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**Report to:** Wakefield District Consultation Sub-Committee

**Date:** 18 January 2018

**Subject:** Information Report

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## **1 Purpose**

1.1 Matters of information relating to the Wakefield District.

## **2 Information**

### Bus Services Act

2.1 The Bus Services Act 2017 was enacted in May 2017. It expands the range of powers available to directly elected mayors and local transport authorities (LTAs) in areas in England outside of London to improve local bus services. The Act provides the following options for LTAs to adapt the approach to local circumstances.

- Franchising - where the LTA issues contracts with bus operators to provide services in the area. The Act provides mayoral LTAs with “London-style” powers to franchise local bus services, application for franchise powers by non-mayoral authorities will need to be made to the Secretary of State.
- Partnership - joint arrangements between LTAs and bus operators. The Act develops the existing Quality Partnerships powers extending their scope to include matters such as fares and frequencies. Two new forms of formal partnership are established “Advanced Quality Partnership Schemes” and “Enhanced Partnerships Schemes”.

2.2 The Bus Services Act also enables data about routes, fares and times across the country to be openly available to app developers, and further facilitates smart multi-modal ticketing schemes.

2.3 On 27 November, the Department for Transport issued guidance on the use of the powers contained in the Act.

2.4 WYCA adopted its Bus Strategy 2040 in August 2017 which sets out a vision for the bus system and a target to grow bus patronage by 25% over the next ten years. Bus 18 is an informal partnership with bus operators seeking to deliver the first stage of the strategy. The success of this initiative will determine the most appropriate use of the powers in the Bus Services Act. A detailed assessment of the DfT guidance is

underway and a paper will be presented to the Transport Committee later in 2018 setting out the options available to the Authority.

### Bus 18

2.5 In November, the Transport Committee reviewed progress with the Bus 18 initiative which, to date, has seen:

- New Buses – the investment in new buses by First West Yorkshire, Arriva and Transdev in 2017 investment totalled £16.5m.
- Ticketing- a Day Saver smart carnet product and the MCard android app are now available.
- Network Stability – an agreement has been made with bus operators to consult on major bus route changes and to limit changes to six times of the year.
- Air Quality - buses in West Yorkshire now display an Eco Star star rating which identifies their environmental performance. Fleet replacement plans are being agreed with operators.
- Punctuality and Reliability – a £1m programme of work to address bus “punctuality hotspots” is now in progress.
- Customer Service - any customers not happy with their bus journey can claim a free travel voucher from the major bus operators. Customers can call a taxi and claim the cost back from either First, Arriva or Transdev if their last bus doesn't arrive within 20 minutes of the scheduled time.
- Information – WYCA and bus operators have collaborated on a new design for bus stop information which is being rolled out.

2.6 The following priorities have been identified for 2018:

- Young People – a strongly promoted, discounted “go anywhere” day ticket, and half fare travel for young people in school uniform (without the requirement for a half fare PhotoCard).
- Air Quality – to maximise the funding opportunities provided by central government to facilitate low emission buses.
- Punctuality and reliability – a strong focus on punctuality and reliability with clear visibility of performance against targets.
- Customer Confidence – a campaign to increase public awareness of the recent investment in buses and the steps taken to increase patronage.

### Boxing Day Services

2.7 WYCA funded a network of services on Boxing Day on over 70 West Yorkshire bus routes. Half-hourly services ran between 9am and 6pm into city and town centres,

retail locations and hospitals. A verbal update on take up of the services will be given at the meeting.

#### Wakefield City Bus

- 2.8 Tetley's Motor Services took over the operation of the Wakefield City Bus from 23 October 2017. As part of this new contract they will be introducing new Euro 6 buses which are currently being built; the new buses will be delivered in March 2018.

#### MCard Fare Increase

- 2.9 The cost of MCard ticketing products increased on 2 January 2018. Across the product range the 2.8% increase is less than the current Consumer Price Index (3.1%).
- 2.10 The increase in the cost of under 19 MCard tickets was only 25p per week, and there was no increase in the cost of the DaySaver tickets.
- 2.11 The price increases for products where rail travel is included are higher, in line with the national increase in rail fares (3.4%) which is based on the Retail Price Index.
- 2.12 MCard prices are set by West Yorkshire Ticketing Company Ltd, which comprises representatives of bus and rail operators and WYCA.

#### Fitzwilliam Train Station Car Park

- 2.13 Construction work has started at Fitzwilliam train station to provide an additional 108 parking spaces. Phase 1 is already complete and in use by rail users; work has commenced on phases 2 and 3 and will be completed in April 2018.

#### TransPennine Route Upgrade

- 2.14 Network Rail reported to the Department for Transport (DfT) on the options for the TransPennine Route Upgrade (TRU) scheme on 14th December 2017. Rail North and partner authorities, including WYCA and Transport for the North, will be developing a North of England viewpoint as to what the scheme scope should be.
- 2.15 It is anticipated that the decision making process on options is likely to commence during early to mid-2018 and be completed in 2019.

#### Revenue Protection

- 2.16 Northern Rail are trialling a "penalty fares" scheme on the Airedale and Wharfedale lines. If a passenger gets on a train without a ticket or Promise to Pay voucher at a station where ticket buying facilities are available, they may be liable to pay a penalty fare. The penalty is the greater of £20 or twice the full single from the station where they got on the train to the next station at which the train stops. If the passenger

wants to travel beyond the next station they must also pay the relevant fare from that station to their final destination. A Promise to Pay notice is a ticket that must be obtained from the ticket vending machines if customers do not have the facility to pay by credit/debit card. The Promise to Pay notice allows customers to board the train with the intention of exchanging the notice at the first opportunity with a revenue officer, or at the next available booking office. If the trial is successful it will be extended out to other lines in 2018. Posters, flyers and warnings on tickets have been produced to explain the new scheme.

### Transport for the North

- 2.17 Transport for the North (TfN) is producing a draft Strategic Transport Plan (STP) for the North, working with northern Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and local transport authorities including WYCA on the approach and content. The STP will be TfN's flagship policy document setting out plans for investment in strategic transport in the north in the period up to 2050. TfN will hold a formal public consultation on the draft STP in early 2018.
- 2.18 TfN has commenced work on their Central Pennines Strategic Development Corridor study. This work will continue through to autumn 2018 and will provide a key input to developing the evidence base for rail and road interventions to shape the STP's Long Term Investment Programme. WYCA has worked with TfN on the scope of the Central Pennines study to cover journeys between Greater Manchester and East Lancashire and Yorkshire and the North-East.

### Department for Transport Accessibility Strategy

- 2.19 The Department for Transport (DfT) recently published a consultation seeking views on a draft Accessibility Action Plan which sets out proposals to improve the travel experience for people with disabilities. The consultation ended on 22 November 2017 and WYCA's response can be found on the WYCA website.

### Transport Budget

- 2.20 On 14 December 2017, the Combined Authority considered its three year Budget Strategy and Business Plan in advance of its approval by the Authority on 1 February 2018. The current funding environment for local government is very difficult and requires WYCA and local Councils to consider a range of options to reduce expenditure. WYCA is reviewing its costs and income across its full range of activities and services. The provision of supported bus services is the largest element of transport expenditure over which WYCA has discretion. It will be necessary to review this provision over the coming three years with a view to ensuring an effective service at a reduced cost to the taxpayer. An area by area review will take place with input from members of this Sub Committee.

### Transforming Cities Fund

- 2.21 The November 2017 Budget included an announcement on the ‘Transforming Cities Fund’, a £1.7 billion fund to support transport investment. The fund will target projects which drive productivity by improving intra-city connectivity, reducing congestion and utilising new mobility services and technology. It was announced that “half of the fund will be allocated via competition for transport projects in cities and the other half will be allocated on a per capita basis to the six combined authorities with elected metro mayors – £74 million for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, £243 million for Greater Manchester, £134 million for Liverpool City Region, £80 million for West of England, £250 million for West Midlands and £59 million for Tees Valley – enabling them to invest in their transport priorities.”
- 2.22 WYCA is working with partners from across the city region to consider a range of options for a potential bid to the fund.

### CityConnect

- 2.23 The first phase of the CityConnect funded elements of the Castleford to Wakefield Greenway project between Fairies Hill Lock and Methley Bridge is being constructed on site with completion due in late February 2018. Subsequent phases have now been approved for delivery. These include Phase 2, extending the existing section of the greenway over the Hallam Line via a new bridge and on to the disused railway viaduct, and Phase 3 following on from the Viaduct into Leeds district. These works are planned to be completed by the end of 2018.