

Report to: Transport Committee

Date: 17 September 2021

Subject: **Leeds City Region Transport Update**

Director: Liz Hunter, Director of Policy and Development

Author: Richard Crabtree, Rail Development Manager

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:	
Are there implications for equality and diversity?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To provide Transport Committee with relevant updates on current issues not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

2 Information

Transport for the North meetings

Transport for the North Board

- 2.1 A public session of the TfN Board took place on 27 July 2021. This was an informal session as meetings continue to be held virtually. This session considered the following substantive items:
- **Northern Powerhouse Rail and Integrated Rail Plan** where an update was provided underlining the challenges that delay to the publication of the Integrated Rail Plan is now imposing. Members requested that TfN continues to press Government to publish the IRP as soon as possible,

and TfN will continue to push on with work on NPR where possible in the meantime.

- **Manchester Recovery Taskforce** which are covered in more detail below under Rail North Committee.
- **Governance**, where there was an update on ways of working, including proposals to establish a General Purposes Committee. This also confirmed interim arrangements for the Chair.
- **Northern Transport Charter** where members were updated on the work of the member working group on this topic, which will help position TfN for devolved responsibility for northern transport budgets. The merit of citizens' assemblies was debated, and it was agreed that detailed scoping will be used to be clear on the objectives.
- **TfN Freight and Logistics Strategy** where members agreed the draft strategy for final amendments ahead of proposed public consultation. Members continue to support TfN's important roles in freight strategy.
- **Accessibility at stations**, where members were updated on work TfN is doing to help make a strong business case for accessibility improvements at stations in the North. Members requested that securing a stronger role for member authorities in stations is covered as part of this work.

2.2 July's meeting was John Cridland's final one as Chair of the TfN's Board and Partnership Board. Members thanked John for his contribution over the years. Cllr Louise Gittins takes (Labour Vice-chair) takes over as interim Chair pending the process of recruitment and appointment of a new independent chair, expected to be complete in autumn.

2.3 Martin Tugwell joined TfN as the new permanent Chief Executive on Monday, 2 August 2021, joining from the England's Economic Heartland subnational transport body. Tim Wood who has been acting as interim Chief Executive returns to his substantive role as Northern Powerhouse Rail Director.

2.4 Subject to ensuring Covid safely, the Transport for the North Board is due to meet in Manchester for its Annual Meeting on 29 September.

2.5 A link to TfN Board meetings and papers is provided in the Background Documents section, which includes access to recordings of the public session of the Board.

Rail North Committee

2.6 A special public Rail North Committee session took place on 14 July 2021. The agenda focused exclusively on Manchester Recovery Taskforce. In addition, a number of informal briefing sessions have taken place on the same subject.

2.7 This has included an exchange of letters between TfN and the Rail Minister on the conditionality attached to the acceptance of the Option B+ timetable

proposal for implementation from December 2022. The conditionality relates to the degree of commitment by government to invest in the rail network to address the capacity constraints that have necessitated the timetable changes to achieve reliability.

- 2.8 The final outcome of these exchanges is expected to be confirmed in September. Meanwhile, the industry will continue to develop the detailed timetable proposals for consultation later this year.
- 2.9 As reported previously, for West Yorkshire the Option B+ timetable will result in restoration of the pre-pandemic TransPennine Express service patterns, but one of the two services per hour that normally runs through the Manchester Airport will instead terminate / originate in central Manchester. Together with the other changes proposed, this should lead to a more reliable timetable overall.

Department for Transport Active Travel Fund: Local Authority Capital Funding (2021/22)

- 2.10 The Combined Authority's submission for £12,361,310 of this fund tendered on 09 August 2021. The package included 13 schemes covering all five constituent council areas, building on earlier tranches of Active Travel Funding (Tranches 1 and 2) released since the start of the pandemic.
- 2.11 If successful, the bid will fund improved canal towpaths in Bradford (on the Leeds – Liverpool Canal) and Kirklees (both Huddersfield Broad and Narrow Canals), a new access route for cyclists to Fitzwilliam station from Ackworth in Wakefield and a permanent scheme to replace the temporary cycle lane on the A660 Otley Road in Leeds.
- 2.12 Other elements include a package of measures to improve walking access to schools and hospitals and Rights of Way improvement works in Bradford and money to enhance cycle parking at key trip generators across West Yorkshire, alongside funding to enable more School Streets to be deployed in all five constituent council areas.
- 2.13 In addition to the capital funding, the bid called for expressions of interest to take part in two new national pilot programmes. The first of these was for up to 12 “mini-Hollands” to be built across the country, wherein local high streets and surrounding areas have significant public realm and traffic management improvements so as to enable more economic activity and increased active travel. The second was for a number of demonstrators across the country to showcase the importance of active travel in improving health outcomes through social prescribing.
- 2.14 For both pilots, expressions of interest were submitted from Bradford, Calderdale and Leeds, including a supporting letter from the Mayor. The next stage for the two national pilot programmes is access to development funding for locations to develop their ideas ahead of final selection. This is expected to be announced alongside the Capital Funding allocation later this year.

Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy

Engie rapid charging network

- 2.15 The Ultra-Low Emissions Vehicle (ULEV) taxi charging scheme, led by the Combined Authority in partnership with Engie and the five constituent councils aimed to deliver 88 Rapid Charge points by March 2021. The delivery date has been extended and there are now 83 sites that are live and operational, with up to 20 still to be deployed. The project aimed for a 5% increase in the numbers of electric taxis in West Yorkshire, and almost 9,500 drivers are now members of the scheme. Charging on the network will continue to be free until October 2021.

Arcadis Infrastructure feasibility study

- 2.16 Our regional electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure study, being undertaken by Arcadis, is a combination of a strategic assessment along with a feasibility study for the delivery of a West Yorkshire-wide charging network. Through a bespoke West Yorkshire model, the study predicts EV ownership in 2025 and 2030 across the region and the five constituent council areas. For West Yorkshire, they predict 180k-360k EVs by 2025 and 500k to 950k EVs by 2030. Through estimation of trip length and numbers, they estimate the required energy, and therefore the numbers of charge points required across the region. By 2030, between 1,384 and 2,791 additional electric vehicle charge points are needed in West Yorkshire to meet forecasted demand.
- 2.17 The study outlines “early deliverables” - 225 charge points (broken down by charge point type) in 75 locations across all five constituent council areas for the Combined Authority and partners to deliver. This is based on spatial analysis considering energy grid capacity, propensity to adopt EV in different areas, land use factors, and current availability of charging. In addition to infrastructure, the study recommends engagement and promotion of EVs through complimentary measures, such as starting an “EV centre of excellence” inspired by work done by other authorities. Ten complementary policy recommendations are brought forward. We are looking to fund these early deliverables (225 charge points) through the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (see paper at this Committee) with the possibility of funding additional policy initiatives as part of the uplift package.

East Coast Mainline timetable consultation

- 2.18 On 5 August West Yorkshire submitted its response to a series of parallel consultations from train operators into proposals to change the train service patterns from May 2022 on the East Coast Mainline (ECML). The ECML encompasses the Edinburgh – London King’s Cross line including the Leeds – Doncaster section. The timetable change proposed is significant and has impacts across many other routes over much of the North. A copy of the response is at **Appendix 1**.

- 2.19 While there were some positives (such as a small improvement in Leeds – London journey times and a new once-daily service between Huddersfield and London), these were overshadowed by many serious concerns. These included the loss of one of Bradford’s two daily LNER trains to King’s Cross, plus significant downgrades to West Yorkshire’s connectivity by Trans-Pennine Express and Cross-Country to North Yorkshire, Teesside, the North East and Scotland, with losses of trains and longer journey times.
- 2.20 West Yorkshire’s concerns were mirrored in responses submitted by authorities across much of the north, and by Transport for the North. The overall view was that the May 2022 proposals did not strike the right balance, but also underlined the overdue investment needed on the northerly sections of the ECML itself to enable operators to make best use of investment in new trains and unlock better connectivity as a whole.
- 2.21 On 25 August 2021 it was confirmed by Department for Transport that the proposed timetable change will be deferred until at least May 2023 (one year). This is the result of a combination of factors that meant there was little confidence in the readiness of the proposals, together with the poor reaction of many stakeholders. LNER has confirmed that it still proposes to introduce the daily through train each way between Huddersfield / Dewsbury and London as soon as possible.
- 2.22 This delay creates the opportunity for the Combined Authority and TfN to work in collaboration with the industry to ensure that future service proposals are more balanced with fewer compromises. The delay increases the scope for the timetable change to be considered in a more coherent way, considering the proposals promised by the Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail. The existing regulatory regime governing track access rights has been a specific challenge in dealing with the East Coast Main Line timetable holistically.
- 2.23 The timetable change was intended to deliver additional Anglo-Scottish services as a key deliverable of the £1.2bn ECML investment programme currently in its final stages. The difficulties experienced in trying to recast the timetable to deliver this underlines the chronic need for:
- investment in the capacity and capability of the line at York and to the north of York in the short term, ahead of but in the context of HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail; and
 - the ongoing need for the eastern leg of HS2 to create the capacity needed to relieve pressure on the ECML south of York.

Department for Transport Consultation on Key Route Networks

- 2.24 On 30 July 2021, the Department for Transport opened a consultation seeking views on proposals to give Metro Mayors and their Combined Authorities greater decision-making powers and accountability for Key Route Networks (KRN), namely the most important and busiest main roads in the region.

2.25 The proposals include:

- providing Mayors with additional highway management powers;
- providing Mayors with sole or concurrent highway powers over the KRN;
- giving Mayoral Combined Authorities the ability to delegate highway powers to local authorities;
- providing Mayors with the power to direct a local authority to deliver schemes agreed in their local transport plan; and
- giving Mayors or constituent local authorities the ability to request responsibility for a route by order of the Transport Secretary.

2.26 The Combined Authority intends to respond to this consultation and is currently drafting a response, which will be shared with Transport Committee members for input prior to the submission deadline of 24 September 2021.

3 Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

3.1 It is essential that the public transport and walking and cycling networks continues to provide access to employment, training and leisure opportunities across West Yorkshire so that modal shift to public transport and active modes can happen.

3.2 Many of the measures updates on this report will promote active modes of travel and are intended to make lower carbon modes more attractive, or to reduce emissions from road traffic through the promotion of take up of electric vehicles.

3.3 Successful resolution of the East Coast Mainline timetable proposals will facilitate more reliable rail services and better connectivity promoting mode shift. Delivery of more and faster Anglo-Scottish rail services will have an important role to play in reducing demand for domestic air travel, with substantial benefits for carbon emissions.

4 Inclusive Growth Implications

4.1 It is important that the transport network continues to provide access to employment and training opportunities across West Yorkshire, and opportunities for this continue to be explored as part of the initiatives outlines in this paper.

4.2 A number of the initiatives, such as the active travel fund measures highlighted, will help improve cost effective travel options for a number of communities around West Yorkshire.

5 Equality and Diversity Implications

5.1 It is important that the transport network addresses the accessibility needs of all communities across West Yorkshire. Equality and diversity are being

addressed as part of individual projects. Individual schemes highlighted will also have direct positive impacts on accessibility, notably the canal towpath and other rights of way upgrades, and improvements to the public realm proposed as part of active travel fund.

- 5.2 The TfN station accessibility work reported on will also have direct positive impacts on the Authority's ability to attract additional funding to station accessibility schemes in West Yorkshire.

6. Financial Implications

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

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

8. Staffing Implications

- 8.1 There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

9. External Consultees

- 9.1 No external consultations have been undertaken.

10. Recommendations

- 10.1 That the Committee notes the updates provided in this report.

11. Background Documents

Agendas, papers and webcasts of meetings of the Transport for the North Board and Rail North Committee are available via this link:

<https://transportfornorth.com/about-transport-for-the-north/meetings/> .

12. Appendices

Appendix 1 West Yorkshire response to the East Coast Main Line timetable consultation.