

**Report of the Director of City Development and the Director of Transport Services  
(WYCA)****Report to Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure and Investment)****Date: 19 July 2017****Subject: RESPONSE TO SCRUTINY INQUIRY REPORT ON ADVANCING BUS  
SERVICE PROVISION**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**Summary of main issues**

1. An inquiry in to Advancing Bus Service Provision was undertaken by the Scrutiny Board (City Development) between January and October 2016. The scope of the inquiry and its findings were set out in the final report which was published in May 2017.
2. Bus services form an important part of the emerging transport strategy for Leeds and the Draft West Yorkshire Transport Strategy which includes the draft Bus Strategy for the wider sub-region. Since the completion of the inquiry sessions proposals for a Public Transport Investment Programme in Leeds have been prepared jointly by the City Council and West Yorkshire Combined Authority and were approved by the Government in April of this year when an allocation of £173.5 million funding was made to the city.
3. The recommendations of the inquiry sought action from the Council's Director of City Development and have been prepared with reference to the West Yorkshire Combined Authority's Director of Transport Services. This report represents their combined response.

**Recommendations**

4. The Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure and Investment) is requested to note the response to the recommendations based on their findings and to note the observations made below.

## **1 Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 This report sets out the formal response of the Director of City Development to the recommendations of Scrutiny Board (City Development) inquiry into Advancing Bus Service Provision.

## **2. Background information**

- 2.2 The scrutiny inquiry into advancing bus service provision was held between January and October 2016 and drew on evidence from City Council and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) members, officers and a range of third parties including bus operator representatives.

## **3. Main issues**

- 3.1 The Directorate have taken an overview of the recommendations of the inquiry and considers that they are generally reflective of the current position in terms of the services perspectives on bus services in the city and the needs for future service development in the city
- 3.2 As the major public transport carrier in the city bus services alongside those of rail have a key role in keeping the city moving as part of the balanced transport strategy that has been set out with the Transport Authority (WYCA) previously in the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan now being updated with a new draft Transport Strategy and supporting bus strategy. WYCA undertook the extensive consultation on its proposed bus strategy in 2016 and will adopt a twenty year strategy later in 2017.
- 3.3 Most recently and in the light of the government decision to earmark £173.5 million for investment in public transport in the city a new Public Transport Investment Programme has been developed for the city. The key elements of which are investment in the bus services of the city through improved physical highway, passenger facilities and infrastructure alongside a package of investment by the bus operators with the aim of doubling bus use within the next ten years. This programme was approved by the Department for Transport on the 21 April.
- 3.4 Alongside this and through the Leeds Transport Conversation engagement which commenced in June 2016 work is proceeding on the further development of the emerging Leeds Transport Strategy to set out the long term vision for meeting the city's future transport needs.
- 3.5 Subsequent to the completion of the inquiry, the Bus Services Act has received Royal Assent. This legislation confers new powers on WYCA as the statutory transport authority for the region to enter into formal partnerships with bus operators. The exercise of these powers will be set out in secondary legislation and regulations expected to be published later in the year. The Act enables Mayoral authorities to progress franchising provisions. The extension of franchising powers to non-Mayoral authorities will be subject regulations made by

the Secretary of State; the Department for Transport has not yet given any timescale for consultation or adoption of such regulations.

- 3.6 In terms of the Board's recommendations the Directorate's response follows:

**Recommendation 1 – That the Director of Transport Services (WYCA) explores how existing legislation and powers recently provided in the Bus Services Act could be utilised:**

**a) To enhance the responsiveness and accountability of bus operators to local communities.**

**b) To open up the bus service market to new competitors and to promote competition in Leeds and the West Yorkshire region. The findings and conclusions are to be reported to the Scrutiny Board (City Development) in the first quarter of 2018.**

- 3.7 The Directorate support this recommendation and will work with WYCA to form a detailed understanding on the provisions and opportunities offered by the Bus Services Act and due course the anticipated secondary legislation and regulations yet to be published. It recognised as WYCA have advised that there is a breadth of other pertinent legislation and legal powers including those related to accountability and competition.

**Recommendation 2 – That Director of Transport Services (WYCA) provides a report, in the first quarter of 2018, to the Scrutiny Board (City Development) on how the key areas to address, raised in the AECOM report, will be or have been, resolved through the West Yorkshire Bus Strategy and West Yorkshire.**

- 3.8 The Directorate and WYCA support this recommendation. The AECOM report provides an analysis of the feedback obtained by WYCA during the consultation on its proposed bus strategy in 2016 and the authorities will work together to understand how the key areas of service quality and performance that have been identified can be addressed through joint collaborative working.

**Recommendation 3 – That the Director of City Development provides the Scrutiny Board (City Development), with a report at a future meeting which outlines the congestion alleviation plan for Leeds, including identification of areas of the City that requires priority measures, the measures due to be implemented city wide and timescales for implementation.**

- 3.9 The Directorate support this recommendation. It is noted that the transport strategies and planning for both Leeds and West Yorkshire will set out the approach to delivering a balanced and long term strategy for the city and city region. In the immediate future work including data collection and analysis that is now being done to shape the detailed plans for the Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme as approved by the Executive Board in June will inform the future reporting to the scrutiny board.

**Recommendation 4 – That the Director of Transport Services (WYCA) and ABOWY provide the Scrutiny Board (City Development) with an update, in the first quarter of 2018, regarding the research into the barriers to bus**

**travel for non-users, and the action to be taken to make bus travel a viable and more attractive mode of transport for non-users.**

- 3.10 The Directorate and WYCA support this recommendation for further collaborative work and reporting aimed at securing a better understanding of the propensity for the choice of bus travel and the measures that could make bus a mode of choice for a wider section of the travelling public. The importance of participation of all bus operators through ABOWY is recognised.

**Recommendation 5 – That Director of Transport Services (WYCA) and the Director of City Development, working in collaboration with Bus Operators, provide the Scrutiny Board (City Development) with an update at a future meeting on the implementation and impact of air quality improvement measures, outlined in the West Yorkshire Bus Strategy, Leeds Transport Strategy, and Bus 18 Programme objectives. (see recommendations 6,7&8).**

- 3.11 The Directorate support this recommendation noting the wider work underway within the city and with WYCA to address the air quality concerns arising from motor traffic, primarily diesel engines and the potential requirement for a Clean Air Zone. The informal Bus 18 partnership between ABOWY and WYCA includes a pledge by the bus industry to take action to address its impact on air quality within the region. Specific targets will be developed and agreed with the city's bus operators within the Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme.

**Recommendation 6 – With regard to the West Yorkshire Bus Strategy, that the Director of Transport Services (WYCA) provides the Scrutiny Board (City Development) with an update, in the first quarter of 2018, which identifies progress in the implementation and delivery of the proposals outlined in the bus strategy.**

- 3.12 The Directorate and WYCA support this recommendation.

**Recommendation 7 – With regard to the Bus 18 programme, that Director of Transport Services (WYCA), in collaboration with Bus Operators provides the Scrutiny Board (City Development) with an update in the first quarter of 2018, which identifies progress in the implementation of the pledges outlined in the programme. This report should also outline the impact and outcomes delivered by the Bus 18 programme.**

- 3.13 The Directorate support this recommendation noting that close working is taking place with WYCA in terms of the development of the Bus 18 programme and its relationship to the new additional investment being planned through the Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme. It will also be important to learn the lessons for the future from this shorter term programme as these materialise during 2018.

**Recommendation 8 – With regard to the investment in bus travel defined in the Leeds Transport Strategy, that the Director of City Development and Director of Transport Services (WYCA) provides the Scrutiny Board (City Development) with:**

- a) An update at a future meeting which identifies progress in the £180m investment in bus travel in Leeds.
- b) An update at a future meeting which identifies the outcomes that have been delivered through this investment and the impact of that investment.
- c) An overview of the delivery plan for bus priority measures across Leeds and how this complements the delivery of improvement plans specified by Bus Operators/ ABOWY.

- 3.14 The Directorate and WYCA support this recommendation noting that the combined figure for funding incorporating Department for Transport funding, Leeds City Council and WYCA contributions is £183 million. Complementary third party investments including from the bus operators, rail industry, planning and development is expected to ultimately achieve a final gross transport investment of circa £275 million from this programme.

**Recommendation 9 – That Director of Transport Services (WYCA) and the Director of City Development fully investigate the elements of the Bus Services Act regarding:**

- a) The implementation of partnership arrangements with robust governance and accountability provision.
- b) The requirements for gaining Secretary of State approval for the implementation of bus franchising in Leeds and West Yorkshire. The analysis, options and methodology for implementation to be reported in the first quarter of 2018 to the Scrutiny Board (City Development).

- 3.15 The Directorate support the principle of this recommendation noting as stated with respect to the Recommendation 1 response that a achieving full appreciation may be contingent on the further information that will be required from government to fully understand the options provided by the Bus Services Act. As stated in 3.5 above the requirements for gaining the Secretary of State's approval for the implementation of bus franchising in the region may not be known by the first quarter of 2018.

#### **4. Corporate Considerations**

##### **4.1 Consultation and Engagement**

The final inquiry report is providing a resource and input to the ongoing development of the bus strategy and proposals for the city including the development of the Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme. It is also being taken into consideration by WYCA in terms of the finalisation of the bus and transport strategy for West Yorkshire.

##### **4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

- 4.3 This report raises no issues for equality and diversity / cohesion and integration.

##### **4.4 Council policies and Best Council Plan**

4.5 These actions are supporting Best Council Plan priorities in relation to transport and connectivity and the ongoing development of the approach to bus services in the city.

4.6 **Resources and value for money**

4.7 There are no specific resource implications arising from this report. Future inputs to the scrutiny board will be provided from within the internal resources of the Council and WYCA.

4.8 **Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

4.9 There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

4.10 **Risk Management**

4.11 There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

**5. Conclusions**

5.1 The Director of City Development welcomes the recommendations of the scrutiny board into advancing bus service provision in the city and believes these findings can contribute to the further development and monitoring of bus services and the associated transport and highway infrastructure in the city. The service will work alongside WYCA to bring forward the requested progress reports which will reflect development of the draft arrangements with bus operators which underpin the agreed Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme and also more widely the work WYCA in terms of the applications of the Bus Services Act.

5.2 The Director, Transport Services at WYCA has confirmed acceptance of the recommendations of the scrutiny board and will work closely with the Director of City Development in their execution.

**6. Recommendations**

6.1 The Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure and Investment) is requested to note the response to the recommendations based on their findings and to note the observations made above.

**7. Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

7.1 There are no background documents.

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.