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**Report to:** Transport Committee

**Date:** 10 March 2023

**Subject:** **Bus Service Improvement Plan Update – Passenger Charter**

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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 The purpose of this report is to seek approval of the Passenger Charter for bus services required as part of the Bus Services Improvement Plan, and to provide an update on bus infrastructure funding relating to the recently successful Levelling up Fund bid.

## 2. Information

### Background

- 2.1 The Combined Authority developed its Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) in 2022, in response to the Government's National Bus Strategy for England.
- 2.2 The BSIP set out a plan of interventions at each stage of the passenger journey and across five key delivery areas, which work towards:
- **An enhanced, fully inclusive and more cohesive bus network** – which takes people where they need to go, when they need to go.
  - **Clear and simple fares** – to make paying for bus travel more affordable, easier, convenient and flexible.
  - **Improved, more inclusive Passenger service and support** – so passengers have the tools to travel with confidence and help they need if their journey does not go to plan.

- **Priority for buses on our road** – so journeys by bus are quicker, with less time spent stuck in traffic, and are a viable alternative to the private car.
- **More green and better vehicles** – to improve the onboard experience and make bus the sustainable choice for travel in West Yorkshire.

2.3 Following publication of the BSIP, the Combined Authority conducted the Mayor’s Big Bus Chat between July and September 2022 to engage the public on the content of the BSIP, as well as their current attitudes towards bus travel more generally. The findings of this public engagement were reported to the February meeting of the Committee and the full reports are now available online.

2.4 The Mayor’s Big Bus Chat identified that passengers are seeking consistent standards of passenger services across the bus network. The provision of a Passenger Charter is a requirement of BSIP funding and work has been underway through the Bus Alliance to develop the charter.

#### Passenger Charter

2.5 The text for the Passenger Charter as set out in **Appendix 1** has been developed and endorsed by the Bus Alliance Board chaired by Cllr Carlill and is presented to the Committee for approval. The Charter sets out:

- What the Passenger can expect from bus services in terms of on buses, at bus stops and stations, reliability of service and passenger information
- How the bus service will support equality, diversity and inclusion
- What the service operator will guarantee
- How to make comments and complaints

#### Next steps

2.6 A designed-up version of the document in Appendix 1 is being developed for inclusion on the Combined Authority and bus company websites. ‘How to complain’ advice will be incorporated into bus stops.

2.7 Service delivery will be monitored against the Charter and the Transport Committee will be periodically advised of performance in the regular Passenger Experience report.

2.8 Funding for delivery of bus service improvement and infrastructure schemes is likely to come from a variety of sources and funding programmes. At the last meeting of the Transport Committee on 10<sup>th</sup> February, it was reported that the Combined Authority had been successful in securing around £46m of funding from Levelling up Fund 2 (LUF2). This funding will deliver a range of interventions across West Yorkshire that will contribute to the delivery of BSIP, and further information can be found in **Appendix 2**.

2.9 Appendix 2 also sets out relevant infrastructure that will be delivered through the City Region Sustainable Transport Fund (CRSTS). However, it should be noted that other funding programmes, such as Transforming Cities Fund

(TCF) and the West Yorkshire Transport Fund (WYTF), will also deliver relevant initiatives that contribute to the BSIP, and a piece of work to undertake wider analysis of all funding programmes will be presented to a future meeting.

### **3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications**

- 3.1 There are no climate emergency implications directly arising from this report. Increasing bus use will promote more sustainable travel

### **4. Inclusive Growth Implications**

- 4.1 The delivery of the Bus Service Improvement Plan will contribute to the Combined Authority's inclusive growth objectives.

### **5. Equality and Diversity Implications**

- 5.1 A key aim of the BSIP is to enable an inclusive bus service, which meets the needs of different communities across West Yorkshire.

### **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 This report reflects the outcomes of engagement with the public on the BSIP and bus travel more generally.

### **10. Recommendations**

- 10.1 That the Transport Committee approves the adoption of the West Yorkshire Bus Passenger Charter

### **11. Background Documents**

There are no background documents referenced in this report.

### **12. Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Passenger Charter

Appendix 2 – Combined Authority Levelling-up Fund summary