

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
TRANSPORT COMMITTEE
HELD ON FRIDAY, 1 JULY 2022 AT COMMITTEE ROOM 1,
WELLINGTON HOUSE, LEEDS**

Present:

Councillor Susan Hinchcliffe (Chair)	Bradford Council
Councillor Manisha Roma Kaushik (Deputy Chair)	Kirklees Council
Councillor Peter Carlill (Deputy Chair)	Leeds City Council
Councillor Neil Buckley	Leeds City Council
Councillor Peter Caffrey	Calderdale Council
Councillor Peter Clarke	Bradford Council
Councillor Helen Hayden	Leeds City Council
Councillor Colin Hutchinson	Calderdale Council
Councillor Hassan Khan	Bradford Council
Councillor Matthew McLoughlin	Kirklees Council
Councillor Alex Ross-Shaw	Bradford Council
Councillor Taj Salam	Bradford Council
Councillor Jane Scullion	Calderdale Council
Councillor Kevin Swift	Wakefield Council
Councillor Eleanor Thomson	Leeds City Council
Councillor Izaak Wilson	Leeds City Council
Amir Hussain	LEP

In attendance:

Dave Pearson	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Liz Hunter	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Craig Taylor	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Andrew Fitzpatrick	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Ian Parr	West Yorkshire Combined Authority

1. Chair's Introduction

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting, highlighting the changes made to the membership of the Committee, and invited a round of introductions for the benefit of all in attendance.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Bolt, Cllr Butt, Cllr Cunningham, Cllr D'Agorne, Cllr Firth, Cllr Jones, and Cllr Morley

3. Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests

Cllr Salam declared an interest in the BSIP Enhanced Partnership Scheme item owing to his employment with First Bus.

4. Exempt information - possible exclusion of the press and public

Resolved: That in accordance with paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Appendix 6 to Agenda Item 13 on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information and for the reasons set out in the report that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

5. Minutes of the meeting of the Transport Committee held on 27 May 2022

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the Transport Committee held on 27 May 2022 be approved and signed by the Chair.

6. Governance Arrangements

The Transport Committee considered a report to provide an update on the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) and the next steps for the West Yorkshire Bus Alliance and the Enhanced Partnership.

Officers explained the BSIP funding for the benefit of new Committee members, which amounts to £70 million of funding over the next three financial years. This funding will be used for improvements across the bus service, and sits alongside other funding streams which are already in place. The costed proposals for how the BSIP funding will be spent has been sent to the Department for Transport, which is expected to respond and provide final approval of the funding in July 2022.

The Chair welcomed the funding given that other authorities had not been successful in their bids, and expressed frustration that the Bus Recovery Grant will be ending in October 2022 which will significantly impact operators. Officers confirmed that it is important to utilise the BSIP funding for improvements and there will be other means to explore to offset the loss of the Recovery Grant.

Members questioned how the transport network will be developed to keep pace with future travel habits. Officers agreed that travel patterns are changing and the routes in service today may not meet the needs of travellers in ten years. Work is ongoing to identify passenger trends and offer services that meet the needs of passengers.

Members highlighted the impact of the Arriva bus strikes on the communities in Wakefield, and questioned how operator compensation is calculated. Officers replied that there is ongoing work to determine the funding amounts

for operators as there are many variables to consider and many means of capturing the necessary data. The eventual outcome will be agreed with operators and legally codified to ensure it is appropriate.

Members raised the need to listen to the voices of the community, and that cheaper, simpler fares is a key factor that would encourage much more bus use particularly among young people.

Resolved: That the Transport Committee:

Noted the terms of reference for Transport Committee attached as Appendix 1 to this report, and the role profiles for committee members set out at Appendix 2. 8

Noted the appointments made by the Combined Authority, as set out at paragraphs 2.2 and 2.3.

Established an Active Travel Working Group for the municipal year 2022/23, with the terms of reference and arrangements as set out in Appendix 3 to this report.

Established a Climate, Energy and Environment Working Group for the municipal year 2022/23, with the terms of reference and arrangements as set out in Appendix 4 to this report.

7. BSIP Enhanced Partnership Scheme

Resolved: That the Transport Committee:

Noted the update on the Bus Service Improvement Plan.

Endorsed a recommendation to the Combined Authority making of an Enhanced Partnership Scheme to enable delivery of the Bus Service Improvement Plan

8. Bus Network Sustainability

Members considered a report to update them on the progress of the Bus Network Sustainability Review, and to seek the Committee's endorsement of a pro forma return to the Department for Transport detailing the position regarding the Review.

Officers explained that over the course of the pandemic, bus use fell across all regions of West Yorkshire and has not recovered to pre-pandemic levels, resulting in lower revenues. Operators were supported by central grant and local government grants based on the number of passengers pre-pandemic, but the Government provided notice in March 2022 to end funding in October 2022. A condition of the bus grant was to carry out a joint review of the financial sustainability of buses to identify ways to increase passenger levels.

There is a chance that operators will reduce services as some have been in Wakefield and Kirklees. There will be smaller scale service changes and all bus operators have reduced service frequencies due to driver shortage. Some routes may be cut if they are deemed to be unviable, but there are legal processes operators have to follow if they are to be discontinued. The Combined Authority has supported operators with buses and training for new drivers to cover shortages and has encouraged operators to be patient while new schemes to attract passengers are introduced.

Members raised concerns regarding the reduction of services, and voiced the need to work closely with operators to strengthen relationships with communities and identify more ways to encourage passengers to use buses. Members suggested further avenues of funding such as links with local and national businesses.

Resolved: That the Transport Committee:

Noted the current position with the Bus Network Sustainability Review and endorses the submission of an update to the Department for Transport on the Bus Network Sustainability Review.

Endorsed the approach to develop a Bus Network Development Plan.

9. Signoff of the State of the Region Transport Theme Indicators

Members considered a report to seek the committee's approval for headline indicators related to transport to be included in the second iteration of the West Yorkshire State of the Region report to be published later this year. Officers explained that the Combined Authority will be publishing second iteration of the State of the Region report, the first of which was published in September 2021.

Members raised concerns that the indicators don't specify carbon reduction or clean air measures. Officers responded that the indicators are cross-cutting and cover many aspects, there is a longer list of indicators which does include air quality and carbon emissions, as was included in the 2021 report.

Resolved: That the Committee reviewed the proposed indicators with a view to approving them and / or amending them or suggesting additional indicators.

10. Passenger Experience Update Report

The Committee considered a report which provided a quarterly update on the performance of the transport network in West Yorkshire, including an update of the Combined Authority's passenger-facing activity.

Members raised concerns caused by the Arriva bus strikes in Wakefield, as well as reductions in other bus and rail services as a result of driver shortages. A representative for TransPennine Express informed the Committee that absence due to positive Covid-19 tests remain high, but

there are other factors including mental health and other illnesses which prevent drivers from working. More help for staff is being implemented to reduce current issues and prevent future absences as much as is possible.

Resolved: That the Committee noted the updates provided on the Passenger Experience in West Yorkshire provided in this report.

11. Transport Policy Update

Transport Committee members were provided with an update on relevant transport policy developments. Members asked how more information regarding cycling and walking can be accessed, as well as more information on schemes that are being funded.

Members noted that there are more considerations to be made for active travel, for example maintaining existing pathways that are prone to becoming overgrown, thereby restricting access.

Resolved: That the Committee noted the updates provided in this report.

12. Introduction to the Assurance Framework

Members were provided with an introduction to the Combined Authority Assurance Framework.

Resolved: That the Transport Committee noted the Introduction to the Assurance Framework presentation.

13. Capital Spending and Project Approvals

Transport Committee members were presented with five schemes for approval to continue through the Assurance Process.

Corridor Improvement Programme – A638 Wakefield/Doncaster Road

Officers summarised the scheme as presented in the report.

Transport Committee members voted to approve the scheme.

Leeds City Centre Cycle Connectivity

Officers summarised the scheme as presented in the report, and notified the Committee Members of an alteration on page 132 of the pack which should read that the phase 2 decision in January 2023 is delegated to the Managing Director

Members raised concerns about the limited data in the report to suggest why the scheme should go ahead. Officers responded that the scheme has economic merits as well as benefits to passengers, and data has been taken from previous similar schemes to justify its worth.

Members questioned if the cost of the scheme includes possible overspend, as well as the perceived high cost compared to other schemes. Officers responded that there is a standard overspend budget that is applied to all projects, and that scheme costs are dependent upon the location.

Transport Committee members voted to approve the scheme.

Leeds Station Sustainable Travel Gateway

Officers summarised the scheme as presented in the report.

Officers explained that despite a relatively low value for money figure, the scheme will deliver large benefits to pedestrians and active travel, which doesn't factor as heavily into Department for Transport appraisal guidance. The scheme includes a dedicated privately-operated cycle storage facility which will encourage more active travel into the city.

Members questioned if the ownership of the land will change as a part of the scheme, officers replied that the land has always been owned by Network Rail.

Transport Committee members voted to approve the scheme.

Zero emission bus phase 1

Officers summarised the scheme as presented in the report.

Members questioned what would happen to older buses following the introduction of zero emission buses. Officers responded there are agreements with operators that buses will align with euro 6 standards. It is not known how buses will be upgraded or redeployed on a case-by-case basis but there will be no net reduction in compliance.

Members queried if bus depots are also meeting standards to reduce their carbon emissions. Officers responded that depots are not currently equipped to charge all buses and will require more space. The issues has been acknowledged and future proposals include developments to depots to provide more electric vehicle compatibility.

Members questioned the disparity between the number of buses for Leeds compared with the other West Yorkshire districts. Officers responded that more buses will be made available for other districts, and this is only the initial phase of a much larger project.

Transport Committee members voted to approve the scheme

Resolved:

With respect to the Corridor Improvement Programme – Wakefield A638 Doncaster Road, the Transport Committee approved that:

- (i) The A638 Doncaster Road Wakefield scheme proceeds through decision

point 3 (outline business case) and work commences on activity 4 (full business case)

(ii) An indicative approval to the Combined Authority's contribution of £6,300,000. The total scheme value is £6,794,000.

(iii) Development costs of £1,090,000 are approved in order to progress the scheme to decision point 4 (full business case), taking the total scheme approval to £1,650,000.

(iv) The Combined Authority enters into an addendum to the existing funding agreement with Wakefield Council for expenditure of up to £1,650,000.

(v) Future approvals are made in accordance with the assurance pathway and approval route outlined in this report. This will be subject to the scheme remaining within the tolerances outlined in this report.

With respect to the Leeds City Centre Cycle Connectivity, the Transport Committee approved that:

(i) The Leeds City Centre Cycle Connectivity Scheme (phase one) progresses through decision point 5 (full business case) and work commences on activity 5 (delivery)

(ii) An indicative approval to the Combined Authority's contribution of £7,262,173. The total scheme value (Phase 1 and 2) is £7,262,173.

(iii) Approval to the Combined Authority's contribution of £3,769,199 is given, taking the total scheme approval to £5,004,199.

(iv) The Combined Authority enters a variation to the existing funding agreement with Leeds City Council for expenditure of up to £4,862,819.

(v) Future approvals are made in accordance with the assurance pathway and approval route outlined in this report. This will be subject to the scheme remaining within the tolerances outlined in this report.

With respect to the TCF – Leeds Station Sustainable Travel Gateway, The Transport Committee, subject to the conditions set by the Programme Appraisal Team, approved:

(i) The TCF Leeds Station Sustainable Travel Gateway scheme proceeds through decision point 4 (FBC) and work commences on activity 5 (Delivery).

(ii) Approval to the Combined Authority contribution of £25,673,833 is given, taking the total scheme approval to £36,009,872. The total scheme value is £36,009,872.

(iii) The Combined Authority enters into a variation to the existing funding agreement with Leeds City Council for expenditure of up to £36,009,872.

(iv) Future approvals are made in accordance with the assurance pathway

and approval route outlined in this report. This will be subject to the scheme remaining within the tolerances outlined in this report.

Conditions

That Leeds City Council provides an Approval to Proceed report to the Combined Authority's Programme Appraisal Team (PAT) to include discharge of the conditions outlined in the PAT Appraisal Report.

With respect to Zero Emissions Bus Regional Area (Phase 1), the Transport Committee approved that, subject to the conditions set by PAT:

(i) The Zero Emission Bus Regional Area (Phase 1) project proceeds through decision point 4 (full business case) and work commences on Activity 5 (delivery).

(ii) Approval to the Combined Authority's contribution of £24,565,171. The total scheme value is £56,161,738.

(iii) The Combined Authority enters into funding agreements with the three bus operators for the sums included in exempt Appendix 6 for expenditure of up to of £24,565,171.

(iv) That future approvals are made in accordance with the assurance pathway and approval route outlined in this report. This will be subject to the scheme remaining within the tolerances outlined in this report.

Conditions

The following conditions have been set by PAT to gain Approval to Proceed to Delivery:

(i) The Combined Authority's Project Manager will have been appointed.

(ii) A Benefits Realisation Plan is produced.

(iii) The ZEB Programme Board is formed including the Project Managers from each Bus Operating Company.

With respect to the Active Travel Fund: Local Authority Capital Funding, the Transport Committee approved that:

(i) The change request to extend the scheme delivery timescales from March 2023 to March 2024 and to change the scope of the programme from 13 schemes to five due to a reduction in funding available from the Department for Transport to £6,931,250.

(ii) An indicative approval to the Combined Authority's contribution of £6,931,250. The total scheme value is £6,931,250.

(iii) Approval to the Combined Authority's contribution of £2,146,250, allocated between the Combined Authority and the West Yorkshire partners as set out below. The total scheme value is £6,931,250:

- o Bradford – Active Travel Neighbourhoods £525,000
- o Calderdale – Active Travel Neighbourhoods £475,000
- o West Yorkshire – School Streets Programme £350,000
- o Bradford – Darley Street (Bradford City Centre) £600,000
- o Combined Authority programme costs £196,250

(iv) The Combined Authority enters into funding agreements with the Local Authority partners for the four schemes as set out above for current expenditure of up to £1,950,000 in total.

(v) Future approvals are made in accordance with the assurance pathway and approval routes outlined in this report. This will be subject to the schemes remaining within the tolerances outlined in this report.