

Bus Reform Questionnaire – Long Version

Data protection

Please tick to confirm that you have read and understood our privacy notice which can be viewed at the end of this survey.

Yes, I have read and understood the privacy notice

X

How are you responding to this survey? (Please tick one box only)

I am a member of the public, giving my views as an individual

I am responding on behalf of, or as a representative of, a business or organisation

X

[If selected business/organisation] – What is the name of your business or organisation? What is your position/title?

Leeds City Council

There are two versions of the consultation questionnaire. You are welcome to fill out whichever questionnaire you wish, and you don't have to answer all of the questions.

The short version which contains the ten questions that are set out throughout the Executive Summary (see section 1). These are focused on key areas discussed in the Consultation Document. If you choose to answer this questionnaire, you should find all the relevant information in the Executive Summary and are not required to read the whole document.

The long version contains 47 questions. These questions are set out throughout the Consultation Document following the Executive Summary, referenced in the relevant text. The long version may be more appropriate for respondents who have a good level of knowledge and interest in the bus market as it contains more questions - some of which are more complex.

This is the Long Questionnaire

You may include additional papers should the space not be sufficient for your answers.

Long Questionnaire

Section 1: Description of the Proposed Franchising Scheme

Q1. Do you have any comments on the proposal that the Proposed Franchising Scheme should apply to the entire West Yorkshire region?

See Section 3.2 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

We agree with a West Yorkshire wide approach.

We note that the 5 districts have different characteristics and usage levels of bus. Although broadly similar the 5 districts do have differing levels of ambitions and aspirations for the role of buses within local plans and strategies. So, a West Yorkshire approach is merited but will need to adapt to the scale of the challenge and aspirations of each district.

Further noting that for Leeds travel flows between NY e.g., Harrogate and Selby into/out of the Leeds district are significant and due regard is needed for cross-boundary services.

Q2 Do you have any comments on the proposal to split the geographical area of the Proposed Franchising Scheme into ten zones to be procured across three rounds?

See Section 3.3 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

We note and appreciate the challenges inherent in rolling out franchising.

With regard the specifics of the zones and lots we would appreciate clarification on linkage between these tendered lots and depot allocations.

For instance, in the category B and C lots aimed at smaller operators, and the 'C' lots are described as down to a single vehicle contract – further detail on the links between these lots and the depot strategy would be welcome.

As Leeds depots are the largest and the location of the 3rd depot is not entirely clear. Reassurance and clarity that Leeds residents will not be unduly disrupted by the transitional arrangements would be welcome.

Q3. Do you have any comments on the local services that are proposed to be franchised?

See Section 3.4 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

Broadly we agree with the services to be franchised.

However, as the consultation suggests this list should not be too rigid.

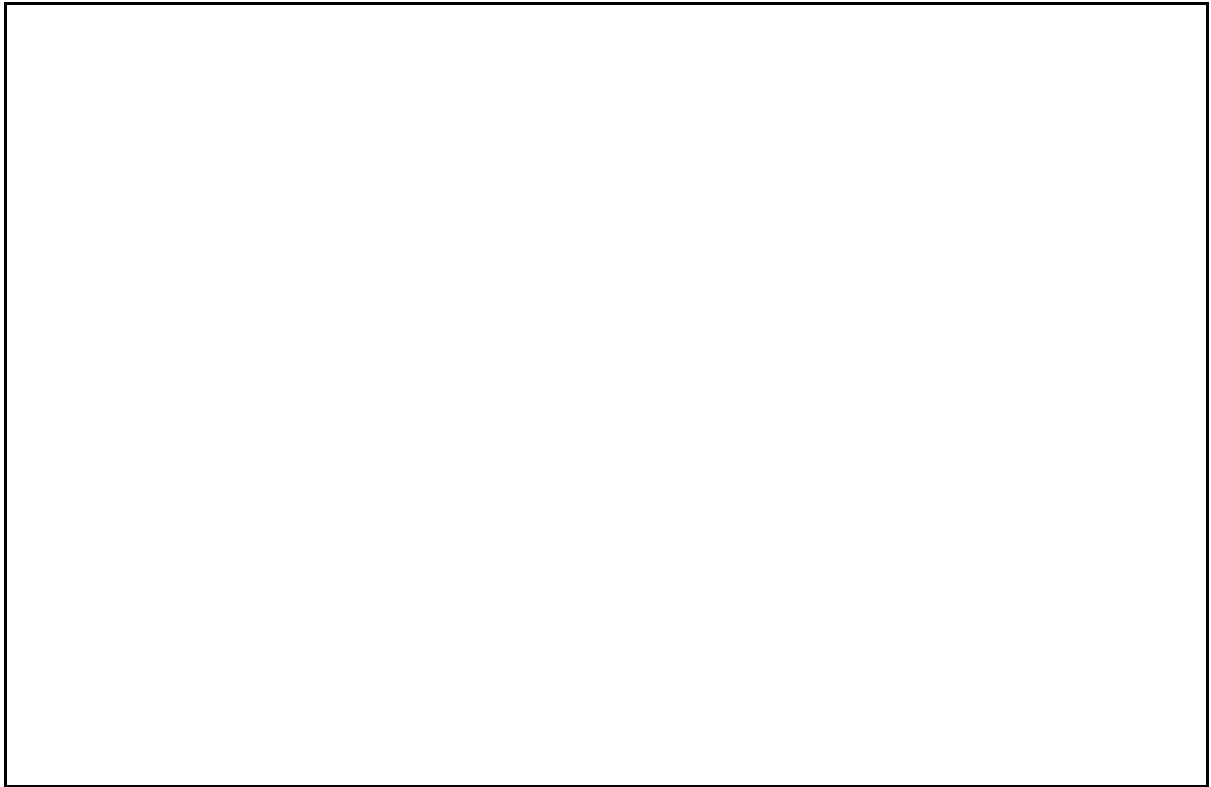
We would expect consideration for both services that have been withdrawn to be reinstated or new services introduced, including services identified in previous workstreams like the 2021 WY Strategic Bus Network Review. There are opportunities to grow the demand by improving frequencies, enhancing services, improving infrastructure, providing new links to growth areas, and providing selected orbital connections within the high frequency network – there are potential schemes in the Aire Valley and in Outer West Leeds.

Also, at an early stage we would expect some scope to upgrade frequencies on services which we think are key for Leeds residents but currently are at a semi-commercial frequency e.g., 30 minutes, when a 15-minute frequency or better could have very large benefits for passengers.

Other improvements like new or improved orbital services to form part of the high frequency network, may be beyond the resources available when franchising is mobilised, but knowing there is a viable path to add in extra services as early as possible, we would encourage.

Q4. Do you have any comments on the services which are exempt from regulation under the Proposed Franchising Scheme?

See Section 3.4 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.



Q5. Do you have any comments on the date on which the Proposed Franchising Scheme is currently proposed to be made, 14 March 2024?

See Section 3.5 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

No comment on the date. We would welcome engagement on our feedback as soon as practically possible after the consultation period ends.

Q6. Do you have any comments on the date on which it is proposed that the first franchise contracts would be entered into, 28 June 2026?

See Section 3.5 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

No comment on this date. We would welcome reassurance and clarification, on how the transition period will be managed, so as to not cause undue disruption to the journeys of Leeds residents.

Q7. Do you have any comments on the nine-month period it is proposed will expire between entering into a franchise contract and the start of a service under such a contract (mobilisation period)?

See Section 3.5 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

No comment on this date. We would welcome reassurance and clarification, on how the interim period will be managed, to not cause undue disruption to the journeys of Leeds residents.

We would like to better understand how the Transition periods in greater Manchester compare and what can be learnt from that experience.

We would welcome and encourage a plan for the interim 9 months to be shared and/or consulted on so we are aware of the details.

Q8. Do you have any comments on the proposals for how the Combined Authority would consult on how well the Proposed Franchising Scheme is working?

See Section 3.6 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

We would suggest an agreed set of KPIs could be determined beforehand, that could be reviewed may be a sensible basis for this consultation, and we would welcome clarification on who the consultees for this consultation would be.

Section 2: Assessment Summary - Strategic Case

Q9. The Strategic Case sets out the challenges facing the West Yorkshire bus system and says it is not performing as well as it could. Do you have any comments on this?

See Section 4.1.3 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

We would suggest the network is the key driver for change – we think it's important franchising doesn't stray from this focus.

In Leeds we have big ambitions for bus as set out in our Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy.

We want everyone in Leeds to have an affordable zero-carbon choice in how they travel – and we envisage the bus playing a big role in delivering this vision. The bus plays a unique role in the life of Leeds being the most accessible and well used form of public transport. We want to provide the widest and most densely accessible local bus network.

In Leeds we often hear from residents that it's the lack of orbital services providing cross-connectivity and a feeling bus users people using the bus have that they always must go into the city centre to change buses that are key concerns.

In the Leeds Transport Conversation, 64% of respondents told us that 'Cross City journeys including those not going through the city centre' were a priority for improvement.

In the Leeds Transport Conversation 57% considered 'Local journeys in and round adjoining neighbourhoods' to be a priority for improvement.

Our residents also tell us that the network does not in all areas provide adequate links to employment destinations particularly outside of 9-5 hours, and they also have concerns about accessing hospitals and healthcare.

A general consensus from the Leeds Transport Conversation was that overall, there was a need for better connections between local areas and key services such as hospitals, employment, and education sites.

Q10. The Strategic Case suggests that reforming the bus market is the right thing to do to address the challenges facing the local bus market. Do you have any comments on this?

See Section 4.1.4 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

We agree and see these 2 points as most important:

- **It is right thing to do primarily to get control of the network to reshape it in the immediate and longer-term future.**
- **It is the right thing to do to recast the network around Mass Transit.**

No option other than franchising, will give the same level of control over these 2 crucial factors for Leeds.

Q11. Do you have any comments on the Combined Authority's objectives as set out in the Strategic Case?

See Section 4.1.5 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

Whilst we agree with the 5 strategic objectives as set out by the CA. We believe public control is most fundamentally needed for re-shaping the network.

We appreciate that in the first instance the priority will be to operate a stable efficient network, thereafter we would encourage the CA to concentrate on this aspect particularly and work with us on re-shaping the network.

To note we appreciate the scale of the challenge and acknowledge in simple terms that it won't be possible to do everything on day one.

Q12. Do you have any comments on how the Proposed Franchising Scheme could deliver the impacts set out in the Strategic Case and therefore contribute to bus reform objectives?

See Section 4.1.6 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

We believe the Network is key and we would look to support a revised network, through continuing our extensive Bus Priority, nationally recognised, investment in bus priority.

In Leeds we expect the suggested benefit of franchising, of using the so-called cross subsidy from the most profitable routes (that are predominately in Leeds), to be used to provide a step change in passenger experience on both existing and new routes in Leeds, to allow more of our residents make many more journeys by bus.

Q13. Do you have any comments on how the EP+ could deliver the impacts set out in the Strategic Case and therefore contribute to bus reform objectives?

See Section 4.1.6 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

We don't believe the ability to recast the network would be as beneficial as with franchising, and therefore would suggest given the great importance of recasting the network this is the primary drawback of the EP+.

We also have concerns in the longer term about how the Operators would respond to adapting the Bus network around Mass Transit Corridors.

On the other areas, we acknowledge there are though attractive elements of the EP+ offer, and some of these for instance across innovative fares and ticketing products, and the pace that some operators are delivering EV buses, are positives. We would wish to see these reflected for Leeds by the CA as the franchising authority, if the franchising option was chosen.

Q14. The Strategic Case concludes that the Proposed Franchising Scheme is the best option for the Combined Authority to meet its strategic objectives for bus in the region. Do you have any comments on this?

See Section 4.1.8 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

We would agree that by working together to make a better network for all, we will jointly succeed in achieving shared WYCA and LCC goals.

Control of the Network is imperative in our view, although in other areas the EP+ offer from Operators is attractive, and we need to ensure that the Franchising offer can match it.

Q15. Do you have any comments on the impacts of the Proposed Franchising Scheme on passengers, as set out in the Economic Case?

See Section 4.2.2 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

For passengers (and potential passengers) we believe redesigning the network will be key to making sure buses maximise the objective of getting passengers efficiently to where they need to go.

In terms of achieving modal shift from car users and maximising how bus serves existing customers – we believe it will be important that the bus offer isn't 'one size fits all' across West Yorkshire - we believe just as operators have innovated on certain routes to drive modal shift – the franchised system will also need to be prepared to innovate rather than employ a blanket approach to the bus offer.

With regard to projections showing an inevitable future decline in bus patronage, we don't think we should accept this as inevitable in Leeds and we will continue to target DfT funding to improve and investigate areas such as bus priority/network management /smart signals/demand management to make sure bus continues to grow in Leeds.

The LPTIP programme successfully delivered a significant amount in a short space of time, but we have a pipeline of further bus priority and accessibility improvements, that we are ready to deliver as funding comes on-stream.

Q16. Do you have any comments on the impacts of the Proposed Franchising Scheme on operators, as set out in the Economic Case?

See Section 4.2.2 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

Although Operators may lose direct control if they then retain a significant franchise, they will have an opportunity to operate without the risks associated up until now. We recognise the opportunity for new operators to enter the market, which, may at the expense of existing operators.

We would welcome clarification over how drivers would be TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment rights) transferred between operators and what job security and employment rights they would have.

Q17. Do you have any comments on the impacts of the Proposed Franchising Scheme on the Combined Authority, as set out in the Economic Case?

See Section 4.2.2 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

It would appear that the CA has recognised the initial costs of delivering franchising and have clarified that the ongoing costs are comparable with the Reference Case and the Enhanced Partnership.

The costings outline the additional staff that the CA would require but make no reference to the skills that those staff would require and how easy they would be to employ.

Q18. Do you have any comments on the impacts of the EP+ on passengers, as set out in the Economic Case?

See Section 4.2.2 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

We believe there is merit in aspects of the EP+ proposal and passengers are likely to notice improvements in their experience on selected corridors. The long-term permanence of this would be subject to uncertainty.

However, we believe there is not the same scope to recast the network as with franchising and it would be harder to integrate with Mass Transit; therefore, limiting the full benefits to the Leeds transport system and hence passenger benefits, compared to franchising.

Q19. Do you have any comments on the impacts of the EP+ on operators, as set out in the Economic Case?

See Section 4.2.2 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

We think it is uncertain in some regards how the EP+ would impact operators. In some cases, operators may change ownership, or wider group priorities may change in terms of commitment to investing for growth or not.

In delivering improvements through LPTIP, LCC has had a positive relationship with operators, and we think this could be potentially replicated in the case that an EP+ was enacted. However, we feel this would be less certain in the rest of West Yorkshire.

We would like further clarity on the prospects for Small Operators and how they would fare.

Q20. Do you have any comments on the impacts of the EP+ on the Combined Authority, as set out in the Economic Case?

See Section 4.2.2 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

We would expect that the CA through the WY Network group – would need to be agile and innovative, to address the challenge of increased operating costs set against declining patronage.

Although as we have said previously the control offered by Franchising would be absent, an EP+ would still give the CA an opportunity to exert more influence over the Network.

Q21. Do you have any comments on the conclusion of the Economic Case that the Proposed Franchising Scheme will offer value for money to the public sector?

See Section 4.2.7 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

Yes, we would agree and are confident that it would offer value for money. Also, particularly if we work through the process of optimising the network rather than a like for like process, there should be savings from a more efficient network.

However, we are conscious that should untoward events occur like another pandemic, or an acute fuel crisis (notwithstanding the move to Zero Emission vehicles) we would be wary of those extreme economic effects.

Section 3: Assessment Summary- Commercial Case

Q22. Do you have any comments on the Commercial Success Factors outlined in the Commercial Case?

See Section 4.3.2 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

We are naturally anxious about attaining the success factors but feel that this is a matter for the Combined Authority, although as outline elsewhere we are anxious to play our part.

Q23. Do you have any comments on the lotting strategy for franchising contracts as set out in the Commercial Case?

See Section 4.3.5 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

In this area we would like further clarity on the following points.

- **In Leeds it is suggested there would be 3 depots instead of the current 2 – more detail on this would be welcome.**
- **The interim period and how this will be managed.**
- **And clarity on the arrangement that are envisaged for input and engagement with districts in deciding what services/frequencies etc. to tender for in each district.**

We appreciate that as the West Yorkshire Combined Authority an overall West Yorkshire solution will always be the preference. However, we do have some concerns with regard to the Lotting system. The three Leeds zones are the most profitable, and we understand that the operations in Leeds will cross-subsidise the other Zones within a Round. We are naturally concerned that this element of cross subsidy may be detrimental to the passenger offer in Leeds and the opportunities to develop the Network.

In addition, we have concerns regarding Depots. There are currently 2 large modern Depots in Leeds and wonder how the 3rd Leeds Category A Lot will be obtained without delay.

Q24. Do you have any comments on the length of franchise contracts under the Proposed Franchising Scheme, as set out in the Commercial Case?

See Section 4.3.5 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

We would suggest that it could be beneficial, that in order to facilitate network redesign, on initial letting some contacts may be better to be let for shorter period of time, so they can be combined with other routes or reworked.

Contracts across the board should have a degree of flexibility so that the network can be re-designed.

Q25. Do you have any comments on the approach to fleet under the Proposed Franchising Scheme, as set out in the Commercial Case?

See Section 4.3.5 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

We would welcome clarification on the timetable for electric bus adoption. In Leeds our ambition would be to have a fully zero-emission fleet by 2023 thus matching our climate emergency declaration – the franchising assessment suggests the CA are aiming for 2040, so clarification that perhaps the 2040 goal does not preclude this being expediated in Leeds, would be welcome.

We would also be grateful for clarification on whether all operators (including the smallest) are expected to use WY owned buses and WY owned depots – if so, what are the benefits that smaller operators can offer, or will they retain their own fleet and depots? Also, we require clarification on the sentence saying that the CA ‘would look to invest in fleet ownership over time’ (Page 78). How would the buses initially be available or does ‘over time’ means as each round is let.

We would welcome conversations about the purchase of Double Door buses and the efficiencies it would bring but acknowledge there maybe revenue protection issues.

In addition, we think Leeds and Bradford would appreciate dialogue on how the new fleet would accommodate the extra equipment necessary for the Guideways.

Q26. Do you have any comments on the approach to depots under the Proposed Franchising Scheme, as set out in the Commercial Case?

See Section 4.3.5 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

We would naturally have concerns regarding the location and purchase of Depot 3 for Leeds. While we appreciate there is time to purchase another depot, it is a matter of concern where it will be and will it be ready in time.

We note the issues raised by the Auditor, concerning an increase in the CA budget over the appraisal period.

Q27. Do you have any comments on the proposed allocation of risk and responsibilities between the Combined Authority and bus operators under the Proposed Franchising Scheme, as set out in the Commercial Case?

See Section 4.3.5 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

We note the envisaged allocation of risk and responsibilities between the CA and the operators. Although not directly affected we note the higher level of Risk the CA will be exposed to chiefly through the responsibility for the Fair-box, revenue and the ticketing regime which lies behind it.

Q28. Do you have any comments on the Combined Authority's approach to procuring franchise contracts under the Proposed Franchising Scheme, as set out in the Commercial Case?

See Section 4.3.5 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

We note the Procurement Strategy and recognise the need for a staged approach with the opportunity for 'Lessons Learned' sessions between Rounds.

We would appreciate further discourse on what Strategy would be adopted if no Operator responded to the Franchise, or no Operator was suitable for a round of Franchising.

Q29. Do you have any comments on the Combined Authority's approach to facilitating the involvement of small and medium sized operators, as set out in the Commercial Case?

See Section 4.3.5 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

We welcome the measures to encourage small and medium sizes operators and would like to see more clarity about whether they would continue to use their own buses and if so, would they operate out of the CA depots.

Q30. Do you have any comments on the impacts of the Proposed Franchising Scheme on the achievement of the objectives of neighbouring transport authorities, as set out in the Commercial Case?

See Section 4.3.5 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

We recognise that the Cross Boundary services are subject to a separate Consultation although a draft list is available.

We also concur that the amount of commonality in Transport Strategies between ourselves and the other Authorities is significant,

After the consultation is complete, we would welcome further dialogue on which services will be affected definitively.

Q31. Do you have any comments on the potential impact that the Proposed Franchising Scheme would have on employment and pensions, as set out in the Commercial Case?

See Section 4.3.5 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

Naturally LCC would like to ensure that Drivers and others are being paid the Living Wage and above.

More specifically we would like further information regarding (albeit small number of drivers who still receive LCC pensions).

Q32. Do you have any comments on how the Proposed Franchising Scheme could support the Commercial Success Factors, as set out in the Commercial Case?

See Section 4.3.5 (Franchising summary) of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

We are concerned about attaining the success factors but feel that the this is a matter for the Combined Authority.

Q33. Do you have any comments on how the EP+ could support the Commercial Success Factors, as set out in the Commercial Case?

See Section 4.3.6 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

No specific comments beyond what is stated in the document.

Q34. The Commercial Case concludes that the Combined Authority would be better able to meet its Commercial Success Factors through the Proposed Franchising Scheme compared to the EP+. Do you have any comments on this?

See Section 4.3.7 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

No specific comments beyond what is stated in the document.

Section 4: Assessment Summary- Financial Case

Q35. The Financial Case sets out the potential sources of funding available to the Combined Authority to deliver the Proposed Franchising Scheme. Do you have any comments?

See Section 4.4.4. of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

We would note that with regards Local Authority contributions, LCC would be prepared to consider investigating methods to further support bus services, and how they may contribute to paying for better services in Leeds.

With respect particularly to local contributions, we would welcome clarity on geographically hypothecating local revenue contributions and re-invested profits, whilst noting we recognise the challenges across the 5 districts.

Q36. The Financial Case concludes that the Combined Authority could afford to introduce and operate the Proposed Franchising Scheme. Do you have any comments?

See Section 4.4.4. of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

We note the additional challenge regarding the purchase of assets.

As noted elsewhere given the CA endures the vast majority of the Risk, LCC will have on-going concerns regarding the potential costs, particularly as noted if patronage decline is more profound than forecast.

Q37. Do you have any comments on the conclusion of the Financial Case about the affordability of the EP+?

See Section 4.4.5 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

We would note we are confident on its affordability and is lower risk, but however it does not match the ambitions we have for buses in Leeds.

In addition, we would require more clarity over the profit-sharing mechanisms and how effectively they would deliver for passengers.

Q38. The Financial Case concludes that the Proposed Franchising Scheme carries more direct financial risk to the Combined Authority compared to an Enhanced Partnership but offers the Combined Authority greater control over the way buses are run, resulting in greater benefits. Do you have any comments on the Combined Authority taking on this financial risk?

See Section 4.4.7 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

We are broadly comfortable with the level of risk the CA is taking on.

However, two slight concerns where clarity would be welcome are: -

- **If patronage continued to decline beyond the projections, would services need to be reduced or would an increase subsidy be used to maintain services.**
- **In a time of financial challenge an exceptional event like the pandemic, it is not clear how this would be resolved.**

Section 5: Assessment Summary- Management Case

Q39. The Management Case sets out how the Combined Authority would manage the Proposed Franchising Scheme. Do you have any comments?

See Section 4.5.3 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

We have Confidence in the CA approach to management.

We would note that districts could have an invaluable role to play, as we have the local intelligence and skills to play a role in the management.

We would also note clarification would be welcome on how the management will respond to needs of all districts and the channels of communication envisioned.

DfT in their November 2022 response to their own consultation on KRN powers have stated that they looking to:

- local authorities to remain the highway authority for both KRN and local roads, remaining responsible for maintenance and management of both KRN and local roads, ensuring that road networks remain tightly integrated.
- mayors to be provided with a power to direct their local authorities to take forward measures on the KRN. This will ensure mayors have the full powers needed to deliver on local transport plans and the wider priorities of the city region.

As of November 2023, we believe these extra powers for Mayoral Combined Authorities have not yet been legislated for and we await clarity on timescales for this. Engagement over how the West Yorkshire Mayoral Authority plans to use these powers to support improving the bus network would be welcome and necessary.

Q40. Do you have any comments on the approach to the transition and implementation of the Proposed Franchising Scheme, as set out in the Management Case?

See Section 4.5.3 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

We anticipate the Transition being a very challenging period.

However, we support what is outlined for the Transition and (again) but would welcome more clarity and detail on the transition.

Q41. Do you have any comments on the proposed approach to managing the EP+, as set out in the Management Case?

See Section 4.5.4 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

We note the comments made with regard to the Management Case the EP+ is more like an extension of the Reference Case (Enhanced Partnership)

We acknowledge the significant improvements an EP+ would bring but believe autonomy over the network, is paramount.

Q42. The Management Case concludes that the with additional competencies and resources the Combined Authority would be able to manage the Proposed Franchising Scheme through its existing organisational structure. Do you have any comments?

See Section 4.5.5 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

We are broadly confident in the suggested proposal for management by the CA. We would note the information given, and we welcome clarification on the proposed structure e.g., will each of the 10 zones (3 for Leeds) have a Director/principal person for districts to liaise.

We believe that the districts could have an invaluable role to play, utilising their knowledge of local issues to play a role in the management.

In addition, LCC, with 99 elected members representing the views of the public in Leeds, means we have key local information and networks to contribute to successfully shaping franchising to meet public needs.

Section 6: Assessment Summary

Q43. The Assessment concludes that the Proposed Franchising Scheme is the best way to achieve the strategic objectives of the Combined Authority. Do you have any comments on this?

See Section 4.6 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

As is well outlined in the Consultation we feel the Proposed Franchising Scheme does indeed meet the strategic objectives of the CA. Moreover, we feel it positively impacts the three pillars of the LCC Best City Ambition

- 1 **Health and wellbeing:** The development of Bus Reform will improve Bus Services as the cornerstone of the sustainable public transport offer and allow it to complement Mass Transit. A modern attractive bus offer will support healthy, physically active lifestyles whilst encouraging the feeling of safety when using transport infrastructure.
- 2 **Inclusive Growth:** An attractive and responsive Bus Service will boost productivity by helping businesses to grow and invest in the region and their workforce, to drive economic growth, increase innovation and create jobs. It will help people travel to jobs and education in a reliable, efficient, and affordable manner, while increasing the job and training opportunities people can easily reach. The Inclusive Growth Strategy acknowledges the role of Transport in supporting and delivering inclusive growth in the city. Investing in our places and transport to create a sustainable economy and greener future where you don't

need a car, bringing jobs and opportunities closer to people and continue to support the most disadvantaged communities across Leeds.

- 3 Zero Carbon: Bus Reform with its emphasis on a Zero Emission Bus Service and a more attractive offer which will draw people away from other less environmentally friendly modes, will directly tackle the objective of tackling the climate emergency by growing the economy while cutting emissions and improving the environment.

Q44 Overall, to what extent do you support or oppose the introduction of the Proposed Franchising Scheme?

See Section 4.6 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

| Support | Support in part | Neither support nor oppose | Oppose in part. | Oppose | I don't know. |
|---------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| X | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Q45. Are there any changes that you think would improve the Proposed Franchising Scheme?

See Section 1.4 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

We suggest there are issues particularly to Leeds that may not have been appropriate to cover in detail within the WY wide assessment. We believe these can be explored by the Combined Authority to improve the offer for the public in Leeds.

Fundamentally we believe the network does not serve our communities as well as it possibly can. Therefore, we would encourage a thorough root-and-branch examination of the bus network in Leeds, potentially in a similar fashion to the successful network re-design in Dublin. This would assess how we can best allocate resources to provide the most attractive and equitable bus network. We believe services to hospitals and health services in Leeds and would ensure better links to employment centres particularly those poorly served currently.

This review would also need to understand the potential for extra orbital services in the city providing cross-connectivity that doesn't require interchange in the city centre. The review would also consider how we can better meet demand for bus services in the evening, at night and on Sundays and bank holidays. Cross-subsidy may be required to support additional service at these times. We believe Leeds can support a night bus network on the major radial corridors.

To make bus services in Leeds more attractive to passengers we need faster journey times and reduced delays at bus stops. We encourage a consideration of methods to reduce dwell times, as currently they are a significant proportion of overall journey times. For some services with significant 'churn' of passengers it is likely that double door buses would be very effective in speeding journeys up.

The other aspect of dwell times that causes significant delays to journeys is purchasing on the bus of tickets and validating bus tickets in front of the bus driver. Currently the time taken for a contactless card transaction offers little or no benefits over cash, and selling weekly and similar products on the bus causes significant delays, further it is the case that take up and awareness amongst passengers of 'tap on tap off ticketing', that is much quicker, is currently only marginal.

Therefore, we believe franchising should be used to simplify and streamline the current approach to ticketing, with the aim of transitioning to a fully contactless system. Consideration should be given to introducing a proof-of-payment ticketing system, which does not require passengers to interact with the driver and can therefore offer major reductions in dwell time. This would have clear synergies with multi-door operation and further improve the speed of passenger journeys. Faster bus operating speeds save on operational costs that could then be re-invested in the network in higher frequencies or a longer span of operation.

Both these issues whilst important for bus operations everywhere, become exponentially more important in the densest urban areas with the busiest services. It is in Leeds this type of service is much more common than in the other 4 districts and so we believe even if these improvements are not viable as a blanket change across West Yorkshire as a whole – due regard should be given to maximising and tailoring bus services to the nature of each district, and indeed travel corridors within a district, as Leeds does vary significantly.

The assessment makes clear that a benefit of Franchising would be a simplified ticket range. We agree and suggest that we also must ensure it offers inclusivity. Whilst the current £2 fare and the £4.50 both offer good value in the cost-of-living crisis, we believe there is more to do. Firstly a ‘hopper’ fare that ensures that if a passenger needs to use more than one bus to get to their destination, they are not penalised for this. As many bus passengers use the bus to get to work, we think here more can be done to ensure commuter tickets are even better value than at present. Franchising should also be used to expedite the delivery of truly multi-modal ticketing products that encompass bus, rail, bike hire, car hire and, ultimately, Mass Transit.

We suggest the role of Park and Ride services that are specific to the Leeds district within West Yorkshire, will need consideration to ensure they are not overlooked within the broader West Yorkshire focus of franchising. Although passenger numbers are down compared to pre-pandemic, there exists significant potential to support mode shift through Park and Ride offer.

Q46. Do you have any further comments?

See Section 4.6 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

We believe the Consultation to be very thorough, and we have expressed all our opinions.

Section 6: EQIA

Q47. The Combined Authority's draft Equality Impact Assessment identifies the potential impact of the Proposed Franchising Scheme on persons with protected characteristics. Do you have any comments on it?

See Section 5 of the Consultation Document for information to support answering this question.

The EDCI shows some thorough research into the differential use of and impact of bus services and inclusion. However, due to the structure of the form it can appear confusing, and it is difficult to gain a clear indication of what the combined impacts are on a particular characteristics or indeed cumulative impacts. It will make it more difficult to draw conclusions and agree actions to foster equality of service.

Older women are more likely to travel by bus and less likely to drive, they live longer and therefore may find themselves without car access following the death of their spouse. Yet until about half-way through, the EDCI only references specifically an increase in bus patronage among older men. The opportunity of a controlled bus network to better meet the needs of women, those in part time jobs and caring responsibilities not acknowledged.

Lowest income households have higher levels of non-car ownership, 40% still have no car access – female heads of house, children, young and older people, ethnically diverse and disabled people are concentrated in this quintile.

Bus design, routing and need to interchange make it more challenging for disabled people to use the bus; there is one wheelchair space per vehicle which may be contested. Audible announcements are a major improvement, but complaints received about these being routinely turned off. Opportunity for this to be improved under franchising system not acknowledged.

Again, due to the format of the form cumulative impacts of improvements e.g., bus services after dark on are positive for multiple characteristics are not emphasised. No detail about how accessibility (services, information, bus stops) will be improved, which has resulted in generalised statements next to all protected characteristics.

Optional section: About you (individuals only)

Thank you for taking the time to provide your feedback.

These questions are optional and for individuals responding only. If you choose to answer these questions you will not be identified by the information provided. All information will be handled and dealt with in line with the Data Protection Act 2018, as detailed in our privacy notice.

We want to better understand who we are engaging with and hearing from. We are required to act in line with the [Equality Act 2010](#). By asking the following questions we can make sure our work reflects the diverse communities we serve.

| What is your postcode? | |
|------------------------|---|
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |

| What is your sex? | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Female / woman | <input type="checkbox"/> Male / man | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |

| Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth? | | |
|---|--------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I self-describe my gender identity as: | | |

| Age: How old are you? | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|---------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0 - 15 | <input type="checkbox"/> 16 - 24 | <input type="checkbox"/> 25 - 34 | <input type="checkbox"/> 35- 44 | <input type="checkbox"/> 45 - 54 | <input type="checkbox"/> 55 - 64 | <input type="checkbox"/> 65 - 74 | <input type="checkbox"/> 75 - 84 | <input type="checkbox"/> 85+ | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |

| Ethnicity: How would you describe your ethnicity or ethnic background? | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Asian, Asian British: | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi | <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Any other Asian background, please state: | |
| Black, Black British, Caribbean, or African: | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> African | <input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean |

| | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Any other Black, African, or Caribbean background, please state: | |
| Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White and Black Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> White and Black African |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White and Asian | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Any other Mixed or Multiple ethnic background, please state: | |
| White: | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> English, Welsh, Scottish. Northern Irish or British | <input type="checkbox"/> Irish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gypsy or Irish Traveller | <input type="checkbox"/> Roma |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Any other White background, please state: | |
| Other: | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arab | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Any other ethnic group, please state: | |

| | | |
|---|--------------------------------|---|
| Disability: Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more? | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |

| | | | |
|---|---|--------------------------------|---|
| Do any of your conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry out day-to-day activities? | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, limited a lot | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, limited a little | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |

| | | | |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| Sexual orientation: How would you describe your sexual orientation? | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heterosexual or straight | <input type="checkbox"/> Gay man or gay woman / lesbian | <input type="checkbox"/> Bisexual | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I self-describe my sexual orientation as: | | | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Religion or belief: What is your religion or belief? | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No religion (including atheist) | <input type="checkbox"/> Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant, and all other Christian denominations) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Buddhist | <input type="checkbox"/> Hindu |

| | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jewish | <input type="checkbox"/> Muslim |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sikh | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify, if you wish): | |

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS SURVEY

If you are interested in receiving more information from us in the future regarding bus reform, please provide a preferred method of contact below.

Please select your preferred method of contact and add your details below:

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Email <input type="checkbox"/> | Post <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|

Email: _____

Name: _____

Address line 1: _____

Address line 2: _____

Town/City: _____ Postcode: _____

How to mail your completed survey to us:

Please return your completed survey by the closing date of 7 January 2024 to:

Freepost CONSULTATION TEAM (WYCA)

Please note you do not need to pay for or add a stamp to the envelope you use when you post your survey back to us. The Royal Mail will deliver your post for free, and the cost is covered by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

Privacy Notice

For the purposes of the Data Protection Act (2018) and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), the 'controller' of the personal data which you provide in the attached form is the West Yorkshire Combined Authority ("the Combined Authority", "we", "us") of Wellington House, 40-50 Wellington St, Leeds LS1 2DE (Tel: 0113 251 7272). The Combined Authority is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office with registration number ZA051694.

The Combined Authority is collecting this data and will process it for the purpose of understanding and identifying information surrounding the future of Bus travel and Bus Franchising. The purpose of this engagement exercise is to meet, and exceed, the Statutory requirements of making a franchising scheme as set out in The Bus Services Act 2017.

Questions regarding some of your personal data and some special category data are asked as we recognise that the needs of different customer groups can vary, and we are committed to improving transport services for all customers within the region. In addition, the online survey will capture your IP address when you complete an online survey, however we will not process this data further.

We publish comments/feedback you provide in the consultation's outcome reports available on the Your Voice page, to demonstrate the feedback we have taken into account. This does not contain any of your identifiable information.

The Combined Authority will share the data, comments, feedback and/or opinions obtained during the consultation with DJS Research who will provide analysis of the data for the Combined Authority Data for the purpose stated above.

Where you request a response to a question from the project team, we will share your name and contact information with the project team at the Combined Authority and with DJS Research.

We will not share your information with any other organisation or third party other than those named above. However, there may be other circumstances in which we may share or use certain information about you, which are:

- if we have a legal obligation to do so or if we are required or requested to do so by a competent authority such as the police or a court.
- if we need to use or disclose your information to obtain legal advice or in connection with legal proceedings.
- if we need to share your information to protect your vital interests if you are unable to give us consent or it is unreasonable for us to ask for your consent in the circumstances (e.g., if you are injured).

We will retain your information for the duration of the project in accordance with our information retention policy and on the expiration of such period we will safely delete it.

Information provided to the Combined Authority will be processed on the basis of Article 6(1)(e) of the UK GDPR which states that processing is necessary for the purposes of a task carried out in the public interest.

As a data subject you have a number of rights under the DPA. These include the right to access the information which we hold about you. In some cases, you may have a right to have your personal data rectified, erased or restricted, and to object to certain use of your data.

This would not affect the legality of what we do with your personal data before you make such a request and would not stop us from continuing to use your data to the extent that we do not require your consent. It would stop us from further using data for purposes which require your consent (e.g., marketing).

If you are unsatisfied with the manner in which we collect or handle your personal data, you have a right to make a complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office. Information about how to make complaints can be found on the ICO's website at <https://ico.org.uk>

We act in accordance with our corporate privacy notice, which provides further information on personal data processing and how to contact us to make a request: <https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/footer/privacy-notice-and-cookie-policy/>

The Combined Authority's Data Protection Officer can be contacted at DPO@westyorks-ca.gov.uk