

Written Ministerial Statement

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Regional Development

Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future: A New Approach to Regional Transportation

Published at 10:00 am on Tuesday 27 March, 2012

Mr Kennedy (The Minister for Regional Development): I am pleased to inform Assembly members that Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future: A New Approach to Regional Transportation will be published on 28 March 2011.

The current Regional Transportation Strategy 2002-12 was successful in securing high levels of public funding to improve our transportation infrastructure. However, the speed and direction of change in society prompted the need for review. The increase in population and vehicles has placed significant pressures on our transportation networks coupled with fiscal constraints and the need to reduce our environmental impacts.

Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future: A New Approach to Regional Transportation will build on what has been achieved. It emphasises the need to concentrate on moving people rather than vehicles, creating space on the networks for people and also for freight and on maintaining what is in place and using it in a smarter way.

The New Approach is different from the current strategy in that it is not constructed on schemes and projects. Rather it sets the High Level Aims and Strategic Objectives for transportation in Northern Ireland that form the basis for future decision-making on my Department's transportation funding priorities.

The High Level Aims and Strategic Objectives are:

- A. Support the Growth of the Economy
- 1: Improve connectivity within the region

- 2: Use road space and railways more efficiently
 - 3: Better maintain transport infrastructure
 - 4: Improve access in our towns and cities
 - 5: Improve access in rural areas
 - 6: Improve connections to key tourism sites
- B. Enhance the quality of life for all
- 7: Improve Safety
 - 8: Enhance Social Inclusion
 - 9: Develop transport programmes focussed on the user
- C. Reduce the Environmental Impact of Transport
- 10: Reduce Greenhouse gas emissions from transport
 - 11: Protect biodiversity
 - 12: Reduce water, noise and air pollution

My Department will continue to engage with other departments in working through the process and in developing a draft Delivery Plan which I will bring to the Executive for endorsement.

Copies of the document are available in the Assembly Library. The document and associated Impact Assessments are also available on the Department's website www.drdni.gov.uk/ or by contacting:

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Please note the above statement is embargoed until 10:00 am on Tuesday 27 March 2012.