

Report of Director of City Development

Report to Scrutiny Board (Sustainable Economy and Culture)

Date: 22 November 2012

Subject: BUS SERVICES IN LEEDS

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. At their September 2012 meeting the Board considered Terms of Reference for an inquiry into "bus services in Leeds".
2. This report provides initial information on:
 - Background and context to deregulation of bus services
 - Information on the role of the West Yorkshire Integrated Transport Authority in relation to bus services
 - The role of the Highway Authority
 - Opportunities and barriers in relation to increasing bus usage
3. A further session of the inquiry will focus on future strategy and delivery:
 - Update on current key issues, eg ticketing, fares, journey times, reliability, routes
 - Issues of local accountability and governance for Leeds in relation to the provision of bus services
 - Background and context to the Area Bus Network Review programme, information on the consultation process and details of the proposals for Leeds
 - Overview of Bus Quality Contract schemes and details of the proposals for the West Yorkshire Bus Quality Contract Scheme

Recommendations

4. Members are requested to note and comment on this report.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report provides Members with initial background information on bus services in Leeds.

2 Background information

2.1 As Members will be aware the Council does not have a statutory responsibility for the co-ordination, provision or financial support of bus services, which in West Yorkshire lies with the West Yorkshire Integrated Transport Authority (Metro). As a Highway Authority the Council works with Metro to develop and implement a Local Transport Plan in line with the requirements of the Local Transport Act 2008. Through this the Council has an input to Metro's public transport policies but does not have any powers in relation to the provision of services.

2.2 Leeds City Council, as the Local Highway Authority have the following duties with regard to buses in accordance with the acts of parliament outlined below;

- The Highway Act (1980), which sets out the main duties of highway authorities in England and Wales, with regard to the management and operation of the road network. This legislation relates to the creation, maintenance and improvement of the highway. In terms of provision for buses, this act gives the Highway Authority the responsibility for the creation, maintenance and improvement of bus infrastructure, for example bus lanes and traffic light priority measures.
- The Traffic Management Act (2004), which establishes a new duty for local traffic authorities to secure 'the expeditious movement of traffic on the authority's road network' to tackle congestion and disruption on the road network, includes the movement of buses.
- Under the provisions of the Road Traffic Regulation Act (1984), local authorities can implement 'Traffic Regulation Orders'. A traffic regulation order (TRO) is the legal instrument by which traffic authorities implement most traffic management controls on their roads. TROs are designed to regulate, restrict or prohibit the use of a road, or any part of the width of a road by vehicular traffic or pedestrians.
- The Transport Act 2000 made a number of reforms to local transport planning and delivery, including the requirement on all local transport authorities in England outside of London to produce a Local Transport Plan, and new powers for local authorities to enter into Quality Partnerships with bus operators and to introduce Road User Charging Schemes and Workplace Parking Levies.
- In November 2005, new regulations enabled local authorities outside London to carry out camera enforcement of bus lanes provided that their area had been designated as a permitted/ special parking area under the provisions of Schedule 3 of the Road Traffic Act 1991 undertaking enforcement by way of the Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) provisions. A number of local authorities have adopted these powers to enforce bus lanes.

- 2.3 The Local Transport Plan (LTP3), is a 15-year plan setting out West Yorkshire's transport needs and ambitions until 2026, under the themes of Asset Management, Travel Choices, Connectivity and Enhancement to the transport system. There are a number of LTP3 proposals that relate to increasing bus patronage, one of the key proposals is for a new approach to working with bus operators in order to address the sustained decline of bus patronage, a summary of the LTP3 proposals relevant to this report is given in Appendix 1.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 The Transport Act (1985) radically changed the bus industry by deregulating bus services and the subsequent privatisation of many of the publicly owned municipal bus companies. Deregulation replaced the existing licensing system with a system of registration, removing the duties of Local Authorities to co-ordinate public passenger transport. Bus companies could therefore choose to operate any services on a commercial basis. In conjunction with this deregulation, Public Transport Authorities were given powers to secure, using subsidies, socially necessary services.
- 3.2 Most bus services throughout West Yorkshire are provided by commercial operators such as First and Arriva without subsidy from Metro. Metro fund the operation of socially necessary bus services which do not generate enough passengers to be self funding or profit making. Whilst Metro works closely with bus operators in the design and operation of the network, it can only act in an advisory capacity for those services for which it does not directly pay for. Metro will work with operators to address issues concerning commercial services. Whilst they can encourage them to consider service issues they cannot direct them to do so.
- 3.3 Nationally there has been a long standing concern regarding bus industry domination by a small number of large companies, rival operator behaviour, and the absence of a regulatory framework. Bus patronage has been declining in West Yorkshire from 235 million journeys in 1995/1996 to an estimated 180 million in 2011/12. This has been accompanied by a reduction in service levels and sustained above inflation fare increases. These are significant issues for the Authority because the consequences include reduced productivity, increased CO2 emissions and reduced quality of life through increased congestion and reduced accessibility.
- 3.4 The current legislative position with regards to bus provision is set out in the Local Transport Act (2008), which seeks to give local authorities and Integrated Transport Authority the right mix of powers to improve the quality of local bus services, strengthening the powers to regulate bus services. Local authorities were granted the power to review and propose their own arrangements for local transport governance to support more coherent planning and delivery of local transport, this includes the options for quality bus partnership schemes and quality bus contract schemes.

4 Opportunities and Barriers to Increasing the Level of Bus Patronage

- 4.1 The section below outlines the opportunities and barriers in relation to the following five key issues

- 1) Integration of Bus Services
- 2) Bus Ticketing
- 3) Bus Reliability and Punctuality
- 4) Bus User Satisfaction
- 5) Journey Speed and Congestion

1) Integration of Bus Services

- 4.2 A high quality integrated bus network for Leeds and West Yorkshire is key to achieving Local Transport Plan objectives. Reconciling the goal of achieving a highly integrated approach to service planning and delivery, and the present deregulated framework for local bus services is a major challenge.
- 4.3 Proposal 16 of LTP3 outlines aspirations for a 'new framework for local bus services as part of an integrated transport system', through the implementation of a Quality Bus Contract Scheme (QBCS) to help deliver improved local bus services in West Yorkshire, replacing the existing deregulated market with a system of contracts, as currently operates in London.
- 4.4 Under a QBCS, the Integrated Transport Authority (or local authority) specifies the bus services that are to be provided in the area of the scheme, and invites tenders from operators to provide those services under contract. The ITA has approved a further period of consultation on the preferred approach, which will involve further discussion with District Councils, bus operators, neighbouring authorities, the public and other interested parties. The discussions with the District Councils will provide an opportunity to explore risk and risk management, accountability and complementary highway measures.

2) Bus Ticketing

- 4.5 LTP3 consultation found that high fares and concern about value for money are discouraging bus users. The average adult peak fare for all operators in West Yorkshire increased from £1.08 to £1.66 between 2004 and 2010, an increase of 54%, while RPI has increased by 20% in comparison. In addition to cost, ticket type inflexibility and lack of integration are key issues for bus users.
- 4.6 There is also a high cost associated with some of Metro's products compared to other Transport Authorities in the country, and single operator products,. Current ticketing prices are set by the West Yorkshire Ticketing Company (which includes bus operators), and for some time Metro has expressed concern that the operators' own tickets are being sold at a more competitive price.
- 4.7 The implementation of smartcard ticketing offers the potential for speeding up boarding times and reducing queuing, and ultimately improving journey times, allowing passengers to load tickets or credit in advance of travel. Proposal 15 of LTP3 outlines the aspiration to for West Yorkshire to 'develop and use integrated ticketing and smart card technology to facilitate seamless travel across modes'. Discussions with operators regarding the implementation of smartcard ticketing are ongoing. The roll-out of the project will be implemented through a partnership arrangement with some activities being managed through the West Yorkshire Ticketing Company under the deregulated bus framework. Opportunities to

implement integrated ticketing also exist through proposal 16 of LTP3 QBCS outlined in 4.3 above.

3) Bus Reliability and Punctuality

4.8 Bus Reliability and Punctuality are both key concerns for bus users that directly affect customer satisfaction levels and the perception of bus service quality. Bus reliability is the proportion of scheduled commercial services operated, while bus punctuality measures punctuality of bus performance against the operation timetable. The average reliability performance in 2010/11 was 99.04% which, whilst an improvement on 2009/10 (98.73%), fell short of the target of 99.5% of all bus services operating.

4.9 Bus punctuality is measured using data obtained from the “yournextbus” real time system. The major influencing factors in punctuality include traffic congestion, passenger boarding and alighting times, setting realistic operational timetables and drivers ability to keep to time. Bus punctuality has improved but it is still a key concern for users.

4) Bus User Satisfaction;

4.10 Customer satisfaction levels are used as a key Indicator for LTP3. Surveys from Metro’s Tracker survey tell us what people think of different aspects of West Yorkshire’s transport network. They are a key measure of the quality of services being provided and can help identify areas where improvement is needed. Bus service satisfaction is lower than recent phone survey but close to the mean since Metro Tracker inception in 2004 See Appendix 2 for details.

5) Bus Journey Speed and Congestion;

4.11 The time taken to make a journey can vary significantly throughout the day and from day to day according to traffic conditions. This makes it hard to plan journeys and can add costs to businesses in terms of time and resource required to deliver goods and services.

4.12 Journey time variability is one of the Key LTP3 Indicators and targets, The indicator reports the proportion (length) of the WY core bus network where journey time variability in the weekday morning peak period is equivalent to inter-peak conditions. The target is to increase this proportion from the current baseline position of 33% in 2010 to 50% by 2026.

4.13 A map of Leeds District Bus Lanes can be found in appendix 3. There is a total of 20.5km (12.8 miles) of buses lanes within the Leeds District. 4.1 km (2.6 miles) of Bus Guideway and 5.5 KM (3.4 miles) of High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes.

4.14 As outlined in paragraph 2.2, the Council as the Highway Authority has a responsibility for the creation, maintenance and improvement of bus lanes and associated bus infrastructure, which can have a direct impact on improving journey speed and reducing congestion for bus users. Within the Draft Leeds Local Implementation Plan, the Council has set out our short term LTP3 implementation proposals. The Council will continue to deliver a programme of improvements to bus priority on radial routes into Leeds, including

enhancements to the existing guided bus ways. The current documents and workstreams will feed into the three year review of the LTP and the preparation of an updated West Yorkshire implementation plan for the period 2014-17.

4.15 The main bus priority interventions in the first three years of the LTP3 are:

- A65 Quality Bus Corridor [Complete].
- A647 Canal Street outbound bus lane [Complete].
- Harrogate Road, Chapel Allerton bus priority scheme.
- Commence delivery of a series of transport hubs across the city at key locations.
- Bus priority measures associated with a bus Park & Ride [Elland Road, Leeds, under consideration].
- Continued development of the Bus Lane Enforcement (BLE) project [Roll out to all bus lanes in Leeds approved].
- Traffic Light Priority [62 out of 66 junctions are now operational].

4.16 The locations for bus priority treatment, such as traffic signal priority for buses and additional bus/HOV lanes, have previously been identified based on reported and observed problems with delays and reliability along particular routes. More recently, new schemes have started to be identified through the use of information from the Automatic Vehicle Location detection system to identify more precisely delays and verify the other data sources. This system provides Real Time Information on the running times of bus services across West Yorkshire, and the information from this system can be used to highlight where services are experiencing delays and where improvements are required.

4.17 The West Yorkshire Integrated Transport Authority (Metro) and the bus operators have reported the use of bus lanes by other vehicles as a major issue affecting service punctuality and encouraged the Council to adopt bus lane enforcement as a solution. Leeds utilised the new powers available under the road traffic act, to develop a pilot scheme enforcing city centre bus lane locations using cameras. The enforcement cameras are automated and then all recorded events are independently reviewed by two Parking Services personnel before a ticket is issued.

4.18 The pilot phase 1 scheme implemented in July 2011, has seen offences at 5 city centre sites reduce by 82%. Phase 2 of the scheme will extend the camera enforcement of bus lanes and bus gates to the remaining sites across Leeds and extend the benefits gained from the pilot to other bus lanes. Buses travelling through key city centre locations where enforcement is being carried out have seen bus journey times improve by up to 1 minute, compared to the same time period last year (before enforcement)

5 Corporate Considerations

5.1 Consultation and Engagement

5.1.1 Transport cannot be planned effectively in isolation because it has a wider role to play in the achievement of a range of social, environmental and economic objectives. The Local Transport Plan was developed through partnership working,

engagement and consultation with a range of partners and stakeholders. The engagement and consultation involved three rounds of formal public consultation.

5.1.2 Highways and Transportation schemes are subject to the following four stage consultation process;

- Stage 1 – Internal Scheme Development Consultation List (Technical).
- Stage 2 – External Scheme Development Consultation List (Key Stakeholders).
- Stage 3 – Public Engagement Consultation List.
- Stage 4 – Review Feedback, Report Back Findings & Recommendations.

5.2 **Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

5.2.1 The development of bus strategy and transport interventions is being accompanied by full Equality Impact Assessments as appropriate by the LTP partners, Metro and the five district councils in line with their respective procedures for such assessments.

5.3 **Council Policies and City Priorities**

5.3.1 The provision and future development of high quality bus services in the city contributes is a priority within the Local Transport Plan and transport strategy and specifically supports the delivery of the City Priorities to:

- Improve journey times and the reliability of public transport; and
- Improve the environment through reduced carbon emissions.

5.4 **Resources and Value for Money**

5.4.1 This report has no specific resource and value for money implications.

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

5.5.1 This report has no specific legal or access to information implications.

5.6 **Risk Management**

5.6.1 This report has no risk management implications. Processes for risk and project management form part of the various projects related to the bus strategy being progressed by the City Council and Metro.

6 **Conclusions**

6.1 This report has presented an initial overview of the background position to the provision of bus services in Leeds, in the context of the history of the deregulation and privatisation of the bus industry. The report outlines the current legislative position of the Council as the Local Highway Authority.

6.2 A further session of the inquiry will focus on future strategy and delivery governance for Leeds in relation to the provision of bus services; Background and context to the Area Bus Network Review programme, information on the consultation process and details of the proposals for Leeds, Overview of Bus

Quality Contract schemes and details of the proposals for the West Yorkshire Bus Quality Contract Scheme.

7 Recommendations

7.1 Scrutiny Board members are requested to note and comment on this paper.

8 Background documents ¹

None

Appendix 1; West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan 3, Proposals relating to buses

Proposal Number	Page	Summary of details
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¹ 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.

1	49	Prioritise asset management and maintenance standards according to a hierarchy of key transport route networks and users that best supports the Plan.
2	50	Work with partners to ensure that all assets are maintained and managed to a standard that is suitable and sufficient for their desired use .
4	51	Use new network management practices to minimise congestion and ensure efficient recovery from disruption .
7	55	Implement a targeted programme of travel behaviour change including marketing, information, education and support activities .
8	56	Develop and provide tailored, interactive, readily available information and support that encourages and incentivises more sustainable travel choices on a regular basis.
11	58	Strengthen demand management and enforcement to gain maximum benefit from measures to enable more sustainable choices.
13	62	Define and develop a core, high-quality, financially sustainable network of transport services that will provide attractive alternatives to car travel .
14	63	Improve interchange and integration including the development of transport hubs .
15	64	Develop and use integrated ticketing and smartcard technology to facilitate seamless travel across modes .
16	65	Introduce a new framework for local bus services as part of an integrated transport system .
17	66	Develop a new model for transport planning at a community level to enhance local accessibility .
20	4	Address barriers to travel , including the use of concessionary fares schemes .
24	27	Get better use from the existing network including investing in additional capacity to address congestion and overcrowding at key locations.

Appendix 2; Metro Tracker 2011

Bus Service – Satisfaction Ratings (WYITE Tracker Survey 2011)

Table 6.6	User	Non User
Frequency of the service	7.45	7.12
Whether the service arrives on time	7.35	7.20
Quality and cleanliness	7.18	6.61
Amount of over-crowding	6.87	6.72
Helpfulness of driver/conductor	6.95	6.69
Personal safety while traveling	8.06	7.80
Personal safety while waiting at the stop	8.05	7.61
How easy it is to get on/off	8.75	8.97
State of the bus stop/station	7.69	7.43

Key: Ratings scored on scale of 1 (very dissatisfied) to 10 (very satisfied)

Bus Service Satisfaction (WYITE Tracker Survey 2011)

Table 6.17	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4	Wave 5	Wave 6	Wave 7	Wave 8	Wave 9	Wave 11
Bus service overall users	6.95	6.98	7.07	7.10	7.00	7.45	7.63	7.69	8.03	7.2
Bus service overall non users	5.88	6.35	6.53	6.22	6.29	6.63	7.11	7.11	7.30	6.4

Wave 1 (2004), Wave 11 (2011)

Key: Ratings scored on scale of 1 (very dissatisfied) to 10 (very satisfied)

