

**REPORT TO:** WECA COMMITTEE

**DATE:** 30 NOVEMBER 2018

**REPORT TITLE:** KEY ROUTE NETWORK

**DIRECTOR:** DAVID CARTER, DIRECTOR OF INFRASTRUCTURE

**AUTHOR:** JASON HUMM, HEAD OF TRANSPORT

### **Purpose of Report**

1. To agree the initial proposed Key Route Network
2. To note the development of operational issues relating to managing the Key Route Network

### **Background**

3. Several hierarchies of network exist across any transport system. The Strategic Road Network (SRN) is managed by DfT and effectively represents the motorways and trunk roads across England.
4. The Major Road Network (MRN) encompasses the SRN and additionally includes those roads that are considered to be regionally significant. DfT are due to publish the MRN for the SW imminently. The creation of regional groupings and Sub National Transport Bodies was partly to consider a more co-ordinated approach to the management of and investment in MRN's.
5. The agreement of a Key Route Network (KRN) is a devolution requirement for the WECA, however a KRN encompassing routes across the West of England is being developed to ensure that the transport network is appropriately connected. Noting however that the operational criteria may be applied differently for the West of England would encompass both the SRN and MRN and additionally include those routes that are critical for the transport network and economy within the West of England. Whilst the agreement of a
6. A Key Route Network for the West of England would encompass both the SRN and MRN and additionally include those routes that are critical for the transport network and economy within the West of England. The agreement of a KRN is a devolution requirement for the WECA, however a KRN encompassing routes across the West of England has been developed to ensure that the transport network is appropriately connected.
7. The criteria for the selection of the KRN and the proposed network has been through several iterations to ensure the validity of the assumptions against the defined route. Operational improvements to lever benefit for the KRN are being developed as part of the current phase 2 of the project and as such these could influence the final selection

of the route.

### **KRN objectives and Network Principles**

8. The KLRN is expected to achieve several objectives:
  - A network of routes which is prioritised for investment and maintenance to support policy objectives and the economic performance of the West of England
  - Bring consistency to policies supporting the better management of the network and contributing to safety and air quality
  - Enables the alignment of policies and spending priorities between the SRN, MRN and KRN
  - Improves connectivity between and within economic centres in the West of England and to national and international gateways, supporting journey times, reliability and all modes of transport
  - Supports economic growth and planned development in the West of England
  - Supports travel by all modes of transport, whilst encouraging modal shift, to better manage congestion and demand across the network and protect the natural and built environment
  - Supports a maintenance programme aligned with policy objectives
9. These in turn have been translated into a number of principles for the KRN, which will:
  - be a contiguous network of routes
  - which connects major employment, economic and urban centres
  - whilst providing connectivity to the Major Road Network (MRN); and
  - will provide resilience for the West of England transport network

### **Network Criteria and layout**

10. The criteria against which the proposed route KRN has been selected is:
  - Have more than 25,000 of people movement per day
  - Provide connectivity to an employment centre with more than 5,000 jobs
  - Connects economic centres or provides connectivity within economic centres
  - Connect to a national or international gateway (railway station, airport, cargo port)
  - Connects to part of the resilience network/connects to the Highways England diversion route
  - Connects with the MRN
  - Connects to an area of planned development at strategic development locations.
11. The initial proposed KRN is shown in Appendix 1.

### **Levered benefit and operational arrangements**

12. In order to meet the KRN objectives initial discussions have focussed on several operational levers that could be applied to the KRN. These require further development and a clearer understanding of their alignment to current highway authority functions undertaken by the constituent authorities.
13. By their nature these routes are already significant routes for each constituent authority so already have higher priority in relation to some network management issues. As such the development of the operational arrangements is likely to focus initially on a consistency of approach across the West of England.

14. The operational arrangements will be brought back to committee before implementation in mid-2019. These are expected to focus on:
  - Priority for capital investment from WECA for improvement schemes or schemes supporting modal shift
  - Potential contributions to maintenance schemes
  - Greater consistency across the region in relation to traffic management and streetworks approaches, for example in the operation of restricted working hours or co-ordination and permitting of utility works
  - Potential for improved consistency on resilience issues such as emergency response, reactive maintenance and winter resilience
  - Consistent KPI's and improved understanding of operation of KRN

### **Next steps**

15. The development of the approach and operational arrangements will continue to be developed by the end of the financial year with the operational arrangements and any adjustment that these might require to the selected KRN being brought back to committee in spring. The agreement of the KRN at this stage is therefore in principle reflecting the ongoing development of the proposals and future need to engage with stakeholders. It is anticipated that operational arrangements would be implemented from early summer 2019.

### **Consultation**

16. Head of Transport and operational teams have been involved in the development of the proposals. Consultation has taken place with Directors in the constituent councils. It is accepted that the current layout will need to be informed by the ongoing development of operational proposals and subsequent stakeholder feedback.
17. There is no requirement to externally consult on the layout of the KRN, however approval to adjust 'Highway Authority' operational arrangements (if necessary) may require approval through Constituent Authority processes. Key stakeholders, such as bus operators, emergency services, utilities etc, would be engaged once the arrangements are developed.

### **Other Options Considered**

18. Agreement of a KRN is a devolution requirement. Route options have already been considered as part of the iterative development of criteria and potential route options.

### **Risk Management/Assessment**

19. The introduction of significant enhancements for the management of the KRN over and above the current priority given to operational management of the routes by constituent authorities could introduce liability and financial risks. These will be assessed as part of the development of the current phase of the project

### **Public Sector Equality Duties**

20. The public sector equality duty created under the Equality Act 2010 means that public authorities must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
  - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
  - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
21. The Act explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:
- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
  - Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
  - Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.
22. The general equality duty therefore requires organisations to consider how they could positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations. It requires equality considerations to be reflected in the design of policies and the delivery of services, including policies, and for these issues to be kept under review.
23. Any changes to the operational management of routes on the KRN are not expected to have equalities implications at this stage. The promotion of modal shift on the KRN could bring some benefit to those residents or communities with a higher reliance on public transport.

#### **Finance Implications:**

24. There are no financial implications of agreeing a KRN. Any potential financial implications related to the development of the operational arrangements for the KRN will be considered as part of the current phase of the project.

Advice given by: Malcolm Coe, Director of Corporate Services, WECA

#### **Legal Implications:**

25. The agreement of the KRN is a devolution requirement for WECA and would therefore be taken through the WECA committee. The agreement of a coherent network across the West of England would require the report to be agreed by the West of England Joint Committee.
26. Whilst not an issue at this stage, changes to the operational arrangements for highway authority functions would require agreement through the Constituent Council's processes, dependent on the significance of any change and existing powers of delegation

Advice given by: Shahzia Daya, Director of Legal Services, WECA

#### **Land/property implications**

27. There are no land / property implications associated with this report.

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Advice given by: Malcolm Coe, Director of Corporate Services, WECA

**Human Resources Implications:**

28. There are no Human Resource implications associated with this report.

Advice given by: Alex Holly, Head of Human Resources, WECA

**Recommendation:**

29. That the Combined Authority:
- a. Agrees the initial proposed KRN; and
  - b. Notes that operational arrangements will be developed and brought back to committee at a later date.

**West of England Combined Authority Contact:**

Any person seeking background information relating to this item should seek the assistance of the contact officer for the meeting who is Ian Hird / Tim Milgate on 0117 332 1486; or by writing to West of England Combined Authority, 3 Rivergate, Temple Way, Bristol BS1 6ER; email: [democratic.services@westofengland-ca.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@westofengland-ca.gov.uk)