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

Date: 24 February 2021

Subject: **West Yorkshire Connectivity Infrastructure Plan:
Investing in the future of West Yorkshire**

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1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 For the LEP Board to note the publication in January 2021 of the West Yorkshire Connectivity Infrastructure Plan, WY Mass Transit Vision 2040 and associated documents, in order to open a conversation and engagement around the bold and ambitious proposals to create a greener, more inclusive and better connected region.

2 Information

Background

- 2.1 In 2017, the Combined Authority adopted the West Yorkshire Transport Strategy 2040, setting out our policy framework for improving transport. The transport Connectivity Infrastructure Plan is an extension of this, setting out a delivery plan and long-term pipeline of transport infrastructure improvements to improve connectivity in our region.

Context

- 2.2 A modern, integrated transport system is essential for an economy to flourish and communities to thrive. West Yorkshire is a significant and growing economy. Yet for it to fulfil its full potential as a major player in the Northern Powerhouse, and to support decarbonisation of the economy, our region needs a transformation in its transport system – to one that is fit for the 21st Century.
- 2.3 This plan sets out a long-term transport infrastructure investment programme for the next 20 years, providing a spatial picture of where improvements are most needed to stimulate inward investment and improve people’s quality of life, building on our key growth areas within the region.
- 2.4 Our cities and towns have out-grown our transport system. Our reliance on the car is damaging business, the environment and the health of residents. Our

most disadvantaged communities, who have not benefited from car travel, suffer most from its impact.

- 2.5 Our evidence is clear that continuing the “business as usual” approach to transport will not enable economic opportunities to be fully realised, or effective action to be taken to decarbonise the economy.
- 2.6 The Connectivity Investment Plan moves us away from traditional transport investments and deliberately focusses on a sustainable future. It focuses on addressing three strategic challenges:
- COVID-19 - Recession and recovery
 - Connecting Everyone - Inclusive growth and the productivity gap
 - Climate change - Decarbonising transport
- 2.7 This plan makes the case to Government for longer-term local transport budgets to deliver these improvements, including unlocking the government’s infrastructure fund linked to the West Yorkshire devolution deal. The recent Spending Round confirmed Mayoral Combined Authorities would have access to an intracity transport settlement. It is important that plans are being developed now to make the best case for that funding in preparation for when further details are announced.
- 2.8 By starting now, we can set our region on the right pathway for tackling the climate emergency and support a green recovery from COVID-19.

Scope

- 2.9 The Plan is an evidence led approach to identifying our connectivity challenges and solutions, consistently applied across the whole geography of West Yorkshire. This work is identifying a set of options for improving transport infrastructure and connectivity to be delivered up to 2040.
- 2.10 The plan covers bus, rail, cycling, walking, mass transit, digital demand responsive transport, other innovative solutions and car, with the intent to enhance economic performance by connecting all of our important places, and in doing so, help deliver inclusive growth by giving particular attention to the connectivity needs for our currently more disadvantaged and peripheral communities.
- 2.11 A series of daughter documents accompany the overarching ‘working draft’ West Yorkshire Connectivity Plan. These provide more in depth analysis and information around each individual mode. Their conclusions are summarised within the West Yorkshire Connectivity Infrastructure Plan:
- Mass Transit 2040 Vision
 - Rail Vision
 - Strategic Bus Network Review

Inputs to the Plan

- 2.12 The Connectivity Infrastructure Plan is informed by a range of other research, plans and case making reports:
- 2.12.1 **West Yorkshire District Local Development Plans** - Each West Yorkshire Districts sets out, as part of their statutory land use plans: the spatial vision, scale of new development and strategy for accommodating new housing and employment growth.
 - 2.12.2 **West Yorkshire Bus Network Reviews** - a strategic review of the core bus network across West Yorkshire has taken place. This provides a summary of the core bus network by district in 2018, and then in three future years, 2024, 2028 and 2033. The future years consider the types of interventions needed that could create patronage growth.
 - 2.12.3 **West Yorkshire Carbon Reduction Emissions Pathways (CERP) study** - This sets out the evidence for five key sectors of the economy including Transport, and identifies options for different CO2 reduction pathways, setting timescales for action and policies that we need to implement to ensure that our target for net zero carbon by 2038 can be met.
 - 2.12.4 **West Yorkshire Future Mobility Strategy** This sets out ways to increase travel options through new forms of transport and better integration maximising new technologies – from autonomous cars to e-scooters, digital on-demand buses services, shared transport and integrated apps for accessing services, plus innovative ways of getting the goods into our town and city centres.
 - 2.12.5 **Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPS)** - developed to help the Combined Authority and partner councils prioritise investment in walking and cycling infrastructure to support everyday journeys. Phase one LCWIPs have successfully trialled new methodologies for community engagement. This approach is now being rolled out across West Yorkshire.
 - 2.12.6 **Housing Affordability and Needs Study** exploring the relationship between housing, transport costs and accessibility to jobs, it identifies a number of disconnected places and evidence to suggest that the decentralisation of employment made possible by car travel, has not led to greater accessibility for low income households which have to make trade- offs between disposable income and transport expenditure.
 - 2.12.7 **West Yorkshire Rail Vision and Strategy** - as the first product of the Rail Strategy, the Rail Vision sets out West Yorkshire's ambition for the way in which the railway needs to serve the region, its people

and businesses in the future. Beyond the Rail Vision, development of the full Rail Strategy will translate the high-level objectives, outcomes, and outputs contained in the vision into interventions across the full scope of rail policy.

- 2.12.8 **West Yorkshire Mass Transit** - Mass Transit is a bold new transport mode and a central component of the Connectivity Infrastructure Plan proposals. In parallel to the publication of the Connectivity plan, the vision for Mass Transit will also be published and integrated within the Connectivity Plan.
- 2.13 The options for improving connectivity are identified in spatial plans that show which transport modes and interventions are understood to provide the most appropriate solution for a particular geography and need.
- 2.14 To help quantify the scale of the challenge to meet net-zero carbon, the West Yorkshire Carbon Emission Reduction Pathways (CERP) evidence base assessed the five key sectors of Transport; Buildings; Power; Industry; and Land-use and Agriculture and demonstrate the ways in which the climate emergency could be addressed, and the target met. It identifies that:
- Transport is the largest carbon emitting sector in West Yorkshire; and
 - Transport emissions are dominated by road transport and private vehicle use, with road transport contribution over 90% of transport emissions
- 2.15 Experience has shown in recent years that delivering improved public transport infrastructure alone has not translated to a step change in public transport patronage; a reduction in carbon, particularly on bus; or a reduction in car congestion. Alongside the development of the Connectivity Infrastructure plan, careful consideration of car policies which could complement the infrastructure proposals will be needed, in order to meet the net zero carbon targets.

Next steps

- 2.16 The draft plan documentation was published on 27 January 2021, to enable engagement on the connectivity plan, and accompanying daughter documents (Mass Transit vision, Rail Vision and Bus Network Reviews). The next steps would be:
- **January 2021 – March/April 2021:** Period for public and stakeholder engagement
 - **May – June 2021:** Analysis of responses to the engagement
 - **Summer 2021:** Re-shape plan's interventions and priorities following engagement
- 2.17 The aim of the engagement is to seek feedback on the work so far and to help inform the next stages of development. The Connectivity Plan and its daughter documents are hosted on the Your Voice pages of the Combined Authority website. As is consistent with other engagements, engagement on the plan will be mainly carried out digitally. The Combined Authority will also monitor

responses by district and by protected characteristics during the engagement period so promotion of the engagement can be targeted as needed.

- 2.18 It is important that businesses are able to feed into the engagement and the Combined Authority is already talking to representative business groups, will make use of the existing networks such as the Travel Plan network of 350 businesses and the Chair of the LEP has agreed to support. Views of the LEP are sought on further ways to ensure the business community know about the plans and respond.

3 Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1 The work described in this report is central to ensuring that the transport sector can play a full part in the region making a green recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and decarbonising the West Yorkshire economy by 2038, whilst providing the connectivity improvements that will help to ensure inclusive growth.

4 Inclusive Growth Implications

- 4.1 The work described in this report is focused on those communities of greatest economic need within the region and providing the connectivity improvements that will help to ensure inclusive growth.

5 Financial implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

6 Legal implications

- 6.1 The West Yorkshire Combined Authority is the Local Transport Authority for West Yorkshire. As the Local Transport Authority, the Combined Authority has the legal responsibility to produce and maintain a Transport Strategy for the region.

- 6.2 In 2017, the Combined Authority adopted the West Yorkshire Transport Strategy 2040, setting out our policy framework for improving transport. The transport Connectivity Infrastructure Plan is an extension of this, setting out the spatial delivery plan and long-term pipeline of transport infrastructure improvements to improve connectivity in our region.

7 Staffing implications

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

8 External consultees

- 8.1 District partners have been engaged in producing the Connectivity Plan. Workshops on various topics were held with Transport Committee Members. The report identifies proposals for engagement on the West Yorkshire

Connectivity plan and long term investment pipeline which is now open to views from stakeholders and members of the public.

9 Recommendations

- 9.1 That the LEP Board notes the content of the Connectivity Infrastructure Plan, WY Mass Transit Vision 2040 and other associated documents and the plans for engagement.
- 9.2 That the LEP Board discusses ways to engage the business community in the plans.

10 Background Documents

- 10.1 All documentation associated with the engagement can be found here:
<https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/connectivity/>

11 Appendices

- 11.1 None.