
Report to: Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership Board (LEP Board)

Date: 23 January 2019

Subject: **Planning for Growth: The Leeds City Region Connectivity Strategy**

Director: Alan Reiss, Director of Policy, Strategy and Communications

Author(s): Tom Gifford

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1. To provide the LEP Board with an update on the development of the Leeds City Region Connectivity Strategy as considered by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Transport Committee.
- 1.2. To note the commencement of a conversation with the public and stakeholders around the new 21st century connectivity and services technologies including Mass Transit required to address the economic and transport challenges facing West Yorkshire, to complement future strategic infrastructure including HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR).
- 1.3. To set out the wider benefits and opportunities which arise as a result of introducing mass transit technologies as part of an integrated connectivity strategy.
- 1.4. To identify a 'business champion' for the Connectivity Strategy & Mass Transit from LEP Board/Panel attendees.

2. Information

Context

- 2.1. In June 2017, the Combined Authority endorsed development of the HS2 Connectivity Strategy and delegated oversight to its development to Transport Committee.
- 2.2. Since this time, Transport Committee have considered and supported the development of the Leeds City Region HS2 Growth Strategy and the associated Leeds City Region HS2 Connectivity Strategy throughout 2017-2018. The most recent update was provided to the 9 November 2018 Transport Committee meeting. Similar updates have also been considered by Leeds City Council Executive Board and Bradford Executive. Feedback received to date has been positive around the work undertaken so far.

- 2.3. The purpose of this report is to provide LEP Board with the latest position, following consideration by Transport Committee on 9 November 2018. In addition, this paper focuses on the Business, regeneration and development opportunities which arise from the proposals.

Summary of the 9 November Transport Committee report

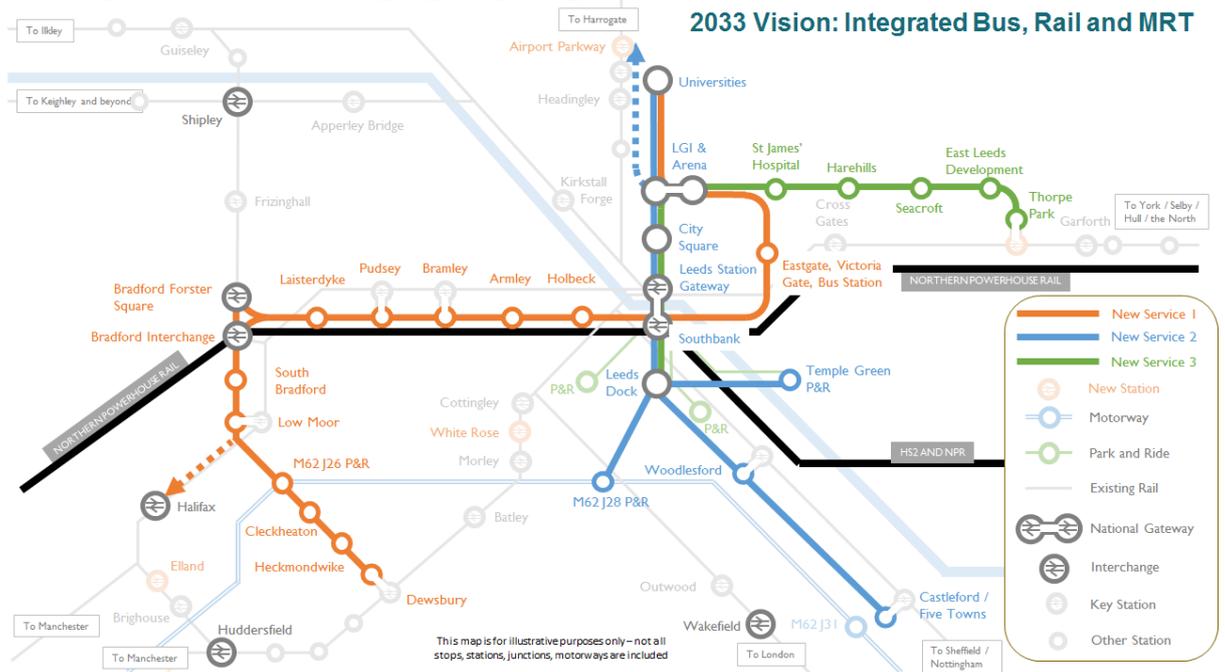
- 2.4. The Transport Committee report is available online¹, with the key points summarised below:

- The report develops the first tranche of Inclusive Growth Corridors (those areas with greatest economic need/opportunity), as identified in the HS2 Connectivity Strategy. The report sets out how transforming connectivity in the communities of greatest economic need will help raise productivity, living standards and improve air quality, thereby helping to deliver Inclusive Growth.
- The conclusions build on the current investment in transport improvements across York, Wakefield, Leeds, Bradford, Calderdale and Kirklees. Significant improvements are already being made through programmes including Connecting Leeds and the West Yorkshire-plus Transport Fund across Walking, Cycling, Bus and Rail.
- This report seeks to ‘commence a conversation’ on future solutions to future capacity requirements and delivering inclusive growth - including maximising the positive impact of strategic transport investments (HS2/NPR).
- Subject to feedback received through the conversation, the proposed City Region Transit Network has the potential to form a key priority for delivery in the timeframe up to HS2 opening in 2033.
- The key ‘places to connect’ for the four corridors examined so far have been identified and are illustrated within Figure 1 below. The work to date proposes three new public transport services to increase capacity between key local urban communities into national hubs – the orange, green and blue lines. Some of these services have the potential to require entirely new infrastructure and whilst complementary to the existing transport system, offer the opportunity to reimagine how other modes such as bus and rail can integrate with it. Together these new services would form the first tranche of the ‘City Region Transit Network’ to open in parallel with HS2 opening in 2033.

¹ The Transport Committee report from 9 November – “Planning For Growth: The Leeds City Region Connectivity Strategy”: Agenda Item 7 (plus appendices):

<https://westyorkshire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=138&MId=730&Ver=4>

Figure 1: 2033 Emerging City Region Transit Network with HS2



- It is important to note that for the proposals set out in Figure 1, detailed alignments, confirmation around mode choice and business case value for money assessments would be developed as part the next stage of development works and would also be informed by feedback and amendments as a result of from the proposed forthcoming engagement. At this stage Figure 1 is intended to illustrate the key communities to connect through transformed connectivity by 2033. It is likely that Mass Transit has an important role to play for some of these services given the scale of demand forecast and the economic needs of these communities.
- Different modes of transport serve different needs and provide different levels of capacity. Technologies have moved forwards significantly in the last decade. For example, new battery technologies, hydrogen propulsion and autonomous innovations are changing advance mass transit vehicle technologies, which also improve air quality. There are a range of pros and cons for each individual vehicle technology option.
- The work undertaken to date and reported to Transport Committee highlights that Mass transit vehicles (i.e. vehicles which can carry between 200-300 people – a vehicle of this size requires a steel rail) are anticipated to be required to meet the capacity need in delivering these new City Region Transit Network services set out in Figure 1.
- With the scale of demand forecast, 'Mass transit vehicles' are anticipated to be required to meet the capacity need in delivering these new City Region Transit Network services. The Mass transit vehicles would be just one element of integrated future pipeline; the system would need to be integrated within the wider public transport offer, for example through bus services feeding the mass transit services. Bus will continue to have a very important role in the transport network.

- This is only the start of the conversation. Through the conversation with stakeholders and the public as well as through the development of the business cases, other modes such Bus Rapid Transit or Tram-Train will continue to be assessed and may be more suitable for example, where there lower levels of capacity are required or where there is direct interface with the heavy rail network respectively.
- The analytical and evidence based approach applied here is focused on connecting communities in greatest economic need/opportunity. This is the logical and evidenced based next step in the City Region's plans for transport investment.
- Significant further development work is required on the City Region Transit Network and would be informed by the conclusions of the forthcoming engagement.

2.5. A business case considering all the technology options which meet this need will need to be developed, as part of which are there significant and exciting opportunities to explore linkages to the wider LEP Board around Green Blue Infrastructure, the Energy Strategy, the Hydrogen 21 project and within the 'Technology for Good' component of the Digital Framework.

The UK 'Mass Transit' Sector

2.6. As outlined above, the connectivity strategy for our region has yet to determine the specific modes of technology required to meet the levels of demand, however it is likely that Mass Transit will form part of the solution. This section provides a summary of the current UK Mass Transit sector.

2.7. There are 11 modern Mass Transit systems in the British Isles and Ireland, which are served a combination of various Mass Transit vehicles:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| • Edinburgh Trams | • London Docklands Light Railway (DLR) |
| • Luas Dublin | • Tyne And Wear Metro |
| • London Tramlink | • Glasgow SPT Subway |
| • West Midlands Metro | • Blackpool Tramway |
| • Sheffield Supertram / Tram-Train | • Nottingham Trams ('NET') |
| • Manchester Metrolink | |

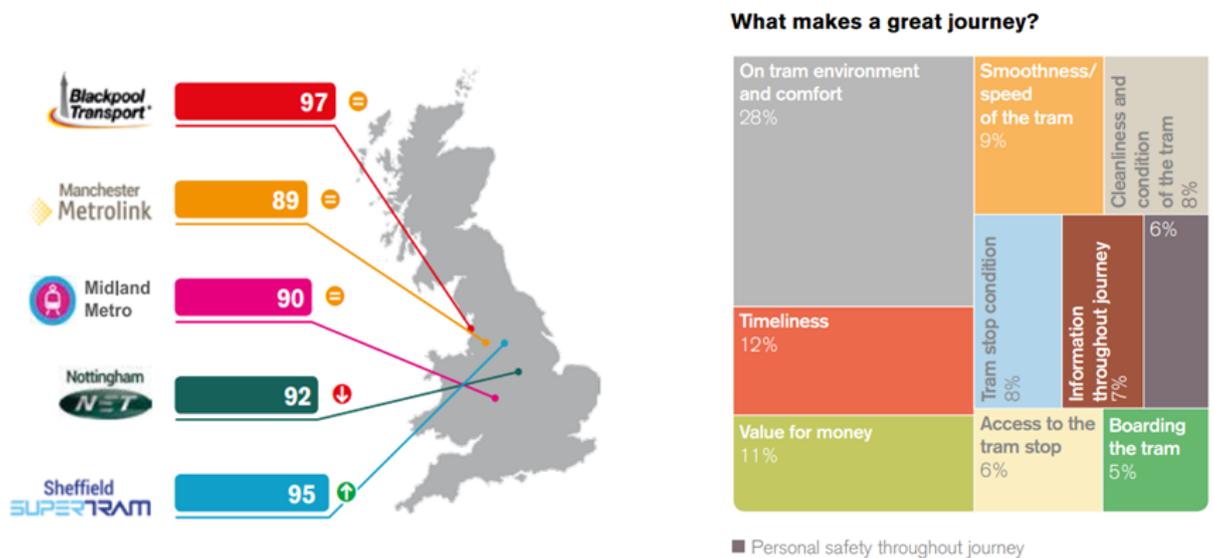
2.8. Together, these systems have seen significant capital investments and expansion, with billions cumulatively invested by Government and the private sectors in their technologies over the last 5 years alone. Every single one of these systems is planning and / or currently constructing further network expansions, as it set out in the Appendix 1.

2.9. Department for Transport statistics illustrate that patronage continues to grow across each of these system. The past decade has seen total passenger journeys increase by around 45% to, a recording 275 million passengers in 2016/17. The Nottingham and Edinburgh systems are seeing 10% year on

year patronage growth – as is the case with heavy rail, demand for mass transit is growing.

- 2.10. In addition, passenger satisfaction with these existing mass transit systems is much higher than with bus based alternatives. Department for Transport / Transport Focus research highlights that customer satisfaction for mass transit systems is well ahead of other forms of public transport including on bus. *“Overall tram passenger satisfaction remains high at 91 per cent. The key factor that drives the passenger’s view of either a satisfactory, or that much-valued great journey, is the comfort and environment of the vehicle.”²*

Figure 2: Passenger Satisfaction with existing systems³



- 2.11. The opportunity for this region is to invest in technology to deliver a system which has the following characteristics and provides:

- High capacity vehicles which can carry high numbers of people directly to and from key employment, leisure and housing locations and can operate regular, high frequency services on the busiest stretches of track.
- Fast, reliable journeys using a combination of off-street running and on-street priority measures.
- High quality, easily accessible vehicles providing passengers with a feeling of quality and a comfortable ride, include air conditioning, smooth journeys, and a low floor throughout, and quick, convenient boarding for multiple doors.
- Penetration into city centre streets, with frequent stops, providing a high degree of accessibility to key sites.
- Strong levels of popularity with passengers

² <http://d3cez36w5wymxj.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/20110417/TPS-autumn-2017-key-findings-report-V2.pdf>

³ <http://d3cez36w5wymxj.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/20110417/TPS-autumn-2017-key-findings-report-V2.pdf>

- Environmental and air quality outcomes which help meet our Green/Blue Energy Strategy outcomes:
- Higher quality urban realm, attracting new visitors, new investment and changing the overall perception of urban areas, for example:
 - In Croydon, surveys of residents and businesses before the opening of Tramlink suggest that many viewed Croydon as in decline. After the opening, most saw the area as experiencing regeneration and expansion.
 - In Manchester, the successful regeneration of Salford Quays has only been possible with Metrolink connecting the former industrial area to the centre of the city. The Salford Quays extension cost £150 million but created over 3,000 permanent jobs, stimulated £60 million of investment by business and boosted the economy of Greater Manchester by £70 million a year.
- Greater access to labour markets, supporting business growth: There are a number of examples where businesses are located near to Mass Transit schemes can benefit from being more accessible to customers and having greater access to labour markets to support growth and expansion. High quality transport schemes are proven to improve labour market performance, help attract inward investment and create an improved quality of life.

2.12. There is much evidence that almost all of the UK schemes have built up a strong positive image since opening. There is also evidence that the improved image has, in turn, contributed to attracting inward investment as well as business and in some areas tourist visitors. While the improvement to a city's image is clear, identifying what economic benefits have been delivered is very difficult. This is because investment in mass transit is usually one of a package of measures aimed at tackling economic decline and because it is impossible to know what would have happened without the intervention.

Benefits to Businesses from Transforming Connectivity

- 2.13. The ways businesses can benefit from a mass transit scheme include:
- Better access for their customers, and increased catchment areas;
 - Better access to labour markets to support the growth and expansion of businesses;
 - Investment decisions could be made more quickly and with more confidence given the commitment to improved public transport; and
 - Increased development activity was felt to bring a “buzz” to an area and, while not necessarily attributed to the mass transit schemes directly, was certainly identified with them.

- Kick-starting development of sites that had remained undeveloped for many years;
- Improving the attractiveness of residential areas through better access to jobs, shopping and other facilities;
- Halting the out-migration of residents from areas previously in decline;
- Increasing the area in which job-seekers have been able to search for jobs; and
- Channelling commercial and leisure developments to sites adjacent to stops.

Business Champion

- 2.14. With the scale of opportunity which exists for our Region, and the potential benefits for economic growth, the private sector has an important role in shaping, influencing and championing the connectivity strategy. This report therefore proposes that there be a 'Business Champion' for the connectivity strategy moving forward.
- 2.15. The Business Champion could be someone who attends either the LEP Board or a Panel, or a senior business person who is well connected within the transport sector for example. Crucially, they would have a strong interest in delivering innovative and transformational future connectivity solutions for the region. The scope and scale of the role is flexible and can be tailored/developed in coordination with the LEP Board chair and officers. However, it is envisaged that the Business Champion would develop a good understanding of connectivity strategy and would work in partnership with Council Leaders and the Chair of Transport Committee, to shape, share and advocate the work within the business community. This could include for example representing the work at events such as MIPIM, with Chambers of commerce or with private sector companies, to help support and encourage inward investment in the region. The role be reviewed after 12 months.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1. There are no direct financial implications from the report, however, the pipeline outlined in the Transport Committee report have high value and high cost. A funding strategy for the emerging schemes identified here is essential and will be developed as part of the next stages of development.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 None as a result of this report.

5. Staffing Implications

- 5.1. Development work has been undertaken within the West Yorkshire Combined Authority Transport Policy Team in partnership with partner district authorities.

6. External Consultees

- 6.1. The development of this report has reflected feedback and input from district partners.
- 6.2. Transport Committee endorsed the Connectivity Strategy report on 9 November, as have Leeds City Council Executive Board and Bradford Executive at their meetings on 21 November and 4 December respectively.

7. Recommendations

- 7.1. That LEP Board note the update on the development of the Leeds City Region Connectivity Strategy as considered by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Transport Committee.
- 7.2. That the LEP Board note the commencement of a conversation with the public and stakeholders around the new 21st century connectivity and services technologies required to address the economic and transport challenges facing West Yorkshire, to complement future strategic infrastructure including HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR).
- 7.3. That LEP Board consider the wider benefits and opportunities which arise as a result of introducing mass transit technologies as part of an integrated connectivity strategy.
- 7.4. That LEP Board agree the proposal for a 'Business Champion' for the Connectivity Strategy & Mass Transit.

8. Background Documents

9 November 2018: Transport Committee – “Planning For Growth: The Leeds City Region Connectivity Strategy”: Agenda Item 7 (plus appendices):<https://westyorkshire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CategoryId=138&MId=730&Ver=4>

21 November 2018: Leeds City Council Executive Board: Leeds City Region Connectivity Strategy and Connecting Leeds Update”:
<https://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/documents/s182294/Connectivity%20Strategy%20Cover%20Report%20121118.pdf>

4 December 2018: Bradford Executive: Planning for Growth: The Leeds City Region Connectivity Strategy:
<https://bradford.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s23978/Document%20AD.pdf>

13 December 2018: West Yorkshire Combined Authority meeting: Planning for Growth: The Leeds City Region Connectivity Strategy:
<https://westyorkshire.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s10082/Item%207%20-%20Planning%20for%20Growth%20-%20The%20Leeds%20City%20Region%20Connectivity%20Strategy.pdf>

9. Appendices

Appendix 1: Summary of Existing UK systems