



## SCRUTINY BOARD (INFRASTRUCTURE, INVESTMENT & INCLUSIVE GROWTH)

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Meeting to be held in Civic Hall, Leeds, LS1 1UR on  
Wednesday, 27th November, 2024 at 10.15 am

There will be a pre-meeting for members of the Scrutiny Board at 10.00am.

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### MEMBERSHIP

Cllr A Ali	- Gipton & Harehills
Cllr H Bithell (Chair)	- Kirkstall
Cllr N Buckley	- Alwoodley
Cllr K Dye	- Killingbeck & Seacroft
Cllr S Lay	- Otley & Yeadon
Cllr S Leighton	- Guiseley & Rawdon
Cllr M Millar	- Kippax & Methley
Cllr M Robinson	- Harewood
Cllr A Scopes	- Beeston & Holbeck
Cllr M Shahzad	- Moortown
Cllr I Wilson	- Weetwood

**Note to observers of the meeting:** We strive to ensure our public committee meetings are inclusive and accessible for all. If you are intending to observe a public meeting in-person, please advise us in advance by email ([FacilitiesManagement@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:FacilitiesManagement@leeds.gov.uk)) of any specific access requirements, or if you have a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) that we need to take into account. Please state the name, date and start time of the committee meeting you will be observing and include your full name and contact details'.

To remotely observe this meeting, please click on the 'To View Meeting' link which will feature on the meeting's webpage (linked below) ahead of the meeting. The webcast will become available at the commencement of the meeting.

[Scrutiny Board \(Infrastructure, Investment & Inclusive Growth\) - 27 November 2024](#)

# A G E N D A

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
1			<p><b>APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS</b></p> <p>To consider any appeals in accordance with Procedure Rule 25 of the Access to Information Rules (in the event of an Appeal the press and public will be excluded)</p>	
2			<p><b>EXEMPT INFORMATION - POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</b></p> <p>1 To highlight reports or appendices which officers have identified as containing exempt information, and where officers consider that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons outlined in the report.</p> <p>2 To consider whether or not to accept the officers recommendation in respect of the above information.</p> <p>3 If so, to formally pass the following resolution:-</p> <p><b>RESOLVED –</b> That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated as containing exempt information on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information, as follows:-</p>	
3			<p><b>LATE ITEMS</b></p> <p>To identify items which have been admitted to the agenda by the Chair for consideration.</p> <p>(The special circumstances shall be specified in the minutes.)</p>	

4

## **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

To disclose or draw attention to any interests in accordance with Leeds City Council's 'Councillor Code of Conduct'.

5

## **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTES**

To receive any apologies for absence and notification of substitutes.

6

## **MINUTES - 6 NOVEMBER 2024**

5 - 10

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2024.

7

## **WORK SCHEDULE**

11 -  
18

To consider the Scrutiny Board's work schedule for the 2024/25 municipal year.

8

## **FUTURE OF BUS PROVISION IN LEEDS**

19 -  
34

To receive an update from the Director of Transport Services at West Yorkshire Combined Authority regarding the future of bus provision in Leeds.

9

## **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next public meeting of the Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment & Inclusive Growth) will take place at **10.15am on Wednesday 22 January 2025**. There will be a pre-meeting for all members at **10.00am**.

As part of the consultation on the budget proposals that fall within the remit of this Scrutiny Board, there will also be a private working group taking place for remotely at **1pm on Monday 9 December 2024**.

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## SCRUTINY BOARD (INFRASTRUCTURE, INVESTMENT & INCLUSIVE GROWTH)

WEDNESDAY, 6TH NOVEMBER, 2024

**PRESENT:** Councillor H Bithell in the Chair

Councillors A Ali, N Buckley, K Dye, S Lay,  
S Leighton, M Millar, A Scopes,  
M Shahzad, R. Stephenson and I Wilson

### 34 APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS

There were no appeals.

### 35 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There were no exemptions.

### 36 Late Items

There were no late items.

### 37 Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

### 38 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies were received from Cllr Matthew Robinson.

Cllr Ryan Stephenson attended as a substitute.

### 39 Minutes - 25 September 2024

**RESOLVED:** The minutes of the meeting of 25 September 2024 were agreed as a correct record.

### 40 Inclusive Growth Update

Those in attendance for this item were:

- Cllr Jonathan Pryor (Executive Member, Economy, Transport & Sustainable Development)
- Fiona Bolam (Chief Officer, Economy and Skills)

The Chair introduced the paper, noting that it provides an update on progress in delivering Inclusive Growth in Leeds since the publication of the city's second Inclusive Growth Strategy in September 2023.

She particularly welcomed the partnership approach to Inclusive Growth in Leeds, as was evident at the Inclusive Growth Partnership event she attended in July.

Cllr Bithell noted that the main measurement tool for inclusive growth is the Social Progress Index. She put on record the thanks of the Scrutiny Board to Fiona Bolam and Graham Ponton who delivered a training session on the SPI to scrutiny members last month.

Cllr Pryor described the update as an exciting piece of work that reflects a joint vision for economic growth amongst partners in Leeds. He highlighted that the Council became the first local authority to achieve an outstanding Ofsted judgement for its Adult Learning and Employer Provider Apprenticeship programmes. Other highlights from the last year include the expansion of Leeds PIPES network and the impact of an expanded UK Real Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum (UKREiF).

Fiona delivered a presentation on inclusive growth in Leeds, which covered the following areas:

- National Policy Context
- West Yorkshire local Growth Plan
- Inclusive Growth Strategy
- Leeds Anchors
- Next steps

In response to member queries, it was noted that the paper was written prior to the Government's very recent budget announcement and as such an assessment of the potential impact of local growth is not available.

Fiona advised members that knowledge-based sectors in Leeds are a key feature of the regional economy. She highlighted digital, health, and tech sectors as significant drivers of local economic growth, along with finance and professional services.

Fiona was invited to provide further clarity about comparisons with equivalent European cities and a reduction in the overall Social Progress Index score between 2018 - 2022. She advised the Scrutiny Board that she would provide more information about the comparative with European cities outside of the meeting. However, she noted that European cities do tend to score better than their UK counterparts. Skills, productivity, and transport connectivity are all drivers of that disparity.

Members welcomed the positive activity set out in the report including work with the Anchor network, the delivery of careers fairs, the roll out of HomesFirst and progress in relation to the delivery of new homes. Members

also recognised the increased focus on education and employment opportunities for children within the SEND cohort.

Further information was requested with regards to the options for post-16 education outside of the city centre. Fiona agreed to reflect member concerns in joint discussions with colleagues from Children and Families.

Fiona confirmed that the Council has worked with West Yorkshire Combined Authority to invest in digital infrastructure in the city with a view to encouraging further private sector investment in the network.

Members received assurances that very early discussions are taking place with Microsoft about the potential for a heat network linked to a new hyperscale datacentre on the former Skelton Grange Power Station Site.

In response to member queries further information was provided about community listening exercises taking place in association with the Good Jobs, Better Health, Fairer Futures project (2021-2024).

Members sought further information about how to maximise the benefits of national institutions such as the National Wealth Fund locating in Leeds.

Clarity was sought in relation to the Gross Value Added (GVA) within the regional economy being lower than the national average per person.

Other matters addressed by the Scrutiny Board included:

- Access to work experience
- Ways in which to remove barriers to work through targeted skills tuition.
- Feedback from exhibitors attending the SEND careers fair
- The impact on the health sector if the proposed Leeds General Infirmary re-build does not take place.
- An update on plans to develop the British Library North and National Poetry Centre in Leeds.

#### **RESOLVED:**

Members noted that a One Year On report to Executive Board setting out progress on the delivery of Inclusive Growth was also published in November.

Members note progress made in delivering our collective ambitions set out in the Leeds Inclusive Growth Strategy.

The Scrutiny Board Chair committed to write to the Chief Officer and Executive Board member on behalf of the Scrutiny Board to formally endorse the approach to the inclusive growth programme, with specific reference to the following issues:

- The need to deliver improved infrastructure – including transport connectivity – to drive future economic growth locally.

- Support for increased skills tuition and education for young people in Leeds post-16.
- Support for the expansion of work with the Anchor network and a request for a further update on this activity to be provided in future reports.

## **41 Visitor Economy**

In her introductory remarks the Chair expressed her delight that members would have the opportunity to examine this topic following their previous requests. She thanked officers for the detailed report.

Those in attendance for this item were:

- Cllr Jonathan Pryor (Executive Member, Economy, Transport & Sustainable Development)
- Fiona Bolam (Chief Officer, Economy and Skills)
- Belinda Eldridge (Head of Service, Destination Marketing and International Relations)

Following the Chair's introductory remarks, Belinda Eldridge delivered a presentation that covered the following topics:

- The economic impact of tourism in Leeds
- The varied ways in which income from leisure tourism supports local economic growth.
- The geographical centrality of Leeds.
- An update on business tourism in 2023.
- The role of Conference Leeds.
- The impact and growth of UKREiiF.
- National framework for Local Visitor Economy Partnerships (LVEPs) and Destination Development Partnerships (DDPs).
- Governance structure for the West Yorkshire LVEP.
- The West Yorkshire LVEP and the Destination Management Plan.
- Opportunities and threats for the development of tourism in West Yorkshire.

The Scrutiny Board received an overview of the economic impact of international tourists as opposed to domestic tourists.

Members sought further information about the structure of the formal Destination Marketing Organisation (DMO) for Leeds. Members received further details about the structure of the DMO and the interim LVEP board. Belinda set out the next steps to seek the final membership of a permanent LVEP board, with EDI values at the heart of the process.

Concern was raised about the growth of short term lets in the city and the negative impact this may start to have on some communities. Several members were keen to explore opportunities for greater proactive management of short-term lets in Leeds. Belinda Eldridge advised members



that this has been raised in the House of Lords and via a private members bill in the House of Commons.

Belinda noted that there is an ambition to establish a public-private model of long-term funding for the visitor economy in Leeds. She confirmed that a wider commercial strategy may involve a membership model.

The Scrutiny Board sought information about comparative conferencing facilities in neighbouring authorities and core cities. It was noted that Leeds is the only core city without a dedicated convention centre, which results in a loss of business tourism for the city. Members were also advised that Leeds has the smallest visitor economy team of any core city both in terms of budget and resource.

Members discussed the ambition for the Royal Armouries to develop a conference centre with the capacity to seat approximately 1,800 delegates. In response to member queries about current capacity, Belinda advised the Scrutiny Board that the current facilities at the Royal Armouries are already completely booked for the next year. She confirmed that the team is confident of the capacity to grow business tourism further.

Members noted their in-principle support for the development of purpose built convention facilities in the city.

UKREiiF was cited as an example of how the city has hosted a large-scale conference – with over 13,000 delegates – using a different delivery model to the traditional convention centre, and showing the potential for growth in future.

At the request of members, Belinda set out the way in which an Accommodation BID (ABID) may operate. She reiterated that this would be a voluntary levy on the invoices of those staying in a hotel for each night of their stay. The income generated by a hotel levy could be used to create more momentum behind larger events, including by potentially providing a subvention to secure major business.

Hoteliers are keen to see more overnight stays and longer stays, and major events will be a significant part of achieving that growth.

Councillors sought more information about how the LVEP could secure data regarding visitor perceptions of Leeds and considered how anonymous data may be shared in future.

Members examined the benefits of providing a welcome for major employers relocating to Leeds – supporting the Bank of England in establishing their expanding workforce in Leeds was cited as an example of this work.

Belinda reassured the Scrutiny Board that the team will be exploring opportunities to grow sustainable and regenerative tourism.

Members explored ways in which leisure tourism is promoted to business visitors to encourage return visits to the city.

**RESOLVED:**

The Scrutiny Board noted and provided comments on the information provided in the report and the progress made.

Members asked that their in-principle support for the development of purpose-built convention facilities be noted.

*Cllr Sandy Lay left the meeting at 11.55am.*

**42 Work Schedule**

The Principal Scrutiny Advisor asked members to note the draft work schedule in the agenda pack.

She highlighted that a remote working groups will be taking place **1pm – 2.30pm** on **9 December 2024** to consider the budget proposals that fall within the remit of the Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth).

The Chair reminded colleagues that she has asked for the work programme to be considered at the start of public meetings in future.

**RESOLVED:** The 2024/25 draft work programme was noted, along with the request to schedule the work programme as the first substantive item on future agendas.

**43 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

**RESOLVED:** The next meeting of the Scrutiny Board will take place on **27 November 2024 at 10.15am**. There will be a pre-meeting for all Scrutiny Board members at **10am**.

## Work Schedule

Date: 27 November 2024

Report of: Head of Democratic Services

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment & Inclusive Growth)

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

### Brief summary

- All Scrutiny Boards are required to determine and manage their own work schedule for the municipal year. In doing so, the work schedule should not be considered a fixed and rigid schedule, it should be recognised as a document that can be adapted and changed to reflect any new and emerging issues throughout the year; and also reflect any timetable issues that might occur from time to time.
- The Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules also state that, where appropriate, all terms of reference for work undertaken by Scrutiny Boards will include 'to review how and to what effect consideration has been given to the impact of a service or policy on all equality areas, as set out in the Council's Equality and Diversity Scheme'.
- Reflecting on the information in this report and information presented as part of other agenda items at today's meeting, Members are requested to consider and discuss the Board's work schedule for this municipal year.

### Recommendations

Members are requested to:

- a) Consider the draft work schedule for the 2024/25 municipal year.

## What is this report about?

1. A draft work schedule for the Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment & Inclusive Growth) is presented at Appendix 1 for consideration and discussion. Reflected in the work schedule are known items of scrutiny activity, such as performance and budget monitoring, identified Budget and Policy Framework items and specific member requests for individual work items.

### Developing the work schedule

2. When considering any developments and/or modifications to the work schedule, effort should be undertaken to:
  - Avoid unnecessary duplication by having a full appreciation of any existing forums already having oversight of, or monitoring, a particular issue.
  - Ensure any Scrutiny undertaken has clarity and focus of purpose and will add value and can be delivered within an agreed time frame.
  - Avoid pure “information items” except where that information is being received as part of a policy/scrutiny review.
  - Seek advice about available resources and relevant timings, taking into consideration the workload across the Scrutiny Boards and the type of Scrutiny taking place.
  - Build in sufficient flexibility to enable the consideration of urgent matters that may arise during the year.
3. To deliver the work schedule, the Board may need to undertake activities outside the formal schedule of meetings – such as working groups and site visits. Additional formal meetings of the Scrutiny Board may also be required.

## What impact will this proposal have?

4. All Scrutiny Boards are required to determine and manage their own work schedule for the municipal year.

## How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing       Inclusive Growth       Zero Carbon

5. The terms of reference of the Scrutiny Boards promote a strategic and outward looking Scrutiny function that focuses on the priorities set out in the Best City Ambition.

## What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?       Yes       No

6. To enable Scrutiny to focus on strategic areas of priority, it is recognised that each Scrutiny Board needs to maintain dialogue with the Directors and Executive Board Members holding the relevant portfolios. The Vision for Scrutiny also states that Scrutiny Boards should seek the advice of the Scrutiny officer, the relevant Director and Executive Member about available resources prior to agreeing items of work.

## What are the resource implications?

7. Experience has shown that the Scrutiny process is more effective and adds greater value if the Board seeks to minimise the number of substantial inquiries running at one time and focus its resources on one key issue at a time.

8. The Vision for Scrutiny, agreed by full Council also recognises that like all other Council functions, resources to support the Scrutiny function are under considerable pressure and that requests from Scrutiny Boards cannot always be met.
9. Consequently, when establishing their work programmes Scrutiny Boards should consider the criteria set out in paragraph 3.

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

10. There are no risk management implications relevant to this report.

**What are the legal implications?**

11. This report has no specific legal implications.

**Appendices**

- Appendix 1: Draft work schedule of the Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment & Inclusive Growth) for the 2024/25 municipal year.

**Background papers**

- None.

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# Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth)

## Work Schedule for 2024/25 Municipal Year

June	July	August
<u>Wednesday 26 June 2024 at 10.30am</u>	<u>Wednesday 17 July 2024 at 10.30am</u>	No Scrutiny Board meeting scheduled.
Performance report (PM)  Annual reports: - Sources of Work (DB) - Terms of Reference (DB) - Co-opted members (DB)	Draft Highways Maintenance Strategy [PDS]  Community Asset Transfer Policy [PDS]  Biodiversity Net Gain – Watercourse [PSR] [presentation]	
<b>Working Group Meetings</b>		
<b>Site Visits</b>		

### Scrutiny Work Items Key:

PSR	Policy/Service Review	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring



# Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth)

## Work Schedule for 2024/25 Municipal Year

September	October	November
<a href="#"><u>Wednesday 25 September 2024 at 10.30am</u></a>		<a href="#"><u>Wednesday 6 November 2024 at 10.15am</u></a>
<p>Update on the development of Mass Transit (WYCA)</p> <p>Vision Zero Annual Update [PSR]</p> <p>Connecting Leeds: understanding current practice &amp; considering how to build on strengths to further improve future engagement / consultation.</p>		<p>Sustainable economic development – focus on impact of tourism and destination marketing.</p> <p>Inclusive Growth update (PSR)</p>
		<a href="#"><u>Wednesday 27 November 2024 at 10.15am</u></a>
		Future of Bus Service Provision in Leeds (PSR)
Working Group Meetings		
<p>23/9/24 1.30pm – 2.45pm: Affordable housing need, delivery, and challenges <b>IN PERSON</b></p> <p>2-3pm 25/9/24: Budget Briefing (all scrutiny members - <b>REMOTE</b>)</p>	<p>11.30am-12.30pm 9/10/24: Sim Spec Walk <b>IN PERSON</b></p> <p>2-3.30pm 15/10/24: Affordable Housing delivery models and viability <b>HYBRID</b></p> <p>1-2pm 17/10/24: Social Progress Index (<b>REMOTE</b>)</p>	<p>9.45-11am 8/11/24: Roundtable with housing providers <b>IN PERSON</b></p>
Site Visits		

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### Scrutiny Work Items Key:

PSR	Policy/Service Review	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring





# Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth)

## Work Schedule for 2024/25 Municipal Year

December	January	February
No Public Meetings	<a href="#"><u>Wednesday 22 January 2025 at 10.15am</u></a>	No meetings
	Performance Monitoring (PM) Initial Budget Proposals (PDS) Leeds Affordable Housing Growth Delivery Partnership Plan update (PSR)	
Working Group Meetings		
9/12/24 1-2.30pm: Budget consultation working group (REMOTE)		

### Scrutiny Work Items Key:

PSR	Policy/Service Review	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring



## Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth)

### Work Schedule for 2024/25 Municipal Year

March	April	Notes
<u>Wednesday 5 March 2025 at 10.15am</u>	<u>Wednesday 9 April 2025 at 10.15am</u>	
Leeds Transport Strategy Update (PSR)  100% Digital Leeds annual update  Leeds Museums and Galleries – protected characteristics	Future Talent Plan update (including reference to Adult Skills)  Flood Risk Management Annual update (PSR) & draft new LFRMS  Local Plan Update 2040  End of Year Summary Statement (DB)	To schedule as items for either a private working group or public meeting:  - Leeds 2023 Legacy - Follow up to Vision Zero
<b>Working Group Meetings</b>		
<b>Site Visits</b>		

**Scrutiny Work Items Key:**

PSR	Policy/Service Review	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring

## Future of Bus Provision in Leeds

Date: 27 November 2024

Report of: Head of Democratic Services

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment & Inclusive Growth)

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

### Brief summary

The future of bus provision in Leeds has been a long-standing area of interest for the Scrutiny Board. In recent years, members have requested an annual update on significant challenges and opportunities within the sector, as well as developments in the local and national policy context.

Consideration of bus provision within the Scrutiny Board's 2024/25 work programme reflects a wider interest from scrutiny members in the delivery of the ambitions of the [Inclusive Growth Strategy](#), the Council's response to the declared climate emergency and ways in which improved connectivity can better link communities with education, training and employment opportunities.

At the request of the Scrutiny Board the Director of Transport Services at West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) has provided the appended report as an update about ongoing work at WYCA to advance bus provision across West Yorkshire.

### Recommendations

- a) Members are asked to note and comment upon the information set out in the appended report from the Director of Transport Services at West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

### **What is this report about?**

- 1 The appended report provides an update regarding the activity taking place at West Yorkshire Combined Authority to advance bus provision across West Yorkshire and Leeds.
- 2 The report summarises matters which have been reported to meetings of West Yorkshire Combined Authority and its Transport Committee.

### **What impact will this proposal have?**

- 3 The development of more sustainable city-wide transport infrastructure, of which bus service provision is a part, impacts upon residents throughout Leeds. Engagement with this agenda remains a key priority for the Scrutiny Board.

### **How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?**

Health and Wellbeing       Inclusive Growth       Zero Carbon

- 4 The Scrutiny Board's engagement with this matter is reflective of its broader commitment to principles set out in the Best City Ambition.

### **What are the resource implications?**

- 5 Any resource implications are set out in the attached report.

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

- 6 There are no risk management concerns associated with the scrutiny process.

### **What are the legal implications?**

- 7 Any legal implications are set out in the attached report.

### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1: WYCA Bus Provision Update Paper

### **Background papers**

- None

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**Report to:** Leeds City Council Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth)

**Date:** 27/11/2024

**Subject:** **Advancing Bus Provision**

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**Director:**

**Author:**

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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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

## 1. Purpose of this Report

- 1.1. This report provides an update regarding the ongoing activities by the Combined Authority to advance bus provision across West Yorkshire and Leeds.
- 1.2. This report summarises issues reported to meetings of West Yorkshire Combined Authority and its Transport Committee.

## 2. Information

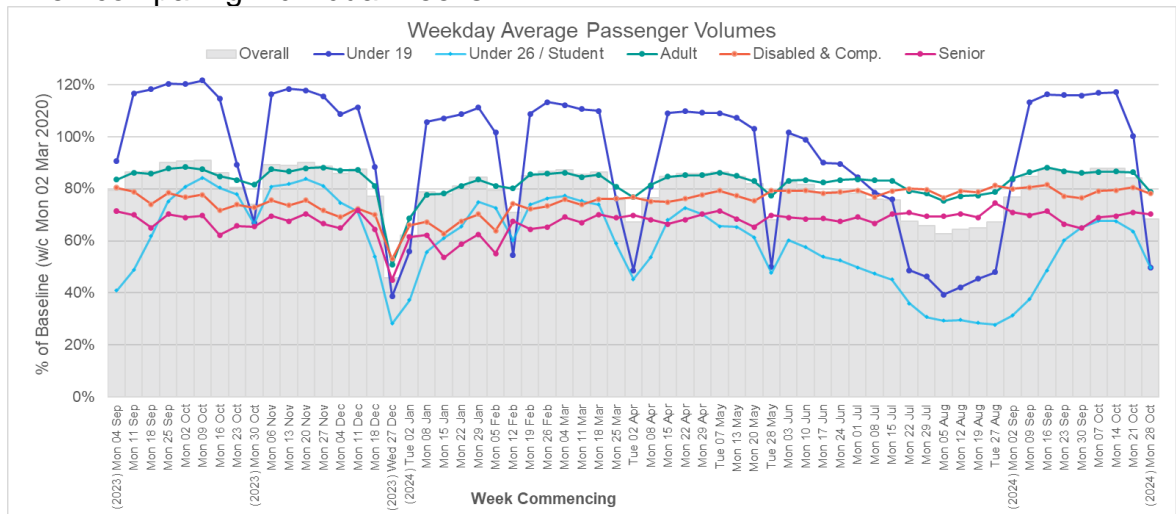
### Patronage trends and the associated consequences for revenue

- 2.1. Overall bus patronage in early October 2024 (before school half term) stood at 88% of pre-pandemic levels (March 2020), slightly lower than the same period last year (92%). This year-on-year difference in overall patronage appears to be largely (but not exclusively) driven by a decline in bus use by the Under 26/student cohort during this period (as shown in the table below).

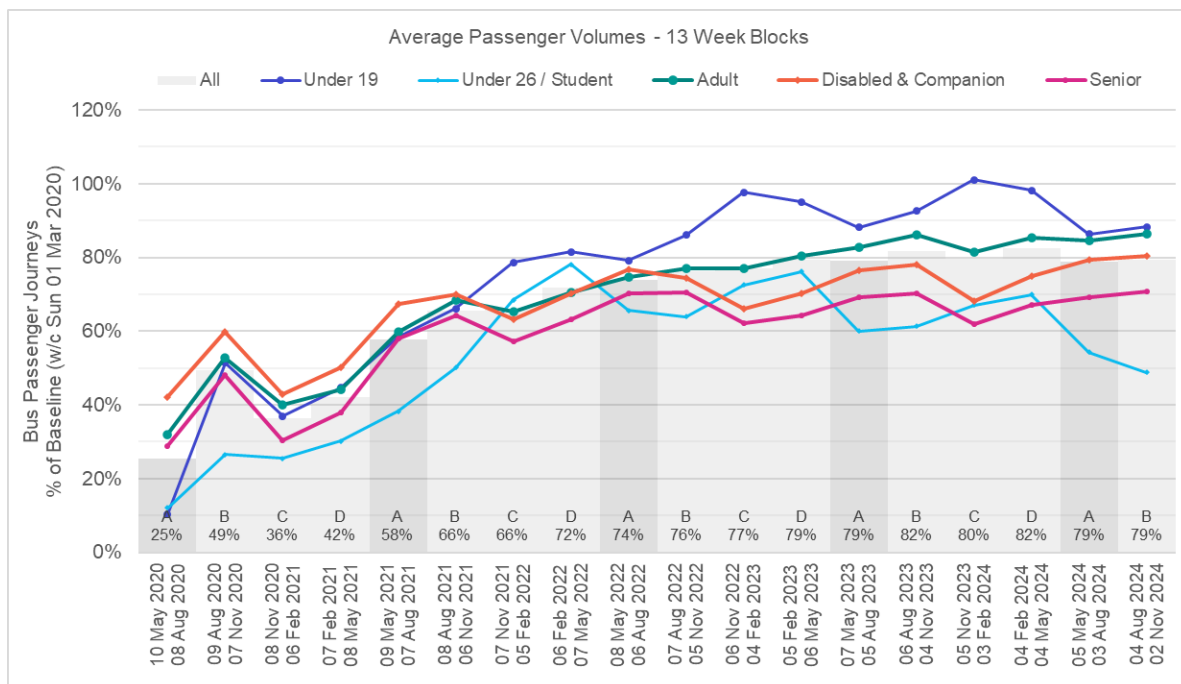
**Patronage as a Percentage of the week commencing Sunday 01 March 2020 (the pre-COVID baseline restrictions week)**

Whole Week	Under 19	Under 26 / Student	Adult	Disabled & Comp.	Senior	Overall
Sun 08 to Sat 14 October 2023	124%	87%	91%	79%	71%	92%
Sun 06 to Sat 12 October 2024	119%	69%	89%	80%	70%	88%

2.2. Bus patronage follows a seasonal pattern, as illustrated in the chart below which shows weekday patronage over the last year. Patronage is affected by statutory holidays, the academic term, school inset days, unusual/extreme weather, as well as industrial disputes (most obviously bus drivers but also rail operating staff, teachers, and others) so this context should be considered when comparing individual weeks.



2.3. The chart below provides a more strategic view of longer-term bus patronage trends since the pandemic. The chart shows thirteen-week periods of Sunday to Saturday patronage data to smooth out short-term impacts such as holidays and weather events, and also applies smoothing to allow for variations in statutory holidays. Over the last 13 weeks, bus patronage has averaged at 79% of baseline (pre-pandemic levels), which compares to 82% last year. This longer-term comparison illustrates the recovery trajectory since the pandemic, and the most recent trends, if sustained, indicate that post-COVID recovery in bus patronage is slowing.



2.4. Spatial analysis of bus patronage data reveals that the largest year-on-year differences are on routes that serve central Bradford. It is likely that a combination of the emergency closure of Bradford Interchange on 4 January 2024 and wider ongoing capital programme works in the city centre have impacted on demand.

### **Fare simplification including an update on the impact of the Mayor's Fares**

- 2.5. West Yorkshire was the first area in England to introduce a bus fare cap as the Mayor's fare at £2 which was established in September 2022 with a DaySaver at £4.50. This bus fare cap was introduced to help make travel around the region easier and cheaper and to help people with the cost-of-living crisis. The West Yorkshire £2 fare cap (Mayor's Fares) was introduced ahead of the introduction of a national bus fare cap, also at £2, funded by the Department for Transport (DfT), which was introduced in January 2023.
- 2.6. As part of the Autumn Budget, the national bus fare cap scheme is to move to £3 from 01 January 2025 and run to the end of December 2025. As part of the same announcement, DfT confirmed a national allocation for Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) of £640m for financial year 2025/26, and at the time of writing, the CA is awaiting confirmation from DfT as to its allocation.
- 2.7. The CA and the Mayor have previously agreed to retain the £2 fare cap until the end of March 2025. As the CA is not part of the national fare cap scheme and needs to fund its costs locally, a decision needs to be taken on the fare from April 2025. As we do not yet know our BSIP allocation for 2025/26, we are working on scenarios which consider the affordability of various price points (e.g. £2, £2.50, £3) relative to other demands on BSIP funding including network protection and Safer Travel Team resourcing (amongst others).

- 2.8. The Mayor's Fare for single fares also has relevance for the pricing of the DaySaver ticket and also for Under 19's fares. The plan is to agree a way forward on these at a Combined Authority meeting at the end of November.
- 2.9. There is then a need to set out a longer-term approach to fares and ticketing on bus which provides a bridge between the current commercial deregulated market and that under a franchised bus network. That work on producing a Fares, Ticketing and Retail Strategy forms part of the bus reform workstreams.

### **Service enhancements (e.g. launch of Superbus)**

- 2.10. To date in West Yorkshire there has been £24.1m approved through the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) to invest in services, including ongoing network protection, a rolling programme of enhancements and a number of 'Superbus' schemes developed in partnership with commercial operators.
- 2.11. The Leeds 'Superbus' scheme launched in September 2023 and has significantly enhanced the 60 (Aireline) service between Leeds and Shipley from every 30 to 20 minutes. The service has since seen passenger growth of c30%.
- 2.12. Through our network enhancement programme, since February 2024, the Combined Authority has funded the doubling of frequency of service 14 (Leeds – Bramley – Pudsey) from hourly to half hourly, which has already generated passenger growth of up to 80%.
- 2.13. We are also supporting evening enhancements on service 444/446 (Leeds – Rothwell/Carlton – Wakefield) providing a 30-minute frequency (from hourly). From July 2024 we are also supporting the enhancement of service 164 (Leeds – Micklefield – Sherburn) from two hourly to hourly, and evening enhancements on services 140/141 (Leeds – Pontefract) and 163 (Leeds – Castlefield) providing a 30-minute frequency (from hourly). However, some of these services which operated by Arriva are currently under review, due to their current driver shortage.
- 2.14. We have also introduced the new orbital service 9/9c (White Rose – Middleton – Seacroft – Horsforth – Pudsey – White Rose), which has created new direct links across the city, and reinstated previously withdrawn service 48 (Leeds – Wigton Moor) and evening journeys on service 62 (Leeds – East End Park).
- 2.15. We have also protected several services from further reductions or withdrawals through our network protection funding.
- 2.16. This includes retaining the current service provision on the Park and Ride services in Leeds. Operationally services continue to perform well, however the unpredictable traffic congestion in Leeds city centre can impact service reliability and punctuality. It is expected that this will be intensify as we approach Christmas.



2.17. There continues to be aspirations for enhanced services, particularly more early morning and weekend journeys. This is something the Park and Ride board are considering.

**Accuracy of real time information systems**

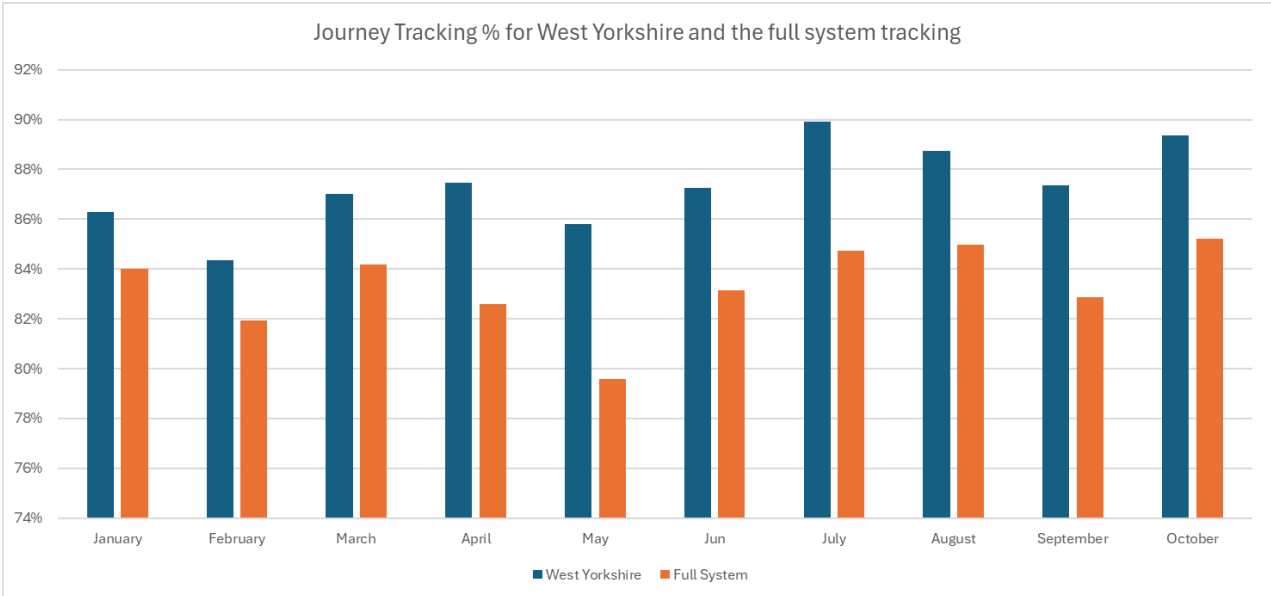
2.18. The greater Yorkshire real time system, of which West Yorkshire is one of the leading partners, along with SYMCA and City of York Council has been in operation for over 20 years. The system is geographically the biggest in the UK, with real-time service tracking as far south as Nottingham and Middlesbrough in the North and as far West as Manchester and to the East Coast, we regularly have over 2,300 vehicles reporting into the system daily. In 2023 the system database over the 12-month period had just under 9.5m scheduled journeys, with 7.6m of those being tracked in the real time system, which was 82% of all journeys tracked (the system holds data for many small operators who can provide real-time AVL feeds).

**Leeds City region**

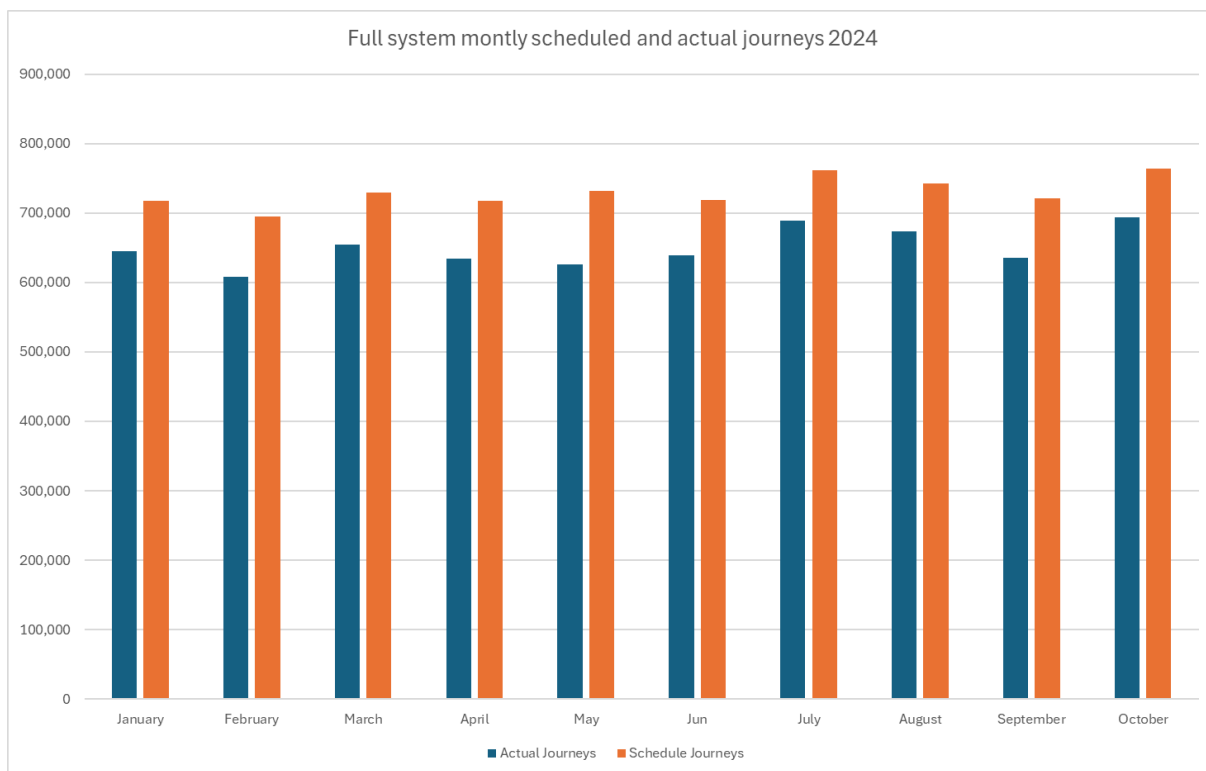
2.19. The main operators, First, Arriva and Transdev in the region consistently journey track in the high 80% and into the mid 90% mark daily.

2.20. WYCA and its partners are reliant on both service data, AVL positional data and cancellation inputs from the operators back-office systems for the provision of the real-time data feed. The quality of these data sources has an impact on the outputs for the real-time system specifically the on-street displays, of which there are currently 1,350+ in the Leeds City region, this being 64% of the real-time display estate.

**Tracking percentage of bus services for 2024 for West Yorkshire region**



**Scheduled to actual bus journeys in the real time system**



2.21. The issues experienced with real time information are largely due to the quality of data inputted into the system, and work is ongoing between the Combined Authority and bus operators to try address this. With the system covering the greater Yorkshire region there are several smaller operators who do not have the capability to provide AVL feeds – despite this being a DfT requirement since January 2021.

### **Measures of customer satisfaction**

2.22. The Combined Authority runs an annual survey to better understand West Yorkshire residents’ perceptions and attitudes towards transport and infrastructure. This long running survey managed by the Transport Research, Analytics and Spatial Intelligence Team sits alongside other evidence such as the National Travel Survey (NTS), the National Highways and Transportation Survey (NHT), and the survey work by Transport Focus as well as empirical evidence on use of transport assets and services. A copy of the full report is published on the Combined Authority’s [Data and Intelligence Hub](#).

2.23. The latest wave of this survey ran between January and March 2024, using a mix of telephone (1,250) and online (550) methods, achieving a total of 1,800 responses. Importantly, survey responses form a statistically representative sample of the West Yorkshire population aged 16 and over accounting for age, gender, district and ethnic group. There were 650 responses in the Leeds district. The headlines were:

- a) Overall mean West Yorkshire level satisfaction scores for local bus services in were **6.0** (out of 10), similar to last year (**5.9**), and this measure has been in decline since 2020/21 (**7.0** out of 10). Data for Leeds shows a

similar picture, with a score of **6.0** (out of 10) having declined from **7.0** in 2020/21.

- b) The mean score for satisfaction with the affordability of public transport at the West Yorkshire level continues to trend upward; up from **5.6** in 21/22 to **6.5** this wave. This is a statistically significant increase from last year (**6.2**). Again, data in Leeds follows a similar pattern with a score of **6.7** (out of 10) in the latest survey, up from **6.0** in 2020/21.
- c) **75%** of respondents reported being satisfied with the ease of buying a bus ticket in West Yorkshire, up from **72%** last year, and up from **65%** in 2019/20 (with a very similar pattern in Leeds). Additionally, **49%** of respondents were satisfied with the bus ticket price (**9%** were dissatisfied), up from **45%** last year.
- d) In Leeds **77%** of respondents reported being either very or fairly confident that they usually purchase the best value ticket, up from **72%** last year and **67%** in 2021/22. At the West Yorkshire level, those aged 16-34 years old and regular bus users were more likely to report being confident (**77%** and **88%** respectively).
- e) At the West Yorkshire level, talking to staff is still the most used method for buying a bus ticket; **58%** of respondents bought their last ticket this way, down from **77%** in 2019/20. Notably, this figure is lower in Leeds than the West Yorkshire average at **47%**. **40%** of Leeds respondents bought their last bus ticket using an app and overall, this is more popular among younger people aged 16 to 34 (**49%**) and those from an ethnic minority background (**46%**).
- f) The mean satisfaction score with travel centres was **7.4** (out of 10), a slight fall from last year (**7.7** out of 10). Over the last six years, **60%** of those from a White British background are satisfied with travel centres compared with only **49%** of those from an ethnic minority background. **64%** of those aged 65 and over are satisfied but this falls to **51%** of those aged 16 to 34.
- g) Mean satisfaction scores with electronic time displays at bus stations and stops in Leeds was **7.2** (out of 10), and this measure has been in decline since 2020/21 (**8.3** out of 10).
- h) At the West Yorkshire level, **32%** of respondents reported regularly using the bus (using the BSIP definition of 'at least once a week'), similar to last year (**31%**). In Leeds, self-reported regular bus use is higher at **40%**. At the Leeds and West Yorkshire level, self-reported regular bus use remains below pre-pandemic levels; in 2019/20 **39%** of respondents In West Yorkshire reported using the bus at least once a week.
- i) This research shows that bus use remains higher for residents in the most deprived neighbourhoods; over the last 2 years, **38%** of those living in the most deprived quintile reported regularly using the bus compared to only **26%** of those living in in the least deprived quintile.

- j) Overall in West Yorkshire, **87%** of respondents felt confident in their personal safety while using local buses during the day (**90%** in Leeds). However, this figure falls to **54%** when using local buses in the dark (**58%** in Leeds). Notably, there are considerable differences by gender, **68%** of men felt confident in their personal safety while using local buses in the dark, but only **41%** of women felt the same, a pattern observed in the last 3 years of this survey. A similar pattern is observed for perceptions of safety on the train.
- k) The survey also asked about the impact of perceptions of safety. Results aggregated over the last 3 years reveal that **42%** of female respondents said they had used a car or taxi instead of walking or cycling in order to avoid antisocial behaviour or because of fear of crime and **41%** had used a car or taxi instead of using a bus or train. Young people are more likely to change their mode choice to avoid antisocial behaviour or because of fear of crime. Half of women aged 16 to 34 had used a car or taxi instead of walking or cycling and **54%** had used a car or taxi instead of using a bus or train. Respondents who live in the most deprived areas, those who are disabled, and those other than of White British ethnicity are also more likely to change their mode choice to avoid antisocial behaviour or because of fear of crime.

2.24. Dedicated local transport research is complimented the national 'Your Bus Journey' survey managed by Transport Focus. The Combined Authority contributes financially to this to achieve a sample of 900 response from West Yorkshire residents in 2023. The Your Bus Journey survey captures perceptions of bus passengers (at bus stops and on-board buses) aged 16 years or older. It covers 34 participating local transport authorities (including a mixture of urban metropolitan, semi-rural and rural areas) and captured passenger experiences on 35,000 journeys in 2023. Data was weighted to be representative of the demographics of passengers by gender and age and journey time. A copy of the West Yorkshire report published on the Combined Authority's [Data and Intelligence Hub](#). The headline West Yorkshire results were:

- a) Overall, 73% of passengers in West Yorkshire said they were either very or fairly satisfied with their bus journey, lower than the England average (80%) and the lowest level of satisfaction out of the 34 participating Local Transport Authorities. Note that London did not participate in the survey and is therefore not included in the England average.
- b) Overall satisfaction with the bus journey in West Yorkshire was higher in the off-peak (77%) than in the peak (64%), and passengers with a free pass were more satisfied (77%) than fare paying passengers (70%).
- c) The most common positive themes taken from comments of satisfied passengers were related to punctuality and the bus driver (24% and 22% of comments respectively), whilst the most common negative comments from dissatisfied passengers were related to punctuality (44% of comments).

- d) 69% of passengers in West Yorkshire said they were either very or fairly satisfied with value for money, which compares to 67% in England. The largest influential factor in dissatisfaction with value for money was the quality of the service.
- e) 67% of passengers in West Yorkshire rated the cost of bus fares as either very good or fairly good, notably higher than the England average (61%).
- f) 84% of passengers in West Yorkshire said they were either very or fairly satisfied with the bus driver (of which 59% were very satisfied), which compares to 85% in England.
- g) 61% of passengers in West Yorkshire said they were either very or fairly satisfied with waiting time for the bus, notably lower than the England average (68%). West Yorkshire ranked 32 out of 34 participating Local Transport Authorities for satisfaction with waiting time. 39% of passengers in West Yorkshire said the wait was longer than they expected, compared to 32% of passengers in England as a whole.
- h) 40% of passengers in West Yorkshire rated the reliability of bus services as either very good or fairly good, notably lower than the England average (56%).
- i) 37% of passengers reported their journey being delayed compared to 33% in England as a whole.
- j) 50% of passengers in West Yorkshire rated the frequency of bus services as either very good or fairly good; lower than the England average (61%).
- k) Also rated below the England average were the ease of getting to local amenities, connections with other forms of public transport and “taking me to the places that I want to go”.
- l) The most common main reason for taking the bus was not having the option of travelling by another means; 47% of passengers gave this reason in West Yorkshire compared to 50% in all Urban metropolitan areas.
- m) 57% of passengers reported that the bus stop where they caught their bus had an electronic display showing bus arrival times; much higher than the England average (42%).
- n) Fieldwork for the 2024 survey is in progress with a final report expected to be published in March 2025.

### **Bus Franchising**

- 3.1 Following a recommendation by the Combined Authority, the Mayor made the decision to introduce franchising across West Yorkshire at the Combined Authority meeting on Thursday 14 March. The Combined Authority therefore is currently in a transition phase to the delivery of franchising, and a detailed

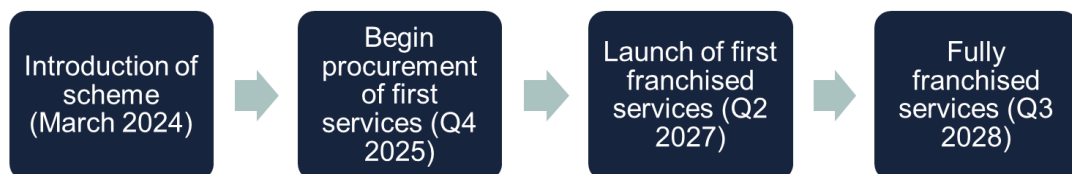
update on the mobilisation of this programme and the associated resourcing and financial budget was given at the Combined Authority meeting on 25 July 2024, and further detail of this can be found in the report for that meeting<sup>1</sup>. The following paragraphs provide a summary from that report

### **Background**

- 3.2 This decision followed completion of an Assessment of Bus Reform Options that was undertaken by the Combined Authority, following a statutory legal process.
- 3.3 As part of the Assessment process, a Bus Reform consultation ran from October 2023 to January 2024 which gave statutory consultees (in line with section 123E (4) of the Transport Services Act 2000) and the general public an opportunity to respond. The consultation consisted of a range of awareness raising events including webinars and in-person presentation events.
- 3.4 1,245 responses were provided and in March 2024 the Combined Authority was presented with the key themes emerging from the consultation and the Combined Authority's response.

### **Mobilisation and Timelines**

- 3.5 The legal process required to transition to bus franchising from a deregulated, commercial market is set out in the Transport Services Act 2000, as amended by the Bus Services Act 2017 (the 'Act'). This forms the basis of the Combined Authority's mobilisation plan, and requires the setting of a number of dates as part of the Franchising Scheme which provide the overarching timeline for delivery:

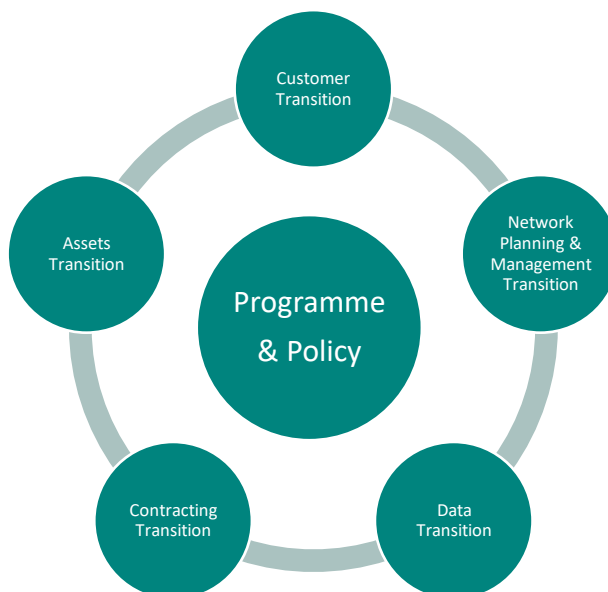


- 3.6 Given the importance of mobilisation to delivering the benefits for the bus franchising programme, the Combined Authority has structured its mobilisation against five identified workstream areas in line with the transition requirements: Customer, Data, Network Planning and Management, Contracting and Assets. These five workstream areas will also be supported by a Programme and Policy Core team within the Combined Authority, managing delivery against the overall timescales and strategic policy

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<sup>1</sup> [25 July Combined Authority report: Bus Franchising](#)

objectives.



- 3.7 An overall bus franchising programme is in place and being iterated to ensure all activities that need to be completed in order to deliver the first phase of the Franchising Scheme are programmed. Each workstream area is then developing a detailed delivery plan of the activities that they will contribute to. With external support being commissioned across a number of these areas over the coming months, these delivery plans will be further enhanced ahead of commencing market engagement on bus franchising from Autumn 2024, with a first operator session planned for late November.

**Finance and Resourcing**

- 3.8 In line with the Assessment, the first year’s budget (2024/25) for transition to franchising is £5,389,863, which was agreed at the meeting of the Combined Authority on 25 July 2024. This amount has been allocated from the Combined Authority’s Single Investment Fund as was also outlined in the Assessment as the source of revenue funding for transition activities. This will leave £15,010,137 to cover the transition period over the remaining 3 years, and expenditure and funding for future years will be considered and progressed as part of the Combined Authority’s budget process in the autumn.
- 3.9 The split between the five workstream groups set out above, external legal advice, the programme and policy core, and risk, contingency and inflation pots is shown below. The risk, contingency and inflation allocations recognise that at this stage all requirements are not known, and that there will be further calls on these figures as the programme matures during the year, and that some costs may also change. The contingency is 10% of the overall budget, and inflation is 5% of the overall budget. This breakdown includes resource costs along with known costs for consultancy services to produce the outputs set out in the franchising assessment:

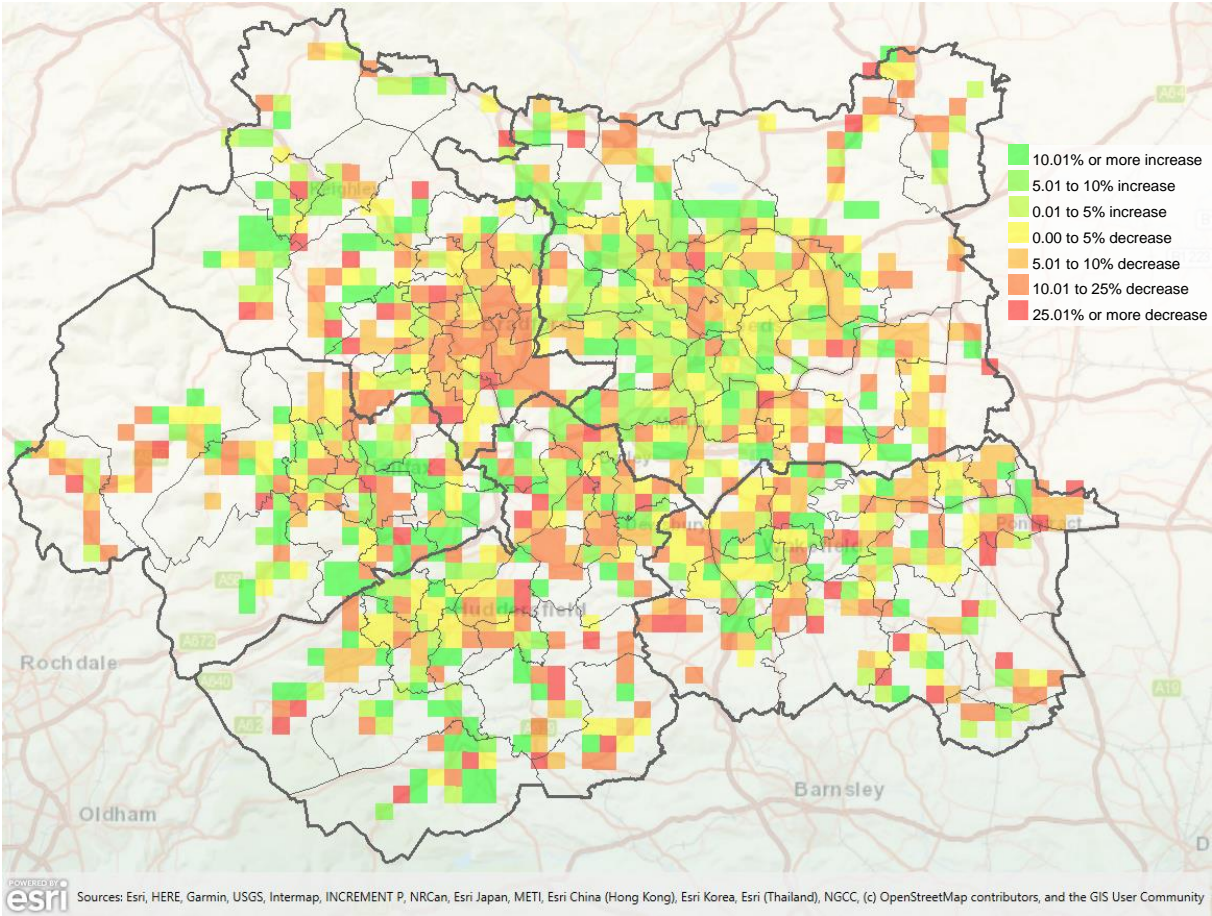
Workstream	2024/25 Budget
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Programme and Policy Core	£478,153
Assets Workstream Group	£552,228
Contracting Workstream Group	£250,000
Customer Workstream Group	£96,030
Data Workstream Group	£554,424
Network Planning and Management Workstream Group	£316,088
External Legal	£225,000
Risk	£2,109,461
Contingency	£538,986
Inflation	£269,493
<b>Total</b>	<b>£5,389,863</b>



#### 4. Appendices

The map below provides an illustration of overall patronage change in the last 3 whole weeks of September 2024 compared against similar weeks in 2023. A small percentage change in a busy location such as a city centre can have a bigger impact on whole West Yorkshire figure than a large percentage change in a suburban or rural area. The concentration of patronage decline is much higher in and around Bradford city centre compared to other area. Squares are 1km squares on the Ordnance Survey grid, thick grey lines show district boundaries and thin grey lines show ward boundaries. Source: ticket machine data from First, Arriva, and Transdev, plus some small operators.



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