



Strategic Transport Forum

16th July 2021

Agenda Item 3: Transport Decarbonisation

It is recommended that the Forum:

- a) Considers the presentation delivered by City Science on a placed-based approach to decarbonisation and, identifies opportunities to build on the insight provided by the discussion through the work of EEH**
- b) Endorses the EEH approach to delivering placed-based decarbonisation trajectories as part of its decarbonisation roadmap work**

1. Context

- 1.1. EEH's transport strategy outlines the ambitions of our regional partners to achieve net-zero carbon emissions from our transport system by 2040, 10 years ahead of the legal requirement of 2050.
- 1.2. Transport is currently the largest contributor of UK domestic greenhouse gas emissions. In 2019, the transport sector was responsible for 34% of the UK's carbon emissions. More importantly, in stark contrast with other sectors of our economy where there is evidence of progress being made with decarbonisation, for transport the picture is one of emissions remaining at levels inconsistent with our legal requirements.
- 1.3. The EEH transport strategy recognises that successful place-making and by extension decarbonisation requires a whole system approach, driven by an ambitious vision of the future and which joins-up public sector policy to deliver agreed outcomes.

2. Place-based approach

- 2.1. The Strategic Transport Forum has long advocated a place-based approach to infrastructure provision. This is particularly pertinent given the need for our transport system to better reflect wider changes in society and the economy in a post pandemic landscape with decarbonisation a key priority for the Government.
- 2.2. A growing body of evidence points to the reality that in order to achieve the ambition for our transport system, there is a requirement for significant investment in transport infrastructure and services. It also requires investment in wider strategic infrastructure – improved digital connectivity and wider strategic infrastructure (particularly energy systems and new approaches to residential development).
- 2.3. Increasingly recognised by government is that the current approach (as a country) to investing in our transport system, and indeed wider strategic infrastructure, will not deliver on the legal requirement to achieve net-zero carbon by 2050.
- 2.4. There will be some difficult choices to make; government at all levels will be challenged. As we have seen with the introductions of low traffic neighbourhoods, change is not always universally welcomed or accepted.

- 2.5. A place-based approach can help mitigate these challenges, not only supporting an equitable approach to decarbonisation, but if developed in the right way, supporting growth, better access to goods, services and opportunities for communities across our region.
- 2.6. A place-based approach recognises that whilst there are universal elements in the approach to decarbonising transport and the wider economy applicable to the country at large (for example, demand reduction, electrification) it is equally important to develop solutions based on a place's unique characteristics: there cannot be a 'one-size fits all' solution to decarbonisation.
- 2.7. EEH has developed a range of tools to support the development of a place-based approach and to enable us, and our partners, to focus on delivering the right intervention in the right place. This includes work on first mile last mile transport options, the capacity release study and our baselining and transport decarbonisation trajectories.

3. Presentation

- 3.1. Forum members are invited to consider a presentation on the value of a place-based approach to decarbonisation, based on research and modelling undertaken by LDA Design, City Science and Vectos.
- 3.2. The research explores how different places can achieve an 80% reduction in surface transport emissions by 2030, as part of a pathway to net zero by 2050. It combines advanced carbon modelling with stakeholder workshops in order to test the impact of 40 carbon reduction interventions in four place typologies:
 - A unacentric city
 - A polycentric conurbation
 - A regeneration town
 - A growing county
- 3.3. By setting out an emissions reduction pathway and spatial vision for each typology, it demonstrates the contribution of spatial planning and place-based solutions to transport decarbonisation.

4. Decarbonisation roadmap

- 4.1. The Strategic Transport Forum has previously approved our proposal to develop a standalone 'roadmap' setting out a realistic pathway to decarbonising the transport ecosystem in our region, including a trajectory and non-binding carbon budgets/targets for transport.
- 4.2. It is proposed that the study be split into three phases. The initial stage (WP1) focuses on translating the Climate Change Committee's (CCC's) Sixth Carbon Budget and Pathways to 2050 (Transport) and the emerging TDP Pathways into a regionally specific decarbonisation roadmap.
- 4.3. EEH has commissioned City Science to develop the first package (WP1) of the decarbonisation roadmap for the Heartland region.
- 4.4. Being mindful of what may be published as part of the Transport Decarbonisation Plan (TDP), EEH and City Science are developing a methodology that is flexible enough to 'retrofit' emerging Government policy and pathways.
- 4.5. The approach will work with established UK pathways to decarbonisation, particularly the CCC's 'surface transport pathway'.
- 4.6. The draft outputs of the first work package (WP1) will be delivered imminently. EEH's decarbonisation sub-group will be kept updated and briefed on this work. Once completed EEH will look to take the outputs and commission the second work package, translating the baseline and nationally adopted trajectories into a place based approach to transport decarbonisation. This will support members and officers to develop a deeper understanding of



the challenges and opportunities that are emerging in a way that's most relevant and applicable to their localities.

- 4.7. Given the pressing requirement to rapidly decarbonise our economy and transport system, recent changes to the government's green book' are welcome. They offer the opportunity to consider investment proposals for their contribution towards agreed outcomes including decarbonisation that embrace social and environmental, as well as economic factors.
- 4.8. However, to implement these changes will require a shift in mindset in the way we approach the appraisal of proposals. We need to move away from using the appraisal to identify how we mitigate the impact of a proposal, towards a situation in which the appraisal is used to identify the solutions required to deliver the desired outcomes.
- 4.9. EEH's decarbonisation road map will support this new approach and will, with the support of this forum, form the basis of a regional transport decarbonisation strategy. This will support the developing economy wide approach to systemic decarbonisation.

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