

Report to: Transport Committee

Date: 11 January 2019

Subject: **Leeds City Region Transport Update**

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Author(s): Various

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| Is this a key decision? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| Does the report contain confidential or exempt information or appendices? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| If relevant, state paragraph number of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, Part 1: | |

1. Purpose of this report

1.1 To provide the Transport Committee with an update on current issues.

2. Information

Consultations

Planning for Growth: Leeds City Region Connectivity Strategy

2.1 Transport Committee considered a substantial update on the Connectivity Strategy at the meeting on 9 November. Since this time, similar but tailored reports have also been considered and approved by, Leeds City Council Executive Boards, Bradford Executive and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority. Reports will shortly be considered by other West Yorkshire Districts and also by the Leeds City Region LEP Board.

2.2 Member working groups to consider the details of the work are also being set up and development of the further corridors has also commenced. Further updates will be brought to Transport Committee.

Funding issues

- 2.3 The Combined Authority has been successful with an application to the EU North Sea Region Interreg Programme – as part of a European consortium led by the City of Bremen - to investigate the potential options and impact of Connected and Autonomous Vehicles (CAVs). Through a consortium of seventeen European authorities and research partners, the three year project will examine potential policy requirements to govern use of CAVs for both passenger and freight movements and consider societal impact. The project will commence in March 2019 and complete in spring 2021. The project will help develop and test policy considerations for the Leeds City Region that will attract investment to delivers inclusive growth objectives and benefits all, whilst mitigating potential threats including safety concerns. The Combined Authority will receive approximately £50,000 for research work, which will be 50% match funded through officer time.

Research activities

TRIF Tranche 2 research projects

- 2.4 The 16 March 2018 meeting of Transport Committee was informed of the Transport Research Innovation Fund (TRIF) collaboration between the Combined Authority and Leeds University Institute of Transport Studies (ITS) to undertake collaborative, applied research in aspects of transport policy with a view to improving practice and results.
- 2.5 The Combined Authority and ITS have jointly committed resources to a £200,000 TRIF funding pot. The Combined Authority agreed a financial contribution of £100,000 from Integrated Transport block funding. ITS agreed a £100,000 commitment to match that financial resource with research staff time and secondments. TRIF was established in February 2016 and is now well progressed and delivering results. Three tranche 1 research projects have delivered using exactly half of the TRIF funding pot. These Tranche 1 projects were the subject of the report in March 2018.
- 2.6 ITS is a leading international centre for transport research and this research is receiving national and international exposure e.g. The tranche 1 research project 'Youth Mobility And Access To Economic Opportunities' (which features a comparative study of West Yorkshire and the Rotterdam-Randstad region of the Netherlands to investigate the extent to which young people's poor employment outcomes in the UK and mainland Europe are caused by poor transport accessibility) was the subject of a 'Transport poverty on the labour market' seminar held in December 2018 in Rotterdam.
- 2.7 The Combined Authority and ITS have subsequently issued a Call for a second Tranche of research projects, and agreed and commissioned a further three projects. These projects which will commence in the New Year. The three projects are:
- **Public Realm Economic appraisal Toolkit for Transforming Investments** – Commencing 2 January 2019 for eight months

- **Benefits of new cycling infrastructure in reducing the exposure of cyclists to air and noise pollution** – Commencing 4 March for four months
 - **Determinants of public satisfaction with highway maintenance and management** – Commencing 2 January 2019 for Twelve (12) months
- 2.8 A report to a future meeting of Transport Committee will provide more details as these TRIF tranche 2 research projects develop. A web resource is being developed by the Combined Authority to share the learning and outputs from the TRIF collaboration to a wider audience.

Rail Issues

Williams Rail Review: Call for evidence

- 2.9 As reported to members at the November 2018 Transport Committee, the Secretary of State has initiated a major review of the UK rail industry, led by Keith Williams. Roger Marsh has been appointed to the expert challenge panel. Keith Williams attended the Transport for the North Board on the 6th December to discuss his review. Ben Still also met him at a roundtable event on the same day.
- 2.10 A call for evidence has now been made, with an overall deadline of 31 May 2019. Initial views are sought during the 'listening' phase of the Review, with a deadline of 18 January 2018. An initial Combined Authority response to meet this deadline will be prepared for Transport Committee members to agree by correspondence. A substantive paper will be presented to a subsequent meeting of Transport Committee to consider a full response to the Review.

Rail North Partnership Review

- 2.11 The Review led by Cllr Judith Blake and Rail Minister Andrew Jones into how the devolved arrangements for managing the Northern and TransPennine rail franchises could be improved to prevent a repeat of the May 2018 timetable crisis is expected to be published in February 2019. In addition to recommending changes to strengthen the devolved arrangements, the Review will make recommendations for consideration by the wider Williams Review into the structure of the rail industry.

Train Operators Forum

- 2.12 The first meeting of the Train Operators Forum is to take place on the 30 January 2019. As reported previously this meeting will provide an informal forum for open and honest discussion between the train operating companies (TOCs), the Combined Authority and other relevant parties, to co-ordinate and work together. The meeting is to be chaired by Councillor Kim Groves Chair of the Transport Committee.

Leeds station works

- 2.13 Network Rail has commenced a package of works at Leeds railway station. Most obviously, this includes the renewal of the wooden-clad roof over the south concourse. The existing roof will be replaced with a lightweight structure clad in a transparent plastic material, which will significantly improve light levels. Erection of scaffolding to facilitate this work commenced in November 2018, and it is due to be complete by autumn 2019. Other works to the south concourse will include relocation of the ticket barriers to improve pedestrian capacity and flow. Retail units on the western side of the concourse have been closed and will be removed to accommodate this relocation.
- 2.14 Work is due to commence in spring 2019 on the New Station Street project. This Combined Authority project will improve the pedestrian capacity and flow by widening the existing pavements and relocation of bus stops. Buses will be subject to diversions during this work. This is also due to be complete by autumn 2019. It is recognised that some disruption to passenger flow through the station is likely and the team will work to minimise this.
- 2.15 Finally, Network Rail will commence work over the Christmas period on a project to improve the capacity and operation of the station at Platforms 1 to 6, including the construction of a new Platform 0. The first phase will be alterations to signalling to facilitate the work. Originally due for completion by December 2019, it is now understood this work will be complete in 2021. This will allow the operation of longer and additional trains.

New trains

- 2.16 LNER, Northern, and TransPennine Express are all due to introduce fleets of new trains in 2019.
- 2.17 LNER will be introducing new 'Azuma' trains on services between Leeds and London Kings Cross in early 2019, and will replace the existing trains on this line. These trains will offer more modern passenger facilities, and offer more seats per train, than existing electric and diesel trains. These trains were due to be introduced from 2018, but have been delayed by teething problems. The industry is confident these should be resolved soon.
- 2.18 Northern is due to introduce new diesel and electric trains throughout 2019. These supplement other trains coming into the franchise from elsewhere, many of which have already started to arrive. Calder Valley services are expected to be an early recipient of new diesel trains which will offer significantly better passenger facilities, including wi-fi, air conditioning and at-seat power. The new and additional trains on Northern will allow the withdrawal of Pacer trains in 2019. Pacer trains have relatively low passenger capacity due to their short vehicle lengths. This alone will offer significant increases to the capacity of trains even where trains are not being lengthened.
- 2.19 TransPennine Express is due to introduce two new fleets of trains serving West Yorkshire in 2019; 'Nova 1' and 'Nova 3'. These trains will offer five

carriages per train, compared with three on the current fleet. The objective is that TransPennine Express will become five and six car operation by the end of the year, by doubling-up the remaining three-car trains. The 'Nova 3' trains should have been introduced in 2018, but have experienced technical difficulties. The industry is confident that they will enter service in spring 2019, which is crucial for realising overdue additional capacity.

Estimates of station usage 2017/18

- 2.20 The Office of Road and Rail (ORR) publishes the estimates of station usage annually. The latest data was published on 11 December, and covers the period from April 2017 to March 2018. This data is based on ticket sales, but also includes several assumptions, particularly in regard to season ticket use, and zonal tickets (such as MCard). It is therefore a useful guide, but should not be assumed to be accurate.
- 2.21 In line with other industry indicators, it suggests there has been a stalling of growth in West Yorkshire, and overall a slight reduction in rail use (-1%), compared to a slight increase nationally (+0.8%). There are a number of factors that contribute to this, including the impact of strikes on Northern Rail, and the poor availability of peak-time capacity on key commuter routes.
- 2.22 New stations at Apperley Bridge and Kirkstall Forge continue to grow patronage. New stations generally build-up use in their early years. Apperley Bridge saw over 370,000 estimated users in 2017/18. Kirkstall Forge recorded its full first-year data with over 150,000 estimated users. This should increase in 2018/19 as the effect of half-hourly trains since May 2018 is realised. The new station at Low Moor station opened in April 2017, and recorded over 133,000 estimated users. This is a respectable figure for the first year particularly as it only has an hourly service, and it puts it ahead of 20% of other stations in West Yorkshire. Low Moor will continue to grow as it becomes further established. The Combined Authority continues to push for a half-hourly service at Low Moor, which would realise greater patronage.
- 2.23 Leeds saw the biggest absolute growth, with an increase of over 140,000 estimated users in 2017/18, but this translates to less than +0.5%. Notable growth occurred at stations in the upper Calder Valley, with increases at Walsden (+4%), Mytholmroyd (+4%), Todmorden (+3%) and Hebden Bridge (+2%) standing out. Other notable increases include Shepley (+6%), and Woodlesford (+1%). Pontefract Baghill remains the last well-used station in West Yorkshire with an estimate of around 6,500 users with only two trains per day each-way, although this is an increase of +5% from the previous year.
- 2.24 There are stations on the network where estimates of usage have fallen disproportionately. This includes Featherstone (-9%), Pontefract Tanshelf (-15%) and Streethouse (-17%). These stations are on a line that only offers an hourly service, which is a common factor of many of the stations that have seen falls in estimated use, which underlines the need to achieve a half-hourly service level across the network. On the line via Featherstone trains were extended through to Leeds via Wakefield Westgate in May 2018, which should

improve the attractiveness of services. The line will also benefit from Pacer replacement in 2019, together with work in early 2019 as part of Northern's Station Improvement Fund to improve the attractiveness of stations.

- 2.25 ORR also publishes quarterly returns by train operator. These suggested that growth in rail use nationally increased in the first two quarters of 2018/19. This includes growth for TransPennine Express, but a continuing decline in patronage on Northern services, which have continued to be impacted by strike action and service disruption following the timetable change in May 2018.

Service Delivery

- 2.26 The Combined Authority's front line services have again been successful in meeting the criteria of the government's Customer Service Excellence Standard (previously known as Charter Mark). To meet the standard, the Combined Authority needed to demonstrate how it serves customers and considers their needs to an external assessor who judged against their rigorous benchmarks. The assessor awarded a 'Compliance plus' for demonstrating a high level of understanding of customer needs. This result demonstrates the commitment of the Combined Authority's front line staff to deliver a consistently good service to its customers. Further details may be found at www.customerserviceexcellence.uk.com
- 2.27 Passengers at Bradford Interchange, Castleford, Dewsbury, Halifax, Huddersfield, Keighley, Leeds and Pontefract Bus stations can now take advantage of free Wi-Fi. Providing users with access free wi-fi at its eight busiest facilities is part of the Combined Authority's current project with BT to upgrade CCTV coverage across all of 25 of its West Yorkshire bus stations. Passengers using any of these eight bus stations, will have the option of connecting for free with 'WYCA Public' through the BT network. Connecting for the first time requires a one-time registration process to make sure their device is recognised on the next visit to one of West Yorkshire's bus stations.

Car Club contract extension

- 2.28 The West Yorkshire and York Car Club Agreement was established in 2016 to enhance the region's car club offer by delivering the £100,000 car club project funded partly through Local Transport Plan capital and DfT grant money. In collaboration with Enterprise Car Club and local authorities the project has enhanced car club presence in the region and inclusion of three zero emission electric vehicles within the fleet. The agreement is a three years (plus two) agreement between Enterprise Car Club, the Combined Authority and local authorities. Car club membership and utilisation has increased significantly since 2016 with Enterprise Car Club exceeding most key performance indicators. The agreement is due for extension in February 2019 and recent consultations with partner local authorities have indicated their support for

extending the current agreement. The Combined Authority is in the process of formalising the extension agreement ahead of the renewal in February 2019.

3. Financial Implications

3.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

4. Legal Implications

4.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

5. Staffing Implications

5.1 There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

6. External Consultees

6.1 No external consultations have been undertaken.

7. Recommendations

7.1 That the updates provided in this report are noted.

8. Background Documents

None

9. Appendices

None.