

**Report to:** Transport Committee

**Date:** 5 November 2021

**Subject:** **Leeds City Region Transport 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:	
Are there implications for equality and diversity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input 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 The Transport for the North (TfN) Board met in Manchester on 29 September 2021, which also served as the Annual Meeting.
- 2.2 The meeting confirmed Cllr Louise Gittins as the Majority Vice Chair of the Board, and Chair of Board pending recruitment of an Independent Chair later in the municipal year. Cllr Charles Edwards was confirmed as the Minority Vice Chair.

2.3 This meeting considered the following substantive items:

- **Governance report** where members agreed constitutional amendments and governance arrangements. This included establishment of the General Purposed Committee with extended membership to include a non-voting LEP member, changes to allow virtual contributions to meetings (but not virtual voting), and amendments to weighed voting metrics to reflect latest population figures.
- **Recruitment of the Independent Chair** where members agreed the process for recruitment of a new Independent Chair, including amendment of the constitution to allow candidates that have held recent political office to be considered, the role profile and the number of remunerated days and salary. The recruitment process is expected to conclude early in 2022.
- **Comprehensive Spending review** where members considered the submission that TfN had made to the Department in early September. This seeks a continuation of funding for TfN from the Department for Transport (Df) at broadly current levels as part of a multi-year settlement. In addition, TfN has pitched for £2m annual development funding to accelerate development of key rail and highway projects. Officers reported constructive discussion between TfN and other Sub-National Transport Bodies (STBs) and the Department about the future role of STBs. Outcome of the spending review is expected to be announced on 27 October.
- **Strategic Transport Plan development** where members agreed an initial paper setting out proposals to refresh the Strategic Transport Plan (STP). The initial focus will be updating the evidence base alongside an update of the Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review due in 2022. The objective set out it to have a revised STP adopted in early 2024, although members suggested these timeframes be accelerated. The revised STP will respond to the new economic evidence, together with the decarbonisation strategy work. Members highlighted the importance of ensuring that the STP dovetails with local transport plans and priorities, as well as cross-border links beyond the TfN geography.
- **Rail reform response** where members agreed a paper setting out TfN's initial response to the Williams-Shapps White Paper. This identifies 'four pillars' that form the basis of TfN's pitch for its future role in the rail network alongside the proposed Great British Railways (GB Railways). Members agreed minor changes to make clear that TfN is a unified voice for northern authorities and businesses. There was a discussion about ensuring that all members interests are adequately represented via the Rail North Committee grouping arrangements. Engagement with the GB Railways transition team is ongoing, and a joint response on next steps is proposed for the November 2021 Board meeting.

2.4 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.

- 2.5 At the time of writing, the publication of the Integrated Rail Plan for the Midlands and the North (IRP) was expected imminently. This will have a significant bearing on TfN's activity, most notably the Northern Powerhouse Rail programme. TfN proposes to convene an informal meeting of the Board to brief members on the implications of the IRP, and to assist in co-ordinating the response.
- 2.6 The next meeting of the TfN Board is scheduled to take place on 24 November 2022. The response to the Comprehensive Spending Review and contents of the Integrated Rail Plan will be significant considerations for this meeting.

#### Rail North Committee Strategic Rail Director Consultation Call

- 2.7 Rail North Committee met informally on 15 September 2021. This meeting considered the following substantive items:
- **Rail Reform Matters** summary which considered a paper setting out the role of TfN as part of the rail reforms. This was subsequently agreed by the TfN Board on 29 September. Members raised some
  - **Manchester Services and Infrastructure update** where members were updated on ongoing activity with the Department and Manchester Recovery Task Force. A joint announcement on the timetables and ways is to follow, with detailed timetable consultation for December 2022 expected to follow in late October.
  - **Operational update** summary where members were given an update on the operational matters. Timetables remain reliable, but not as reliable as the highs seen where there were fewer passengers, demonstrating the ongoing need to ensure timetables are robust. Passenger numbers are recovering well, especially in leisure markets, but commuter and business travel markets continue to be slower to recover. TransPennine Express and Northern are both running promotions to target these markets. Members expressed concerns that changes to timetables should not be made prematurely, as markets continue to be quite changeable.
  - **Business Planning** where members considered proposals for ongoing activity in the coming financial year, including the proposed contributions for constituent authorities to the TfN's rail work for 2022/3.
- 2.8 It was also agreed at this session that more of the Committee's business could be carried out informally online. This will make attendance easier. In-person meetings will be needed where formal decisions are required.
- 2.9 A link to Rail North Committee meetings and papers is provided in the **Background Documents** section, which includes access to recordings of the public session of the meeting.

### **City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement Announcement**

- 2.10 The West Yorkshire City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) submission was made to the Department for Transport in September.
- 2.11 Government announced the funding awards for each of the eight eligible Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs) area that made submissions on 23 October 2021. West Yorkshire has been awarded a total of £830m, from an indicative range of £570m to £920m.
- 2.12 The Combined Authority is now working to the Government's timetable to finalise the CRSTS programme for delivery in the five-year period from April 2022 to March 2027. DfT has indicated that it requires a Programme Business Case to be submitted and published in the coming months, which will set out the details of the CRSTS programme for delivery. The Programme Business Case will need to set out the prioritised programme to fit into the actual funding award.
- 2.13 Further details may be published in the Comprehensive Spending Review, which was pending at the time of writing. Any significant announcements will be relayed to the Committee during the meeting.

### **West Yorkshire Climate and Environment Plan**

- 2.14 The Mayor launched the West Yorkshire Climate and Environment Plan on 22 October. This sets out the plan to deliver a net zero carbon economy by 2038 at the latest.
- 2.15 The plan will look to improve air quality, protect the environment and create better access to green spaces and nature. The plan builds on the West Yorkshire Combined Authority's ongoing work to tackle the climate emergency which has contributed to an overall 38% reduction in carbon emissions in the Leeds City Region since 2005, compared to 27% nationally.
- 2.16 Transport has a fundamental role to play in the plan, including delivery of the Connectivity Infrastructure Plan, bus reform, improved active travel opportunities and future rail provision. A link to the plan is provided in **Background Documents**.

### **Department for Transport Consultation on Key Route Networks**

- 2.17 Further to the update at the last Transport Committee, the Combined Authority submitted a response to the DfT consultation seeking views on the application of Key Route Network (KRN) powers given to Metro Mayors and Combined Authorities, seeking feedback on their effectiveness and any gaps in powers.
- 2.18 The existing discretionary KRN powers were only recently made available in West Yorkshire as part of the mayoral devolution deal. Further work will be undertaken in partnership with constituent highway authorities to develop an appropriate KRN response. This will enable the interventions identified in the

Combined Authority's Bus Service Improvement Plan and City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement proposals, and to achieve the Mayor's ambitions and priorities in relation to bus reform and delivery of a mass transit system.

- 2.19 A copy of the submission is included at **Appendix 1**.

### Rail updates

#### Rail Expert Panel

- 2.20 The Rail Expert Panel hosted by Cllr Groves took place on the 1 October 2020. The meeting was attended by the train operators, Network Rail, TfN alongside Combined Authority officers.
- 2.21 The meeting was updated on the progress of the Rail Strategy work. The attendees were also asked for their input and feedback on the first chapter which will be published which covers rail network capacity. The group felt that the plans were ambitious and as well as major projects, plans and priorities for the next 5-10 years should also be clearly identified.
- 2.22 To ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion considerations are fully embedded in the Rail Strategy the group was asked for ideas and best practice which their organisations followed to help further inform the Authority's work.

#### Manchester Recovery Taskforce

- 2.23 A joint announcement between DfT and TfN and was made on 12 October 2021 (a link is provided in **Background Documents**). This confirmed the selection of an 'Option B+' as the outcome to the consultation undertaken by the Manchester Recovery Task Force in early 2021. For West Yorkshire, this should mean more a more reliable timetable from December 2022, but also means that half-hourly services to Manchester Airport will not be restored, with services remaining on an hourly basis. The frequency of trains between West Yorkshire and Manchester is otherwise expected to be restored.
- 2.24 At the time of writing a consultation on the details of the proposed timetable is expected to be launched by mid November. It was hoped that more frequent calls could be accommodated at Slaithwaite and Marsden as part of these changes. Discussions with TransPennine Express suggest that these cannot be accommodated at present, but TransPennine Express is clear that these remain a priority for future timetable changes in West Yorkshire.
- 2.25 The announcement on 12 October also confirmed commitment to a joint 'rail map' setting out a process for incremental network investment and timetable improvements around central Manchester to deliver benefits across the North. This will be developed over coming months and respond to the outcomes of the Integrated Rail Plan and Comprehensive Spending Review. This work will continue to be progressed under the auspices of the joint Manchester

Recovery Task Force comprising DfT, Network Rail, operators, TfN and Transport for Greater Manchester.

### East Coast Mainline Timetable Changes

- 2.26 Following the announcement in August that the proposed timetable change in May 2022 has been deferred, discussions are ongoing with operators about the future timetable for the East Coast Main Line, both directly and via TfN.
- 2.27 LNER has offered reassurances that the two trains each way per day service between Bradford, Shipley and London will continue meanwhile, and the industry is now seeking to retain these services as part of any timetable change. The proposed overall timetable change is now expected for May 2023 at the soonest. LNER has also confirmed that it is preparing to introduce a daily return service between Huddersfield, Dewsbury, and London, which is expected from May 2022 at the latest.
- 2.28 A further round of consultation on revised proposals for the East Coast Main Line timetable is expected to follow later in 2021.

### Integrated Rail Plan

- 2.29 Following the Oakervee Review of HS2 in February 2020, the government announced its intention to draw up an Integrated Rail Plan (IRP) for the North and the Midlands which will identify the most effective scoping, phasing and sequencing of relevant investments and how to integrate HS2, Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR), Midlands Engine Rail and other proposed rail investments.
- 2.30 At the time of writing the IRP had not been published. Subject to its timely publication prior to the Committee meeting, a verbal summary of the headlines and implications of the IRP will be provided at the Committee meeting.

## **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. The important links between tackling the climate emergency are set out in the West Yorkshire Climate and Environment Plan.
- 3.2 TfN has explicitly identified that its update to the Strategic Transport Plan will respond to its Decarbonisation Strategy, which it expects to agree in November 2021.

## **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.

## **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 and policies. Discussion at the Rail Expert Panel sought to canvass experience from within the rail industry on successful measures to ensure these objectives are embodied in the Combined Authority's rail strategy work.
- 5.2 TfN has also identified the need to ensure the needs of all transport users are properly reflected in the update to the Strategic Transport Plan.

## **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/> .

'High performing rail timetable announced for Manchester' – joint announcement by DfT and TfN, available via this link:

<https://transportfornorth.com/press-release/high-performing-rail-timetable-announced-for-manchester/>

The West Yorkshire Climate and Environment Plan 2021-2024 is available via this link: <https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/media/7382/west-yorkshire-climate-and-environment-plan.pdf>

## **12. Appendices**

Appendix 1 – West Yorkshire response to the Department for Transport Consultation on Key Route Networks.