

West Yorkshire Mass Transit Update

Date: 23 January 2023

Report of: Chief Officer (Highways & Transportation, City Development)

Report to: Climate Emergency Advisory Committee

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

A report setting out information on the background to the West Yorkshire Mass Transit programme proposals, together with details of Leeds City Council (LCC) response to the statutory consultation of the West Yorkshire Mass Transit Vision 2040 was recently approved at the LCC executive board meeting on 14th December 2022 ([Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Executive Board, 14/12/2022 13:00 \(leeds.gov.uk\)](#)).

This briefing report which sets out some key points relating specifically to the Climate Emergency priority has been prepared jointly by Leeds City Council, as strategic partner, and West Yorkshire Combined Authority, as the sole promoter of the West Yorkshire Mass Transit Programme proposals.

Recommendations

- a) For the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee to note the contents of this report in conjunction with the report published under agenda item 14 from the Leeds City Council Executive Board meeting held on the 14th December 2022 titled West Yorkshire Mass Transit Vision 2040 Consultation LCC response.

What is this report about?

1. An update and background to the West Yorkshire Mass Transit programme proposals, together with details of Leeds City Council response to the statutory consultation of the West Yorkshire Mass Transit Vision 2040 was recently approved by the Leeds City Council Executive board on 14th December 2022, ([Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Executive Board, 14/12/2022 13:00 \(leeds.gov.uk\)](#)) (see agenda item 14 as a related document).
2. This briefing report, which summarises some of the points relating to the Climate Emergency agenda, has been prepared jointly by Leeds City Council (LCC), as strategic partner, and

West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA), as the sole promoter of the West Yorkshire Mass Transit Programme proposals.

3. LCC recognises the strategic importance of Mass Transit and its role in improving connectivity across Leeds and wider West Yorkshire, supporting our economic growth and bringing people within easier reach of jobs and opportunities. LCC's commitment to Mass Transit is stated as a big move in the Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy and Action Plan which is integral to the success of the city's policies on Inclusive Growth, Health & Wellbeing and tackling the Climate Emergency <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/parking-roads-and-travel/connecting-leeds-and-transforming-travel/transport-policy>
4. In 2017, WYCA adopted the West Yorkshire Transport Strategy 2040, setting out the ambitions for transport and providing the policy framework for improvement. The draft Connectivity Infrastructure Plan compliments the strategy, setting out a delivery plan and long-term pipeline of transport infrastructure enhancements to improve connectivity across the region.
5. The West Yorkshire Transport Strategy 2040 sets out the West Yorkshire vision for transport, and Mass Transit forms a central part of that transport vision. The West Yorkshire Transport Strategy and the draft Connectivity Infrastructure Plan have been developed with the input of each of the five partner councils and both reflect LCC's growth plans and priorities for investment.
6. The draft Connectivity Infrastructure Plan was published in January 2021, accompanied by a series of related documents, including the draft Mass Transit Vision 2040. Alongside cycling, walking, bus and rail, mass transit will be essential in helping our communities thrive and the economy to flourish, bringing people and places closer together. By offering a new public transport option and an attractive alternative to car travel, it is expected mass transit to:
 - Help combat climate change and provide climate resilient infrastructure.
 - Connect West Yorkshire's important places.
 - Support levelling up and help rebalance the economy.
 - Improve health and wellbeing.
 - Support economic recovery.
7. Mass Transit will help combat climate change by offering a clean and sustainable means to travel across the region, offering an attractive and sustainable alternative to car travel and providing climate resilient infrastructure. It will also offer a transformational catalyst to support sustainable economic growth. As a part of the wider draft Connectivity Infrastructure Plan, Mass Transit will support existing local plan spatial priority areas and employment and housing centres across the region. Mass Transit will be part of a wider integrated transport system for West Yorkshire and aligns with the LCC Connecting Leeds transport strategy.
8. During early 2022, work began to progress business case development from the programme-level Strategic Outline Business Case, towards Strategic Outline Cases (SOC) for each of the four priority areas for the future network.
9. A consultant consortium has been commissioned to lead on the business case development workstreams and will initially focus on the priority corridors under Phase 1 labelled as Orange (East Leeds, Bradford to Leeds and South Leeds to Dewsbury) and Green (Bradford to Dewsbury) business case route groupings, with other areas of the network following in due course.

10. Modelling and appraisal activities are underway to complete the priority area SOC business case submissions by late 2023. The workstream is being developed with input from WYCA's Assurance Framework representatives and through dialogue with Department for Transport. The broad approach is structured to follow the conventional Treasury Green Book 'Five Case' model, with the focus on the strategic dimension, which sets out the need for intervention and why transit is the preferred way to meet that need. The purpose of the economic dimension of the business case is to identify the proposal that delivers best social value to society, including wider social and environmental effects. Therefore, as part of this work climate / environmental matters will be considered.
11. Carbon emissions generated by transport are currently at levels that, without significant intervention and changes to processes, a net zero carbon future by the LCC target of 2030 or the WYCA target 2038 will not be achievable. Road transport is the biggest contributor to roadside air pollution with cars being the largest source of emissions.
12. To meet the net zero targets, and even with a shift to zero/low emission vehicles, analysis suggests that a reduction of total vehicle kilometres exceeding 30% is necessary, accompanied by an increase in the use of sustainable modes (walking and cycling) and public transport.
13. Mass 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 Mass Transit will allow for additional capacity on congested corridors, which affords the opportunity to improve vehicle flows which in turn will improve air quality.

What impact will this proposal have?

Wards Affected: All (City-wide)

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

14. Mass Transit has the potential to provide a positive transformational change to the public transport network across the Leeds city region and West Yorkshire.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

15. WYCA is the sole promoter of the West Yorkshire Mass Transit scheme and is leading on all the consultation and engagement including with elected members. WYCA has written to all elected Ward and Parish Councillors in Leeds to make them aware of the statutory consultation on the Mass Transit Vision 2040, together with an offering of any further information or a briefing if requested.
16. There will be further consultation and engagement later in 2023 when the route options have been developed.

What are the resource implications?

17. There are resource implications for LCC and the resource requirements are currently being developed alongside roles and responsibilities for discussion and agreement with WYCA. The intention is to recover justified costs for such resource requirements from the WYCA as promoter of the WY Mass Transit Programme.

What are the legal implications?

18. There are no legal implications as a result of this report for the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee to consider.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

19. There are no key risk implications as a result of this report for the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee to consider.

20. Does this proposal support the council's 3 Key Pillars?

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

Health and Wellbeing

21. By having Mass Transit as an additional attractive public transport offer together with the proposals of introducing new and enhanced infrastructure for improving active modes (walking and cycling) the proposals are aimed at increasing the use of sustainable modes which will help achieve Leeds to become a healthy city, be more active and with reduced traffic emissions, creating cleaner air contributing to meeting the net zero carbon targets.

Inclusive Growth

22. Through WYCA's role in managing the delivery of the West Yorkshire Transport Strategy, the Connectivity Infrastructure Plan and bidding for funding, focus is being placed on ensuring that equality and diversity needs are addressed, with a particular emphasis on improving accessibility for all.

23. A central common theme of the Connectivity Plan, and Mass Transit Vision as part of that, is that investment in transport accessibility will make a positive contribution to driving forward inclusive growth.

24. The 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. The plans particularly focus on how to support the hardest to reach communities to realise economic opportunities.

Zero Carbon

25. Mass Transit has the opportunity to support improvements to air quality and contribute to carbon reduction goals by providing an attractive lower carbon, lower emission transport offer. The Mass Transit scheme has real opportunity to contribute to the net zero targets with additional capacity on congested corridors, which affords the opportunity to improve vehicle flows which in turn will improve air quality.

26. The development work is in the early stages, so in later work details of material options and construction methods will be key considerations to minimise the embedded carbon emissions. This is also applicable to when considering technology choice options.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

27. The development work is on-going, and details on the options can be shared at a later date. The scheme is led by WYCA as the sole promoter

How will success be measured?

28. The business case development work is on-going, so this information can be shared at a later date. This will be led by WYCA as the sole promoter

What is the timetable for implementation?

29. The Vision document states that for Phase 1 corridors 'Subject to Government funding decisions, we anticipate commencing public engagement on route and technology choices during 2023. We want construction to start during the 2020s. The timing, shape and form of the Mass Transit system will be subject to engineering feasibility, environmental assessment, and public & community engagement, stakeholder support of its business case, and funding availability'
30. To successfully deliver the system there are a number of key milestones to reach, such as business case approvals, public consultation on route selection, funding approvals, Transport and Works Act Order application submission, public inquiry, obtaining the powers to build and operate the system, vehicle procurement and construction phase. The current programme indicates that Phase 1 routes could potentially be operational at the end of 2031.

Appendices

31. None.

Background papers

32. Leeds City Council Executive Board meeting 14 December 2022 (Item 14 - West Yorkshire Mass Transit Vision 2040 Consultation).
<https://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/documents/g11824/Public%20reports%20pack%2014th-Dec-2022%2013.00%20Executive%20Board.pdf?T=10>
33. Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/parking-roads-and-travel/connecting-leeds-and-transforming-travel/transport-policy>
34. West Yorkshire Mass Transit 2040 Vision document. <https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/media/8846/mass-transit-vision-2040-august-version.pdf>