

**Report to:** Transport Committee

**Date:** 6 September 2019

**Subject:** **Bus Service Matters**

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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 advise the Committee on issues affecting the bus service in West Yorkshire and to update the Committee on the Local Bus Working Group meeting to review actions in respect of the reduced budget for supported local bus services.

## 2. Information

### West Yorkshire Bus Alliance

- 2.1. On the 5th July the Voluntary Partnership Agreement for the West Yorkshire Bus Alliance was approved for signing by the Transport Committee. The legal agreement contains a number of commitments for the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, West Yorkshire Districts and the West Yorkshire Bus Operators.
- 2.2. The success of the Alliance is an important first step to improving the bus offer for customers. Delivering a successful partnership is an important step to demonstrate that the Combined Authority and the bus operators of West Yorkshire can together deliver a successful bus network.

2.3. A number of customer focussed early deliverables are in progress:

- Young people initiatives –making it easier for young people to use the bus and promoting the opportunities available to save money on bus fare
- A driver training programme to deliver further training to improve driver interaction with customers.
- A proposal to make the bus network more legible and easier to use –on the 5<sup>th</sup> July Transport Committee approved the principles for a system that will be based around a map which identifies each corridor with a colour and a symbol these will highlight the key destinations on that corridor such as hospitals and universities. It is proposed to integrate the maps with the on-street furniture and the buses to support navigation
- Shared ticketing agreement which will allow customers to use services offered by different bus operators during times of disruption, such as bad weather, broken down vehicles and other major incidents. It is also proposed that where tender contracts change the customer will be able to use their ticket purchased from a different operator.

#### West Yorkshire Bus Market

- 2.4. On 29 May First Group PLC made an announcement to shareholders that it is “pursuing structural alternatives to separate our First Bus operations from the Group” as part of a process of re-structuring the company. Deutsche Bahn have also indicated its intentions to dispose of its Arriva business in the UK.
- 2.5. The Combined Authority intends to actively participate in the discussions around the sale of First West Yorkshire and York. Protecting the bus network for West Yorkshire residents is an overriding key objective. The West Yorkshire Bus Strategy 2040 sets out the vision, objectives and bus policies for the Region<sup>1</sup>. It sets out the target to grow bus patronage by 25% in the decade up to 2027.

#### Reduction In Supported Bus Service Budget

- 2.6. On 8 August 2019 the Transport Committee Local Bus Service Working Group met to review progress to date on actions to reduce the spend on supported local bus services to £15.8m in 2020/21. To date savings have been found through applying the Transport Committee’s value for money guidelines, smarter procurement, reviewing school bus policy and optimising the school bus provision (for example by replacing two single decker routes with one double deck route). Whilst the savings target for 2019/20 will be met, further action will be needed to reduce spend in 2020/21.
- 2.7. The Working Group agreed that a further value for review exercise is carried out to identify poorly used journeys that may require withdrawal. The impact of this action will then be discussed initially with the District Consultation Committee Chairs to understand local issues prior to a further meeting of the Local Bus

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/improving-transport/bus-strategy/>

Service Working Group. A finalised package will then be referred to the Transport Committee in January 2020 for implementation from April 2020.

### **3. Financial Implications**

- 3.1. There are no financial implications directly arising from this report. The actions detailed in 2.6 and 2.7 are necessary to ensure the Combined Authority meets its target to reduce expenditure on local bus services.

### **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 to directly produce this report.

### **7. Recommendations**

- 7.1. That the Committee notes the updates provided in this report.
- 7.2. That a further report be presented to the Transport Committee with respect to actions taken to reduce expenditure on supported local bus services in 2020/2021.

### **8. Background Documents**

- 8.1. None.

### **9. Appendices**

- 9.1. None.