



West
Yorkshire
Combined
Authority

Tracy
Brabin
Mayor of
West Yorkshire

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
TRANSPORT COMMITTEE
HELD ON THURSDAY, 16 NOVEMBER 2023 AT COMMITTEE ROOM 1,
WELLINGTON HOUSE, 40-50 WELLINGTON STREET, LEEDS**

Present:

Councillor Susan Hinchcliffe (Chair)	Bradford Council
Councillor Peter Carlill (Deputy Chair)	Leeds City Council
Councillor Eric Firth (Deputy Chair)	Kirklees Council
Councillor Peter Clarke	Bradford Council
Councillor Mohsin Hussain	Bradford Council
Councillor Alex Ross-Shaw	Bradford Council
Councillor Liz Rowe	Bradford Council
Councillor Peter Caffrey	Calderdale Council
Councillor Colin Hutchinson (Transport Engagement Lead)	Calderdale Council
Councillor Scott Patient	Calderdale Council
Councillor Matthew McLoughlin	Kirklees Council
Councillor Neil Buckley	Leeds City Council
Councillor Oliver Edwards	Leeds City Council
Councillor Abdul Hannan	Leeds City Council
Councillor Annie Maloney (Transport Engagement Lead)	Leeds City Council
Councillor Matthew Morley	Wakefield Council
Councillor Jakob Williamson (Transport Engagement Lead)	Wakefield Council
Councillor Peter Kilbane	City of York Council

In attendance:

Simon Warburton	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Melanie Corcoran	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Mick Bunting	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Dave Haskins	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Helen Ellerton	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Simon Linley	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Melissa Liburd	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Royston Colley	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Thomas Stratford	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Ian Parr	West Yorkshire Combined Authority

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Helen Hayden (Leeds City Council).

2. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of pecuniary interests at the meeting.

3. Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Chair observed that there were two exempt items on the agenda. These related to appendices 1 and 2 of Item 6 and were identified by officers as containing exempt information in relation to Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. It was considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons outlined in the submitted report.

The Chair reminded members that should anyone wished to discuss the content of the appendices, the meeting would be suspended with press and public asked to leave. Therefore, the Chair urged members to indicate in advance if they wished to discuss matters pertaining to the exempt items.

RESOLVED: That in accordance with paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Item 6, appendices 1 and 2, on the grounds that it was likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information. The resolution was based on the reasons set out in the report, determining that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

4. Minutes of the Meeting of the Transport Committee Held on 19 September 2023

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Transport Committee held on 19 September 2023 were approved and signed by the Chair.

5. Passenger Experience - Rail

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on West Yorkshire's public transport network and the Combined Authority's passenger-facing activities. The report addressed passenger network performance, rail service changes and enhancements, and an update on the rail ticket office closure consultation exercise.

Members were advised of the rail challenges, which included the rail strikes affecting punctuality, and increased cancellations, especially for Northern. It was noted that TPE's decision to implement a temporarily reduced timetable had improved performance and punctuality. Northern, however, had continued to be challenged with reduced staff resource due to sickness and

vacancies. Since the last meeting, officers had written to Northern and Rail North about service cuts, particularly to the Penistone Line. It was noted that responses had been received, albeit unsatisfactory and non-committal. Officers acknowledged that the operator and the Rail North Partnership would continue to monitor the impacts of the changes. Concerns were raised about proposed service changes, including withdrawals and shortening of trains. Additionally, the report discussed passenger network enhancements, such as promotions and accessibility improvements. In terms of passenger network enhancements, members noted that rail operators had taken advantage of low footfall and recent strike days to clean rail stations which would normally be difficult to clean. TPE had also installed tactile maps at Dewsbury, Huddersfield and Manchester airport stations to aid the visually impaired, which had been approved by The Royal National Institute of Blind People.

It was reported that the rail ticket office closure consultation had faced substantial objections, leading to Transport Focus rejecting all proposals. It had been previously noted by the Committee that implementation of the closures would significantly impact on the travelling public, particularly those with disabilities and mobility issues. The Department for Transport (DfT) had made the decision to withdraw the proposals and, as a result, legal challenges were no longer being pursued by the Regional Mayors. Members very much welcomed this decision and the Chair gave thanks to all who had taken part in the consultation. However, members sought reassurance that funding would not be reduced in other service areas in order to facilitate this decision and officers agreed to monitor this. Members also sought further clarification on whether staff levels would continue to be maintained or reduced and whether access to facilities, such as opening hours of toilets, would be impacted. It was agreed that a letter would be sent to Rail North Partnership welcoming the news and seeking clarification to these concerns. Officers confirmed that an update would be provided to a future meeting of the committee.

Members agreed that bus and rail operators be invited to the January meeting of the Committee to further discuss transport issues in the region.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That members noted the updates provided in the submitted report.
- (ii) That a letter be sent to Rail North Partnership seeking further clarification on how staffing levels and the provision of public facilities would continue following the decision to withdraw proposals to close rail ticket offices.
- (iii) That rail and bus operators be invited to attend the 29 January 2024 meeting of the Transport Committee to further discuss transport issues in West Yorkshire.

6. Transport Policy Update

The Committee considered an update report on transport policy developments.

Officers introduced the report, detailing the submission to Active Travel

England for the Active Travel Fund 4 Extension (ATF4E), with an indicative allocation based on unfunded schemes. It was noted that a design review meeting with ATE had been held on 23 October 2023, which had influenced scheme development. Members noted that the bid was due for submission to ATE on 27 November 2023. They sought clarity on whether there would be an Active Travel Fund 5 (ATF5) and if there would be opportunities to obtain further funding allocations to assist identification and implementation of beneficial schemes. It was agreed that officers would write to the National Active Travel Commissioner, Chris Boardman MBE, to obtain further information.

The ZEBRA 2 scheme offered £129 million for zero-emission buses in the financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25 with a submission deadline set for 15 December 2023. This project was currently in delivery and was a significant priority for West Yorkshire in addressing both the carbon and air quality emissions of traffic in our key centres. Members noted that Appendix 2 of the submitted report provided details of the schemes under consideration.

"Network North" plans were outlined, reallocating £36 billion from reduced HS2 spending to various initiatives, including rail, mass transit, and road projects in West Yorkshire. The Combined Authority planned to engage with government officials in order to advance these proposals. Additionally, it was reported that over the next few months the Combined Authority would work closely with our local authority partners to further understand the potential impacts of the Plan for Drivers, alongside evaluating the potential impacts on our BSIP, emerging Vision Zero, Active Travel Strategies, Local Transport Plan and the West Yorkshire Plan.

The Committed was reminded that West Yorkshire had implemented the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) in 2022. In October 2023, the Department for Transport (DfT) had allocated £13.3 million of the £150 million nationally announced for BSIP for 2024/25. This was the first of the next five years funding for BSIP. As part of BSIP, the 'Mayor's Fares' launched in September 2022 and a subsequent National £2 fare scheme aimed at affordability was successfully initiated, providing savings for passengers. Up to April 2023, Mayor's Fares had facilitated 28.9 million journeys, saving passengers £11 million. Officers were currently reviewing the impact of additional funds to inform discussions with ministers on sustaining the West Yorkshire offer. Although members noted that the National £2 fare scheme had been extended to December 2024, comment was made that this needed to be achieved without compromising other funding streams.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the updates provided in the submitted report be noted.
- (ii) That approval of the final Active Travel England bid submission be delegated to the Chair and Deputy Chairs of the Transport Committee.
- (iii) That the Chair and Deputy Chairs of the Transport Committee be consulted ahead of the final ZEBRA 2 funding bid submission.

- (iv) That the National Active Travel Commissioner be approached to ascertain plans for an Active Travel Fund 5 (ATF5) and to determine further associated funding opportunities.

7. The West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan

The Committee considered an update report on the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan's revised program, which included co-development with district partners and an engagement and consultation approach.

Officers introduced the report, which highlighted the importance of Local Transport Plans (LTPs) as a statutory plan for transport, with the current West Yorkshire Transport Strategy 2040 in place since August 2017. The Department for Transport's (DfT) guidance on LTPs, last updated in 2009, emphasised flexibility and local strategies. In February 2023, the Transport Committee approved the development of a new West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan, which aimed to create a well-connected West Yorkshire, focusing on sustainability, accessibility and healthy transport choices. This plan set out the 'forward agenda' and programme basis, which had been revised to include mass transit, bus reform, City Region Sustainable Transport Settlements (CRSTS), implications of the Integrated Rail Plan, Active Travel and the West Yorkshire Plan.

The LTP had been co-developed with district partners, with an aim for adoption by 2025. It was noted that legal advice had been received on LTP development and that West Yorkshire Leaders had played a crucial role in the co-development process. Comment was made on the importance to ensure that the Plan was comprehensive in order to represent economic, social, environmental priorities across all parts of West Yorkshire.

Discussions ensued regarding the recent decision by the Mayor to return £51m of unspent transport levy contributions to the five West Yorkshire district councils. Although it was recognised that the refund would support the local authorities at a time of extreme financial pressure, comment was made that the purpose of the funding was to facilitate transport programmes. The Chair confirmed that despite the funding being returned, the Combined Authority would continue to implement its comprehensive delivery programme of £600m worth of transport developments/schemes. Officers explained the specific nature of the funding involved. It was reported that local authorities had, as part of overall capital investment arrangements in West Yorkshire, established a specific capital reserve. However, this reserve was definitely set aside for spending on capital items and, therefore, that was not available to the Combined Authority to use against revenue items. It was on this basis that the discussion took place with the West Yorkshire local authorities and, on the advice of all the West Yorkshire Chief Finance Officers, the funding contributions returned.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the report be noted.

- (ii) That the development of a revised Local Transport Plan programme be approved.
- (iii) That the principle of co-development of the Local Transport Plan with the district partners led by the Combined Authority be endorsed.
- (iv) That an update on the progress of the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan be provided to the Transport Committee in Spring 2024.

8. Project Approvals

The Committee considered a report on proposals for the progression and funding of projects under Investment Priority 5 within the West Yorkshire Investment Strategy.

Delegated decision-making authority, granted by the Combined Authority on 23 June 2022, empowered the Transport Committee to review projects at stages 1, 2, and 3 of the assurance process. Officers introduced the report, and the Transport Committee, exercising its delegated authority, approved the progression of the A64 Bus Walking and Cycling Corridor Improvements, endorsing an indicative contribution of £4,980,000. Development costs of £561,000 were sanctioned, bringing the total approval to £1,956,400. An addendum to the Funding Agreement with Leeds City Council for up to £1,956,400 was authorised.

The Elland Rail Station and Access Package's change request was approved, including additional development costs and an extension of the completion date to September 2026. Members welcomed the linking of development and access, which this project facilitated.

The A629 Phase 1B scheme's change request to increase the Combined Authority contribution by £6,000,000 and extend the delivery timescale to July 2024 was also approved, with conditions for the release of additional funding to support delivery and risk costs. Future approvals were contingent on adherence to the outlined assurance pathway and approval route. Members welcomed the improvements to an extremely congested traffic corridor.

A64 Bus, Walking and Cycling Corridor Improvements

RESOLVED:

The Transport Committee approved that:

- (i) The A64 Bus Walking and Cycling Corridor Improvements (Phase 1+) scheme proceed through to decision point 3 (outline business case) and work to commence on activity 4 (full business case).
- (ii) An indicative approval to the Combined Authority's contribution of £4,980,000. The total scheme value was £5,020,000.
- (iii) Development costs of £561,000 approved in order to progress the scheme to decision point 4 (full business case) taking the total scheme approval to £1,956,400.

- (iv) The Combined Authority enter into an addendum to the existing Funding Agreement with Leeds City Council for expenditure of up to £1,956,400.
- (v) Future approvals be made in accordance with the assurance pathway and approval route outlined in the PAT report. This would be subject to the scheme remaining within the tolerances outlined in the PAT report.

Elland Rail Station and Access Package

RESOLVED:

That the Transport Committee, subject to the conditions set by the Programme Appraisal Team, approved that:

- (i) The change request to the Elland Rail Station and Access Package schemes to increase the development funding allocation and extend the completion date be approved.
 - The drawdown of further development costs of £2,570,000 for the Elland Rail Station scheme be approved in order to progress the scheme to decision point 4 (full business case) taking the total development costs approved for this scheme to £5,504,000.
 - The drawdown of further development costs of £759,554 for the Access Package scheme be approved in order to progress the scheme to decision point 4 (full business case) taking the total TCF development costs approved for this scheme to £1,689,554.
 - The completion date of the Elland Rail Station and Elland Station Access Package be extended from September 2025 to September 2026.
- (ii) The Combined Authority enter into an addendum to the existing Funding Agreement with the Borough Council of Calderdale for expenditure of up to £1,689,554 from the Transforming Cities Fund.
- (iii) Future approvals be made in accordance with the assurance pathway and approval route outlined in the PAT report. This would be subject to the scheme remaining within the tolerances outlined in the PAT report.

A629 Phase 1B

RESOLVED:

The Transport Committee approved that:

- (i) The change request for the A629 Phase 1B scheme increased the Combined Authority contribution by £6,000,000 to £42,619,000 and extended the delivery timescale to July 2024.
- (ii) The release of the £6,000,000 additional funding as follows:
 - £4,200,000 to support additional delivery costs released as part of this change request.

- £1,800,000 to support risk costs released on the condition the scheme promoter notified the Combined Authority of the occurrence of a risk event. The approval to release the funding be delegated to the Director of Transport and Delivery.
- (iii) The Combined Authority enter into an addendum to the existing Funding Agreement with Calderdale Council for expenditure of up to £42,619,000.
- (iv) Future approvals be made in accordance with the assurance pathway and approval route outlined in the PAT report. This was subject to the scheme remaining within the tolerances outlined in the PAT report.

9. Ian Parr

Members of the committee gave thanks to Ian Parr, Committee Services Officer, for his hard work and commitment in supporting the committee for the past 2 years. It was noted that this meeting would be his last, as he was leaving the Combined Authority. Members wished him the very best in his new role outside of the Authority.