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| Report to: | Climate, Energy and Environment Committee |
| Date: | 24 October 2023 |
| Subject: | Mass Transit Sustainability Strategy |
| Director: | Luke Albanese, Director Mass Transit |
| Author: | Stacey White, Policy Manager, Mass Transit, Place and Environment |

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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 type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" 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 inform the Committee about, and seek endorsement for, the development of the Sustainability Strategy for West Yorkshire Mass Transit. The report sets out the direction of travel, emerging findings and the proposal to seek appropriate sustainability accreditation for the project.
- 1.2. This report also seeks agreement that the final public facing summary document can be approved through written representations in order to support the programme for public consultation for the first phase of Mass Transit.

2. Information

Background

- 2.1. The Combined Authority, supported by the Environment Partner, is undertaking a review and refresh of the sustainability objectives for the Mass Transit system ready for the first phase development, building on the Mass Transit Vision 2040 and work undertaken to date.

2.2. The Strategy will:

- Align with the Transport and Works Act Order process, National and Regional legislation and policy; and UN Sustainable Development Goals.
- Support alignment with future National and Regional legislation and policy, including the Levelling up and Regeneration Bill and Environmental Outcomes Reporting.
- Provide public facing positive sustainability outcomes and commitments.
- Provide golden threads for Mass Transit, to guide the project through feasibility, development, delivery and into operation and support delivery of its aspirational objectives.
- Be framed around Transport, Economic, Social and Environmental outcome themes.
- Be consulted on with the public as part of the first phase options consultation.

Methodology

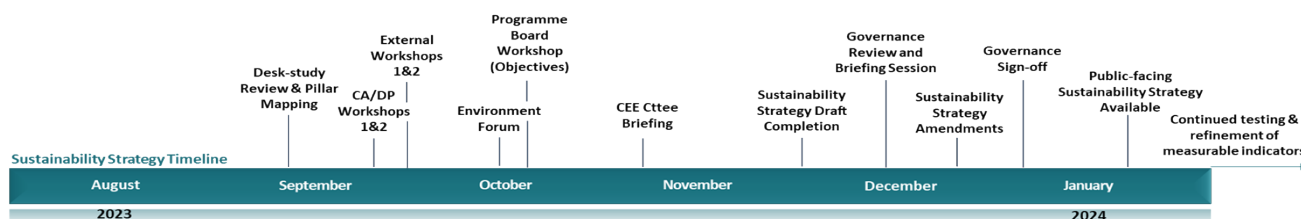
2.3. A four-stage process is being followed to produce the Strategy:

- *Exploratory*: Desk-study review of relevant policies and background information, and review of potential future National environmental outcomes to produce long-list of potential sustainability outcomes
- *Materiality*: Stakeholder workshops to review and challenge the long-list, frame local context and align with project delivery
- *Prioritisation*: Stakeholder workshops to short-list and prioritise key sustainability outcomes (identifying where Mass Transit can provide greatest contribution towards the highest priority issues)
- *Development*: Define specific sustainability objectives and targets to a set framework, agree priority outcomes and develop public facing strategy document and supporting technical report.

2.4. A second phase of work in 2024 will focus on embedding sustainability outcomes and targets through the delivery processes for Mass Transit first phase.

Timeline

2.5. The timeline for development of the strategy is shown in the diagram below:





- 2.6. A public-facing summary document (setting out priority sustainable outcome objectives) will be produced by January 2024, ready for public consultation on the first phase of Mass Transit.
- 2.7. Measurable indicators and targets for the full outcome framework to be developed in parallel to inform first phase development and will be published following testing (later in 2024).

Emerging Findings

- 2.8. The Exploratory and Materiality phases have been completed, and the project is part way through the Prioritisation phase.
- 2.9. 28 key sustainability topics have been identified through long-listing and synthesised down to 16 topics for prioritisation and development of outcomes.
- 2.10. Workshops with the Combined Authority and District Partners have identified the following emerging priorities for each sustainability pillar:
 - *Transport*: Supporting Modal Shift; User Ease and Accessibility; Reliability of Public Transport; Promoting Active Travel
 - *Economic*: Supporting Local Development and Regeneration; Affordability; Customer Value/VfM; Regional Productivity
 - *Environment*: Carbon Reduction; Air Quality; Climate Resilience; Biodiversity
 - *Social*: Behavioural Change; Local Employment and Training; Diversity, Equality and Inclusion; Community Engagement
- 2.11. The full framework and emerging draft outcomes are presented in Appendix 1. These will be tested through further engagement with external stakeholders (Environment Forum) and project delivery partners before end September 2023.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1. Carbon emissions generated by transport are currently at levels that, without significant intervention and changes to processes, a net zero carbon future by 2038 will not be achievable. Road transport is the biggest contributor to roadside air pollution with cars being the largest source of emissions. To meet the 2038 net zero target, and even with a shift to zero/low emission vehicles, analysis suggests that a reduction of total vehicle kilometres exceeding 20% is necessary, accompanied by an increase in the use of sustainable modes (walking and cycling) and public transport. Transit also has the opportunity to support improvements to air quality and contribute to carbon reduction goals by providing an attractive lower carbon, lower emission transport option. Increased capacity provided by transit will allow for additional capacity on congested corridors, which affords the opportunity to improve vehicle flows which in turn will improve air quality.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 4.1. A central common theme of the Connectivity Plan, Mass Transit Vision and Approach to Placemaking as part of that, 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 Transport Strategy, the Connectivity Plan and bidding for funding, focus will be placed on ensuring that equality and diversity needs are addressed, with a particular emphasis on improving accessibility for all.

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. 2 No. workshops have been held with District Partners; workshop to be held with Statutory Environmental and Health bodies through the Mass Transit Environment Forum on 27th September.

10. Recommendations

- 10.1. That the Committee endorses the approach proposed for the development of the Sustainability Strategy for the West Yorkshire Mass Transit, and the Direction of Travel regarding emerging sustainability objectives and priorities (see Appendix 1).
- 10.2. That the Committee endorses the aspiration for the West Yorkshire Mass Transit project to be accredited to appropriate industry sustainability standards (see Appendix 2).

10.2. That the Committee endorses that the public facing summary Strategy can be signed off by the Committee through written submissions, as required to support Mass Transit first phase 'options consultation' in early 2025, ahead of the next CEE Committee meeting.

11. Background Documents

There are no background documents referenced in this report.

12. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Emerging Sustainability Objectives and Outcomes

Appendix 2 – Potential accreditation schemes