

Report to: Transport Committee

Date: 10 May 2019

Subject: **West Yorkshire Bus Alliance Update**

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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. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the development of the West Yorkshire Bus Alliance. Following the last meeting of the Committee, work has progressed in developing the work plans, performance management and Voluntary Partnership Agreement, which will form the basis of the Alliance.
- 1.2. To set out the next steps in finalising the West Yorkshire Bus Alliance.

2. Information

Background

- 2.1. Transport Committee on the 9 November 2018 endorsed that Bus 18 should move towards a non-statutory alliance (technically known as a Voluntary Partnership) with a view to migrating to a statutory partnership model as it matures. The overarching outcomes from the West Yorkshire Bus Alliance are to improve customer satisfaction and increase patronage.
- 2.2. On the 11 January 2019 Transport Committee endorsed the Commitments proposed for delivery through the West Yorkshire Bus Alliance. At its meeting

on 25 April, the Combined Authority endorsed the steps taken to develop the West Yorkshire Bus Alliance and the commitments to improve bus services and delegated the Transport Committee to oversee the development and signature of a Voluntary Partnership Agreement which will establish the form and processes of the Alliance.

- 2.3. The table below provides a summary of the themes, work streams and commitments of the Alliance.

Theme	Work Stream	Commitments
Customers at the Heart	Network Legibility	A bus network clearly identifiable to users and non-users
	Ticketing and Retail	Increasing off bus sales
	Ticketing and Affordability	Simple fares structure and fare offers for young people
	Travel Information	Live journey planning information, real time and disruption collaboration
	Customer Service	Consistent customer service offer, improved on board bus customer facilities
	Communication and Engagement	Promotional engagement to encourage behavioural change
Keeping Buses Moving	Highway Infrastructure	Highway Improvement Programme to reduce journey times, congestion relief programme, improved bus waiting infrastructure
	Service Provision	Extended operating hours, Review of the bus network structure, improved network security, better emergency planning, major highway events planning and resilience
A Sustainable Bus Network	Air Quality	Delivery of a low emission bus programme
	Economy of the Bus Network	Better data availability, review of the economy of the bus network

- 2.4. The 2019 'Big Meet Up' took place on the 18th March 2019. This was attended by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority officers and Transport Committee, West Yorkshire Districts, employees from the bus operators working across the organisations and other interest groups, such as Transport Focus.

- 2.5. Alongside the Big Meet Up the formal launch of the Alliance took place.

Delivery Plan and Performance Management

- 2.6. West Yorkshire Combined Authority, alongside the West Yorkshire Districts and Bus Operators, are currently in the process of finalising the delivery plans for each commitment identified in Table 1.

- 2.7. The delivery plans have been developed using a number of forums:
- Identifying co-leads for each work stream, this includes a WYCA lead and an Operator Lead.
 - An Officer and Operator Away Day was held to discuss each work stream in detail and ensure the deliverables covered the broadest requirement.
 - The Big Meet Up – a challenge session was undertaken at the Big Meet Up to allow for further discussion and review of the content of the delivery plans.
- 2.8. For each deliverable within the work stream the following is identified:
- Description of the output for the commitment.
 - How the commitment will be delivered.
 - Funding -identification of source of funding or requirement for funding.
 - Outputs that can be delivered early.
 - Performance management -how the output will be measured, this may be number delivered or reflected within an indicator.

Voluntary Partnership Agreement

- 2.9. The Bus Services Act 2017 provides for Advanced Quality Partnership, Enhanced Partnerships and franchising; all are relatively new, untested, provisions. It is proposed that in the short term focus is placed on making tangible improvements for the customer rather than the negotiations and legal process needed to establish a statutory arrangement.
- 2.10. Based upon the evidence provided, DLA Piper advised that a Voluntary Partnership Agreement would be most appropriate next step. DLA Piper are working with the Combined Authority to develop the legal Voluntary Partnership Agreement that will support the West Yorkshire Bus Alliance.
- 2.11. The Voluntary Partnership Agreement will formalise the commitments identified in Section 2.2, which will be informed by the performance management Indicators identified as part of the Delivery Plans.
- 2.12. It is proposed that an over-arching Voluntary Partnership Agreement is developed and signed by all parties. This will include the over-arching agreements that will be used to structure the Alliance. This includes:
- Governance
 - The Work Streams and how they will be monitored
 - Funding and constraints
 - Data sharing, availability and data protection
 - Intellectual property rights
 - Terms of termination
 - Confidentiality
 - Competition and procurement law
 - Amendments

- 2.13. The performance management will include a number of customer focussed outcomes and principles that will be used to monitor benefits to the customer. This will include percentage targets for completion of delivery and customer benefits that can come from delivery of key propositions, such as highway infrastructure.
- 2.14. Setting the core principles will provide flexibility should new major highway infrastructure that is likely to reduce journey times for buses be developed and delivered over the course of the Alliance.
- 2.15. It should be noted that there is no compulsion on bus operators to sign up to the Voluntary Partnership Agreement. The following link summarises the Department for Transport Frequently Asked Questions on developing Voluntary Partnership Agreements.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/664318/bus-services-act-2017-new-powers-and-opportunities.pdf

Next Steps

- 2.16. The next steps for the Alliance are to formalise the delivery plans, key performance indicators and work towards signing the Voluntary Partnership Agreement. This will be endorsed by Transport Committee in July and allow for the Voluntary Partnership Agreements with operators to be signed in the summer.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1. The West Yorkshire Bus Alliance is being delivered through existing funding streams.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1. The Voluntary Partnership Agreement will be a legal document.

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 Committee notes the progress made in developing the West Yorkshire Bus Alliance and a report be submitted to a future meeting setting out the terms of a Voluntary Partnership Agreement.

8. Background Documents

- 8.1. None.

9. Appendices

9.1. None