

SCRUTINY BOARD (INFRASTRUCTURE, INVESTMENT & INCLUSIVE GROWTH)

WEDNESDAY, 14TH OCTOBER, 2020

PRESENT: Councillor P Truswell in the Chair

Councillors N Buckley, L Cunningham,
N Dawson, K Dye, K Maqsood,
M Shahzad, J Taylor and P Wadsworth

33 APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS

There were no appeals.

34 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There was no exempt information.

35 Late Items

There were no late items.

36 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations.

37 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

38 Minutes - 23 September 2020

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 September 2020 be confirmed as a correct record.

39 Matters arising from the minutes

Responses to the following were sought:

Minute 28 – Matters arising from the Minutes

Member concern regarding school children and students trying to get to classes on time was noted and would be raised with WYCA.

Minute 30 – Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme

It is understood that improvements to Morley Train Station will be undertaken as part of the Trans-Pennine Upgrade. This to be confirmed and Members be updated.

40 Advancing Bus Service Provision

The report of the Director of City Development and West Yorkshire Combined Authority set out the progress in responding to the recommendations arising from the Scrutiny Inquiry into Advancing Bus Provision.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Cllr L Mulherin, Executive Member
- Cllr Kim Groves, Chair, WYCA Transport Committee
- Gary Bartlett, Chief Officer, Highways and Transportation
- Dave Pearson, Director, Transport and Properties Services - WYCA
- Andrew McGuinness, Regional Manager, North of England, CPT UK Chair ABOWY
- Dwayne Wells, Head of Commercial for Arriva
- Paul Matthews, MD of First WY
- Alex Hornby, CEO TransDev

Dave Pearson delivered a presentation to the Board. The following themes were highlighted:

- The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on bus use – fewer journeys and restricted capacity due to social distancing. Impact on finances.
- Possible scenarios with or without emergency funding.
- Longer term implications – changing travel habits; environmental implications and vehicle investment.
- Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme – works ongoing in the City Centre and the Leeds/Bradford corridor.
- Development of a colour coded network map to ease understanding of the system of bus routes across the city.
- Links to the airport.
- Fare deals for younger people and flexible ticketing for part time workers.
- In response to questions, the following issues were discussed:
 - There had been a similar impact on passenger use on both commercial and supported routes. Bus usage has risen more than rail usage during the summer period.
 - There would be a report to Executive Board in November which would provide an update on schemes in the Leeds Public Transport Improvement Programme.

Councillor Groves addressed the Board with regards to the role of WYCA on bus provision. Issues highlighted included the priorities to protect existing networks; work with the Government to pursue options for the delivery of bus services and developing an enhanced partnership between WYCA and bus operators.

Representatives of the bus operators also addressed the Board. Issues highlighted included the following:

- Recovery following the original announcement for people to avoid the use of public transport.
- Staffing issues.
- Partnership working to meet current challenges.
- Provision of transport for key workers, school pupils and students.
- Future challenges.

In response to Members comments and questions, the following issues were discussed:

- There are capacity issues at peak times due to social distancing.
- Ticketing - MCard payments have been deferred.
- Changing levels of demand and travel habits.
- Most recent guidance for travel was to avoid unnecessary journeys.
- Public concern regarding the use of public transport had lessened since the start of the pandemic.
- Colour coded bus routes would include the relevant signage on the vehicles themselves.
- Less than 3% of bus journeys were full to capacity. Monitoring work was being undertaken to identify where additional services may assist. Real time information and apps were being improved to indicate where journeys were full to capacity.
- Bus companies were working with the coach sector to provide additional services where needed.
- Delivery of the Bus Strategy and enhanced partnership working.
- WYCA would have powers to franchise services when it becomes a Mayoral Authority.
- Decision not to implement the Clean Air Zone - over 90% of buses were now compliant with the target for emissions. Work would continue to improve air quality.
- Simplifying fares for under 19s to make them more affordable and to encourage bus travel. Fares were ultimately set by the bus operators.
- The continuing problem of "phantom buses" appearing on real-time information displays was raised. The issue remained, though real-time information and apps were being improved, including indication of where journeys were full to capacity.

Members' attention was brought to the position status of the Board's recommendations as shown in Appendix 2 of the report. It was agreed that the monitoring status of each recommendation remained as follows:

- Recommendation 1 – Position Status 4 – Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- Recommendation 2 – Position Status 4 – Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- Recommendation 3 – Position Status 2 – Achieved. Issues with regards to congestion may be revisited at a later date.

- Recommendation 4 – Position Status 4 – Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- Recommendation 5 – Position Status 4 – Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- Recommendation 6 – Position Status 4 – Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- Recommendation 7 – Position Status 4 – Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- Recommendation 8 – Position Status 4 – Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- Recommendation 9 – Position Status 4 – Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring)

RESOLVED – That the monitoring status for each of the recommendations be agreed as discussed.

41 Budget Consultation

The report of the Head of Democratic Services provided Members with details of the latest revenue budget update for 2021/22 and budget savings proposals, as considered by Executive Board on 24 September 2020.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor James Lewis, Executive Member
- Councillor Jonathon Pryor, Executive Member
- Martin Farrington, Director, City Development
- Jill Stuart, Principal Finance Manager
- Gary Bartlett, Chief Officer, Highways & Transportation
- Sue Wynne, Chief Officer, Employment and Skills
- Phil Evans, Chief Officer, Operations
- Dave Feeney, Chief Officer, Planning
- Martin Elliott, Head of Strategic Planning

Martin Farrington informed the Board of the budget and savings to be made across the service areas of City Development that fell within the remit of the Board. These included Markets, Planning & Sustainable Development; Highways & Transport, Employment & Skills and Economic Development. Areas of saving included deletion of vacant posts; savings through the Early Leavers Initiative and general expenditure reductions.

In response to Members comments and questions, the following was discussed:

- Concern regarding staffing reduction and the impact on the ability to respond to planning and highways issues:
 - With regard to Planning it was recognised there was a need to maintain continuity whilst making efficiencies. This was being achieved through service reviews and preparing for changes to be brought under

planning reform. There was also the need to continue the improved use of digital technology.

- Demand for services outstripped resources in Highways and certain work areas had to be prioritised. There was to be a review of structures to tackle this, a recognised need to improve communications and there would be discussion with the Executive Member in how to achieve this.
- Car parking charges.
- Reduction of the grant to the Credit Union,

RESOLVED – That the report and discussion be noted.

42 Work Schedule

The report of the Head of Democratic Services asked Members to consider the Board's Work Schedule for the remainder of the current municipal year.

The work schedule was appended to the report along with recent minutes of the Executive Board.

Members were reminded that there was to be a working group meeting to discuss the Government's proposals for Planning on 21 October 2020.

RESOLVED – That the report and Works Schedule be noted.

43 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Wednesday, 18 November 2020 at 10.00 a.m. There will be a pre-meeting for all Board Members at 9.45 a.m.