancing – redistribution of savings made elsewhere to North.
- Need to lobby not just MPs but focus on a wider public awareness campaign, especially across the NW.

#### Table 3

- Fundamental issue is congestion, primarily on rail but to a lesser degree road.
  - Need to increase capacity of infrastructure
  - Modal shift - free capacity on road network for freight
- Better co-ordination of E-W links (e.g. HS3)
- Funding
  - Case for businesses to recognise virtue of paying for things themselves. Need to consider longer term investment – no quick return
- Connectivity to Heathrow – more slots
- Targeting MPs but also LEPs
  - LEPs could/should work closer together.
  - Speak with 1 voice to grow northern economy.

#### Table 4

- Congestion; development of port; M6 Pinch points; rail pinch points (between Winsford and Warrington)
- No attention for Liverpool – all investment targeted elsewhere (e.g. Felixstowe)
- Need to identify pinch points, develop solutions, implement them
- Lack of co-ordinated NW planning – too fragmented.
  - Need greater co-ordination of LEP activity
  - Port is growing but existing infrastructure cannot cope
  - Stimulate further growth
- HS2 is important in terms of planning and getting the infrastructure in place to support it
- Should target party leaders, not just NW MPs. Joint NW letter to leaders.
- Commerce (i.e. “big business”) itself should pull their weight, not just rely on the Chambers who tend to focus on supporting smaller businesses.
- Again should be looking for greater investment from the business sector

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- Need to pitch issues at a level people (including business) will understand. They need to “get it” to support it. Use meaningful but understandable language.

### Plenary Session and Summing Up

- 2016 onwards when direct wards end will be critical – need to support Rail North’s long term rail strategy.
- It’s not just about the big stuff – trams and buses are also essential elements of an integrated sustainable transport network.
- Evidence is vital; but who holds all the stats?
- Whilst evidence is important, the powers that be also need to listen to the people
- Need to have a vision for capacity going forward
- Planning process is a democratic one, but it could be faster and less political. The Government should get a process and stick to it.
- Powers are not good at relating to business partly because business doesn’t command the ear of the powers – should be better at demanding engagement
- Don’t forget the general public – they are stakeholders too, who use transport, and vote
- Pitch it to the right level, esp with small business – make sure they “get it”.
- Co-ordinated NW approach not always best solution
- Summing up:
  - Need to give the NW a voice
  - Coordinated effort is critical
  - Knowledge is key- the Chambers know their own patches better than Whitehall
  - Better marshalling of evidence to make the argument stack up