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**Report to:** Transport Committee

**Date:** 4 March 2022

**Subject:** **Connectivity, Shared Transport and Mass Transit 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 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 type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

## 1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To provide Transport Committee with updates on the development of the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement submission to Government, the Connectivity and Shared Transport Strategies and Mass Transit.

## 2 Information

### City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement

- 2.1 West Yorkshire has been awarded an indicative total of £830 million City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement for the five-year period from April 2022, from an indicative range of £570 million to £920 million, subject to submission of a Programme Business Case to government.
- 2.2 The Combined Authority considered a report on the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement and Connectivity Plan at its meeting on 9 December (see **Background Documents**). This included approval for the Programme Business Case, with delegation to the Managing Director and Mayor for finalisation of the content and appearance. The finalised Programme Business

Case was submitted to government at the end of January 2022.

### **Connectivity Infrastructure Plan update**

- 2.3 A public engagement was held on the Connectivity Infrastructure Plan from 27th January to 4th June 2021. This was centred around a dedicated page of the Combined Authority's digital engagement hub, Your Voice, and available at: [www.yourvoice.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/connectivity](http://www.yourvoice.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/connectivity). This page housed a suite of documents including the Connectivity Infrastructure Plan, Case for Change reports and the Mass Transit vision and gave the opportunity to ask questions and access background materials. The engagement was promoted widely, this was primarily online due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and also included offline methods such as real time information displays. Alternative formats of the engagement materials were available upon request. The aim of the engagement was to inform the public of the Connectivity Infrastructure Plan and Mass Transit concept and proposals and seek public opinion on the plans.
- 2.4 The public engagement exercise yielded over 7000 responses across all the different feedback methods. Additionally, the reach of the engagement online and via social media exceeded 400,000 people.
- 2.5 The results of the surveys of the engagement suggest that there is widespread support for the measures proposed as part of the Connectivity Infrastructure Plan, including strong support for the priorities, types of areas that require intervention and proposals to join up different forms of transport. There was widespread agreement with the vision and proposals for Mass Transit and the dedicated Mass Transit survey also found strong levels of support for each of the proposed nine corridors.
- 2.6 There were some concerns around Covid-19 informing plans, both for longevity and to assess the long-term changes such as hybrid working. Additionally, some people felt the proposals did not go far enough in terms of scale and ambition and many felt the transport improvements should have already been delivered. Additionally, there were many alternative route configurations or suggestions of different places to connect.
- 2.7 Following the feedback from the engagement, the Connectivity Infrastructure Plan has been updated in line with the recommendations approved by the Combined Authority in December 2021. This includes a greater importance on the role of tackling climate change, inclusive growth and building an accessible and fit for purpose transport network for all. Additionally, the Connectivity Infrastructure Plan has been updated to ensure that small towns and suburban areas have the same transport access and opportunity as around our key towns and cities. The revised Connectivity Infrastructure Plan will be presented for discussion at the Combined Authority meeting in March. The feedback on additional places to connect and suggestions for public transport improvements has been considered and will inform the next stages of the Connectivity Infrastructure Plan and Mass Transit vision.

### **Shared Transport Strategy update**

- 2.8 The Shared Transport Strategy (formerly the Future Mobility Strategy) has been developed to support the delivery of the West Yorkshire Transport Strategy 2040 and Connectivity Infrastructure Plan, which was consulted on by the Combined Authority in 2021. The consultation suggested that there was widespread support for the proposals set out within the Strategy – some more specific comments have been included in the updated draft which will be presented to Combined Authority for approval in March.
- 2.9 Once the Shared Transport Strategy is approved, work will commence in collaboration with partners to deliver the Shared Transport Action Plan, alongside the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) and CRSTS programme. The BSIP and CRSTS package set out the vision and funding opportunities for buses in West Yorkshire which the Shared Transport Strategy will help to deliver. In particular, the BSIP objectives of delivering clear and simple fares and developing a radically enhanced, gender neutral and more cohesive bus and transport network are central to the development of the Shared Transport Strategy and delivery of the action plan within.
- 2.10 Where additional resources are required to support the delivery of actions, existing funding streams will be explored alongside potential external funding sources. Many of the items included within the Shared Transport Strategy also form part of the delivery plans for the BSIP and CRSTS programme. We await news of our funding settlement to determine whether these programmes can be delivered in their entirety.
- 2.11 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.

### **Mass Transit Update**

- 2.12 The development of the Strategic Outline Business Case for West Yorkshire Mass Transit continues. Mass Transit will be a large and complex programme with a pipeline of activity to design and deliver the project, benefiting the whole of the region, as articulated in the West Yorkshire Mass Transit Vision 2040 (see **Background Documents**). Lessons learnt from other schemes demonstrate the importance of the early strategic work activities and that decisions undertaken during the front-end planning stage of projects play a vital role in defining the need for a project and determining whether it's a success.
- 2.13 In November 2021 the Government published the Integrated Rail Plan (IRP). This confirms the 'in principle' funding for West Yorkshire Mass Transit. *"We commit today to building a Mass Transit System for Leeds and West Yorkshire, and to supporting West Yorkshire Combined Authority over the long term to ensure that this time, it gets done. That work begins now, with £200m of immediate funding to plan the project and start building it, with the first*

*services operational in the second half of this decade.”* (Page 7). The IRP also references that *“We intend for some parts to be in service by the second half of this decade. The cost for the initial network, over ten years, is expected to exceed £2bn.”* (Page 88). It was subsequently confirmed by officials that the £200m referenced in the IRP is the funding we have sought via City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) proposals.

- 2.14 Given the scale and importance of the Mass Transit project, the Combined Authority secured early assurance and peer review, and secure the input of Local Partnerships (a joint venture between Local Government Association and HM Treasury and the Welsh Government). A summary of the initial findings was reported to the Combined Authority meeting on 3 February 2022, at Appendix 1 of Item 10 (see **Background Documents**).
- 2.15 A key finding of the review was the need to increase resourcing and the capability of the Authority’s client function for the project. A recruitment process in late 2021 to secure a Head of Service with responsibility to lead the Mass Transit development programme failed to secure a suitable candidate.
- 2.16 Based on the peer review, the outcome of the earlier recruitment process and the increased certainty attached to the programme by government announcements in recent months, a recommendation was made to the Combined Authority to create a new role of Director of the West Yorkshire Mass Transit Programme. This was agreed by the Combined Authority at its meeting on 3 February 2022, with delegation to the Managing Director to progress the recruitment and appointment process.

### **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 now agreed its Transport Decarbonisation Strategy, which provides a valuable strategic framework for addressing the Climate Emergency. The CRSTS and Mass Transit programmes are fundamental to achieving the modal shift required to meet our ambitious targets.
- 3.3 The Shared Transport Strategy puts in place a series of actions to support carbon reduction in transport and will help to deliver our climate change ambitions by increasing sustainable alternatives to the private car use, that are easy to use, convenient and responsive to travel needs that support the behaviour change needed for significant model shift.

### **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 The contribution of the CRSTS programme to inclusive growth is being considered as part of the programme business case currently being developed. The Mass Transit business case work will similarly include assessments of the programme's contribution of our Inclusive Growth ambitions.
- 4.3 The Shared Transport Strategy supports the Combined Authority's inclusive growth goals through providing 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.

## **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. Individual schemes identified as part of the CRSTS programme will be subject to assessment to ensure that equality and diversity implications are understood.
- 5.2 The update to the Mass Transit Vision includes an additional section to set out how our approach to Mass Transit will secure is a 'best-in-class' system in relation to equality and diversity
- 5.3 Enhancing the inclusivity of the transport system is at the centre of our Shared Transport 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 Shared Transport 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.
- 5.4 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.
- 5.5 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 Bus Service Improvement Plan.

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.

## **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 As outlined above, the Connectivity Infrastructure Plan and Shared Transport Strategy have been consulted on extensively with stakeholders and put to the public as part of specific consultations undertaken during 2021.

## **10. Recommendations**

10.1 That the Transport Committee discusses the Connectivity Infrastructure Plan and West Yorkshire Shared Transport Strategy as part of the wider West Yorkshire Transport Plan suite of documents and recommends it for discussion at the Combined Authority (for their approval).

## **11. Background Documents**

*West Yorkshire Mass Transit Vision 2040*, Working draft for engagement, January 2021, is available along with other Connectivity Infrastructure Plan documents here: <https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/improving-transport/connectivity/>

*West Yorkshire Mass Transit Resourcing*, Item 10, West Yorkshire Combined Authority, 3 February 2022, available here: <https://westyorkshire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=133&MIId=1084&Ver=4>

## **12. Appendices**

None.