

Report to: West Yorkshire Combined Authority

Date: 9 December 2021

Subject: **City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement and Connectivity Infrastructure Plan Next Steps**

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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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input 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 report the responses from the public engagement on the draft West Yorkshire Connectivity Infrastructure Plan and supporting documents including the Future Mobility Strategy
- 1.2 To seek approval to make proposed changes to the draft Connectivity Infrastructure Plan; and Moving Forward – a Future Mobility Strategy - for adoption.
- 1.3 To seek approval to submit a City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement Programme Business Case to the Department for Transport.

2. Information

Background

- 2.1 The Combined Authority meeting of 10 December 2020 agreed to commence engagement on a draft West Yorkshire Connectivity Infrastructure Plan and supporting documents, to start in January 2021.
- 2.2 The Connectivity Plan sets out a transport infrastructure investment programme for 20 years, to 2040, providing a spatial picture of where

improvements are most needed to stimulate inward investment and improve people's quality of life, building on key growth areas. The plan's theme is that our places have out-grown our transport system and over-reliance on the car is damaging business, the environment and the health of residents.

- 2.3 The plan focusses on a sustainable future through addressing three strategic challenges:
- Connecting Everyone – supporting Inclusive growth and reducing the productivity gap by giving attention to the connectivity needs for our more disadvantaged and peripheral communities
 - Climate Change – accelerating the decarbonisation of the transport sector
 - COVID-19 - supporting a green recovery from economic recession
- 2.4 The plan was developed with the input of all the partner councils. The evidence led approach involved two years of evidence collection and analysis to identify connectivity challenges and solutions. The result is a London tube-style map showing a future vision of an integrated transport system for West Yorkshire, and a set of options for improving transport infrastructure and connectivity for bus, rail, cycling, walking, mass transit, digital demand responsive transport and the car. Emphasis was given to how different modes and services could best be integrated to enable journeys that are easy to make from doorstep to destination.
- 2.5 The Connectivity Plan is an over-arching document. It is accompanied by related documents providing detail on specific themes or modes of travel:
- Mass Transit Vision 2020
 - Rail Vision and Strategy
 - Moving Forward – a Future Mobility Strategy for West Yorkshire
 - Bus Network Review
 - Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans

Connectivity Plan Engagement

- 2.6 The public and stakeholder engagement ran from 27 January to 4 June 2021 (breaking for the purdah period during May elections). It featured:
- Online questionnaire survey - for views on proposals for all modes;
 - Detailed Mass Transit Survey - for views on proposed corridors;
 - Interactive map - to place comments on issues and improvements;
 - Focus groups - with young people, disability and interest groups; and
 - Social media campaigns.
- 2.7 There was a total of 430,000 social media views of the engagement material, and the engagement received 7800 responses across surveys, polls, the interactive map and stakeholder feedback, making it the largest consultation response of its type that the Combined Authority has run.
- 2.8 A detailed report of the analysis of engagement responses will be published on the Combined Authority's website alongside the updated Connectivity

Report. The headline findings are of high levels of support from respondents to the key themes and approach of the plans.

- Support for the plan's key priorities: Inclusive growth, 95% support; COVID-19 recovery, 90%; Climate change, 89%.
- Support for the central theme of providing alternatives to private car use by joining up other forms of transport for easy door-to-door journeys: 89% support
- Support for the place types to target with transport investment: New Employment growth, 95% support; Main cities & towns, 95%; Areas of deprivation, 91%; and New Housing growth, 87%
- Support for investing in specific modes of transport:
 - 94% support for our Rail Vision
 - 90% support for our proposals to improve the quality of buses, including 89% for Core bus network improvements: 89% for expanding the bus network: 84% for increasing bus priority
 - 87% support for the Mass Transit Vision
 - 80% support for our Walking and cycling plans

2.9 The survey questionnaire invited respondents to provide additional comments. Key themes that emerged are identified in Appendix 1. Some key recurring themes were

- The plan is not bold enough on decarbonisation (- countered by some views that climate change should not be a priority).
- The bus and cycling offer currently fall short of expectations and much effort and investment is needed to make both realistic alternatives to the car (- countered by some views that investment in bus lanes will increase congestion and that cycling is an unrealistic option).

2.10 Respondents could also provide commentary on specific locational issues. In respect of key places to connect, the network map is found to be comprehensive, but a number of responses related to Wetherby and the surrounding villages of north-east outer Leeds being considered as overlooked. Wetherby is identified in the draft plan, but comments highlighted concerns with a lack of connectivity to Leeds and the neighbouring areas of York and Harrogate, lack of detail on public transport solutions and concerns with traffic congestion and the impacts of traffic on the safety of cycling

2.11 The Mass Transit Vision 2040 attracted the largest number of detailed responses through the engagement. An updated version of the Mass Transit Vision will be brought to a future meeting the Combined Authority.

Proposed amendments to the Connectivity Plan

2.12 The plan and associated documents appear to have landed well with positive feedback from the public and stakeholders. There is support for the key proposition of investing in, and better integrating, sustainable transport. On this basis of the positive feedback, it is recommended that there should be:

- No fundamental changes to the Connectivity Plan's core content
- No fundamental changes to the tube-style network map
- Some amendments made to respond to detailed feedback

- Some amendments to respond to changes in the policy and funding context since the plan's publication.
 - Some amendments to correct text and maps
- 2.13 The recommended changes to the Connectivity Plan will require amended or additional text. Key proposed amendments are identified in Appendix Table 1.
- 2.14 A 'you said, we did' report will also be produced to complement the updated Connectivity Plan document and the report of engagement analysis. This will be published alongside the updated Connectivity Plan document.
- 2.15 The Connectivity Plan is a live document which will continue to evolve over time with national policy and local policy for growth and decarbonisation and more opportunities to fund the Connectivity Plan become available.

Moving Forward – a Future Mobility Strategy for West Yorkshire

- 2.16 The Combined Authority has been working with partner councils alongside academics, transport operators and industry to explore how technology and innovation in transport can help meet our wider goals. The Future Mobility Strategy is the result of this work and sets out how new forms of transport and mobility services can help us to build a more prosperous region, improve people's quality of life, and reduce carbon emissions.
- 2.17 The Future Mobility Strategy has been developed to support the delivery of the West Yorkshire Transport Strategy 2040, Connectivity Infrastructure Plan (which was consulted on by the Combined Authority earlier this year) and Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) submitted in October 2021.
- 2.18 The objectives for Future Mobility in West Yorkshire have been defined in line with our wider regional priorities:
- Supporting and enabling inclusive growth and contributing towards productivity.
 - Contributing towards the region's objectives of becoming zero carbon by 2038 with significant progress by 2030.
 - Helping achieve modal shift targets for bus, rail, walking and cycling whilst reducing reliance on private car use as outlined in the West Yorkshire Transport Strategy 2040.
 - Helping to reduce transport related emissions to make a positive contribution towards tackling the Climate Emergency.
 - Helping to better plan and manage all of our transport networks to transform the affordability, ease and experience current and future users.
 - Contributing towards the Region's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 2.19 The Strategy sets out the principles and priorities for work on future mobility over the short, medium and long term (0-2 years, 2-5 years and 5-10 years) and is focussed around thematic areas. These themes have been developed to reflect the Combined Authority's priorities in response to our wider ambitions. An action plan has been developed covering each thematic area.

However, it is likely that these priorities will evolve over time as to technology developments and new trends emerge and the action will be reviewed regularly to reflect these changes. Delivery of the action plan sits alongside the Connectivity Plan, BSIP and City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS). The CRSTS settlement and BSIP will potentially provide routes to fund the actions identified in the Future Mobility Strategy.

Moving Forward – a Future Mobility Strategy for West Yorkshire – consultation

- 2.20 Ongoing engagement with stakeholders, elected members and the wider public has been vital to the development of the Strategy to identify opportunities to develop the region's capability to deliver our future mobility priorities and action plans. A series of thematic workshops were held with our partner councils alongside academics, transport operators, technology providers and the wider industry between November 2019 and February 2020. These sessions were used to identify opportunities, develop an understanding of current and future innovations, and test priorities and actions for future mobility in West Yorkshire.
- 2.21 Public consultation on the Future Mobility Strategy was undertaken during 2020 and it was also included in the public consultation on the draft Connectivity Plan which was undertaken via the Your Voice platform between January and June 2021.
- 2.22 Both consultation exercises were designed to seek views on the draft Strategy from partners, advocacy groups, academics, transport operators and wider industry, alongside those who live, work and visit West Yorkshire. Almost 7,000 responses to the Connectivity Plan full survey (including the Future Mobility Strategy) were received. Full details of the consultation and its outcomes will be published in due course. The general comments received as part of the consultation were used to shape the final version of the Future Mobility Strategy.
- 2.23 Once the Future Mobility Strategy is approved, work will commence in collaboration with partners to deliver the Future Mobility Action Plan. Where additional resources are required to support the delivery of actions, existing funding streams will be explored alongside potential external funding sources. This will build on the proposals included as part of the Bus Service Improvement Plan and City Region Transport Settlement.
- 2.24 The Combined Authority has also been observing with interest the ongoing national e-scooter trials being led by DfT and awaits the publication of the results which will help shape our own approach to this technology.
- 2.25 As yet it is unclear what the longer-term impacts of the recovery from COVID-19 will be, there is a level of uncertainty about how quickly some of the actions identified in this Strategy can be delivered. The actions identified within this Strategy will be reviewed in six months' time and if any changes to the timing or priority level of each action is required it will be made at that time.

Proposed amendments to the Future Mobility Strategy

2.26 The Future Mobility Strategy was received positively by stakeholders and there was widespread support for the principles for future mobility outlined in the Strategy (with 86% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the principles). There were some comments made on specific aspects of the Strategy and as a result of this feedback it is recommended that there should be:

- No fundamental change to the principles set out in the Strategy;
- Some amendments to the Strategy and action plan to respond to detailed feedback; and
- Some amendments to update the Strategy and action plan to reflect changes to policy and funding context since the consultation was undertaken (see Appendix 2).

2.27 The draft Future Mobility Strategy was discussed by Transport Committee at the meeting of 5 November. Comments suggested at this meeting are as follows:

- Title of the Strategy should be amended to tell more of the story of what the strategy is trying to achieve
- Link mobility hubs to areas of deprivation
- Ensure mention of improving productivity on the move is added
- Ensure more reference is made to Vision Zero

2.28 The Future Mobility Strategy is a live document which will continue to evolve over time with national policy and local policy for growth and decarbonisation and more opportunities to fund the action plan will become available.

City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS)

2.29 The draft Connectivity Infrastructure Plan has already been used to provide the core content of the Combined Authority's bid to the Government's City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement fund that was submitted to the Department of Transport (DfT) in September 2021.

2.30 The Combined Authority has been awarded £830m of CRSTS funding for the five-year period 2022/23 to 2026/27. The bid submission proposed programmes that met the £920 million high scenario, and £570 million low scenarios set by HM Treasury and DfT for West Yorkshire. The award is £90 million lower than the high scenario potential allocation, but Government had been clear that it would not fund any MCA to the full high scenario. Confirmation of success came in the Government's Autumn Spending Review on 27 October.

2.31 The funding will form a large part of the transport infrastructure and behaviour change programmes for the next five years, accelerating delivery of the Connectivity Infrastructure Plan's vision for transport, including delivery of a first phase of a Mass Transit network, planning for wider future delivery of

mass transit and delivering other sustainable transport infrastructure supported by comprehensive programmes of activity to support people across West Yorkshire to travel more sustainably and enable modal shift.

- 2.32 For the DfT to release the CRSTS funding it has identified it will require the Combined Authority to submit and published a Programme Business Case (PBC) that sets out the precise details of the CRSTS programme for delivery. Guidance is awaited from the DfT on the process and timetable for producing the PBC, but it is anticipated the PBC will be required by mid-January 2022, prior to the next meeting of the Combined Authority of 3 February 2022.
- 2.33 To develop the PBC West Yorkshire partners are in the process of reviewing the CRSTS Low and High scenario programmes and prioritise schemes to fit the actual funding award of £830 million. Prioritised programmes and schemes will need to be developed, including evidence of the expected outputs, impacts and benefits.
- 2.34 Given the expected deadline for submission, approval is sought for submission of the Programme Business Case to the Department for Transport, and delegation of approval to the Managing Director and the Mayor for the content and final appearance of the submission.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1 The Connectivity Plan, Moving Forward – a Future Mobility Strategy for West Yorkshire and the CRSTS programme are decarbonisation delivery plans focussed on accelerating initiatives to decarbonise transport and the economy in West Yorkshire, to deliver on Government and local commitments to decarbonisation, by providing for investment in sustainable transport options to reduce reliance on private car travel.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 4.1 A central common theme of the Connectivity Plan, Future Mobility Strategy and the CRSTS programme is that investment in transport accessibility will make a positive contribution to driving forward inclusive growth. Our approach to transport seeks to provide practical alternatives to the private car that will help to tackle air quality issues and help provide access to jobs and education, especially for people currently less likely to access these opportunities. Our plans particularly focus on how to support the hardest to reach communities to realise economic opportunities.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 5.1 Through the Combined Authority's role in managing the delivery of the Connectivity Plan and CRSTS programme focus will be placed on ensuring that equality and diversity needs are addressed, with a particular emphasis on improving accessibility for all

- 5.2 Enhancing the inclusivity of the transport system is at the centre of our Future Mobility Strategy, by improving the mobility network so as to be a seamless and attractive alternative to car-based mobility. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken as part of the Strategy. The Future Mobility Strategy will improve the transport links to opportunities, skills, education and employment for all. Enhancing provision and access to e-bikes, for example, not only offers access to enhanced mobility across age and disability, but also improves opportunities for improving health outcomes. These are being explored through our partnership work with the West Yorkshire & Harrogate Integrated Care Service.
- 5.3 The Strategy supports our inclusive growth goals through accessible alternatives to the private car that will help to tackle air quality issues and help provide access to jobs and education, especially for people currently less likely to access these opportunities. The Strategy also considers how to ensure how we can support the hardest to reach communities and groups that could be left behind as transport technology moves forward. The development of a mobility credits scheme (as proposed in the BSIP) will help to ensure that access to transport becomes more affordable for key groups including job seekers, refugees, carers and young people in further education and training.
- 5.4 New technology also provides the opportunity to tackle some of the equality, diversity and inclusion issues that have been highlighted through consultation with key interest groups whilst developing the BSIP. *An example of this would be – through the development of better journey planning and mobility as a service apps there will be less need for people to wait for their bus at a bus stop – instead being able to wait inside or at a well-lit location. This removes some of the safety concerns that particularly affect bus passengers travelling later at night or early in the mornings when it is dark.*
- 5.5 An Equality Impact Assessment for the Future Mobility Strategy is currently being undertaken.

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.
- 8.2 Funding for additional staff resource to deliver the schemes outlined in the CRSTS and BSIP has been included in both of these funding bids.

9. External Consultees

- 9.1 Both the Connectivity Plan and Future Mobility Strategy have been consulted on extensively with stakeholders and feedback has been collected as part of the engagement exercises for both strategies.

10. Recommendations

- 10.1 That the Combined Authority notes the feedback from the public engagement on the Connectivity Infrastructure plan and supporting documents.
- 10.2 That subject to the comments arising from recommendation 10.1 the Combined Authority approves the proposed amendments to the Connectivity Infrastructure Plan identified in Appendix 1 to receive an updated Final Connectivity Infrastructure Plan at its meeting of 3 February 2022.
- 10.3 That the Combined Authority approve the submission of a City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement Programme Business Case to the Department for Transport, delegating approval to the Managing Director and the Mayor for the content and final appearance of the Programme Business Case.
- 10.4 That subject to the comments arising from the consultation and Transport Committee meeting, the Combined Authority approves the proposed amendments to the Future Mobility Strategy. An updated Final Future Mobility Strategy will be presented at its meeting of 3 February 2022.

11. Background Documents

West Yorkshire Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) [West Yorkshire Bus Service Improvement Plan \(BSIP\) - Combined Authority | Unlocking potential, accelerating growth \(westyorks-ca.gov.uk\)](https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/transport-and-travel/westyorks-ca-bus-service-improvement-plan)

West Yorkshire City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) (to be published at a later date)

12. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Recommended changes to the Connectivity Infrastructure Plan

Appendix 2 – Future Mobility Strategy – addressing Mayoral priorities