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| Board Meeting Paper | |
| May 14 BM 9.0 | |
| Purpose of report | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Decision ¹ <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion / debate <input type="checkbox"/> Information only ² |
| Sensitive Information? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| If sensitive, protective marking³ | |
| Date of Meeting | 15 May 2014 |
| Agenda Item | 9 |
| Report Title | Roads: the Government's response to its consultation on transforming the Highways Agency into a government-owned company |
| Sponsor | Anthony Smith |
| Author(s) | Jon Carter |



| 1. Summary |
|--|
| <p>Following recent consultation regarding reform of the financing and management of major roads in England the Government has announced its decision. The Highways Agency is going to be re-cast as a standalone Government company as was originally proposed. Roads spending will be set over a five year period giving more certainty and, in theory, better value for money.</p> <p>Passenger Focus will also take on a new role representing the interests of users of the major road network. As was also proposed, the Office of Rail Regulation will take on a new role – measuring the investment and delivery of the new Government company.</p> |
| 2. Recommendations / decision required |
| <p>The board is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Welcome this development as a statement of confidence in Passenger Focus's credibility and capacity to deliver, and formally agree to this expansion of remit, subject to legislation; (2) Discuss and agree any major impacts that are associated with or consequential to this change and how these might be handled |
| 3. Further details |
| <p>This decision is a major vote of faith in Passenger Focus and its work. However, it should be stressed legislation still needs to be passed to bring this into law. While we can probably start working in a 'shadow' form until the legislation is finally passed there is still a degree of uncertainty. We will need written assurances regarding funding for this new activity. We will probably retain our Passenger Focus brand for our rail and bus work and develop a new brand for our road user work. However, it will be clear the two organisations are linked.</p> <p>While we will adapt our proven consumer, evidence based business model to this new field, this does represent a significant development for Passenger Focus. We have a host of new stakeholders. We will need to pilot new products in this new environment.</p> |

¹ If a decision is required, or you are asking for the paper to be formally noted, please set this out in section 2

² If for information only, please make clear in section 1 **why** this information is being provided

³ ie **OFFICIAL/SENSITIVE**: plus COMMERCIAL / POLICY / MANAGEMENT-STAFF / PERSONAL PROTECT

4. Implications – Financial, Risk, Legal, Staffing

Other than the ever-present risk of having insufficient funding to do the job properly, the major risks are presentational:

What expertise does Passenger Focus have to represent road users?

Passenger Focus is a consumer organisation for passengers of rail, bus, tram and coach. We aim to apply the approach used for these passengers to road users. We aim to use evidence to drive change that will be useful to those making major decisions about the provision of road transport services. The type of research we are likely to conduct will help assess road user priorities and satisfaction. Yet to be determined, this might include looking specifically at road users' views of disruption on the network including road works and traffic jams, how drivers plan their journeys.

Our remit has already broadened from rail passengers to bus, tram and coach. Assuming that the legislation passes through Parliament, we will be developing our current approach to cover this new area. We will be liaising with various stakeholders in the sector to involve them in the development of this role for the benefit of road users.

Won't your other transport work suffer?

We have already developed a full work programme for 2014-15 which we will be now delivering including our passenger research, including surveys, and policy work. This work will remain unaffected as we build capacity to develop the new role.

5. Background information

| Description | Web Link |
|---|---|
| Government announcement of 30 April 2014 and response to the consultation | https://www.gov.uk/government/news/green-light-for-highways-agency-reform-gives-better-deal-for-taxpayers |
| Passenger Focus public response of 30 April 2014 | http://www.passengerfocus.org.uk/news/articles/passenger-focus-welcomes-extension-of-its-remit-to-include-road-users |

6. Equalities screen

Sometimes, an equalities impact assessment (EIA) is required for a given report, proposal or project. To help decide whether an EIA is required, a screen must be undertaken based on the information provided above. The screen seeks answers to four questions which are used to determine impact on the protected characteristics – major, minor or none (default). Please choose the correct impact value and, if **major**, link it to an explanation below.

| Gender | Age | Sexual orient'n | Disability | Marital status | Political belief | Religious belief | Racial group |
|---|------|-----------------|--------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|--------------|
| 1. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories? | | | | | | | |
| None | None | None | Major | None | None | None | None |
| | | | 1 | | | | |
| 2. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories? | | | | | | | |
| None | None | None | Major | None | None | None | None |
| | | | 2 | | | | |
| 3. To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | None | None | None |
| | | | | | | | |
| 4. Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | None | None | None |
| | | | | | | | |

Summary of **major** impacts

| | |
|---|--|
| 1 | A great deal remains unknown about issues for disabled road users |
| 2 | A certain amount of work needs to be done before this question can be answered |
| 3 | |
| 4 | |

Conclusion (the board's consideration of this paper may result in a change of conclusion)

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|--|---|
| Based on the information above, and having regard to the guidance below, the sponsor and author of this paper agree that (√) | |
| (a) A full equalities impact assessment is not required | |
| (b) A full equalities impact assessment is not required at this time but the impact values above suggest the matter should be kept under view during the lifetime of the project | |
| (c) A full equalities impact assessment is required and should be completed during the lifetime of the project | √ |
| (d) A full equalities impact assessment is required and should be completed immediately | |
| Please provide a brief explanation of why you have arrived at this conclusion | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential equality impacts are unknown, because, for example, there is insufficient data upon which to make an assessment or because they are complex, and it would be appropriate to conduct an equality impact assessment in order to better assess them; Potential equality and/or good relations impacts are likely to be adverse or are likely to be experienced disproportionately by groups of people including those who are marginalised or disadvantaged; | |