

**MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL  
REPORT FOR INFORMATION**

**COMMITTEE:** Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Committee

**DATE:** 11 December 2007

**SUBJECT:** Regional Centre Transport Strategy

**REPORT OF:** Head of Transport

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**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To inform the Scrutiny Committee of the development of the draft Regional Centre Transport Strategy and the launch of the strategy's consultation period.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Committee:

- i) Notes the consultation report on the Regional Centre Transport Strategy, prepared by Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority/Executive in close consultation with the City Council, appended to this report.
- ii) Considers whether it wishes to make any input into the consultation exercise on the report.
- iii) Notes that the final version of the Regional Centre Transport Strategy, which is summarised in paragraphs 3.2 – 3.7, will be finalised and launched in spring 2008 subject to approval by the Executive.
- iv) Receives an annual update on delivery of the priorities set out in the Regional Centre Transport Strategy

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## **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Manchester City Centre Strategic Plan 2008-12 - Economy, Employment and Skills Scrutiny Committee Report 14 November 2007

Greater Manchester Transport Innovation Fund Bid – Executive Report 25 July 2007

The file on the Regional Centre Transport Strategy is held in the Transport Policy Unit in the Chief Executive's Department.

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### **1. Background**

- 1.1 In recognition of the importance of the city centre as a regional capital and key economic driver for the North West, GMPTA/E and City Council are developing a transport strategy for the Regional Centre – 'regional' so as to incorporate the development and expansion of the city centre that is taking place across the boundary of Manchester and into Salford.
- 1.2 The purpose of this exercise was to review the current and future transport requirements, to build on our successes, and meet the challenge of continuing economic growth and transformation of the Regional Centre. A vision for the city centre has been set out in the draft Manchester City Centre Strategic Plan (CCSP) 2008–12, which is an agreed framework for sustained regeneration, investment and service improvement in the city centre up to 2012.
- 1.3 The Regional Centre Transport Strategy (RCTS) has been set in the strategic context of the CCSP, but articulates its challenges in transport terms and develops a package of schemes to deliver an integrated transport network. The strategy must support competitiveness and address social inclusion. It must also meet the predicted increase in demand for travel and, particularly, the demand for significant improvements in public transport.
- 1.4 Like the CCSP, the draft RCTS will be subject to consultation. The full version of the draft strategy is enclosed at Annex 1.

### **2. Drafting and Consultation Process**

- 2.1 The strategy has been developed by GMPTA/E in close consultation with the City Council. The strategy development has also been firmly set in the context of the Transport Innovation Fund (TIF) Bid and the TIF major scheme business cases which have been developed since the submission of the TIF bid to DfT in July. The RCTS therefore acts as the underpinning strategy for the Regional Centre components of the TIF package.

- 2.2 A programme of initial consultation briefings has been carried out. Engagement has been carried out with the following: Salford City Council and Salford Central URC; GMPTA Lead Members; CityCo's Strategic Transport Group; GM Bus Operators Association; and the Manchester Transport Thematic Partnership.
- 2.3 A further full programme of consultation and engagement with stakeholders commenced with a CityConversation, hosted by CityCo on 3 December. The focus of the CityConversation was the RCTS, placed in the context of the CCSP and both documents were made available to attendees. The Chief Executive of the City Council and the Chief Executive of GMPTE led the presentation. A range of additional stakeholder meetings will take place over the next few weeks to raise awareness and gain buy-in.
- 2.4 Throughout the consultation period both the RCTS and the CCSP will be available for viewing and comment on various high profile websites including the City Council's internet, GMPTA and CityCo's website as well as other outlets such as libraries. The consultation period will conclude on 31 January 2008.
- 2.5 Following consultation and reporting to the Executive Committee the document will be finalised with planned publication and launch in Spring 2008.

### **3. Summary of the RCTS**

- 3.1 The structure of the final version of the RCTS can be summarised as below:
- 3.2 Chapter 1 sets out the strategic context of economic growth since the publication of the last CCSP in 2003. It continues to describe the strategic development forecasted by the City Region Development Programme over the next 15-20 years, where 100,000 new jobs have been predicted for the area. The chapter concludes with a vision for the regional centre and how that vision will be delivered by citywide and local area based initiatives.
- 3.3 Chapter 2 sets out the key principles underpinning the RCTS and provides an overview of the relationship between the RCTS and the TIF bid, which has presented the conurbation with an opportunity to review transport infrastructure, networks and services.
- 3.4 Chapter 3 outlines the proposed strategy by each transport mode, introducing the key issues, solutions and outcomes.
- 3.5 The key elements of the Regional Centre Transport Strategy include:
- Major investment in fixed track (Heavy Rail and Metrolink) increasing network capacity to relieve overcrowding and accommodate increased demand; Metrolink network expansion with Phase 3a & 3b extensions; and improved station facilities
  - A package of measures to bring about a step change in the quality of and capacity of local bus network through institutional reform and Enhanced Partnerships; investment in new vehicles, off bus ticketing and additional

interchange facilities; more bus priority; high quality Bus Transit; and cross city services

- Promotion of and investment in infrastructure to increase levels of walking and cycling. Key routes arriving at the inner ring road will be linked across the city centre via a continuous network of safe, signed routes. More cycle parking and other facilities will be explored. A Pedestrian Priority Core will be the focus of for improvements to pedestrian crossings, wider footways, creating a safe environment for visitors, shoppers and workers.
- Measures to improve the carrying capacity of the inner ring road and the intermediate ring road thereby facilitating the removal of through traffic from the center
- Introduction of traffic management measures to support the overall strategy and facilitate greater pedestrian priority in key locations
- Improvements to the quality and supply of car parking in key locations to ensure that the Regional Centre remains easily accessible by car

3.6 Chapter 4 deals in turn with each of the distinct areas that make up the city centre. The sub chapters summarises the constituent spatial areas of the city centre describing their characteristics and their distinctive challenges. Their specific issues in transport terms are then explored, along with proposed solutions.

3.7 Chapter 5 sets out the Next Steps, including the consultation exercise, the need for further design work and development of the major schemes. A summary of the transport outcomes is provided, followed by a description of the real change to the quality of life in the regional centre derived from a sustainable, managed and integrated transport network.

#### **4. Conclusions and Next Steps**

4.1 The RCTS has been developed in response to the economic, investment and regeneration vision outlined in the CCSP, and the transport infrastructure improvements set out in the TIF bid. Through the process of consultation and engagement we will ensure informed development, publicity and ownership of the final version of the strategy.

4.2 Following the consultation period and subject to the approval of the Executive, the final version of the RCTS will be published in Spring 2008.

4.3 Members are referred to the recommendations that can be found at the front of this report.