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Report to: LEP Board

Date: 19 September 2017

Subject: Transport Strategy and Bus Strategy Adoption

1 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide LEP Board with an update on the West Yorkshire Transport Strategy and the West Yorkshire Bus Strategy, setting out the vision and policy aspirations for the Transport system for the next 20 years.

2 Information

Transport Strategy

- 2.1 The West Yorkshire Combined Authority is the Local Transport Authority ('LTA') for West Yorkshire, with a statutory duty to produce and keep under review a Local Transport Plan, in accordance with the Local Transport Act 2008, Section 109.
- 2.2 WYCA has previously agreed to update and replace the existing West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan (WYLTP), which was adopted in 2011, with a new, long term Transport Strategy. WYCA delegated oversight of the technical work to develop the Transport Strategy to the Transport Committee, with progress reports provided by Transport Committee to the WYCA.
- 2.3 The Transport Strategy covers the geography of West Yorkshire but recognises the importance of the wider Leeds City Region, and that people and goods travel longer distances across administrative boundaries. The Transport Strategy is set in the context of the Leeds City Region Strategic Economic Plan and Transport for the North's Strategic Transport Plan for the North. It is a necessary first step in providing a refreshed, high level statement of transport policy intended to provide the framework for the further development of detailed strategy and investment programmes by WYCA and partners. The Transport Strategy will also be used to influence national and regional decisions.
- 2.4 The vision for our transport network is one that provides fast, efficient, affordable and easy to use connections between the places people want to go and a network that improves air quality and health by giving people a real choice of sustainable modes of travel. If this is achieved:

- The region would become known for the quality of the experience it offers all transport users, the quality and liveability of its places and as a great, safe place for cycling and walking;
- People who live and work in the region will be healthier, happier and more productive;
- Our focus on inclusive growth will make a tangible difference to disadvantaged communities and individuals.

2.5 The six core themes of the Transport Strategy are;

- Inclusive Growth, Environment, Health and Well-being;
- Road Network;
- Places to Live and Work;
- One System Public Transport;
- Smart Futures;
- Asset Management and Resilience.

2.6 It is our focus on Inclusive Growth, developing the expectation of 'Good Growth' first identified in the Strategic Economic Plan, which can set our region apart from comparable regions and Combined Authority areas. It is well understood that our transport policies, strategies and investment programme can make a positive contribution to including all communities, and particularly the more disadvantaged, in experiencing the full benefits of economic growth. Our approach to air quality can also make a significant improvement to the living conditions and health of our residents with particular benefits for our more disadvantaged communities.

2.7 A copy of the draft version of the Transport Strategy document can be viewed online via <http://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/transport-strategy/>. WYCA delegated authority for final copy-writing and the document's appearance for publication to the MD in consultation with the Chair of the Transport Committee.

2.8 The Transport Strategy provides a high level statement of policy. This is not the end of the process and further work will be needed to develop the detail of how these policies can be implemented. Further stages of work will seek the involvement from the LEP in specific strands such as the role of technology and how disruptive business models could influence the future of transport provision.

Bus Strategy

2.9 To support the development of the Transport Strategy WYCA also has been developing, with Local Authorities and Operators, a new, long term Bus Strategy to set the ambition and policies for the Bus System for the next 20 years. The Bus Strategy is available online (http://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/Transport/Bus_Strategy/).

2.10 Each week people in West Yorkshire make almost 3 million journeys on local bus services, making them the most highly used form of public transport. In addition to the economic benefits, the bus is an effective tool of social policy for delivering

inclusive growth. Our goal is to create the best bus system in Europe, where catching the bus in West Yorkshire is an attractive and natural choice for everyone. To realise this, the vision for the West Yorkshire Bus Strategy is:

“To create a modern, integrated and innovative bus system which puts customer first and contributes to the delivery of West Yorkshire’s economic, environmental and quality of life ambitions as set out in the Strategic Economic Plan and the West Yorkshire Transport Strategy”

- 2.11 The Strategy sets the ambition as targeting 25% patronage growth from 2016 levels, over the next 10 years, but given the level of housing and employment growth forecast, it is not unfeasible to target even higher levels of bus patronage.
- 2.12 The first steps in the delivery of the Bus Strategy has already commenced through the Bus 18 partnership with bus operators is seeking to deliver benefits to passengers in the early years of the strategy. The opening of the new Temple Green Park and Ride site in June 2017 is already proving successful. The £173.5m of funding allocated by the Department for Transport to improve public transport in Leeds is focused on developing the City’s bus service to meet the aspirations of our Bus Strategy. In addition to this, Transport Committee at the February meeting approved £875,000 towards the Bus Strategy Delivery Programme. Operators are also delivering new vehicles which meet the latest emissions standards across the Region.
- 2.13 Decisions regarding how the West Yorkshire Bus Strategy is delivered will be developed in the context of the new legislative powers available to this region through the Bus Services Act 2017 and in taking into account the performance of the current partnership. The main consideration will be determining whether the partnership is delivering the objectives and vision of the West Yorkshire Bus Strategy.

3 Financial Implications

- 3.1 None as a result of this report.

4 Legal Implications

- 4.1 The adoption of the Transport Strategy, and Bus Strategy as a daughter document to the Transport Strategy, satisfies the statutory duty for the WYCA, as the Local Transport Authority, to produce and maintain a Local Transport Plan for West Yorkshire.

5 Staffing Implications

- 5.1 The development of the Transport Strategy and the Bus Strategy has been overseen by WYCA Transport Policy.

6 External Consultees

6.1 The development of the Transport Strategy and Bus Strategy has been subject to substantial public and stakeholder consultation with this feedback included within the strategy. This includes consultation with LEP Board as well as LCR Authorities.

7 Recommendations

7.1 For LEP Board to note the adoption of the Transport Strategy and the Bus Strategy, which sets out the vision and policy aspirations for the transport system for the next 20 years.

8 Background Documents

8.1 None.