

## Agenda Item 3

### REGIONAL TRANSPORT FORUM – 27 JANUARY 2006

#### LESSONS LEARNT FROM LTP/APR SETTLEMENT LETTERS

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##### Summary

Government has recently responded to authorities' LTP and APR submissions. These 'settlement letters' give an indication of the way that Government policy is developing and provide helpful suggestions on Government thinking that can be used for future work. This note summarises what lessons can be learnt from the recent settlement letters.

#### 1. Key issues

- 1.1. Settlement letters stated that a number of key issues would be examined in depth in the final plans:
  - performance management
  - integration of air quality
  - accessibility strategies
  - integrating network management, particularly in tackling congestion.
- 1.2. It is clear that authorities should ensure that final LTP submissions pick up on these issues.

#### 2. Performance management

- 2.1. Increasing weight appears to be given to progress towards **targets**, especially those for the national core indicators. Those four indicators comprised 35% of the assessment score for the APR. Progress towards these is likely to feature strongly in the delivery report for LTP1 next year. The regional picture suggests generally patchy progress towards the bus patronage and cycling targets. Assessment of APRs for LTP2 likely to also be heavily weighted towards the new mandatory indicators.
- 2.2. It is highly likely that the Government will not, during LTP2, assess how closely the actual and programmed scheme delivery are matched. It is likely to be all based on progress towards targets and achieving outcomes. Government is keen to see evidence of good performance management processes.
- 2.3. There was poor **risk management** in provisional LTPs. The plans need improving to show how what the risks are, and how these risks will be managed to keep performance against targets on track.
- 2.4. Proper **evidence-based** analysis (eg on quantifying problems and issues) is key, rather than relying on assertion.

- 2.5. There is a clear emphasis on LTPs needing to be **realistic** and to plan within known resources. Those that did not were marked down. This includes plans for major schemes (a number of plans were criticised for containing an unrealistic number of major schemes).
- 3. Integration with other issues / partnership working**
  - 3.1. The message here seems to be to relate the entire transport strategy to achieving wider integration of other issues. This should be showing how wider objectives are achieved throughout the plan.
  - 3.2. For the full LTP, there could be more emphasis on **'quality of life'** issues than was indicated in the guidance. Quality of life issues seems to be given equal weighting to the 4 shared priorities. This could particularly relate to climate change, which got a specific mention as being poor in most plans.
  - 3.3. Integrating **network management** with shared priorities (especially congestion) was seen as a generally weak area. The LTPs should show how Asset Management Plans are linked to LTP objectives.
  - 3.4. Many plans were marked down for failing to integrate **ROWIPs** with shared priorities. Again, ideally, this should show links throughout the plans.
  - 3.5. Government is keen to see local authorities working in **partnership** and engaging in cross-service working (including through Local Area Agreements). Public transport is seen as key, especially working arrangements with bus operators
- 4. Air quality / climate change**
  - 4.1. Government is picking up on local authorities not delivering convincingly against their air quality responsibilities. This is perhaps the shared priority many local authorities are not familiar with and not particularly geared up for, but the evidence from the settlement letters suggests that the government expects better.
- 5. Softer measures**
  - 5.1. Government appears keen to see improvements in softer measures and information provision (which is not unexpected).
- 6. Follow guidance closely**
  - 6.1. A good learning point for future submissions is to follow the guidance. This spells out what is being looked for and what the assessment comprises. Also, by following the guidance and setting plans out clearly makes it easier for both Government Offices and central government to read and assess.