

Report to: Transport Committee

Date: 10 February 2023

Subject: **Transport Policy Update Report**

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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 provide Transport Committee with a quarterly update on relevant transport policy developments not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

2. Information

Transport for the North updates

Transport for the North Board

- 2.1 The Transport for the North (TfN) Board last met on 14 December 2022. This meeting considered the following substantive items:

- **Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review (NPIER) Update** which highlighted the ongoing productivity gap between the North and other parts of England. Members welcomed this important work.
- **Strategic Transport Plan (STP) Development**, where members endorsed the basic priorities to be embodied in the revised STP. The importance of being clear on regional and local roles was emphasised. A draft of the revised STP is expected to be shared for the next Board meeting in March.

- **The Future of Rail in the North**, where members received a further update on rail matters (see also Rail North Committee below). Members expressed serious concerns about TPE's performance, with a call for TPE to be put on notice unless improvement is seen. TfN was asked to develop an action plan to secure improvements.
- **Transport and Health Policy Position**, which was endorsed and welcomed by members. This will now feed into the Strategic Transport Plan work.

2.2 The next meeting of the TfN Board is due to take place on 23 March 2023. A link to papers and webcasts of the TfN Board meetings is provided in **Background Documents**.

Rail North Committee

2.3 Rail North Committee met on 15 November 2022, and considered the following substantive items:

- **The Future of Rail in the North**. This session heard from the rail operators regarding recent performance. Members reiterated the need for a clear and deliverable recovery plan, emphasising the need to better communication to passengers. Members also underlined the importance of the North's rail services in light of concerns that operators are being asked to find significant cost savings by DfT. The overwhelming need for rail reform and devolution was also highlighted. It was resolved that TfN should further engage the Secretary of State on these points.
- **Rail North Partnership Update** where members were updated on the latest performance position. This highlighted a series of challenges operators have been facing. Members reiterated the important role for government to provide the mandate to operators to settle industrial disputes and also to reinstate rest day working agreements.
- **Manchester Task Force** where members were updated on the latest position on the work of the Manchester Recovery Task Force. After December 2022, the next major timetable change is expected to be in 2025. Members pressed the need for the new timetable in December to deliver the promised reliability improvements.
- **East Coast Mainline Services and Infrastructure** which updated on the plans for the line, including the Leeds area works. The need for the terms of reference for the Leeds Area Study promised as part of the Integrated Rail Plan in late 2021 was emphasised.
- **Reliability and Resilience Plan**, where members were briefly updated on the small-scale network interventions that TfN is promoting with the industry and DfT to improve reliability of services.

- 2.4 The next meeting of Rail North Committee is 22 February 2023. A link to papers and webcasts of the Rail North Committee is provided in **Background Documents**.

Other Transport for the North matters

- 2.5 TfN has confirmed its new Directors. Darren Oldham is the new Road and Rail Director, and Deputy Chief Executive. Darren has over 30 years of experience in planning, regeneration and transport sectors and is a Chartered Transport Planner. He joins TfN from WSP where he was an Executive Director.
- 2.6 Katie Day is the new Strategy, Policy and Communications Director. Katie joins TfN from the Office for Nuclear Regulation, where she was the Director of Policy and Communications; previously she worked at the Department of Business, leading work on the Regional Growth Fund.
- 2.7 Finally, the new Finance Director is Paul Kelly. Paul was previously interim Finance Director and took up the permanent role in November.
- 2.8 Darren Oldham and Katie Day take up their roles this month. These appointments mark the completion of TfN's reorganisation in the context of the new business plan prompted by changes including recasting TfN's role on Northern Powerhouse Rail to that of co-sponsor.

Rail updates

Transpennine Route Upgrade(TRU)

- 2.9 TRU is a major, multi-billion-pound programme of railway improvements which will bring better journeys to passengers travelling across the Pennines between Manchester, Huddersfield, Leeds and York. The programme is gaining momentum and we will see tangible improvements in West Yorkshire this year. However, this will also mean that commuters might need to plan and change their travel patterns during construction.
- 2.10 Network Rail will be providing a direct briefing to our members on 3 February 2023 regarding the progress of the programme, the impact on rail journeys and proposals on alternative travel arrangements. There will be an opportunity for members to raise questions directly with Network Rail.
- 2.11 Further work is set to take place at Morley station over nine days, from 4 to 12 February 2023. The work will include laying foundation for the new platforms, upgrading and realigning track and preparation work for the overhead line equipment. During this time, no trains will run directly between Huddersfield and Leeds. The following arrangements will be in place:
- TransPennine Express services will still be running but will be diverted between Huddersfield and Leeds via Wakefield. Passengers are

advised to check before they travel, and these journeys will take up to 15 minutes longer.

- For passengers travelling to and from Dewsbury, an express rail replacement bus service will run between Huddersfield and Leeds, calling at Dewsbury only.
 - For passengers travelling to and from Deighton, Mirfield, Ravensthorpe, Batley, Morley and Cottingley, a local rail replacement bus service will run between Huddersfield and Leeds, calling at all stops, including Dewsbury.
- 2.12 There will be major upgrades at Stalybridge in Manchester which will include a full junction remodelling and new signalling equipment. Preparation work will take place over three weekends (18 to 19 Feb, 25 to 26 Feb and 4 to 5 March). The main work will then take place over 26 days, from 11 March to 5 April 2023. During the works, passengers will be kept on the move by TransPennine Express and Northern Rail by a mixture of rail diversionary routes and rail replacement buses.
- 2.13 There will be further works planned in June in Batley, and improvement works will be carried out between Huddersfield and Mirfield between July and October.
- 2.14 The rail industry intends to keep passengers moving on trains as much as possible so that key towns and cities on the Transpennine route could be well connected and open for business. This will be done via using diversionary routes via Castleford, Wakefield and the Calder Valley. For further information about the programme, its benefits and upcoming closures, please visit [Home - Transpennine Route Upgrade \(thetrupgrade.co.uk\)](https://www.thetrupgrade.co.uk).

West Yorkshire Rail Strategy

- 2.15 An emerging rail strategy and executive summary have been shared with members and district partners. The Combined Authority will consult the public regarding the emerging Rail Strategy as part of the Local Transport Plan 4 consultation later this year, so that the public could see how the rail could fit with other modes of transport as part of the integrated transport network.

Levelling Up Fund

- 2.16 In June 2022 the Combined Authority authorised the Managing Director to finalise and submit a bid to round 2 of the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) on behalf of the Combined Authority in consultation with the Mayor and partner authority Leaders, and the bid was submitted in August 2022.
- 2.17 In January 2023, Government confirmed that the Combined Authority's bid was provisionally successful, subject to further business case approval. Work will now begin on further development of the business cases for the component schemes to proceed through the Assurance process.
- 2.18 The total value of the proposed package of schemes bid for was £47.25 million, with £41.25 million of LUF funding sought, and £6 million of match

funding made up of gainshare capital and West Yorkshire-plus Transport Fund funding.

- 2.19 Government expects all Levelling Up Funding to be spent by 31 March 2025, and by 2025-26 on an exceptional basis e.g., for large projects between £20 million and £50 million (as with the West Yorkshire bid).
- 2.20 The successful package bid includes two corridor schemes supporting bus journeys with bus priority measures, improvements to journey times for all traffic and provision of better cycling and walking facilities on the A629 North in Halifax (Orange Street roundabout to Ogden), and A639 Park Road in Pontefract. These schemes have been developed to date through the West Yorkshire-plus Transport Fund's Corridor Improvement Programme.
- 2.21 The bid also includes a bus journey improvements package which will deliver upgrades to our bus stations and bus stops to reduce barriers to accessing the bus network on the Core Bus Network and other routes that serve communities experiencing poor access to opportunities and deprivation. Improvements will also result in environmental improvements to reduce energy use and support nature recovery. The package builds on the Safety, Accessibility and Environment Programme currently in delivery.
- 2.22 Upgrades at 14 bus stations and over 500 bus stops will support delivery of a range of safety, accessibility and environmental improvements, including:
 - new and replacement bus shelters and real time information screens at bus stops alongside environmental measures like solar panels and green roofs where possible. Bus stops will be further improved through other accessibility improvements
 - improvements to bus stations including creation of Changing Places and Quiet Room facilities, providing facilities for customers and wider communities, as well as other safety accessibility improvements like brush barriers, help points, tactile signage and pedestrian crossings.
 - Renewal of essential customer and operational facilities at bus stations to ensure facilities remain useable and providing suitable customer experience
- 2.23 The bus journey improvements package will also enable improvements to be made at a number of locations ("bus hotspots") identified as points of delay by bus operators in Bradford, Leeds and Wakefield.
- 2.24 Further scheme development, consultation and engagement is required to identify preferred schemes at these locations that address the issues raised by operators and are deliverable within the programme timescales, but these locations include Girdlington, Eccleshill, Holme Top, Laisterdyke (Bradford district); Leeds city centre, Garforth, Burmantofts, Horsforth, Rawdon and Menston (Leeds district); Pontefract, south Wakefield city and Hemsworth (Wakefield district)
- 2.25 Improvements to deliver bus priority schemes in Calderdale and Kirklees are being delivered through the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) programme, alongside potential bus hotspots, with these programmes expected to be continued in further CRSTS funding periods or other future programmes.

- 2.26 Schemes included in the successful LUF bid link to and build on proposals included in the West Yorkshire CRSTS programme, including the A639 Park Road scheme and the component elements of the bus journey improvements package.
- 2.27 Levelling Up Fund funding provides the opportunity to potentially enhance these schemes and deliver a greater range of benefits across the region, as well as delivering schemes pipelined as a result of the effects of inflation on current delivery programmes (reported to Transport Committee in December 2022)
- 2.28 The West Yorkshire LUF bid document will be published on the Combined Authority's website.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1 It is essential that both public transport and walking and cycling networks contribute to the mode shift from car necessary to meet West Yorkshire's ambition to achieve net zero by 2038. This is a key theme that underpins the funding programmes set out, including the CRSTS and LUF programmes
- 3.2 The proposals in development as part of the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy are also an important way the Combined Authority is seeking to achieve decarbonation of road vehicles.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 4.1 The transport network is fundamental to providing access to employment and training opportunities across West Yorkshire, and well as supporting the economic prospects of key centres. This is an underpinning aspect of the Combined Authority's transport development work set out in this report.
- 4.2 The West Yorkshire representation in response to consultation on the legislation to form Great British Railways was explicit on the need for the new railway organisation to be actively responsive to the needs and opportunities of the places it serves, to ensure that the railway contributes inclusive growth objectives.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 5.1 A safe, attractive and affordable transport system that addresses the needs of all communities across West Yorkshire is a core objective. The transport policy development work referred to in this report is being subject to equality impact assessment to ensure that equality and diversity impacts are being properly considered. Mass Transit workstreams include development of a specific Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy as set out above.
- 5.2 The Combined Authority continues to make a strong case to ensure Transpennine Route Upgrade delivers accessibility upgrades to the stations along the route, which is now part of the current proposals.

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

None