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

**Date:** 17 October 2019

**Subject:** **Information Report**

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## **1. Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 To update the sub-committee on matters of information relating to the Leeds District.

## **2. Information**

### Transforming Cities Fund

- 2.1 The Transforming Cities Fund is a £1.28 billion competitive fund which aims to drive up productivity through improved connections between urban centres and suburbs. The Combined Authority is currently working with partners to pull together a funding bid which will be submitted to the Department for Transport on 28 November. The bid seeks investment in a number of priority transport projects across the Leeds City Region. Once submitted, the bid will be published on the Combined Authority's website and a funding decision is expected by March 2020.

### Mass Transit Mode consultation

- 2.2 The Combined Authority is in the early stages of developing new proposals for an Advanced Urban Transit System, which supports the Leeds City Region priorities of raising productivity, delivering inclusive growth and addressing the climate emergency through clean growth, all of which must be underpinned by a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Transport system.
- 2.3 The Combined Authority is seeking ideas and experience from across the world to aid the development of this mass transit system for the Leeds City Region. Through this market testing process, the Combined Authority aims to develop initial designs for an advanced urban transit system that can be delivered by 2033 and ensures the whole of the Leeds City Region can benefit from major infrastructure investment including HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail.

#### Zero Emission Working Group

- 2.4 The transport sector is currently the highest carbon dioxide emitting sector in the Leeds City Region. This trend is expected to continue over the next 20 years with the transport sector forecast to account for over a third of all carbon dioxide emissions in the Leeds City Region.
- 2.5 The Leeds City Region Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) sets out the ambition to become a resilient, zero carbon energy economy. To ensure the transport sector contributes to this regional ambition and improves local air quality, the Combined Authority has established a Zero Emission Transport Working Group.
- 2.6 The aims of the Working Group are:
- To support the delivery of the Energy Strategy and Delivery Plan and its carbon dioxide emission reduction ambitions.
  - To recommend the actions that will decarbonise the transport sector and improve air quality within the City Region.
  - To work with / influence partners, including regional organisations and government to deliver actions that decarbonise the transport sector.
  - To provide oversight of the delivery of outputs and outcomes of low-carbon / low emission transport related projects being developed by the Combined Authority.
  - To align activity on decarbonising the transport sector with activity to improve air quality in the City Region.

#### Clean Bus Technology/ ULEV

- 2.7 In 2018 West Yorkshire Combined Authority was awarded £4.21m of funding by Defra to retrofit buses with clean bus technology. This was match funded by a further £850k from Leeds Public Transport Improvement Programme to retrofit 300 vehicles, primarily for vehicles that are used on routes entering the Leeds district. To date 184 vehicles have had retrofits completed. The remaining work is expected to be completed by March 2020.
- 2.8 In March 2019 West Yorkshire Combined Authority was successful in obtaining a further £2.9m of retrofit funding. This enables the Combined Authority to support the conversion of buses to benefit the planned Clean Air Zone in Bradford.

#### West Yorkshire Bus Alliance

- 2.9 On 5 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.
- 2.10 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.
- 2.11 The following initiatives are being progressed by the Bus Alliance :
- 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 – 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 stops and shelters 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

- 2.12 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.
- 2.13 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.

#### MCard

- 2.14 In order to simplify the MCard ticket range, all paper day tickets were re-branded as ‘Day-Savers’ in the summer. This includes adult bus DaySaver, Family DaySaver and the new Group Daysaver, which allows a group of five adults to travel together on buses and trains.
- 2.15 The adult bus Daysaver is available on bus from the driver or can be purchased in multiples of 3, 5 and 10 on smartcard. The Family and Group Daysaver tickets are available from Metro Travel Centres and staffed rail stations. The full DaySaver range will shortly be available on the MCard ticketing app, which is being developed.
- 2.16 Development work is ongoing on the MCard barcode ticketing app, which will enable customers to purchase MCard tickets via their iPhone or Android phone. We expect to have a test version of the app available at the end of the year. The app should be available for customers to use early in 2020

#### West Yorkshire Bus Information Strategy

- 2.17 At the joint DCSC meeting in June, members’ views were sought on the proposed West Yorkshire Bus Information Strategy. The session was very productive and notes are attached at Appendix A.
- 2.18 Wider engagement on the strategy was undertaken with public and stakeholders during July and August. Work is now under way to analyse feedback on the proposed strategy, and the outcome of the engagement will be made available later in the year. Initial analysis of feedback supports the need to retain printed timetables, and, as highlighted at the joint DCSC

meeting in June, the Combined Authority is developing a cost-effective solution.

- 2.19 The outcomes of the consultation will be reported back to the Transport Committee in November, after which the strategy will be formally approved and rolled out from early 2020.

#### Real Time Screens

- 2.20 The project to upgrade Real Time screens across West Yorkshire is almost complete with 650 monitor type screens being replaced by new units with bright LED screens showing more service information.

#### Bus Service Changes

- 2.21 There will be some service changes in Wakefield from 27<sup>th</sup> October. Full details of changes will be available at [wymetro.com](http://wymetro.com). The main changes to note are:
- Service 496 Wakefield – Crofton – Hemsworth – Upton. A revised timetable will be introduced. Monday to Saturday daytime frequency will be increased from half-hourly to every 15 minutes between Wakefield and South Elmsall Bus Station.
  - Service 481 Leeds – Middleton – East Ardsley – Wakefield will be renumbered 118/118A and operate via the White Rose Centre

#### Boxing Day and Christmas Bus Operation

- 2.22 On Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve bus services will gradually reduce from 6pm, with no services after 8pm.
- 2.23 A Saturday service will operate on 27, 30 and 31 December.
- 2.24 There will be no services on Christmas Day and New Year's Day (apart from airport service 757 which will operate a limited service on New Year's Day).
- 2.25 On Boxing Day, the Combined Authority will be supporting a network of services. Services will operate on core routes approximately every half-hour between 9am and 6pm on main routes in West Yorkshire. Normal bus operator fares will apply, MCard and ENCTS passes are all valid.

#### Blake Jones and Williams Reviews

- 2.26 The Blake Jones Review of the Rail North Partnership was published on 19 July 2019. The review and its recommendations were subsequently endorsed by the Transport for the North Board at its meeting on 31 July 2019, together with an action plan to bring focus to delivery of early wins. The Combined Authority also endorsed the Review's recommendations at its meeting on 1 August 2019. The core theme running through the Review and its recommendations is the need to put rail passengers first.
- 2.27 The Review identifies five recommendations for immediate implementation and a further four recommendations for longer term implementation, and which are made to inform the Williams Review of the country's rail industry.

- 2.28 The Williams Review is now in its final stages. The review's findings and recommendations will be published in a white paper in autumn 2019, with reforms from 2020 onwards.
- 2.29 Keith Williams delivered an interim speech at an event in Bradford on 16 July 2019. In this speech he highlighted that reform will be focused on five main areas:
- New passenger offer – customer service excellence
  - Simplified fares and ticketing
  - A new industry structure
  - A new commercial-model – “the current franchising model has had its day”
  - Leadership, skills and diversity
- 2.30 Discussion has been ongoing over summer about how the proposed reforms can bring more effective accountability to rail service delivery and planning.

### HS2

- 2.31 Consultation on a potential change to the HS2 route into Leeds closed in September. Under the new proposals the approach to Leeds from Woodlesford would predominantly be on a viaduct rather than a combination of ground level, cutting and embankment.
- 2.32 The Combined Authority responded to the consultation and welcomed the opportunity that the refined design provides with regards to reducing travel disruption and congestion to the public transport network during construction. The Combined Authority's response also included a request that in the revised design, visual intrusion and noise pollution is mitigated as much as possible and that the area underneath the viaduct is developed to benefit local communities.
- 2.33 In August 2019, the Department for Transport announced that there would be an independent review into all aspects of the future of HS2. The terms of reference for the review include whether and how the project could be reprioritised, and further examination of the costs and benefits of the scheme. It is anticipated that the review will be completed by autumn, and will inform decisions on next steps for the project. The Transport Secretary has indicated he wishes to make “a go/no-go” decision on HS2 in December.
- 2.34 The Combined Authority has met with the review panel and emphasised that HS2 is an essential part of the investment needed to tackle the capacity crisis in our rail network which is impacting on current services. The Combined Authority has offered to work with the Department for Transport and other partners to find efficiencies in the context of a clear commitment to full delivery of HS2.

### Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR)

- 2.35 Transport for the North (TfN) are currently working to accelerate aspects of the NPR programme between Leeds and Manchester to achieve the ‘Autumn Deal’ which was announced on 27 July. While aspects of the work are being accelerated the key driver is to maintain NPR as a network for all of the North

and to maintain the £39bn transformational vision set out in the TfN Strategic Transport Plan.

#### Department for Transport 'Access for All' Programme

- 2.36 The Department for Transport has recently announced that a proportion of the funding revealed last year as part of its 'Inclusive Transport Strategy' is being made available for a new round of 'Access for All' Mid-Tier funding which supports station accessibility projects requiring between £250,000 and £1 million of Government support. This is a £20 million national fund open to applications from stations in need of accessibility improvements, leading to small-scale enhancements which enable more disabled people to access the rail network more easily. Improvements could include, for example, tactile paving, handrails, and Harrington Humps, which selectively increase platform heights. The Combined Authority is working with rail industry and council partners to identify accessibility improvements and develop potential funding applications.

#### Pacer Trains

- 2.37 Pacer trains were meant to be progressively withdrawn by Northern from September 2018, with a profile which would have seen 102 Pacer trains withdrawn by November 2019. The delay to the withdrawal programme is mainly as a result of delays to the introduction of new trains. At the time of writing it is currently understood that Northern will need to keep around 23 of its Pacer trains in passenger service beyond the end of 2019, in diminishing numbers to achieve complete withdrawal by summer 2020. Whilst this situation is clearly unwelcome, the alternative is a potentially worse situation of having to cancel trains and / or reduce capacity of peak services.
- 2.38 Northern proposes that a small number of very early morning and late evening trains will continue to be operated by Pacer trains on a number of routes. In addition, the majority of trains on the Penistone Line, on local services between Bradford and Huddersfield, on local services between Castleford and Huddersfield, and trains on the York – Pontefract – Sheffield service will continue to be operated by Pacers. The proposal is based on factors such as staff familiarity and maintenance regimes and avoiding deployment on the busiest commuter services around West Yorkshire.
- 2.39 Pacer trains are widely regarded as failing to meet passenger expectations, and their timely removal from service was a significant and high-profile 'promise' when the new franchise was awarded. The Combined Authority and South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive are in discussion with Northern to secure passenger benefits for those areas that will have to rely on Pacer trains for local rail journeys beyond the end of the year.
- 2.40 A crucial further factor is the need for all trains to comply with the Persons of Reduced Mobility (PRM) regulations from 1 January 2020. These regulations require all trains to meet base requirements for accessibility and on-board facilities from that date. Pacers do not currently fully meet these requirements, and there is a national shortage of suitable and PRM compliant trains to use alternatively. There is a national backlog of work to bring older

fleets of trains into compliance with the regulations. The most significant issue for Pacers relates to the accessibility of the toilets, but there is a range of other non-compliances.

- 2.41 Northern is working with its Accessibility User Group to test the mitigations it is proposing to put in place to address the non-compliances. This will include specific on-train and station-specific proposals, including an enhanced passenger assistance service. This package will form the basis of an application to the Department for Transport for a temporary dispensation from the regulations. Part of the process for this determination will include reference to the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DTPAC). There will be a particular emphasis on where Pacer trains will be the only type of train calling at a station throughout the day. Northern is expected to make an application for a dispensation from the regulations in September.

#### Northern New Trains

- 2.42 Northern introduced new electric trains on the Leeds – Doncaster services in July, and on the services between Skipton / Ilkley / Bradford Forster Square and Leeds in September. There are now 26 new trains in operation across the north, with a large proportion of the remaining new trains expected to be in operation by the end of the year. This will release the older electric trains to go ‘off-lease’, and represents an improvement in the quality of trains.
- 2.43 Northern are also introducing new diesel trains to offset continued problems with availability of diesel trains to strengthen peak-time services in particular, as well as to allow the withdrawal of Pacer trains.
- 2.44 Staff training is now underway to allow the new diesel trains to be introduced in October / November on Calder Valley line services, initially on Leeds – Bradford – Halifax – Manchester Victoria – Chester services, and then on York – Leeds – Bradford – Halifax – Preston – Blackpool services. New trains will be introduced on Leeds – Wakefield Kirkgate – Barnsley – Sheffield – Nottingham / Lincoln services at the end of the year. These new trains will provide a significant uplift in the quality of passenger facilities, as well as additional capacity.
- 2.45 The Combined Authority continues to closely monitor the number of carriages provided at peak time trains, and this was a matter discussed with the operator at the West Yorkshire Rail Forum in August.
- 2.46 It is important that Northern does not prematurely withdraw Pacer trains until it has sufficient new trains in reliable service to run all the services (including peak strengthening) it has committed to. Northern has also agreed to retain some Pacer trains to ensure that they are available should stock shortages occur, particularly through the autumn period.

#### LNER New Trains

- 2.47 LNER has continued to introduce its new Azuma trains onto an increasing number of Yorkshire to London services. The roll-out is understood to be going well, and feedback from passengers has been generally positive.

### TransPennine Express New Trains

- 2.48 TransPennine Express (TPE) introduced the first of its new five-carriage Nova 3 trains into public service in August, on the Liverpool – Manchester – Huddersfield – Leeds – York – Scarborough route. A second Nova 3 train entered daily service in September, from which point there are 12 services operated by new trains on a daily basis. These trains bring additional capacity, as well as releasing existing three-carriage trains to add additional carriages to peak time services. The refurbishment of 185's, the original TPE fleet has also been completed.
- 2.49 The delayed introduction of Nova 3 trains means that TPE have not restored full capacity on key peak-time services on the Manchester – Huddersfield – Leeds core route as planned.
- 2.50 To compensate customers for the delayed introduction of Nova 3, Transport for the North agreed to a scheme where £25 travel e-vouchers were made available to season ticket holders and walk up train users between Huddersfield, Dewsbury and Leeds via e-mail (and in accordance with GDPR). These customers will also have received a catering voucher enabling a hot drink to be obtained free of charge. Funds unclaimed from this scheme will be utilised in a further compensation scheme currently being discussed between TransPennine, Transport for the North and their members (including West Yorkshire Combined Authority).
- 2.51 Nova 1's are expected to start operating in public service from late October on Liverpool – Manchester – Huddersfield – Leeds – York – Darlington – Newcastle services, bringing a further significant increase in capacity.
- 2.52 It has been a significant concern that peak time capacity would not be fully restored as the very busy autumn period approaches. It has been made clear to TPE at Rail North Committee and via the West Yorkshire Rail Forum that the first priority remains delivery of peak-time capacity.

### December 2019 rail timetable changes

- 2.53 Many train timetables will change on 15 December 2019, generally reflecting operators' franchise commitments. A summary of the main changes is attached at Appendix A. Principal changes include:
- Harrogate – Leeds – London train to run every two hours
  - Several changes on weekdays on the Calder Valley line through Halifax and Bradford Interchange, including different timings around the hour, an additional train every hour at Low Moor, and the current Huddersfield – Halifax – Bradford – Leeds train being replaced by two separate but overlapping services (one from Huddersfield to Halifax and Bradford and one from Halifax via Bradford and Leeds through to Selby and Hull). Sowerby Bridge and Mytholmroyd will however in most hours revert to two rather than the current three trains
  - Slaithwaite and Marsden will regain an hourly all-stations service, with extra services in the peaks provided by inserting stops into Hull – Manchester trains

- The Leeds – Selby stopping train will start back at Halifax and run on to Hull
- The TransPennine Express hourly Liverpool – Manchester – Huddersfield – Leeds – Newcastle trains will be extended to Edinburgh, and their Manchester Airport – Manchester – Huddersfield – Leeds – Middlesbrough trains extended to Redcar

2.54 Some changes that were previously expected to be delivered in December 2019 will not now happen. This is generally because infrastructure schemes designed to enable them have not happened, and/or as a result of concerns about punctuality and reliability, and/or due to a shortage of diesel trains. These services that will not now happen in December include a Bradford Interchange – Leeds – Wakefield Westgate – Sheffield – Nottingham fast service; direct links from Bradford, Halifax and Calder Valley to Manchester Airport and Liverpool (and an extra Bradford to Manchester train via Halifax and the Calder Valley); a second hourly train on Sundays running Leeds – Bradford Interchange – Halifax – Manchester Victoria; an extra Northern train running between Leeds and Harrogate in the hours when there is no LNER train; and a second train every hour between York and Scarborough.

2.55 A very limited service on Northern is expected to operate on some routes in West Yorkshire on Boxing Day 2019, for the first time in many years; further details will be announced shortly.

#### Castleford Rail Station

2.56 The Combined Authority, in partnership with Northern, Network Rail and Wakefield Metropolitan District Council, are making significant improvements and enhancements to Castleford railway station to provide a more attractive and welcoming gateway to Castleford town centre. Improvements include:

- A modern, high quality passenger waiting facility including a ticket vending machine, seating and a disabled toilet.
- Sheltered cycle parking.
- Significant public realm improvements both to the area around the station and on key walking routes between the rail station, the town centre and the bus station. This will include footway treatments, landscaping and signage.
- Changes to the car park layout to allow for easier pedestrian and non-motorised access.
- Significant refurbishment of the subway underpass to create a more attractive link between the rail station and residential areas in the south of Castleford town centre. This will include resurfacing the footway and adding new wall cladding, lighting and CCTV.

2.57 Construction works are due to start by early November.

#### Wakefield Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan

2.58 Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) are being developed for each partner council area in West Yorkshire. The Plan for Wakefield will build on work to identify networks for walking and cycling already carried out by partners in the region.

- 2.59 A lot of work is needed to create a comprehensive Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan that covers all the urban and rural areas of Wakefield district and several phases of development are envisaged. The work underway now is the first phase of a longer term development process.
- 2.60 For this first phase of work, specific areas of focus were selected for walking and cycling, based on a number of factors. Phase one of the LCWIP for Wakefield includes plans to improve walking into Wakefield city centre from the north and east, and plans to improve cycling provision into Wakefield city centre from the north and south.
- 2.61 A phase one LCWIP for Wakefield has now been produced in draft. This includes a walking network map for Wakefield city and Park Ward, and a programme of improvements for Wakefield city centre from the north and east.
- 2.62 The LCWIP also includes a network map of desire lines for cycling for south Wakefield. The desire lines identified have been prioritised to identify which routes should be assessed in more detail as part of this phase of work. Two routes have been assessed in more detail – Wakefield city centre to Newton Bar, and Wakefield city centre to Sandal and Agbrigg.
- 2.63 A group of stakeholders have been invited to provide feedback on the draft LCWIP, including local ward members, stakeholders representing user groups, local community groups and organisations, and local authority officers – and include those previously involved in early engagement events. This feedback is currently being analysed to enable the draft phase one LCWIP to be updated, with the intention to report to Transport Committee in November 2019.

#### City Connect

- 2.64 The Combined Authority and Wakefield Council have been working in partnership to create a network of greenways around the Castleford area, which will create a 16km route by providing missing links in existing infrastructure.
- 2.65 The Castleford to Wakefield Greenway project includes the provision of a link between Fairies Hill Lock and Methley Bridge in Castleford, which was completed in March 2018. The next phase of the project included the creation of a new bridge for people travelling by bike or on foot across the Hallam Line; and this opened in summer 2019.
- 2.66 Phase 4 of the scheme is currently being developed and construction is planned to start in May 2020.

### **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1 That the information report be noted.

**4. Background Documents**

4.1 None.

**5. Appendices**

**Appendix 1** – Notes of Joint DCSC Discussion on Bus Information

**Appendix 2**– December Rail Timetable Changes