

SCRUTINY BOARD (INFRASTRUCTURE, INVESTMENT & INCLUSIVE GROWTH)

WEDNESDAY, 25TH SEPTEMBER, 2024

PRESENT: Councillor H Bithell in the Chair

Councillors A Ali, N Buckley, P Carlill,
K Dye, S Lay, M Millar, M Robinson,
A Rontree, M Shahzad and I Wilson

23 APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS

There were no appeals against refusal of inspection of documents.

24 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There was no exempt information.

25 Late Items

There were no late items.

26 Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

27 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies were received from the following Scrutiny Board members:

- Cllr A Scopes - Cllr A Rontree attended as a substitute.
- Cllr S Leighton - Cllr P Carlill attended as a substitute.

The Scrutiny Board was also asked to note apologies from Dr Ian Greenwood in relation to item 8, and Cllr J Pryor (Executive Member) in relation to items 7,8 & 9.

28 Minutes - 17 July 2024

The following matters were noted in respect of the minutes:

- **Minute 18:** Members had agreed to submit a Scrutiny Statement to the Executive Member to summarise their conclusions and recommendations ahead of highways maintenance being considered by the Executive Board. The Principal Scrutiny Advisor confirmed that this had been submitted and was circulated to Scrutiny Board members on 4 September 2024.

Members had further agreed a letter would be sent to the Chief Secretary to the Treasury and the Minister for the Future of Roads regarding national funding arrangements for highways maintenance. It was confirmed this had been sent.

The Scrutiny Board was advised that both documents will be appended to the Executive Board report on the same subject within the agenda pack for the meeting taking place on 16 October 2024.

- **Minute 19:** Cllr Bithell has provided further comments to Cllr Coupar in relation to Community Asset Transfer as agreed at the July Scrutiny Board meeting.

RESOLVED: The minutes were agreed as a correct record of the meeting of 17 July 2024.

29 Mass Transit Update

The Chair began by thanking guests from West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) for their engagement with Scrutiny Board members.

Those in attendance for this item were:

- Rob Leech (Director of Mass Transit, WYCA)
- Tim Lawrence (Interim Head of Transport Planning and Appraisal – Mass Transit, WYCA)
- Sima Alavi (Head of Public Affairs and Engagement, WYCA)
- Gary Bartlett – (Chief Officer, Transportation and Highways)

Representatives from WYCA delivered a presentation to members about the development of mass transit to date.

Tim Lawrence began with an overview of the case for change, the Programme Strategic Outline Business Case, Mass Transit Vision 2040 and the Strategic Outline Case+.

In considering the case for change, Tim set out the way in which WYCA originally determined the corridors of greatest need for transport intervention. This involved an assessment of factors including access to the transport network in deprived places, levels of existing travel demand, opportunities to join up key assets, planned housing growth, large scale planned employment growth, rail crowding and road congestion.

Members were reminded that the Mass Transit Vision 2040 was endorsed and adopted by WYCA in October 2023, following two phases of statutory public consultation in January 2021 and October 2022.

It was noted that mass transit is designed to be a regional network. However, as Leeds City Centre is the largest single centre of economic, social and cultural activity in West Yorkshire early work identified that it would be integral to the first phase of mass transit.

Further work established that Bradford and Leeds City centres will be the hubs at the heart of the initial phase of mass transit based on two lines. The options consultation is currently ongoing. A preferred option for both the route and technology will be development taking into account the feedback from the ongoing consultation (taking place July - September 2024).

Sima Alavi went on to update the Scrutiny Board on the process of public engagement and consultation. She advised the Scrutiny Board that the current consultation is seeking views from the public and stakeholders on three issues:

- Which one of the potential route options from Bradford to Leeds is preferred?
- Which one of the potential route options from St James' Hospital via Leeds City Centre to the White Rose Centre is preferred?
- How can a mass transit network be delivered whilst balancing the long-term needs of the environment, social and the economy?

Sima outlined the way in which the consultation has been made available to the public including through online surveys, tactile maps, leafleting events, community drop in engagements, online webinars and a pre-recorded presentation designed for those with a hearing or visual impairment.

Rob Leech provided further information about development phase funding and next steps. He clarified that the total allocated funding is £202m for ongoing development and commencement of the delivery of mass transit phase 1, along with development work on corridors beyond phase 1. The current order of magnitude estimate, based on UK and Ireland benchmarks, for capital cost is £2-2.5bn.

Rob provided an overview of next steps, highlighting that the project aims to have 'spades in the ground' by 2028.

Members sought further information about organisational capacity at WYCA, confidence in government support for the scheme and the proposed technology.

In response, Tim provided an outline of the links to the Treasury and Department for Transport, to ensure WYCA has a good understanding of the relevant gateways. WYCA is building organisational capacity and recognises that technical consultants will have to be engaged in relation to some elements of the scheme.

Partners noted the importance of learning from other regions that have already introduced tram systems, such as Manchester and Edinburgh.

Tim reassured members that the potential route options only reflect the first phase of the scheme and there is an ambition to develop a wider regional network.

It was confirmed that tram appears to be the most appropriate technology given demand, financial constraints and the support of Government. However, it is anticipated that as the network develops there will be opportunities to incorporate different modes of transport depending on affordability and viability.

Members queried whether there are any groups that are currently known to oppose the scheme. Sima noted that she was not aware of significant opposition from any group. She reiterated the importance of building relationships with stakeholders.

In considering the next steps for the scheme, members asked whether future consultation exercises would be duplicating current activity, and therefore causing delays to the programme. In response, Rob advised the Scrutiny Board that the next consultation will be significantly more detailed, especially for properties and businesses who would be directly affected by the scheme.

Concern was raised about the cost of the scheme over running, as was the case in the Edinburgh during phase 1 of their in-house scheme, and further information was sought about the potential use of driverless technology and automation.

Rob advised the Scrutiny Board that they are learning from the experience in Edinburgh. He noted that the second phases of the scheme in Edinburgh did not overrun. Several people who worked on the Edinburgh scheme are now working on the West Yorkshire project. However, he also set out how the scheme will make allowance for optimism bias and the way in which that will diminish over time as a better assessment of costed risk is developed.

It was confirmed that WYCA is not considering bespoke technology and will be considering infrastructure based on market norms.

Members were informed the next consultation will include potential locations for stops.

RESOLVED: Members agreed to note the report and to consider requesting future updates as the scheme develops.

30 Vision Zero

The Chair introduced the item, noting that the Scrutiny Board has had a long-standing interest in the numbers of those killed and seriously injured on Leeds roads and has been very supportive of the partnership approach in Leeds to Vision Zero.

For the benefit of any members of the public watching the webcast, she highlighted that the Vision Zero Strategy sets out the ambition that by 2040 no one is killed or seriously injured on the roads in Leeds.

The Chair acknowledged the impact of each road death reflected in the statistics in front of the Scrutiny Board for the victims, their families and their wider communities.

The meeting began with a minute's silence for the victims of road death and their families.

Those in attendance for this item were:

- Gary Bartlett (Chief Officer, Transportation and Highways)
- Gillian MacLeod (Head of Development Services)
- Rosie Revell (Team Leader, Safe & Sustainable Travel Team)
- Nick Hunt (Traffic Engineering Manager)

- Alison Lowe (Deputy Mayor for Policing & Crime, WYCA)
- Neil Hudson (Policy Manager – Vision Zero, WYCA)

- CI Jonathan McNiff (WY Police)
- Inspector Lorna Crabtree (WY Police)
- Paul Jeffrey (Head of Prosecutions & Casualty Prevention Unit, WY Police)

Gary Bartlett introduced the Connecting Leeds Vision Zero 2040 Annual Update Report 2023-24. He noted that 2023 data is yet to be released by the Department for Transport but early indications illustrate a reduction in the number of those killed and seriously injured as compared to 2022 figures. While he cautiously welcomed the trajectory, especially in the context of comparative trends regionally and nationally, he acknowledged the human impact of each of the figures reported.

Gary reiterated that partnership is key to delivering change and progress towards the ambitions of Vision Zero. He noted work that is ongoing to increase awareness of Vision Zero through communication activity and events. He particularly welcomed the impact of the Vision Zero pledge and work to educate drivers about their responsibility for their own behaviour.

He provided a brief update on enforcement activity and set out an aspiration for the Council to lead by example across its own services, particularly in the context of this being a public health challenge. He noted links to public health are also reflected in the letter provided by Dr Ian Greenwood in the agenda pack.

Alison Lowe provided a brief introduction to the launch of a regional Vision Zero, highlighting the way in which it is hoped regional cooperation can accelerate progress across West Yorkshire.

Members sought advice about whether communication can be strengthened, alongside taking a more robust approach to safety cameras locally.

Neil Hudson provided an update on the regional approach to communication, noting that there is a dedicated Vision Zero communication officer at WYCA. The regional approach has included working with social media influencers, as well as using social media platforms and local radio to share key messages.

Gary reflected on the local work to review the approach to safety cameras, which resulted in amended guidance and a more flexible approach. This was welcomed by members.

Paul Jeffrey acknowledged the importance of the partnership approach to the revision of national guidance relating to safety cameras. He welcomed the move away from the previous approach to risk which was based on locations where there had been a serious injury or fatality. He updated the Scrutiny Board on the current approach to locating safety cameras and the way in which the public can highlight locations of concern.

Paul highlighted the importance of maintaining public support for speed enforcement by ensuring decisions about locating cameras are based on clear data about traffic flows and risk.

Alison Lowe signposted the Community Alert system that has been set up to enable the public to report locations of concern. It was noted that there are also financial constraints to consider in relation to locating enforcement cameras.

Concern was raised about departmental capacity within the Council to deliver road safety interventions, given the size of the city and number of requests.

Gary Bartlett noted that greater security over medium term funding has enabled more effective planning and prioritisation of schemes. He highlighted the benefit of the City Region Transport Settlement (CRSTS) Safe Roads capital fund being provided over a 5-year period.

However, Gary acknowledged the ongoing challenge in relation to the scale of requests that the service received.

Nick Hunt also welcomed the improved approach to prioritisation and planning enabled by the 5-year CRSTS fund.

Alison Lowe agreed that Leeds has made substantial progress in this regard, which is reflected in the data that is monitored at a regional level.

Concern was expressed about dangerous driver behaviours close to schools at pick up and drop off times.

Gary Bartlett acknowledged the challenge with driver behaviour around schools. He noted the range of activities, intervention and education being

delivered to tackle this issue but also reiterated that everyone needs to take responsibility for their own behaviour.

Members welcomed interventions that had been targeted at young drivers including the 'One Life Lost' scheme and sessions delivered by the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service (WYFRS) Youth Interventions Team.

Paul Jeffrey provided further information about the partnership approach to delivering interventions targeting young people. He and Neil Hudson highlighted the PolEd online lesson resources that are offered to schools by West Yorkshire Police.

Alison Lowe provided further information about regional campaigns for legislative change including support for Dr Ian Greenwood's campaign to introduce a graduated driving licence for novice drivers.

Rosie Revell outlined the range of educational activities aimed at young people and noted where there is appetite from schools there is the potential to procure more sessions for younger drivers provided by the TTC Group, who also deliver speed awareness courses on behalf of West Yorkshire Police.

In response to member queries, Gillian McLeod highlighted the activity to tackle the illegal and anti-social use of e-bikes in Leeds. This includes liaison with companies such as Deliveroo to try and improve rider behaviour in pedestrianised areas.

Alison Lowe provided further information on regional funding for additional police bikes.

Members queried whether 'you said we did' messages could be used to illustrate the data that has led to enforcement responses in some communities. Nick confirmed that this is beginning to take place and officers hope to be able to share ward specific data with members soon.

Jonathan McNiff confirmed the Police do publicise the work they are doing with mobile cameras and the results of that activity.

A query was raised about whether the Scrutiny Board and Executive Member could lobby government to seek the retention of a greater proportion of funds generated locally by speed cameras within affected communities.

Alison Lowe informed members she had raised wider systemic concerns about the inability to retain a large proportion of funding generated locally with Yvette Cooper.

Paul Jeffrey explained the current arrangements for funding retention linked to the payment of fines. He noted that where offences are dealt with in court money raised is returned to the treasury. In contrast there is an opportunity to recover some costs from fees paid for education provided outside of the court system. He noted that this must pay for camera infrastructure and back-office

costs. If there is a surplus of such funding at a West Yorkshire level it goes back into road safety activity.

Paul further advised that secondary legislation linked to the Police, Crime and Sentencing Act is currently being developed and this may provide an opportunity to engage with decision makers about their approach to the retention of funding linked to enforcement activity.

Partners responded to member concerns about their ability to tackle mobile phone use by drivers. Police partners advised the Scrutiny Board that to secure a prosecution they have to prove a phone was in use not just in hand.

It was confirmed that in the year to July 2024 520 mobile phone use offences had been prosecuted.

Members requested a further session to specifically consider proposals to introduce a graduated driving licence in more detail and progress towards the introduction of a Council policy regarding drug and alcohol use, akin to those already in place for contractors.

RESOLVED:

Members agreed:

- a) To note the content of the Connecting Leeds Vision Zero 2040 annual progress report 2023-24, together with progress made against the targets in the associated Action Plan 2022-2025.
- b) To consider signing the West Yorkshire pledge and promoting this within their wards. [Vision Zero Pledge - West Yorkshire Combined Authority \(westyorks-ca.gov.uk\)](https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk)
- c) The Chair will explore potential communication on behalf of the Scrutiny Board in relation to the retention of a higher proportion of locally generated funding from road safety enforcement activity.
- d) To consider the graduated driving licence and progress towards a drug and alcohol policy for Council staff in more detail in a separate session.

Cllr Buckley left the meeting at 12.38pm.

31 Connecting Leeds

The Chair noted that the 2023/24 Scrutiny Board recommended that this item was considered in this municipal year and members again agreed they wished to take this forward in June 2024.

She noted that the accompanying report recognises the significant improvements that have been made over recent years in consultation and engagement through the Connecting Leeds team. She asked members to

consider how the current team operates and how that journey of improvement can continue to evolve.

Individuals in attendance for this item were:

- Gary Bartlett (Chief Officer, Transportation and Highways)
- Paul Foster (Head of Transport Strategy)
- Joanna Lepelley (Senior Project Officer)

Gary Bartlett highlighted the significant work that has taken place to improve engagement since 2016. He identified that one area for future improvement may be to consider how younger people could be more effectively targeted through partnerships with social influencers.

Members welcomed work that has been undertaken to capture a broader range of views through the consultation process. A verbal update was requested on how officers are seeking to improve representation from groups who have historically been underrepresented in consultation responses. Clarification was also requested on how officers ensure national campaigns on issues such as active travel zones do not distort responses from local people who would be affected by a scheme.

Joanna Lepelley noted that tackling an imbalance in responses linked to EDI characteristics is an ongoing process. She advised the members that officers will review responses part way through a consultation and seek to adapt the marketing strategy if a significant imbalance is identified.

Paul Foster further advised the Board that postcodes can be used to disaggregate the views of local people if there is concern that a consultation is being distorted due to a national campaign. That disaggregated data can then be provided to assist decision makers.

Members recommended that information is provided to local communities after a consultation to illustrate why decisions have been taken. It was noted that this does currently happen in some instances.

Officers agreed to consider how this approach might be extended for more schemes – for example, by notifying local members of when information is published online post-consultation so that it can be shared more widely by members in their communities.

In concluding the discussion, Cllr Bithell thanked officers for swiftly incorporating changes to their report ahead of the meeting. She also welcomed the 'bitesize' element within consultations, as illustrated in the appendix.

The Chair encouraged officers to consider how the anchor network might be used to increase the distribution of consultations and agreed that social influencers may provide a mechanism through which younger people could be more engaged.

Reflecting on discussions relating to an imbalance relation to EDI characteristics, the Chair highlighted the importance of understanding who is not responding, as well as who is replying.

RESOLVED:

Members noted the content of the report.

Members asked that consideration be given to the following matters:

- The future use of social influencers to target younger people.
- The potential use of the anchor network to increase the distribution of consultations.
- Ways in which ward members can be made aware of information post-consultation, so that can it be shared within the affected local community.

32 Work Schedule

RESOLVED: That the draft work programme be noted.

33 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Scrutiny Board will take place on **6 November 2024** at **10.15am**. There will be a pre-meeting for all Board members at **10.00am**.

Members were also asked to note the upcoming working groups set out in the work programme.