



Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date: Monday 26 February 2024

Time: 1.00 pm **Public meeting** Yes

Venue: Room 116, 16 Summer Lane, Birmingham, B19 3SD

Membership

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Councillor John McNicholas (Chair) | Coventry City Council |
| Councillor Mary Locke (Vice-Chair) | Birmingham City Council |
| Councillor Pervez Akhtar | Coventry City Council |
| Councillor Robert Alden | Birmingham City Council |
| Councillor Aqeela Choudhry | Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council |
| Councillor Zaker Choudhry | Birmingham City Council |
| Councillor Amo Hussain | Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council |
| Councillor Timothy Huxtable | Birmingham City Council |
| Councillor Carol Hyatt | City of Wolverhampton Council |
| Councillor Narinder Kaur Kooner OBE | Birmingham City Council |
| Councillor Emma Marshall | Worcestershire Non-Constituent Local Authorities |
| Councillor Martin McCarthy | Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council |
| Councillor Barbara McGarrity | City of Wolverhampton Council |
| Councillor Steve Melia | Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council |
| Councillor Saddak Miah | Birmingham City Council |
| Councillor Josh O'Nyons | Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council |
| Councillor Ian Nellins | Shropshire Council |
| Councillor Gurmeet Singh Sohal | Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council |
| Councillor David Stanley | Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council |
| Councillor Alan Taylor | Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council |
| Councillor Robert Tromans | Warwickshire County Council |
| Councillor Antony Tucker | Coventry City Council |
| Councillor Ian Ward | Birmingham City Council |

Quorum for this meeting shall be 14 members.

If you have any queries about this meeting, please contact:

Contact Janna Simpson, Governance Services Officer
Telephone 07769 301598
Email janna.simpson@wmca.org.uk

AGENDA

| No. | Item | Presenting | Pages |
|---------------------------------|---|-----------------|---------|
| Items of Public Business | | | |
| 1. | Apologies for Absence | Chair | None |
| 2. | Declarations of Interest Members are reminded of the need to declare any disclosable prejudicial interests they have in any item being discussed during the course of the meeting. In addition, the receipt of any gift or hospitality should be declared where the value of it was thought to have exceeded £25 (gifts) or £40 (hospitality). | Chair | None |
| 3. | Chair's Remarks | Chair | None |
| 4. | Minutes - 22 January 2024 (including action log) | Chair | 1 - 8 |
| 5. | Deeper Devolution (Transport) - Implementation Plan | Adam Harrison | 9 - 14 |
| 6. | Public Transport Real Time Information (RTI) System Improvements | Mike Waters | 15 - 30 |
| 7. | Park & Ride Update | Babs Spooner | 31 - 44 |
| 8. | West Midlands Cycle Hire Scheme Update | Pete Bond | 45 - 54 |
| 9. | Member Engagement Groups – Progress Report | Chair | 55 - 66 |
| 10. | Work Programme a) Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme b) WMCA Forward Plan | Lyndsey Roberts | 67 - 78 |
| Date of Next Meeting | | | |
| 11. | Monday 18 March 2024 at 1:00pm | Chair | None |



West Midlands Combined Authority

Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Monday 22 January 2024 at 1.00 pm

Minutes

Present

| | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Councillor John McNicholas (Chair) | Coventry City Council |
| Councillor Mary Locke (Vice-Chair) | Birmingham City Council |
| Councillor Pervez Akhtar | Coventry City Council |
| Councillor Robert Alden | Birmingham City Council |
| Councillor Timothy Huxtable | Birmingham City Council |
| Councillor Carol Hyatt | City of Wolverhampton Council |
| Councillor Martin McCarthy | Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council |
| Councillor Saddak Miah | Birmingham City Council |
| Councillor Josh O'Nyons | Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council |
| Councillor Gurmeet Singh Sohal | Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council |
| Councillor David Stanley | Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council |
| Councillor Robert Tromans | Warwickshire County Council |
| Councillor Ian Ward | Birmingham City Council |

In Attendance

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Pete Bond | Director of Integrated Transport Services |
| Dan Essex | Governance & Scrutiny Manager |
| David Harris | Transport Strategy & Place Manager |
| Steven Hayes | Transport for West Midlands |
| Councillor Emma Marshall (MS Teams) | Redditch Borough Council |
| Councillor Steve Melia (MS Teams) | Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council |
| Lyndsey Roberts | Statutory Scrutiny Manager |
| Jat Sekhon | Lead Solicitor - Infrastructure |
| Anne Shaw | Executive Director for Transport for West Midlands |
| Kate Taylor | Head of Finance Business Partnering & Strategic Planning |
| Jake Thrush | Associate Policy Advisor |
| Councillor Antony Tucker (MS Teams) | Coventry City Council |

Item No.

53. Inquorate Meeting

The Chair noted that the meeting was inquorate, and therefore the recommendations arising from the meeting would be required to be approved at the next meeting of the committee on 26 February 2024.

54. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Aqeela Choudhry (Sandwell), Councillor Amo Hussian (Walsall), Councillor Barabara McGarrity (Wolverhampton).

55. Chair's Remarks

The Chair reminded members of their obligations to the committee, encouraging attendance and stressing the importance of meetings being quorate.

56. Petition - Bus Service No. 19

Councillor John Blundell of Coventry City Council presented a petition to the committee. He requested that Transport for West Midlands work with National Express Coventry and Coventry City Council to keep bus service no. 19 (serving Tile Hill - Coventry via Cannon Park shopping centre). He reported that the service provided a vital means of transport for a large number of residents who relied on this service, including a significant number who were elderly and had no other means of transport.

Recommended:

The petition be received, and the Director of Integrated Transport Services submit it for consideration into Transport for West Midlands' petition process.

57. Minutes - 11 December and 14 December 2023

The minutes from the meetings were agreed as a correct record, subject to the inclusion of Councillor Robert Tromans in the list of attendees present at the meeting on 11 December, and the comments made by Councillor Timothy Huxtable in respect of the Sutton Park railway line and the Midlands Rail Hub.

58. Question Time Policy & Delivery: Response from the Portfolio Lead Member for Transport to the observations presented to the WMCA Board on 17 November 2023

The committee considered the response of the Portfolio Lead for Transport to the observations of this committee following the Q&A session held on 30 October 2023.

Recommended:

The responses of the Portfolio Lead for Transport be noted.

59. The Role of Green Infrastructure in Urban Design for Air Quality and Climate Resilience

The committee considered a presentation Emma Ferranti from the University of Birmingham on the role of green infrastructure in urban design to improve air quality and climate resilience. She explained how green infrastructure could reduce exposure to poor air quality and support climate resilience.

Councillor Ian Ward noted that the Local Transport Plan provided the WMCA with an opportunity to ensure the concepts underpinning the presentation could be implemented across the region. Councillor Martin McCarthy raised concerns about flooding and the resilience of railway stations, and suggested that the leading to a commitment from the Rail, Metro & Sprint Member Engagement Group conduct an investigation and report back to the committee on this issue.

Councillor Timothy Huxtable drew attention to pavement placement and its implications for cyclists in the Local Transport Plan. He also inquired about integrating green infrastructure into development bids, highlighting the crucial link between environmental considerations and infrastructure planning. It was noted that the Head of Environment sought opportunities to influence projects in this respect. The forthcoming Park & Ride meeting was highlighted as including a comprehensive presentation on green infrastructure, showcasing the commitment to integrating environmental considerations into future planning efforts.

Councillor Robert Tromans commended efforts to adapt recent plans, emphasising the forward-thinking approach to urban development and Councillor Emma Marshall emphasised the role of trees in temperature control. Councillor Carol Hyatt underscored the influential role of the report in shaping policy, particularly in re-evaluating the placement of bus stops on the roadside. Councillor Robert Alden emphasised the importance of considering maintenance schedules for sustained benefits, while Councillor Pevez Akhtar noted that implementing these ideas would require identifying additional resources.

Recommended:

- (1) The presentation by WM-Air from the University of Birmingham be welcomed.
- (2) In developing West Midlands Local Transport Plan, Transport for West Midlands incorporate, in relevant sections, the 'reduce, extend, protect' principle, to support the role of green infrastructure in urban transport design for air quality, and review the draft 'Green Transport Revolution' Big Move chapter to ensure it effectively encompassed the role of green infrastructure in supporting climate resilience in the West Midlands.

60. West Midlands Local Transport Plan - Area Strategies and Implementation Plan Development Update

The committee considered a report of the Transport Strategy & Place Manager on the West Midlands Local Transport Plan Area Strategies and Implementation Plan development. The report summarised the consultation on the Big Moves undertaken earlier in 2023, along with the four Area Strategies and the updated timeline for finalisation and adoption of the new Local Transport Plan in 2024.

Councillor Timothy Huxtable sought clarification on the impact of the cancellation of HS2 north of Birmingham, and Councillor Pevez Akhtar drew attention to the impact this would have towards rail passengers disadvantaged by the current rail network. It was confirmed that consultation on the Local Transport Plan was undertaken widely to ensure that as wide a range of opinions were heard and considered.

Recommended:

- (1) The progress to date on developing the West Midlands Local Transport Plan and next steps and timelines for finalisation and adoption be noted.
- (2) The response to, and key messages from, the Local Transport Plan Big Moves engagement which took place in 2023 be noted
- (3) The proposed approach and next steps for finalising the initial Area Strategies and developing the emerging pipeline of proposals for the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement 2 be noted, and that a further report be submitted to the committee at an appropriate time.
- (4) It be noted that a further report on the Local Transport Plan would be submitted to the WMCA Board later in the year.

61. Ring and Ride Target Operating Model

The committee considered a report of the Head of Network Transformation on the Ring & Ride target operating model. The report set out the drivers of change, along with the emerging future target operating model for the region's Ring & Ride service, seeking endorsement of the proposed approach.

In response to question from the committee, the Head of Network Transformation confirmed that although depots would be centralised, cross-border travel would not be negatively affected. Financial aspects, potential cost savings and the closer alignment with health services were highlighted by Councillor Carol Hyatt and Councillor Pervez Akhtar.

Recommended:

- (1) The ongoing work to transform delivery of the region's Ring & Ride service be noted
- (2) The criteria underpinning the proposed target operating model for implementation from January 2025 be endorsed.
- (3) The Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee valued the Ring & Ride service offered and wished to retain a service, in some form, for the most vulnerable.
- (4) The comments of the committee be noted and considered as part of the review requested by the Mayor and Portfolio Leads.

62. Capital Delivery Programme: Update Capital Performance Report

The committee considered a report of the Delivery Director – Transport Portfolio on the progress on key capital delivery schemes progressing within Transport for West Midlands, along with the proposed new format for presenting this information to future meetings of the committee.

Councillor Timothy Huxtable sought clarification on aspects of the Hagley Road (Phase 1), Cross City Package 1, and Package 2: Moseley, Kings Heath & Pineapple Road schemes. Councillor Pervez Akhtar suggested presentational amendments to the proposed report to help the committee digest the information provided.

Recommended:

- (1) The update and progress on key capital delivery schemes progressing within Transport for West Midlands be noted.
- (2) The proposal to iterate the reporting on the capital delivery portfolio through the 2024/25 calendar year, including local authority-promoted transport schemes funded via WMCA resources, be noted
- (3) The intention to iterate into a new reporting format for capital, and to progressively mature it over the course of the 2024/25 calendar year, taking on board feedback from this committee be noted.

63. Member Engagement Groups – Progress Report

The committee considered a report setting out the activity of the member engagement groups since the last meeting. Councillor Carol Hyatt, Councillor Ian Ward, Councillor David Stanley, Councillor Timothy Huxtable and Councillor Pervez Akhtar all provided updates on their respective MEGs.

Recommended:

The report be noted.

64. Work Programme

The work programme for future meetings of the committee was noted.

65. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 26 February 2024 at 1:00pm

The meeting ended at 3.30 pm.

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Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Action Tracker

| STATUS | CREATION DATE | REPORT ITEM | ACTION ITEM | ASSIGNED TO | DUE DATE | COMPLETION DATE |
|-------------|---------------|--|---|--------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|
| Complete | 3-Jul-23 | Appointment of Scrutiny Champions and Member Engagement Groups | Develop and deliver a training programme for members of the Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee | Lyndsey Roberts / Governance Service | Ongoing | 1-Oct-23 |
| Complete | 3-Jul-23 | Appointment of Scrutiny Champions and Member Engagement Groups | Chair of TDOSC to meet with Scrutiny Champions to discuss ways of working and the work programme | Chair / Governance Services | 14-Aug-23 | 14-Aug-23 |
| Complete | 4-Sep-23 | Financial Monitoring Report | Pete Bond to liaise directly with the finance team and Cllr Akhtar on the repurposing of BSIP funding | Pete Bond | 30-Oct-23 | 30-Oct-23 |
| Complete | 4-Sep-23 | Financial Monitoring Report | Capital Monitoring Interim Report to be provided at the Finance MEG on 3 October | Anne Shaw | 30-Oct-23 | 30-Oct-23 |
| Complete | 4-Sep-23 | Deeper Devolution Deal (Transport) - Implementation Plan | Circulate a briefing note to TDOSC members setting out an assessment of most suitable mode of transport within each of the region's transport corridors, undertaken as part of the CRSTS programme. | Carl Beet | 1-Dec-23 | 19-Dec-23 |
| Complete | 4-Sep-23 | Deeper Devolution Deal (Transport) - Implementation Plan | Six monthly report to be received on the Deeper Devolution Deal Transport Implementation Plan | Adam Harrison / Janna Simpson | 4-Sep-23 | 1-Oct-23 |
| Complete | 4-Sep-23 | Work Programme | Rail ticket office closure update to be received at the next TDOS Committee | Tom Painter / Janna Simpson | 30-Oct-23 | 30-Oct-23 |
| Complete | 30-Oct-23 | MEG Progress Report | Councillor Carol Hyatt be provided with a briefing on the passenger support services provided at bus stations across the region. | Sarah Jones / Pete Bond | 1-Dec-23 | 8-Jan-24 |
| Complete | 30-Oct-23 | MEG Progress Report | The next meeting of the Passenger First MEG to consider an item on demand responsive transport. | Stephen Holloway | 15-Nov-23 | 15-Nov-23 |
| Complete | 11-Dec-23 | Financial Monitoring Report | KateTaylor to confirm realtime information spend to Cllr Carol Hyatt. Action has now been transferred to Pete Bond/Mike Waters to be closed at Passenger First MEG. | Pete Bond | 1-Feb-24 | 29-Jan-24 |
| In Progress | 22-Jan-24 | Ring and Ride Target Operating Model | Ring and Ride and NHS Patient Transport Note to be sent to members | Pete Bond / Steven Hayes | 26-Feb-24 | |
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Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Date | 26 February 2024 |
| Report title | Deeper Devolution Deal - Transport Implementation Plan |
| Portfolio Lead | Transport - Councillor Mike Bird |
| Accountable Chief Executive | Anne Shaw, Executive Director, Transport for West Midlands email: anne.shaw@tfwm.org.uk |
| Accountable Employee | Adam Harrison, Principal Policy & Strategy Officer email: adam.harrison@tfwm.org.uk |
| Report has been considered by | TfWM Planning Group - 5 February 2024 |

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- (1) Review progress on delivering against the Deeper Devolution Deal transport implementation plan.
- (2) Scrutinise the risks emerging on a number of deal elements and endorse the proposed mitigations being taken to manage these, as set out in paragraphs 2.8-2.10.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To update members on the Deeper Devolution Deal - Transport Implementation Plan and other elements of the Deeper Devolution Deal. This is a 6 monthly update to the Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

2. Background

- 2.1. On Wednesday 15 March 2023, the WMCA agreed a new trailblazing Deeper Devolution Deal (DDD) with government.

Transport commitments

- 2.2. A reminder to members that the Deeper Devolution Deal builds on significant transport powers and funding from the previous two devolution deals (2015 and 2017). The Deal commitments are intended to provide further autonomy to the WMCA to establish itself as a leader in transport innovation in the UK and improve the transport offer to its citizens.
- 2.3. The transport elements support the delivery of our Local Transport Plan (LTP) outcomes to **level up accessibility, electrify transport and reduce traffic**. Building on the West Midlands' strengths in transport innovation, as the country's first future transport zone, and its close partnership working with government, the deal provides: -



Transport Implementation Plan

- 2.4. TfWM has committed resources to develop and deliver the transport elements of the deal and it is supported by an implementation plan. An overview of the plan was reported to this Committee on 4th September 2023.
- 2.5. TfWM continue to coordinate delivery across the combined authority, local authority partners and with government. TfWM has established a working relationship with the Department for Transport's (DfT) Devolution Division to discuss deal progress and deliver on deal commitments. Plan oversight has been undertaken quarterly by TfWM Planning Group (previously Strategy Board) and Strategic Transport Officers Group (STOG).
- 2.6. The section below sets out progress made on a number of areas but also highlights key risks resulting from a shift in Government transport policy in regard to the Plan for Drivers and Network North publications. Overall progress is set out below:

Rail partnership with Great British Rail (GBR)

- The West Midlands Rail Executive/Great British Rail Transition Team Partnership Oversight Group met in November 2023.

- Positive progress has been made with delivery of the rail Pay-As-You-Go (PAYG) ticketing pilot. The scope of the pilot has now been agreed and a public announcement was made on 1st February 2024¹.
- The King's Speech announced that pre-legislative scrutiny of a Draft Rail Reform Bill would take place, and this may also ease the passage of legislation when it is eventually introduced.

Infrastructure

- Through the Network North announcement, the WMCA will receive increased allocations for CRSTS 1&2. The indicative allocation for the West Midlands is as follows:
 - CRSTS2: £2,648bn.
 - Including an early draw down in CRSTS 1 for:
 - £100m extra for WBHE metro and Arden Cross cost pressures.
 - £250m revenue (over 5 years).
- A revised Business Case with DfT and Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to unlock the £60m funding committed in the DDD by DLUHC to support the Metro extension is in development.

Bus and Bus Services

- The BSOG Governance Review and Scheme was shared with local authorities and approved at WMCA Board on 13 October. WMCA is waiting for the draft Statutory Instrument Order from DfT before circulating to LAs for their approvals.
- DfT have provided advice on how to strengthen activity in order to tackle anti-social behaviour on bus services across the West Midlands. This has resulted in National Express WM amending their Conditions of Carriage to reflect the delegation of power to Transport Safety Officers (TSO) to act for and on behalf of the Company.

Transport Planning and Innovation

- Birmingham (NEC) was awarded World ITS Congress hosting status on 16th October 2023. The successful bid was a collaboration between TfWM, DfT, Intelligent Transport Systems UK (ITS UK) and the NEC Birmingham. The contractual paperwork is now under development.
- Funding has now been released by DfT for stage gate 1 of Coventry CC's VLR project and the first gateway stage of the Dudley VLR Innovation Centre element of the programme.
- A revised Local Transport Plan (LTP) is in development by WMCA with new analytical work from consultants. An update on the LTP area strategies was reported to this Committee in January 2024.
- TfWM are still undertaking technical work to produce a Local, Last Mile Freight and Logistics Action Plan and are working with partners including Aston University to support with the development of the evidence base. An initial plan has been drafted, capturing current WMCA activity on last mile logistics, and continues to be developed with the aim of having a final draft document ready in the summer.
- As part of the emerging Last Mile Freight & Logistics Action Plan, TfWM's Innovation Team have secured funding with Warwick Manufacturing Group (WMG) to develop a Last Mile Logistics project with WMG. This would see trials using the electric bike delivery vans on campus at Warwick University.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/tap-in-tap-out-train-travel-is-on-track-for-the-west-midlands-and-greater-manchester>

Roads

- TfWM has now appointed technical consultant team to develop detailed options for a Local Roads and Transport Network Service for the West Midlands Key Route Network (KRN).
- TfWM continue to digitise Traffic Orders across the West Midlands as part of the Rules of the Road project, and this has now emerged as a priority for the government. Digitised traffic orders will be required through the Automated Vehicles Bill and we are hopeful funding can be secured to further continue this work, as a national leader in this space.
- TfWM are also working with Birmingham City Council on a dynamic traffic management and digitising street space project. TfWM has been successful in securing grant funding to develop a new dynamic TRO through the Regulatory Pioneer Fund.

Single Settlement

- 2.7. Although not formally part of the transport implementation plan, TfWM officers are actively engaged in the development of the Single Settlement. The Single Settlement MOU, setting out the principles for how the settlement will be agreed and implemented at the next Spending Review, was published at the Autumn Statement².

Risks and mitigations

- 2.8. National BSOG reforms continue to be delayed by DfT, meaning policy making power associated with BSOG (beyond the Mayoral function to make payments to bus operators) cannot yet be devolved to the region. In response, TfWM continue to offer to act as a national pilot area, in with BSIP ambitions, where potential BSOG reforms options could be tested and applied across the bus network. This could strengthen our ability to effectively support the local bus network.
- 2.9. The government has reaffirmed commitment to establishing GBR but legislation will not be passed during this Parliament session. There is a risk that GBR may not have full legislative powers. However, the established rail partnership between GBR and WMRE has a joint ambition to deliver a better integrated and more locally accountable rail network.
- 2.10. Government are reassessing the case for publishing updated Local Transport Plan guidance³. This has an impact on a central element of the LTP, which is to adopt the DfT's preferred approach to quantifying transport carbon reductions to inform progress towards targets. In response, and aligned to a future Single Settlement, TfWM are seeking meetings with officials to discuss this and Local Transport Plan guidance further.

3. Strategic Aims and Objectives

- 3.1. The report aligns with WMCA aims to: -
- 1. Promote inclusive economic growth in every corner of the region
 - 2. Ensure everyone has the opportunity to benefit.

²

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/655d0945d03a8d001207fe19/Memorandum_of_Understanding_for_the_Single_Settlements_with_Greater_Manchester_and_West_Midlands_Combined_Authorities_FINAL.pdf

³ <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-01-25/h11939>

- 3. Connect our communities by delivering transport and unlocking housing and regeneration schemes.
 - 4. Reduce carbon emissions to net zero and enhance the environment
 - 5. Secure new powers and resources from central government
 - 6. Develop our organisation and be a good regional partner.
- 3.2. TfWM has invested heavily in our network since the first devolution deal was agreed. However, the pandemic has shifted patterns and behaviours, with patronage remaining below pre-pandemic levels. The bus industry, in particular, is facing acute challenges.
- 3.3. The deal gives the region a greater set of tools to face these challenges and create an integrated transport system that is fit for the future.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1. A key principle of Devolution Deal negotiations was that WMCA would not accept any additional powers or accountabilities that cannot be either accommodated within existing resources or came with new funds to support them.
- 4.2. As outlined above, the majority of the commitments already have committed resource and funding to enable these to progress. There are some commitments that require further scoping work and discussions with DfT and other partners to fully understand the requirements and financial implications. As these develop there will need to be discussions around the requirements and funding source.
- 4.3. It is noted that some elements of funding may need to be fed into discussions on the single settlement due to be implemented from 2025/26.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1. Responsibility for developing and reviewing the Local Transport Plan was transferred to WMCA by the West Midlands Combined Authority Order 2016 which conferred on WMCA all the functions of the former West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority.
- 5.2. The devolution of the statutory function of administering Bus Service Operators Grant under section 154 (1) of the Transport Act 2000 will require a statutory Order. The process for this is for WMCA to carry out a governance review and develop a scheme to demonstrate that the devolution of this function will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery of this service. This scheme has now been approved by WMCA Board and submitted to the Secretary of State for consideration.
- 5.3. The making of the Order will require the consent of each of the 7 Constituent Authorities and also a unanimous vote of their Members present and voting at the WMCA Board.
- 5.4. The other proposals set out in the Deeper Devolution Deal will require further legal consideration as they are progressed particularly in relation to procurement.

6 Equalities Implications

- 6.1. The WMCA is committed to improving diversity, equality and inclusion. As individual schemes and programmes are developed, they will be subjected to detailed Equality Impact Assessments to demonstrate and quantify the implications on our diverse communities across the West Midlands.

7. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 7.1. The implementation of the Deeper Devolution Deal Transport Implementation Plan will have implications for all eight fundamentals of the West Midlands Inclusive Growth Framework. We will use the greater control over investments and powers to the region to generate inclusive and sustainable economic growth for all our residents and communities.
- 7.2. The continued development of the LTP and the LTP motives for change, have been heavily informed by the WMCA Inclusive Growth Framework. The LTP is of most positive relevance to the Connected Communities fundamental of this framework.
- 7.3. As detailed schemes and programmes are developed further, a full consideration of the inclusive growth implications will be made in line with the Local Transport Plan and the WMCA Inclusive Growth Framework.

8. Geographical Area of Report's Implications

- 8.1. The report applies to the constituent WMCA area. However, TfWM and DfT have committed to work together to identify any cross-boundary bus service issues in regard to the future devolution of commercial BSOG.

9. Other Implications

- 9.1. N/A.

10. Schedule of Background Papers

TDOSC 04/09/2023 [Deeper Devolution Deal - Transport Implementation Plan](#)
WMCA Board 13/10/2023 [Deeper Devolution Deal Ratification](#)



Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Date | 26 February 2024 |
| Report title | Public Transport Real Time Information (RTI) System Improvements |
| Portfolio Lead | Transport - Councillor Mike Bird |
| Accountable Chief Executive | Anne Shaw, Executive Director, Transport for West Midlands email: anne.shaw@tfwm@org.uk |
| Accountable Employee | Mike Waters, Dir. Policy, Strategy & Innovation email: mike.waters@tfwm.gov.uk Pete Bond, Dir. Integrated Transport Services email: pete.bond@tfwm.gov.uk |
| Report has been considered by | TDOSC Passenger First Member Engagement Group |

The Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

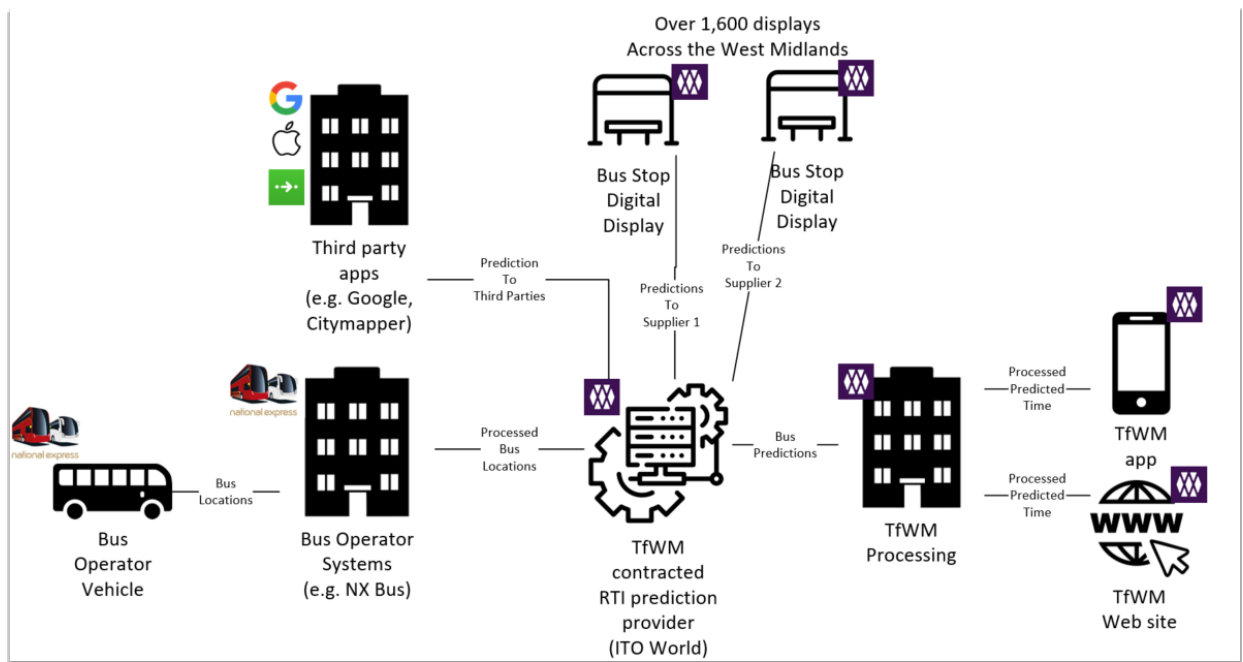
- (1) Scrutinise and provide comments on the progress to date set out in the report in securing funding and implementing an improvement action plan to increase the performance of the region's RTI system, including the on-going performance monitoring regime.
- (2) Note the issues within the RTI system which are hampering the targeted level of customer experience, but which are inherent in a complex system of systems operated by multiple stakeholder organisations.
- (3) Provide comments on the proposed communications plan to inform customers of the issues and the improvements that they can expect to see over the coming months and years which will be used to inform the development of the final plan.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update TDOSC on progress by TfWM to improve customer experience whilst travelling by making access to accurate and reliable travel information better. The report also seeks the committee's input to a draft communications plan which is intended to inform travellers of the improvements being made and what they can expect to see over the coming months and years.
- 1.2 The report primarily focuses on the activity and actions that TfWM is undertaking to improve Real-Time Information (RTI) provision as it is provided today working with bus operators and suppliers under the current framework of the region's Enhanced Bus Partnership arrangement. Within this overarching setting the practical challenge is to integrate many different systems and Apps produced, owned, and run by many different organisations in order to provide a single seamless, accurate and reliable service to travellers. The report deliberately excludes discussion of what actions may be possible under alternative bus delivery policy options which the region may ultimately opt to pursue, and these will be addressed in separate reports and consideration by the WMCA and its partners as part of these wider workstreams.

2. Background

- 2.1 As well as using paper-based means, Transport for West Midlands delivers travel information to customers on the transport network and other third parties via multiple digital channels:
 - Bus stop and station digital displays
 - TfWM app
 - TfWM web site
 - Third party apps such as Google, Apple and Citymapper
 - Third party developers wanting to use West Midlands bus information for services and research.
- 2.2 The key, and most visible, piece of information for most customers is the bus departure time, known as Real Time Information (RTI) displays – these tell the customer when a bus is expected to depart a particular stop. Since they were first introduced over 15 years ago these systems have evolved over time. A project to update these displays has invested c. £2m to replace many of the life-expired on-street displays and the supporting system for them, and is now nearly complete. Work to deliver the full benefits of the project continues within existing resource by improving various ancillary systems and ways of working with bus operators. Further funding is being sought to complete aspects of work which were outside the original scope of the project.
- 2.3 The overall system for providing travellers with live travel information is unfortunately by necessity very complex. It comprises of lots of smaller systems which are often owned or controlled by the many different organisations involved in providing public transport services. A simplified diagram illustrating the system as relevant to bus travel is provided below. This becomes further complicated when considering scenarios where TfWM's Apps or website need to provide travel information to people planning or making journeys via multiple public transport modes.



- 2.4 Ultimately, whether the information is consumed via TfWM's App or a third-party App like Google or Citymapper, the source of the information remains the same. For buses this comes via one of several bus operators and is consolidated by TfWM via a purchased software system and pushed onwards to wherever the customer needs to consume it.
- 2.5 When buses are running on-time and as planned then this works relatively smoothly, with the majority of screens working and plans to address the remaining few known breakages in-hand. However, in order to reflect unplanned changes such as broken-down buses or cancelled or shortened services, the system is reliant on the bus operator being able to feed the relevant information into the system in a timely fashion. Currently the IT systems in place to support them to do this are not well integrated. Work is currently being undertaken with TfWM's software system provider to improve and ultimately automate these processes.
- 2.6 Whilst it might not be relevant or helpful to one of our customers when they are experiencing a problem or gap in the information provision in the West Midlands, it is notable that we are not alone and are in fact in a better position than many areas around the UK. London has a gold standard level of provision which is achieved because they have the power to specify and ensure compliance with all the systems and standards in use across all public transport modes. This does not exist outside of London and consequently real time information provision is typically patchy or non-existent. The level of provision in the West Midlands metropolitan area is actually felt to be considerably better than the majority of the country.
- 2.7 Nevertheless, there remains scope to improve the situation for travellers in the West Midlands and doing so is likely to tangibly support the ability to deliver overall policy objectives and outcomes for transport in the region (and so by wider policy objectives for inclusion, the environment and economy).

2.8 It should be noted that this paper and TfWM's current work stream focuses mostly on the systems supporting bus travellers. The basic architecture for rail and metro is similar, but there is also a significant reliance for these modes on third party providers of the information. In rail journeys when things go wrong TfWM has little ability to influence the national systems which drive many of these issues, but rail has the advantage of being a nationally unified and specified system. We are working with MML to invest in a systematic upgrade to tram systems and the control centre, and in time that will assist with tram information provision.

3. The role of information provision in the public transport system

3.1 Based on Local Transport Plan 5 it can be envisaged that public transport journeys should eventually become so convenient, seamless, and trusted, that users will often prefer it to driving their personal vehicles, not because they have to, but because the alternative is better for them and the environment. A critical factor in achieving this is the user receiving trusted information and being able to trust in Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) to provide it as they make their travel decisions.

3.2 The situation with the bus industry and with the quality of digital bus departure information over the past 12 months has had the opposite effect. On occasions information provided has been inaccurate or misleading; is not always trusted; and could be seen as damaging the reputation of all those associated with public transport provision.

3.3 In analysing where things have not always worked as well as they might, we have identified three distinct types of information failure of a progressively more serious nature:

- Inconsistent information: Where the customer does not see the same information across all the devices with which they might be viewing it (website, App and roadside screen). This can be confusing and erode confidence and trust, but for some users still enables some level of informed decision making to be undertaken.
- Inaccurate information: Where the customer sees a discrepancy between what they are told should be happening (such as a bus departure) compared to what actually happens (for example the bus is late or early). This can have a significant impact on customers, for example causing them to miss their intended service. Regular occurrences force customers to build extra time into their journeys.
- Misleading information: Where the customer is told something will happen such as a service arrival, but the service never arrives. Misleading information is perhaps the worst and most frustrating type of failure. Believing a bus is still coming, waiting some time for it and then not only does the bus not turn up, but the information disappears without any explanation. This has a major impact on the user who now doesn't know if they should trust the next piece of information they are being given and should wait for the next bus, or should make alternative arrangements.

3.4 Detailed work has been undertaken to understand the causes, including on-street surveys to quantify the problem. We have taken a prioritised approach to address each issue identified by focusing on the biggest impact for the customer. We have recently strengthened internal resource to champion the improvements and oversee the changes, and are supporting this by a programme of focussed actions across all businesses (including TfWM). The programme aims to progressively drive out information failure from our systems as set out below.

4. Action Plan for improvement

4.1 The scale of the challenge and complexity of the many current disparate individual systems operated by different internal and external stakeholders mean that a single ‘big bang’ approach to fixing all the associated problems carries additional risks. It would probably also take longer than an incremental approach which is delivered against an overall masterplan. TfWM is following an incremental approach to taking the following actions:

- Through the Transforming RTI programme TfWM have put in place a new software hub for bus and tram predictions.
- We are keeping historical data for planning and network management and to help us understand the problems as they arise.
- We have commissioned and funded regular on street surveys to understand if the actions we are taking are having a genuine impact for customers.
- We have documented our systems to enable us to diagnose problems more quickly and ensure that a solution provided at one point, doesn’t create a problem (or problems), elsewhere.
- We are making live travel information accessible to all travellers by providing QR codes at our stops and stations to provide departures on your smartphone during 2024/25.
- We are replacing life expired on street displays and where some displays are not on the core network and cannot be economically maintained they will be removed completely.
- We are introducing new messages such as “next fastest” on Sprint routes.
- We are working with bus operators to take a feed of cancelled trips directly from their systems. This would be one of the first implementations of this type of automated feed outside of London, however, meaningful functionality is largely dependent on bus operators updating their systems in a timely manner and consistently.



| Bournbrook Road | | 11:35 | |
|--|-----|--------------|--------|
| 63 Frankley | Due | 61 Frankley | 7 mins |
| Via: Selly Oak, Bournville, Northfield, Turves Green, Longbridge, Rednal, Rubery | | 63 Frankley | 11:49 |
| | | 41 CANCELLED | 11:51 |

5. Current activity

5.1 TfWM teams are currently prioritising improvements to the process required to inform passengers of any service cancellations. Mechanisms are in place for most operators, however, as National Express operate the majority of services across the region, they also experience the most cancellations. A current work-around requires a lot of manual processing by teams within National Express and TfWM. For TfWM these can only be undertaken during it’s normal working hours (meaning some cancellations can’t be captured). An automated data handling process is being developed to replace the current manually driven process and will provide complete coverage, but is complex and will, as far as TfWM is aware, represent a first of its kind (noting that most UK systems don’t accurately reflect cancellations all the time). The Regional Transport Co-ordination Centre (RTCC) is central to resourcing the current work-around and utilising the new solution as it is well placed to act upon intelligence relating to bus performance and has good communication and data links with bus operators. The RTCC will act upon live operational intelligence and works with National Express representatives that also work within the RTCC. They work together in order to provide the customer with the best information as we strive to deliver one version of the truth.

5.2 Under the West Midlands Bus Service Improvement Plan there is a proposal to utilise the existing Real Time Passenger Information feed for every bus in the region and enable it to be displayed through various digital channels. The ambition of this “RTI everywhere” work stream is for all stops across the network to provide a straightforward way for passengers to access a virtual real time information display using their own mobile devices. This will be accessed through a QR code on every stop, ensuring that this also provides information in a way that is accessible for all. The virtual displays will mimic the functionality provided through physical screens and will therefore include information about cancelled trips and disruption messaging. It is the aim that the system will be rolled out across stops and shelters from summer 2024 and completing by early 2025.

6. Performance Monitoring

6.1 Performance monitoring of the displays was suspended due to resourcing and operational constraints during the covid period and the period in which most the new screens and their new management system were introduced to the network. It recommenced in late summer 2023. So far two quarterly rounds of monitoring have been undertaken and this is showing mostly positive initial results from the new systems and ways of working. Headline details are set out in the table below.

| | 23/24 | | | |
|--|--|---|------------------------------|-----|
| | Q2 | Q3 | | |
| Monitoring sample size | 13 days, 412 journeys across 108 stops | 9 days, 320 Journeys across 68 stands & 10 bus stations | | |
| Journeys benefiting from a predicted time and countdown at the stop | 86% | 75% | Stop is Origin ^{#1} | 64% |
| | | | Stop not Origin | 95% |
| Displays showing predictions but ultimately no associated vehicle arrived. | 2.50% | 1.90% | | |
| Predicted journeys counted down to the departure accurately. | 80% | 83% | | |
| Predicted journeys cleared the display correctly. | 29% | 39% | EPI Displays | 44% |
| | | | App | 34% |

#1: Often the first stop on a route will display the timetabled departure as there is no prediction to make

6.2 All areas of performance will continue to be focused on seeking the best performance possible. The initial area of focus is on the worst performing metric, which is clearing predicted journey times from the displays in a timely manner in order to avoid confusion for customers (who, if they arrive after a service has departed, may be led to believe that the bus could still be set to arrive). Work is on-going with suppliers to improve this, but partly due to the number of different systems involved between all operators and TfWM this is complex and the rate of improvement is likely to be incremental.

6.3 One area of performance that has historically attracted criticism has been occurrences of displaying predictions on screen for a bus to arrive and clearing these predictions without any bus service actually appearing, something occasionally called a 'ghost bus'. Due to the new systems such incidents now appear to be relatively infrequent and are continually reducing, with incidents dropping from 2.5% of observations to 1.9% in the most recent survey. Where they do occur it is typically to do with a bus service being cancelled or shortened after it has started its journey (for example because of a breakdown); or the bus operator's electronic system triggers the start of the journey, but the RTI system is not aware of that because the cancellation has not been input and processed throughout the system. When this occurs the system continues to try and predict when the service will arrive and is unaware of the cancellation. Until the new automated service cancellation solution is developed, tested and implemented it will be hard to eradicate these completely, and that work is on-going.

6.4 Whilst there will be an on-going and relentless drive to continually improve the system (which is already thought to be one of the better systems in the UK outside of London) there are some fundamental limitations to how good performance is likely to become. These include the combined effect of time delays in different system (latency) and the location accuracy of GPS. The variability of these mean that even if every system is working within its design tolerance there will be some incidences where all the tolerances combine in the worst way across 5 or 6 factors, and consequently accuracy of an individual journey prediction becomes poor. London, as an exemplar in this space, still has these problems. However, because London specifies all of the technology and how it is used, they are able to optimise the overall system design to minimise the problem. TfWM is working to integrate many pre-existing and legacy systems which are specified and run by different organisations. Because of this, improvements will always be harder won.

7. Future improvements

7.1 There are some areas we cannot currently address either because we do not have direct control or we are tied into existing arrangements. These are listed here along with the mitigations we are taking.

- Through the limitations of our incumbent supplier the TfWM app will remain limited in its capability to show cancellations. This will be addressed by a new 'mobility as a service' App, planned for late 2024.
- We cannot influence how third-party app providers such as Google will use this data and we regularly observe a 2-day delay for updates and changes. In this particular case we will continue discussions with Google and their data suppliers to see if we can influence this situation.
- We have a limited resource and if there is a major disruption the TfWM team isn't resourced to handle this and isn't resourced to provide an out of hours service for cancellations. We will review the resource required and will also continue to explore what might be automated to provide out of hours coverage and efficiencies.
- We are dependent on the quality of information that operators supply. If it is wrong, incomplete, or late this will impact the customer. We continue to work daily with operators and data providers to improve the quality of their data feeds. The needs of the customer will also form a key part of any future contractual arrangements explored as part of the wider work on Bus Delivery Options.
- We are dependent on some national services including those provided by DfT which can cause delays in providing information for new locations, for example new tram stops etc. We will work with these organisations to understand if we can speed up these processes.

8. Funding the systems

- 8.1 The initial establishment of the RTI system was funded through a one-off grant, but no additional funding was secured at the time to maintain and/or renew that system. Progressive real-terms cuts in the overall revenue funding for transport has meant that whilst the operation of the system was integrated into existing functions, there was limited scope to fix or improve the system over time. More recently, through the various new grant funding secured for the region (now ultimately integrated into the current CRSTS funding) it has been possible to use one-off grant funding to, once again, refresh the system.
- 8.2 Grant funding has also been secured to develop new software and Apps to improve the functionality and experience for customers in planning, undertaking and paying for public transport travel across modes. There are elements of the App environment (like payment services) which have potential to become self-funding by levying commission charges. However, there are more limited opportunities to generate revenue to off-set the operational cost of providing travel information. The revenue pressures for providing travel information are expected to increase as the software solutions enabling this move towards modern commercial models of 'as a Service' licencing. This will provide benefits in terms of being able to maintain more up to date and reliable digital infrastructure, but will come at a cost.
- 8.3 Consequently, where grant funding cannot be secured or applied to the system there will be reliance on core regional Transport Levy funding, which within the Medium-Term Financial Plan remains highly pressured. The medium to long-term provision of high quality and digital information services will therefore continue to remain a risk until a long-term sustainable transport revenue funding solution is secured. The main cost areas for the system and associated headline costs are summarised below.
- **RTI asset renewal:-** Between 2018 and 2023 c£2.8m of capital grant money was secured and used to replace the core system (driving the messages on the displays) and many of the screens across the core network. Final elements of the screen replacement works using this grant will be complete by March 2025. The project work also includes the delivery of QR codes and the associated 'RTI everywhere' capability.
 - **RTI operation:-** Excluding staffing costs there are c£600k pa of connection, licencing and contracted basic maintenance costs associated with RTI assets on the network.
 - **App environments:-** The current App has benefited from c£280k capital grant investment and £150k of non-capitalised integration costs absorbed into the transport Levy since 2020. It costs a further c£125k pa to support and service, noting that it also enables ticket sales and not just travel information provision (and with these a substantial off-set to the costs of operation). It draws on the same real-time information sources as the roadside passenger information displays. The current grant funded project to upgrade the App environment is planned to drive operating efficiencies and greater commission revenue to off-set costs.
 - **Website environment:-** Although RTI information is provided on the TfWM website there are no costs specifically attributed to doing this which are solely associated with RTI.

- **Central IT systems:-** A number of centrally hosted functions are used to process the different data sources and direct live data into the right system. These were built in-house when the system was first developed. Running these systems costs less than £1k pa in hosting costs, but as the technology is now largely out of date it will ultimately need to be re-built (at a specification and cost yet to be determined). Any new solution is likely to be more expensive to run going forward.

9. Communicating to our customers

9.1 It is recognised that it is important to keep customers up-to-date, even when things aren't going well. We have therefore developed a communications plan for delivery over the coming months.

9.2 In the plan we will aim to:

- Acknowledge the issues with bus departure time predictions and explain what we have done and are continuing to do to solve the problem.
- Explain what bus departure time predictions mean and how we aim to ensure information is as accurate as possible.
- Communicate to customers about how to access information on various platforms including via RTI, website, apps and social media.

9.3 For stakeholders, such as bus operators and local authorities, we will ensure they have access to the same information as customers. We also need to confirm they are aligned with our messaging and are not releasing any information before TfWM, which should be able to act as a main trusted go to source of travel information in the region.

9.4 Tactical implementation will include:

- Social media
- A dedicated webpage on tfwm.org.uk
- At stop printed information
- Station digital screens
- Media release or statement where appropriate
- Stakeholder communication

9.5 With improvements starting to be made, we will look to survey customers to ensure they are aware not only of the improvements that have been made but also that we continue to make improvements with them in mind. This qualitative data will be combined with regular monitoring for accuracy and improvements. The detail of the plan is provided in Appendix 1.

10. Financial Implications

- 10.1 The Authority has been successful in securing one-off capital grants to support the refresh of some older equipment and to procure software to consolidate and communicate information to screens across the network. £2m of capital funding has come from the Transforming Cities Fund with a further £0.52m coming from the Integrated Transport Block and £0.270m from the CRSTS budget which is supporting Asset Management. To December, approximately £1.9m had been spent of the total capital budget of £2.79m. In addition to this one-off capital budget, there is an ongoing revenue budget allocation of approximately £0.5m to maintain the software and licences required to support the ongoing provision of RTI. Staff support time is accommodated within a small team who support electronic passenger information as part of a number of duties.
- 10.2 The availability of the capital budget has allowed the Authority to provide an RTI prediction engine and associated applications for Bus and Tram and has enabled the renewal, upgrade and expansion of electronic passenger information. As with all data systems, the provision of comprehensive information across the network is expensive and there are still screens which are having to be operated on older systems until they can be replaced. The QR code project should ensure that passengers at all shelters have the ability to access up to date travel information and, if successful, may result in a diminishing ongoing financial requirement to update screens if it means that these codes can ultimately replace the need for other EPI at some of the sites. The Authority has been allocated £16.6m of additional BSIP funding for 2024/25 and is currently reviewing potential workstreams which can benefit from additional funding, including the use of a small element of it to support the more extensive roll-out of QR codes.
- 10.3 As with all IT systems, there will need to be a regular refresh of both the technology powering the communications as well as the hardware used to display the information. Without regular capital injections, the systems cannot be updated as frequently as may be optimal. The recent improvements were made as a result of significant capital funding being allocated and funding will need to be earmarked in future if equipment is to continue to be refreshed. It is also worth noting that the RTI system supports other projects including MaaS and the TfWM app.

11. Legal Implications

- 11.1 The report contents (aims and objectives) are supported in combination, by the City Region and Sustainable Transport Scheme (CRSTS), the Integrated Transport Block (ITB) and Transforming Cities Fund (TCF). Each of the funding streams (excluding ITB) have funding arrangements attached to them. The ITB (top sliced payment) is provided annually and operates in accordance with historic practice.
- 11.2 As reflected within the finance commentary above, onward investment/funding will be required to maintain and/or improve the network (both in terms of hardware, software, and functionality) at its best performance levels and to ensure ongoing fitness for purpose.
- 11.3 Consequently, there are no immediate legal implications flowing from the contents of this report.

12. Equalities Implications

- 12.1 The improvements to the RTI system is likely to have positive equality and inclusion implications for all service users regardless of their protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010. There are some areas identified in 7.1 that are beyond TfWM direct control that may have negative or neutral equality and inclusion impacts. To fully investigate the likely positive, negative and or neutral implications of this project, it is recommended that a Health and Equity Impact is carried out and added to this report as an appendix. Any specific implications identified can be summarised and added to this section of the report.

13. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 13.1 No comments.

14. Geographical Area of Report's Implications

- 14.1 The WMCA exercises transport powers overwhelmingly in respect of the area covered by its constituent authority members, however, there is significant interaction with the wider area. The health and performance of the transport system in the metropolitan area has a profound impact on the wider area and vice-versa. Deep engagement and collaboration with surrounding Local Transport Authorities and with Midlands Connect is important and TfWM will work to integrate with or seek efficiencies in the way in which RTI is delivered to members of the public with any relevant organisation, especially noting that transport does not stop or start at administrative boundaries.

15. Schedule of Background Papers

None

Real Time Information (RTI) screens Communications Plan

Context

Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) delivers information to customers using the transport network across multiple digital channels:

- Bus stop and station digital displays
- TfWM app
- TfWM website
- Apps such as Google and Citymapper
- Social media

The quality of digital bus departure information over the past 12 months has had a negative effect on the customer experience. We have on occasion provided inaccurate and misleading information which has led to a feeling of mistrust amongst some customers and key stakeholders including local authorities and politicians.

Having identified the above issue, TfWM is taking a prioritised approach focused on the impact on the end user. We are working to a prioritised and resourced action plan to tackle problems, put them right and prevent this type of information failure occurring in the future.

With improvements starting to be made, we will look to communicate with customers to ensure they are aware not only of the improvements that have been made, but also that we continue to make improvements with them in mind.

Objectives & Audience

| Target | Goal | Action |
|--------------|--|---|
| Customers | Inform customers of current and future improvements. | Communicate the improvements in a clear and simple way. Ensure customers understand how to access the information available. |
| Colleagues | Inform colleagues about improvements and how they can support customers. | Communicate improvements clearly with level of detail needed. |
| Stakeholders | Inform and empower stakeholders to communicate improvements. | Be honest and transparent with stakeholders about the improvements made. |

Strategy

We will aim to:

- Acknowledge the issues with bus departure time predictions and explain what we have done and are continuing to do to solve the problem.
- Explain what bus departure time predictions mean and how we aim to ensure information is as accurate as possible.

- Communicate to customers about how to access information on various platforms including via RTI, website, apps and social media.

For stakeholders, such as bus operators and local authorities, we will ensure they have access to the same information as customers. We also need to confirm they are aligned with our messaging and not releasing any information before TfWM as the transport authority.

Internally, we need to be confident that colleagues in the office and on the ground are well-equipped to advise customers of improvements where necessary.

Key Messages

Primary messaging

- What have we done so far?
- What are the further improvements?

Secondary messaging

- Why have we made these improvements?

Supporting messaging

- How will these improvements support customers in their journeys across the region?

Timeline

Although we know that we still have a way to go, we are continuing to make improvements to our RTI. There are some improvements that have already been made and that we can inform customers about. We are also aware of future improvements that we can also consider as part of future communications.

Current activity:

| Operational improvement | Customer comms messages | Channel | Date |
|---|---|---|----------------------------|
| <p>Real Time Information for all bus operators</p> <p>Prior to 2022, customers would only have seen countdowns (predicted arrival times) for NX services, versus just the timetable time for other operators. Now, we are able to provide countdowns for all bus operators in the West Midlands.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are striving to improve Real Time Information for all customers. • We are now providing countdowns (predicted arrival times) for all bus operators across the West Midlands. • Although we are aware of some issues affecting the availability and accuracy of a small amount of prediction information, we are working hard across all stakeholders to rectify these as soon as possible. • According to a recent survey, 86% of departures gave accurate predictions. We are working towards 95%, bringing us closer to providing countdowns for all buses in the future. | <p>Digital Screens</p> <p>Social Media</p> <p>At station/stop posters</p> | <p>From Feb/March 2024</p> |

| | | | |
|---|--|--|---------------------------|
| <p>Cancellations pilot</p> <p>We are currently undertaking a pilot to provide 'full' and 'partial' trip cancellation information to ensure customers know when their bus isn't running through on-street RTI screens. This is being undertaken by the RTCC during their operational hours.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are striving to improve Real Time Information for all customers. • Through a pilot project, we are addressing how we can better inform customers when their anticipated service won't be running. • If successful, we will be looking to roll this out across the network in the future. | <p>Digital Screens</p> <p>Social Media</p> | <p>March / April 2024</p> |
| <p>Quarterly surveys</p> <p>We have commissioned quarterly on street surveys to understand if the actions we are taking are having a genuine impact for customers.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are striving to improve Real Time Information for all customers. • We want to know that the changes we are making are having a genuine impact on you, our customers. • We are now carrying out regular surveys out on the network to understand your thoughts and work with you to understand how we can continue to improve. | <p>Digital Screens</p> <p>Social Media</p> | <p>Feb 2024</p> |

Future activity:

| Operational improvement | Customer comms messages | Channel | Date |
|---|----------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>At stop QR codes</p> <p>We have procured a system to generate QR codes for each of our bus stops and stations which will link through to a 'virtual' departure board and other useful information when scanned through a smartphone (RTI everywhere project). The codes will start going up on street in Summer 2024.</p> | <p>TBC as project progresses</p> | <p>Digital Screens</p> <p>Social Media</p> <p>At station/stop posters</p> | <p>Late spring/early summer 2024</p> |
| <p>Mobility as a Service (MaaS)</p> | <p>TBC as project progresses</p> | <p>TBC</p> | <p>TBC</p> |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| <p>We are developing a new approach to travelling around the West Midlands. Delivered through an app, users can plan, book and pay for their journey across all local transport options: buses to eScooters, trams to taxis.</p> | | | |
|--|--|--|--|

Scoring

We will assess the quality of the communications through:

- Social analytics and listening
- Website analytics (where applicable)
- Customer feedback via surveys
- Stakeholder feedback.

Risks

The main risk is around **current perceptions and user experience**. There is a risk that improvements made are where we should have previously been.

We will need to ensure consistency and transparency when talking about improvements, acknowledging that there is more to do and we will continue to make positive changes.

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Transport Delivery and Overview Scrutiny Committee

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Date | 26 February 2024 |
| Report title | Park & Ride Update |
| Portfolio Lead | Transport - Councillor Mike Bird |
| Accountable Chief Executive | Anne Shaw – Executive Director, Transport for West Midlands |
| Accountable Employee | Babs Spooner, Senior Park & Ride Manager email: babs.spooner@tfwm.org.uk |

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- (1) Consider and endorse the approach to the continued strategic and operational development of Park & Ride following the Covid-19 pandemic.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To provide an update on matters relating to Park & Ride within the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) area.

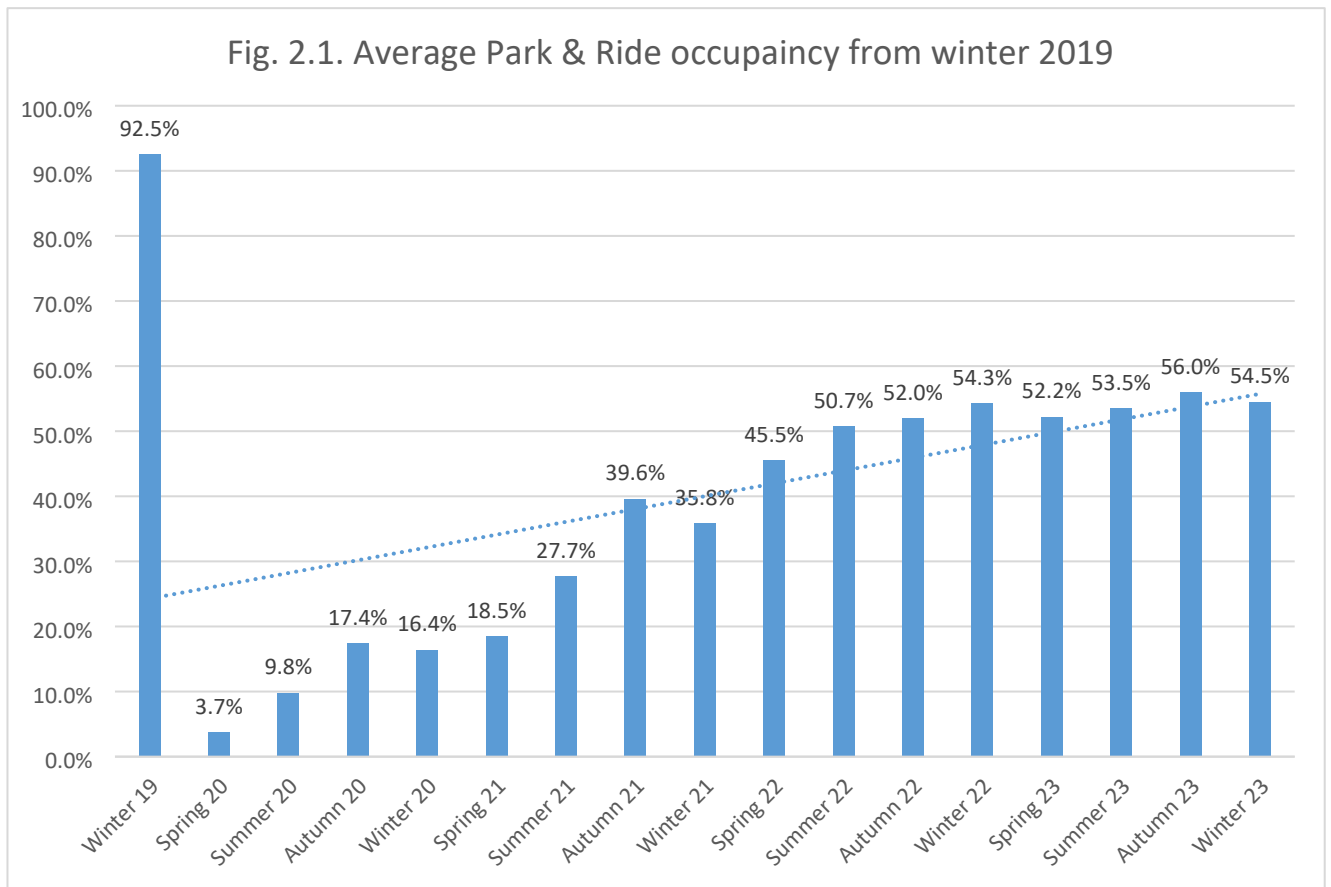
2. Background

- 2.1 Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) currently operates 9,426 Park & Ride spaces at 40 railway stations and five Metro stops within the West Midlands Combined Authority area. The most recent additions to the estate are the 198 space car park at Bradley Lane Metro stop which opened in February 2020 and the 629 space strategic multi-storey at Longbridge railway station which opened in August 2021.

Impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic

- 2.2 Prior to Covid-19, all Park & Ride sites were generally full on a weekday by 8am except for Bescot Stadium and the then recently opened facility at Bradley Lane.

2.3 Covid-19 has had a significant impact on Park & Ride usage since the pandemic, but occupancy has steadily grown as we have moved out of lockdown periods and back into a new period of normality. Figure 2.1 shows average weekday usage of Park & Ride from just before the pandemic to present.



2.4 It is important to note that the above figures provide an average for Monday to Friday at 11am. Some days are much busier than others (particularly midweek days) and people often arrive in the late morning and afternoon after counts have been conducted. There have also been wider impacts on occupancy outside of Covid-19 including rail strikes, reliability issues and reduced service frequencies.

2.5 Table 2.1 gives an indicator of occupancy at specific sites both pre-Covid and more recently (winter 2023). It shows average occupancy (as a percentage of total capacity) but also maximum occupancy during the last three months. On some occasions maximum occupancy exceeds 100% due to people parking outside of marked bays. We have a parking enforcement contract in place to address inconsiderate parking behaviours e.g. parking across bays, outside bays, on footpaths, in roads or in blue badge bays without displaying a valid blue badge.

| | No. spaces | Occupancy Pre-Covid Feb 20 % | Avg. % weekday occupancy winter 23 | Max % weekday occupancy winter 23 |
|---------------------------|------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ACOCKS GREEN | 136 | 96.3% | 59.56% | 75.74% |
| BERKSWELL | 95 | 96.8% | 77.89% | 108.42% |
| BESCOT STADIUM | 122 | 49.2% | 23.77% | 38.52% |
| BLACK LAKE | 87 | 93.1% | 85.06% | 112.64% |
| BLAKE STREET | 163 | 96.9% | 28.83% | 68.71% |
| BRADLEY LANE | 196 | 30.6% | 36.73% | 55.61% |
| BROMSGROVE | 359 | 74.9% | 38.44% | 64.35% |
| CANLEY | 123 | 91.87% | 47.15% | 71.54% |
| CHESTER ROAD | 201 | 99.50% | 73.63% | 111.94% |
| COSELEY | 102 | 94.12% | 83.33% | 97.06% |
| CRADLEY HEATH | 249 | 96.36% | 86.35% | 108.03% |
| DORRIDGE | 90 | 87.02% | 84.44% | 115.56% |
| DUDLEY PORT | 37 | 94.25% | 59.46% | 110.81% |
| FOUR OAKS | 343 | 98.25% | 78.13% | 100.58% |
| GALTON BRIDGE (SMETHWICK) | 77 | 93.51% | 74.03% | 101.30% |
| HALL GREEN | 112 | 88.39% | 66.07% | 100.00% |
| HAMPTON IN ARDEN | 134 | 98.51% | 54.48% | 100.00% |
| THE HAWTHORNS | 185 | 95.14% | 61.08% | 86.49% |
| KINGS NORTON | 321 | 97.82% | 52.34% | 82.87% |
| LANGLEY GREEN | 31 | 93.55% | 54.84% | 87.10% |
| LEA HALL | 29 | 96.55% | 100.00% | 110.34% |
| LYE | 20 | 90.00% | 30.00% | 50.00% |
| LONGBRIDGE | 624 | CLOSED | 11.06% | 19.23% |
| MARSTON GREEN | 122 | 101.64% | 77.87% | 120.49% |
| NORTHFIELD | 194 | 97.42% | 78.35% | 95.88% |
| OLD HILL | 54 | 96.30% | 46.30% | 107.41% |
| OLTON | 93 | 95.70% | 92.47% | 138.71% |
| PRIESTFIELD | 148 | 96.62% | 88.51% | 116.89% |
| ROWLEY REGIS | 741 | 95.28% | 48.45% | 60.86% |
| SANDWELL & DUDLEY | 393 | 98.73% | 76.84% | 96.69% |
| SELLY OAK | 454 | 97.58% | 49.56% | 67.40% |
| SHIRLEY | 71 | 88.73% | 73.24% | 94.37% |
| STOURBRIDGE JUNCTION | 1069 | 96.63% | 28.16% | 45.37% |
| SUTTON COLDFIELD | 317 | 99.68% | 45.74% | 60.57% |
| TAME BRIDGE PARKWAY | 226 | 95.13% | 75.66% | 106.64% |
| TILE HILL | 347 | 97.12% | 54.76% | 71.76% |
| TIPTON | 71 | 100.00% | 70.42% | 109.86% |
| WEDNESBURY PARKWAY | 152 | 93.42% | 74.34% | 113.82% |
| WHITLOCKS END | 324 | 95.37% | 43.21% | 66.05% |
| WIDNEY MANOR | 297 | 97.98% | 59.93% | 77.78% |
| WYLDE GREEN | 57 | 94.74% | 66.67% | 154.39% |
| YARDLEY WOOD | 170 | 100.00% | 59.41% | 85.88% |

Table 2.1 – TfWM car park occupancy pre-Covid and in winter 2023 by site

- 2.6 This data in Table 2.1 that several sites are more than two thirds full on average on a weekday, and many also have occasions where they are at or above capacity. Significantly large sites like Stourbridge Junction, Selly Oak, Bromsgrove and Rowley Regis tend to bring the estate wide occupancy averages down.
- 2.7 It is interesting to note that sites close to the county boundary appear to be recovering more slowly than those further into the urban area. Also, people have not been quick to return to sites more impacted by reduced rail frequencies.
- 2.8 On street parking is significantly lower than prior to Covid-19 as demonstrated in figure 2.2 below – this is due to a lower number of overall car journeys to stations and available spaces within several Park & Ride sites especially on Monday, Friday and weekend days. There are also more people being dropped off.

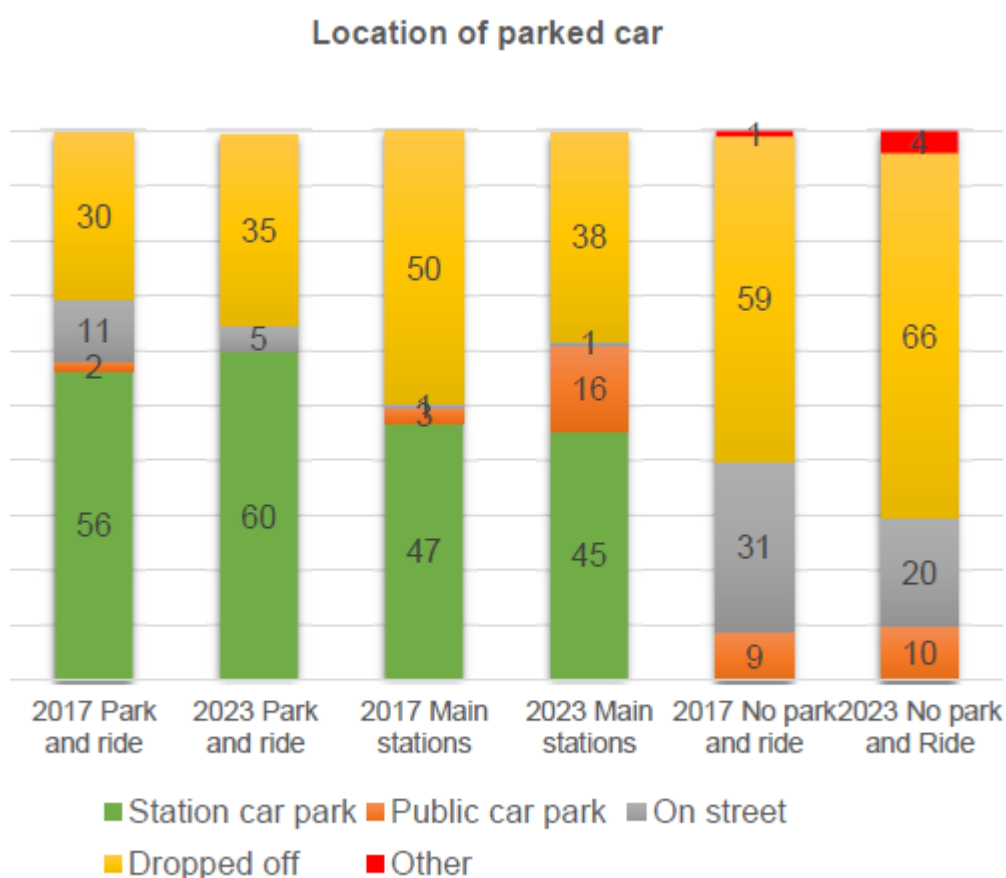


Figure 2.2 – location of parked cars at railway stations in 2017 and 2023

- 2.9 We have had no concerns raised about on street parking since the pandemic, however we will continue to work proactively with local authorities to manage any issues as they occur. Several sites already have on street restrictions nearby from prior to Covid-19. We are having quarterly meetings with local members and Dudley MBC officers about Coseley to review Park & Ride usage and identify if issues might occur as there were specific challenges at this location before the pandemic.

2.10 From December 2022 – June 2023, TfWM undertook a series of mode to station surveys to understand people’s travel behaviours to railway stations and Metro stops post-pandemic. This was compared to similar survey data obtained in 2017. Almost 7,500 people were interviewed.

2.11 The biggest change between pre- and post-pandemic travel habits was the frequency of travel as demonstrated in figure 2.3 below:

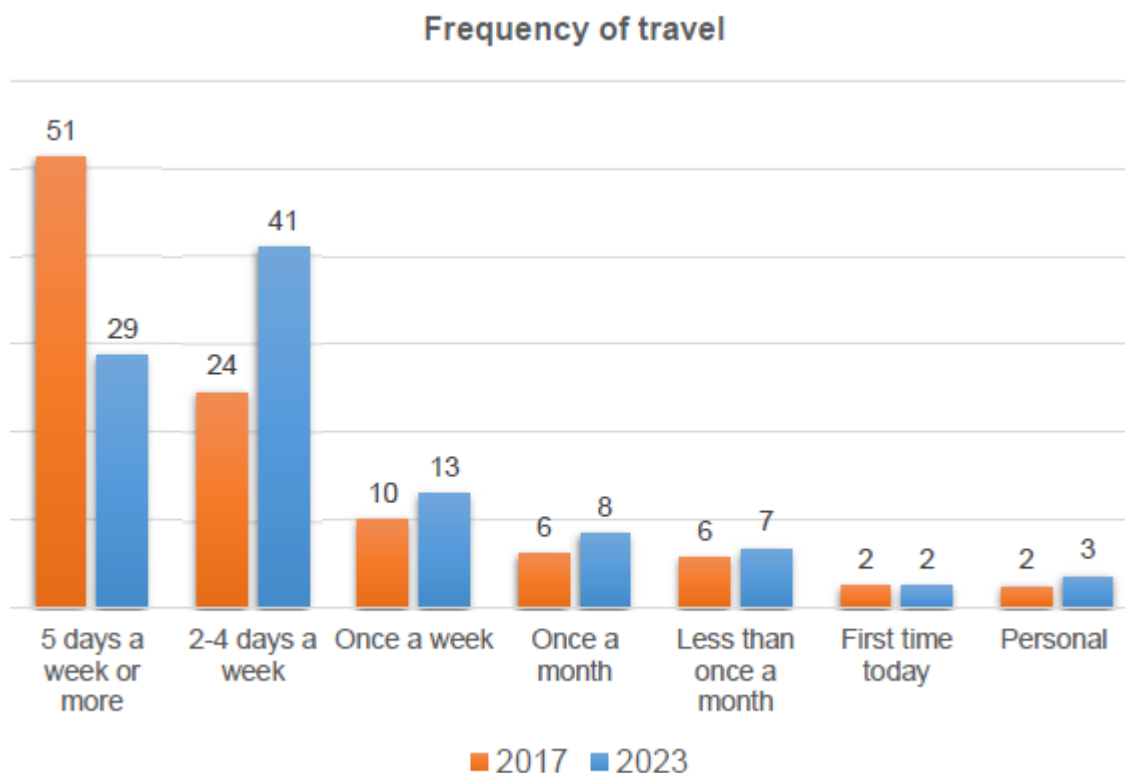


Fig 2.3 – frequency of travel by rail in 2017 and 2023

2.12 In 2017 most people travelled by train five days a week or more, whereas now most people only use rail 2-4 days a week. It is considered that this is due to many rail users being able to work from home for at least part of the week.

2.13 Other useful reflections from the mode to station survey results include:

- The proportions of people travelling for different purposes by train stayed broadly the same before and after the pandemic – the majority for work followed by education. There has been a small increase in leisure users.
- When looking at all stations, most people walk to catch their train (47%), followed by car drivers (24%) and then car passengers (15%). 7% of people catch the bus, 3% use a taxi and 2% cycle. The modal split now is very similar to pre-pandemic.
- Most car drivers park in the station car park. As referenced above, there are fewer people parking on street now, probably due to there being lower numbers of people travelling by rail and therefore a lower demand for parking overall and more availability of parking at the station itself.

- 35% of people drive less than a mile to Park & Ride stations, slightly higher than before the pandemic. 32% of people drive 1-2 miles. The remaining 33% drive from more than 2 miles away – similar to 2017. The average driving distance to stations with a Park & Ride is 2.4 miles.
- Driving habits are very different to main intercity stations compared to other West Midlands stations - 78% of people come from more than 2 miles away and the average driving distance is 5.4 miles.
- At non-Park & Ride stations, 69% of people walk to catch their train compared to 41% when there is a Park & Ride car park.

Park & Ride strategy and development

2.14 In 2019, a Park & Ride strategy was approved by WMCA Board alongside a series of policies and principles which should be applied when developing, operating and funding Park & Ride.

2.15 Now that there is some stability following on from the Covid-19 pandemic, TfWM is reimagining this strategy as a new Integrated Transit Strategy. This will focus on improving access to mass transit services by all modes, including Park & Ride, in alignment with Local Transport Plan 5 and considering significant changes that have occurred over the past six years including:

- Impacts of Covid-19 on usage, travel habits and service levels
- New local, regional and national strategies
- Railway reform – Great British Railways
- Land use requirements and Single Property Estate Strategy
- Local Plans and regeneration/development proposals
- WMCA budget pressures
- Legal and lease reviews relating to Park & Ride
- Opportunities to support net-zero aims
- New and improved sustainable transport options and initiatives

A taskforce is being established to take forward this work during 2024.

2.16 During the pandemic, Park & Ride development activity was largely placed on hold due to a lack of certainty around usage and recovery. The new Integrated Transit Strategy will identify opportunities where future strategic Park & Ride development and sustainable travel measures will help TfWM to meet its objectives for interception and equal access to the mass transit network. However, several schemes are currently in development as outlined in the following paragraphs.

2.17 **Dudley Port Interchange Transformation Scheme** – Dudley Port will be the only interchange between tram and rail on the new Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro extension. TfWM has been allocated £2.4m from the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) to deliver significant improvements to interchange and facilities at the station alongside improved walking, cycling and bus connections from the wider area.

- 2.18 The scheme is being delivered in three phases. Phase One will see a number of enhancements in place ready for when the new Metro stop opens. Phase Two will deliver a holistic network of walking and cycling measures in partnership with Sandwell Council, Dudley Council and Black Country Transport Group. These two phases, funded via the CRSTS allocation, are the stepping stones towards the ultimate transformation of the station.
- 2.19 Phase Three, which is currently unfunded, will deliver a complete redevelopment of the railway station to provide step-free access and cater for future growth. Current budget estimates for Phase 3 are £40m - £55m dependent on scope. TfWM, West Midlands Rail Executive (WMRE) and Network Rail are awaiting the outcome of an Access for All bid to fund Phase Three (highlighted as the top priority scheme for the region). A decision is expected by Government this financial year. If the bid is not successful, TfWM, WMRE and Network Rail will work together to create a shelf ready scheme for future funding opportunities such as CRSTS 2 or Access for All in Control Period 8.
- 2.20 The Phase One Dudley Port Interchange Transformation measures include:
- Urban realm enhancements including a new community space
 - Vegetation and landscaping
 - Lighting and security improvements
 - Accessibility measures including removing steps from the footbridge
 - A wayfinding and information strategy including multi-modal RTI
 - Improved visibility and identity from A461 and Park Lane East
 - Electric Vehicle charge points
 - Dilapidation works
 - Enhanced walking and cycling routes from local residential areas
- 2.21 The Business Justification Case for the Phase One is in development with the aim for submission in June 2024. We hope to start work on site later this summer. Business Case development for Phase Two will commence in summer 2024 with an aim to start on site during 2025.
- 2.22 Sandwell Council, Dudley Council, Black Country Transport Group, West Midlands Rail, Network Rail and Midland Metro Alliance are partners in the Dudley Port Interchange Transformation Scheme. We are working closely with them to ensure alignment with other projects being delivered in the area including the Active Travel Fund 3 scheme along the A461 and the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Sustainable Access Measures project.
- 2.23 **Tile Hill Interchange** – Coventry City Council has been allocated £4m from CRSTS to improve interchange at Tile Hill station. Phase One will focus on improved sustainable access including a new bus interchange, a nicer pedestrian environment, a mobility hub and better walking and cycling access and facilities. Phase Two, which is currently unfunded, will explore options for additional Park & Ride capacity to support increased demand expected from wider housing and regeneration developments in south and west Coventry. Current budget estimates for Phase 2 are c. £2.3m.

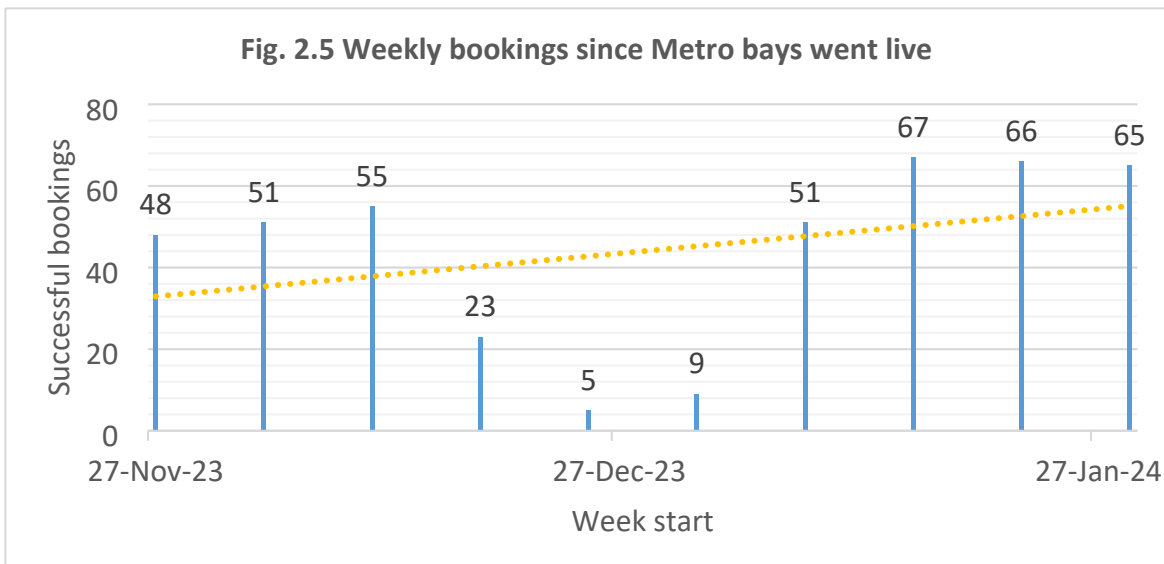
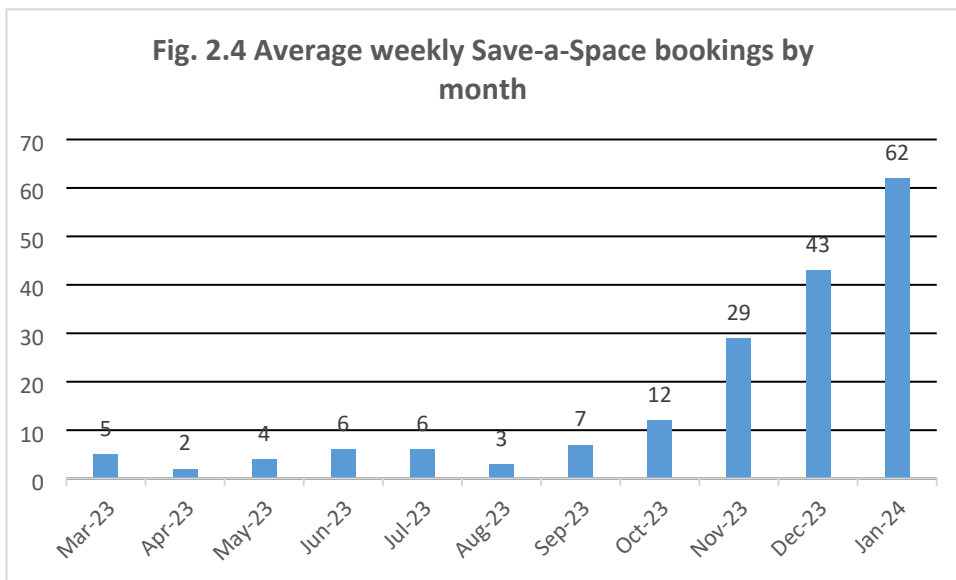
- 2.24 Work has commenced on the Outline Business Case for the scheme which will undertake a detailed options assessments and design work for Phase One alongside higher-level options appraisals for Phase Two. Subject to the outcomes of the options appraisals for Phase Two, Coventry City Council and TfWM will seek funding opportunities to progress this element further e.g. CRSTS 2.
- 2.25 **Whitlocks End** – TfWM is compiling a Strategic Outline Business Case to support improved access to Whitlocks End railway station in partnership with Solihull MBC. As with Tile Hill, this scheme will focus on a two-phase approach to delivery. Phase One will seek to address current challenges at the station including a lack of customer facilities, operational challenges in the car park and poor walking and cycling access from surrounding residential areas. Phase two will be developed in consideration of the Local Plan for significant housing development within the catchment of the station, ensuring that the station and surrounding infrastructure is fit for purpose to cater for the community and encourages positive travel behaviours. There is £500,000 allocated to the project at present, however the completion of business case work will allow future funding bids to be made and conversations to take place with scheme promoters of local development. The current cost estimate for Phase Two is £2.5m – £3m.
- 2.26 **Solihull Park & Ride** – Chiltern Railways currently operates the 444 space charged Park & Ride at Solihull railway station on behalf of TfWM under a lease arrangement. This is due to expire in April 2024 and from 01 May TfWM is taking back the management of the site into its suite of Park & Ride operations.
- 2.27 TfWM will be delivering £160,000 of improvements including resurfacing of the outer area, a new Pay on Exit payment system, upgraded CCTV and general cleaning, repair and maintenance. The car park will offer the same tariffs currently in place with Chiltern Railways. TfWM will be monitoring the usage of the car park over a six-month period to determine if any changes should be made to operation in the future to better support the customer and strategic Park & Ride operations. TfWM is working with Chiltern Railways on a communications campaign to make sure customers are aware of the need to pay in a new way.
- 2.28 Detailed surveys have been undertaken and a full financial model for the car park has been created taking into account capital costs, operational costs and projected revenue to ensure TfWM is not taking on an unmanageable liability. The project is being funded through the Park & Ride budget this financial year and the Network North budget in 2024/25.
- 2.29 **Bromsgrove** – TfWM and WMRE are working jointly to deliver an upgraded payment system for parking at Bromsgrove railway station. The current Pay & Display machines are life expired with regular faults occurring. The new system will be Pay on Arrival giving customers a much smoother payment process by removing the need to pay at a machine and walk back to their car to place a ticket on the dashboard. The new system is Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) based so payment can be made at machines by the ticket office on the way to catch the train or remotely via web, app or phone. This is being funded via the Bromsgrove operational budget.

2.30 **New railway stations** – TfWM is working with WMRE and the project teams delivering Willenhall and Darlaston railway stations to ensure people can access the new facilities effectively. TfWM is acting as client for the new station car parks ensuring they meet the required design and operational standards. TfWM is also supporting the development of the business case for Aldridge railway station with a particular focus on access requirements.

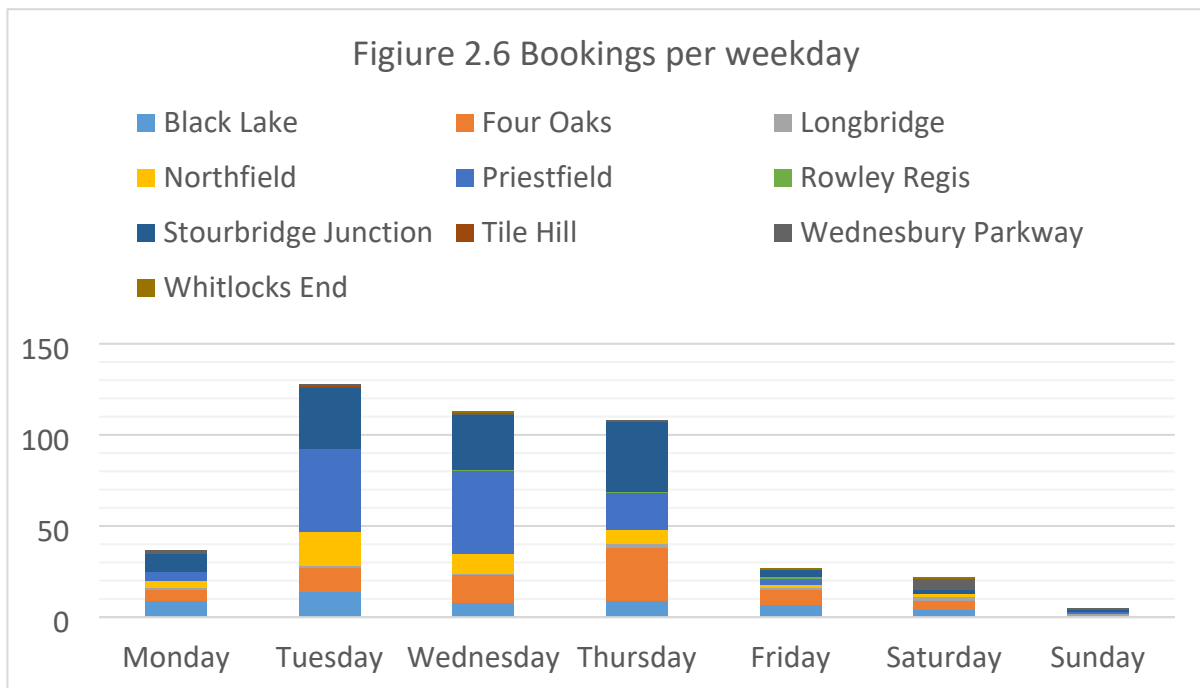
Wider Park & Ride developments and initiatives

2.31 **Save-a-Space** – TfWM’s parking bay reservation system is now in place at seven railway station car parks and three Metro stops. There are between five and 15 bookable spaces per site. Users download the Save-a-Space app and can then reserve a parking space for £3.60 per day.

2.32 The scheme has become increasingly popular since its reinstatement in February 2023. The addition of the Metro sites in November 2023 also led to a big surge in bookings. Figure 2.4 below shows how bookings have risen over the past year (discounting the festive break). Figure 2.5 shows weekly bookings following the introduction of the Metro Save-a-Space bays.



2.33 Figure 2.6 below shows bookings by site and by day since 27 November 2023. This shows that the most popular days are midweek days in line with when car parks and rail services are busiest. The most popular sites are Four Oaks, Priestfield and Stourbridge Junction. The latter is particularly interesting as there is significant capacity available at the car park, so this suggest that people are paying for the convenience of being near to the station. Four Oaks and Priestfield have been fully booked on a number of occasions.



2.34 We are undertaking continuous monitoring of Save-a-Space to determine how to develop the service further, and we are in the process of delivering some marketing campaigns to raise more awareness of the service.

2.35 **Future mobility** - the TfWM Park & Ride team is working closely with the Future Mobility team to explore how Park & Ride can support the development of new transport initiatives and objectives to make the region net-zero by 2041.

2.36 The Park & Ride team is feeding into the delivery of pilot mobility hubs (Local Travel Points) in Halesowen and working with the team to identify opportunities for their delivery within railway station car parks to support and encourage sustainable travel. This includes looking at options as part of the ongoing projects at Dudley Port, Whitlocks End, Tile Hill and Aldridge.

2.37 In 2022 TfWM created a Park & Ride Electric Vehicle Strategy which built upon the regional Ultra-Low Emissions Vehicle (ULEV) Strategy to identify how the Park & Ride estate can support the uptake and ownership of low and zero emissions vehicles. This work delivered a site-by-site assessment of how many public Electric Vehicle Charge Points should be provided by 2030 and 2040 to support use by public transport users, local residents and passing traffic based on a number of factors.

2.38 The ULEV strategy has been recently updated and recommends that TfWM should deliver its Park & Ride EV strategy with standard, fast and rapid charge points to serve different use cases. We will be seeking to refresh the targets in the Park & Ride EV strategy to mirror changes to the ULEV strategy. We are working with the Transport Innovation Team and regional partners to deliver charging infrastructure funded via the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement and DfT's LEVI Capital Fund to provide a holistic and strategic network of publicly available charge points across the region including within the Park & Ride estate.

Operational and financial considerations

Budget challenges

2.39 Park & Ride currently costs c. £3m per annum to operate, up £600k (25%) since 2017/28. Costs have increased significantly in particular over the last two years due to the cost-of-living crisis and higher energy costs - at a time when WMCA budgets are increasingly constrained. Park & Ride operations currently form the largest area of non-discretionary spend within TfWM budgets while only benefitting a very small proportion of the population who are generally more affluent.

2.40 The March 2019 WMCA Board Policies and Principles report confirmed:

“Unless there are compelling wider benefits or commensurate savings the proportion of the WMCA Transport Levy budget allocated to the operation of park and ride will not be increased.”

“Park & Ride assets owned or operated by WMCA will be supported by commercial strategies which seek to:

- *Reduce the cost of Park & Ride;*
- *Raise revenue to cover the cost of Park & Ride, including by means of charging;*
- *Enable services supported by WMCA Transport Levy to be as financially self-sustaining as possible.”*

AND

“Any proposals for new or expanded park and ride schemes would generally be expected to be financially self-sustaining beyond the initial construction costs.”

2.41 Direction was given to begin exploring the impacts and opportunities of introducing charging and other commercial options at Park & Ride to reduce the budgetary pressures of the service while also seeking to encourage more positive user behaviours.

2.42 This work was placed on hold during Covid-19, however, now there is more stability in Park & Ride usage alongside increased WMCA budget pressures, TfWM has a responsibility to take an evidence-led approach to exploring how Park & Ride budgetary impacts can be managed more effectively to reduce the amount of levy required to fund this area of service.

Park & Ride security

- 2.43 Crime across the West Midlands transport network has reduced by 9.7% this year compared to 2022/23. There have been no significant issues of crime within Park & Ride car parks for more than a year following the arrest of two car thieves following a well-documented spate of Ford Fiesta thefts across the Black Country. CCTV footage from Park & Ride was instrumental in the conviction of the perpetrators.
- 2.44 TfWM Park & Ride sites are delivered to Park Mark standards with high levels of CCTV coverage, lighting and help points.
- 2.45 TfWM is currently undertaking a replacement of existing CCTV cameras at various Park & Ride locations. These cameras are state of the art in terms of the definition of the images captured. We are also rationalising some cameras using the latest camera technology that gives a complete 360-degree view meaning some cameras can be removed without being replaced whilst still giving excellent coverage of the car parks.

3. Strategic Aims and Objectives

3.1 This report aligns with the following local, regional and national strategies:

- Park & Ride Strategy, Policies and Principles (2019)
- West Midlands LTP5 – reimagining public transport
- #WM2041
- DfT Gear Change Strategy
- DfT Transport Decarbonisation Plan

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 The latest patronage data at P&R sites indicates a steady recovery since its dramatic reduction due to the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. The data outlined in section 2.3 and 2.5 demonstrates the continued positive usage of current P&R sites, with some car park locations being oversubscribed. In addition, the Save-a-space chargeable initiative booking numbers are also indicating an uprise in demand over the 2023-24 period.
- 4.2 TfWM currently charge at 3 sites: Sutton Coldfield, Bromsgrove, and Longbridge. In addition, from 1st May 2024, TfWM is taking back the management of Solihull Park & Ride into its suite of Park & Ride operations. The revenues generated at these sites are essential contributions to the continued improvements in the local public transport network.
- 4.3 This report is not asking for a financial decision but is requesting endorsement into the continued commitment into developing the strategy and operations at P&R sites. Members are requested to endorse the approach which not only aims to improve the Park & Ride service but will also allow for further exploration into commercialisation possibilities and revenue generation opportunities with the aim to support towards tackling the continued financial challenges across TfWM. This investment is essential to continue to promote and increase patronage across the local public transport network as part of the wider future transport strategy.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 There are no specific legal issues arising directly from the contents of this report. Legal advice will be sought on any specific issues that arise in the usual way.

6. Single Assurance Framework Implications

- 6.1 The Dudley Port Programme Business Case was approved via the Single Assurance Framework in June 2023. The Business Justification Case is being created in line with the Strategic Assurance Framework Requirements with a proposed submission date of early summer 2024 for Phase One and late 2024/early 2025 for Phase Two.
- 6.2 The Whitlocks End Strategic Outline Case will be submitted into the Strategic Assurance Framework in spring 2024.

7. Equalities Implications

- 7.1 The reflections in section 2.14 are not analysed against any protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, and it is therefore not possible to say whether there would be any positive, negative or neutral equalities implications. With the identified 3-phase developments summarised, it is recommended that a health and equity impact assessment is carried out as it is likely that there will be some positive equalities impacts as each phased is delivered. The key findings of the HEIA should be summarised and added to this section and to similar or related reports and updates, with the HEIA added as an appendix for reference.

8. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 8.1 Park & Ride and the Integrated Transit Strategy play a key role in delivering Connected Communities by providing physical connectivity through the facilitation of equal and easy access to the mass transit network. This allows people to connect to housing, education, employment, and wider services while stimulating transit orientated development. It helps give businesses access to a wide labour pool and provides improved urban environments and land use for local communities. It encourages use of sustainable transport for some or all of a journey supporting aims to reduce carbon and improve air quality.

9. Geographical Area of Report's Implications

- 9.1 This report is relevant to the West Midlands Combined Authority area.

10. Other Implications

- 10.1 None applicable.

11. Schedule of Background Papers

- 11.1 Park & Ride Strategy 2019

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Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Date | 26 February 2024 |
| Report title | West Midland Cycle Hire, Scheme Update |
| Portfolio Lead | Transport - Councillor Mike Bird |
| Accountable Chief Executive | Anne Shaw, Executive Director, Transport for West Midlands email: anne.shaw@tfwm.org.uk |
| Accountable Employees | <p>Pete Bond, Director of Integrated Transport Services email: pete.bond@tfwm.org.uk</p> <p>Stephen Bermingham, Implementation Manager – WM Cycle Hire email: stephen.bermingham@tfwm.org.uk</p> <p>Andrew Thrupp, Head of Operational Assets email: andrew.thrupp@tfwm.org.uk</p> |
| Report has been considered by | <p>TfWM Leadership Team Strategic Transport Officers Group TfWM ITS Leadership Team TfWM Network Programme Board Adam Tranter, Mayor’s Cycling & Walking Commissioner Mayoral Team</p> |

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

1. Endorse the additional funding requirement of £2.1m to take the scheme through to the end of the existing contract in October 2025, this will require WMCA Board for approval.

2. Endorse the conclusion of options appraisal of the existing scheme and interim measures taken to improve performance of the scheme and mitigate the challenges reported in Autumn 2023.
3. Note the original objectives of the scheme and the level to which these are being met through the existing scheme, as per WMCA Board report 24 July 2020.
4. Note the link between the existing WMCH scheme and the developing Local Travel Points that will include further cycle hire scheme along with improved safety and security measures.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To seek approval for an additional £2.1m of funding to support the ongoing contract management for the West Midlands Cycle Hire scheme up to the end of the existing contract in October 2025.
- 1.2 To provide an update on the West Midlands Cycle Hire (WMCH) scheme since its launch in 2021, the level to which it is achieving the targets and objectives of the scheme, the performance, management, and integration with other schemes including e-scooters and local travel points as we approach 18 months until the end of the existing contract.
- 1.3 To provide an update on challenges and mitigations which have emerged since the creation of the scheme, and the financial sustainability and impact and importance of stakeholder relationships as factors that impact scheme performance and sustainability.
- 1.4 To make clear the activities that have been implemented to improve and protect the West Midlands Cycle Hire scheme in the short-term, and what is evolving in performance management to secure longer-term opportunities for a scheme beyond October 2025.
- 1.5 To define the opportunities being incorporated to include the rollout of the Local Travel Points to help manage and mitigate some of the scheme challenges.

2. Background

- 2.1 A regional cycle hire system was referenced as one of the core principles of the West Midlands Cycling Charter, established in 2015, which outlined the key principles among partners to deliver a step change in cycling across the West Midlands supported and developed by the WMCA in partnership with local authority partners.
- 2.2 Good active travel will play a key part in delivering the West Midlands LTP Core Strategy and the LTPs (and the WMCA's) wider aims and objectives by encouraging more sustainable journeys and healthier lifestyles and creating more access for people to opportunities such as jobs and education.
- 2.3 To reflect this the draft LTP Walk, Wheel, Cycle and Scoot Big Move sets out that everyone in West Midlands should be enabled to safely access a range of local destinations on foot, in a wheelchair or on a bike or scooter; with the aim of at least half of all trips in our area to be made by active modes by 2030.
- 2.4 27% of households in the region do not have access to a car. At the same time 60% of car trips in the region are less than 2 miles. Shared services such as WM Cycle Hire allow

people to access vehicles to drive without having to own one. This is useful to citizens of the West Midlands because:

- It offers a more affordable alternative to owning a particular vehicle (or another vehicle), and particularly may be a more affordable alternative to buying a Zero Emission Vehicle;
- It is impractical to own a vehicle (or another vehicle) for example because of a lack of personal space to store/park/charge a vehicle;
- They might need to access a vehicle away from home (for example where someone has travelled somewhere by public transport and needs to access another vehicle for onward travel); and
- They may be able to access a greater diversity of vehicles to access the right vehicle to meet their needs at the right time.

2.5 Shared services play a key role particularly either as part of the first and last mile element of journeys or for end-to-end travel helping to support improved accessibility and our ambitions for inclusive growth across the region.

2.6 The draft LTP Public Transport and Shared Mobility sets out that WMCA and local authorities will commit to supporting the development and provision of shared services, specifically including cycle and scooter hire, and car/van clubs, creating a more accessible and inclusive offer.

2.7 Besides health implications, the West Midlands area suffers from significant air quality problems. Public Health England figures suggest approximately 1,500 adult deaths each year are attributable to poor air quality in the West Midlands. Policies such as Clean Air Zones (CAZ) are designed to improve air quality and contribute significantly to our Health and Transport policies. Encouraging active travel, in this case through cycle hire schemes, will form a key element of our overall approach to improving air quality and the health of our residents, as well as reduce the number of motorised vehicles on the road. This, in turn, supports the commitment to WMCA's Air Quality Framework, geared towards accelerating improvements to air quality on a regional scale.

2.8 WMCH scheme was approved and agreed by the WMCA Board in July 2020. The scheme was designed to support some of the major health, wellbeing and air quality targets of the region as well as improving accessibility and trialling micromobility schemes such as those seen in London and other major city regions.

3 Operations and scheme performance

3.1 Since WMCH launched in March 2021, it has provided bikes, and docking stations across all 7 West Midlands Local Authorities. The scheme comprised a total of 1,500 bikes, 150 of which being e-bikes, along with 195 physical and 10 virtual docking stations, for people to hire bikes from and return bikes to. 1320 bikes were always planned to be on the network at any one time.

3.2 Serco have led on the implementation and ongoing management of the WMCH scheme, with a services contract in place up until October 2025. The introduction of the new e-scooter hire scheme in Birmingham in August 2023 has improved the overall micromobility offer within the region. Both schemes utilise the same technology through Beryl and the same operational team through Serco to ensure a consistent regional offer, ensuring bikes are recovered, and restocked to serve demand.

- 3.3 The scheme was established to consist of operations within all 7 Local Authority areas and to include an additional scheme at Sutton Coldfield supported by additional subsidy from Sutton Coldfield Town Council.
- 3.4 Scheme usage has predominantly shown positive uplift trends year-on-year since launch which is a positive in terms of integrated solutions for residents and visitors that can assist in creating the health and wellbeing outcomes originally envisaged. Usage varies across the region, based on a number of factors, whilst also highlighting the wide geographical spread of the scheme, being one of the most widely spread geographical schemes anywhere in the UK. The cumulative distance travelled on WMCH bikes since scheme launch now stands at over 1.1 million miles.
- 3.5 E-scooters - the new West Midlands e-scooter hire scheme was launched on the 2nd August 2023. A continuation of the Department for Transport trial, delivered by Beryl and managed through Serco includes 200 e-scooters that were made available within Birmingham at launch, which is now up to 800 active scooters on-street. The 12.5% revenue share available to TfWM is expected to amount to around £50k per annum in year 1 which can be used to offset some of the deficit on the WMCH scheme.
- 3.6 Data, and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are actively reviewed to ensure that TfWM can effectively monitor the contract and be aware of which areas need developing and attention. The latest changes to staffing and governance will help with this area and ultimately improve contract and scheme performance. Part of this will allow TfWM access to the back-office system for Serco for internal teams to interrogate and respond to contractual issues as happens with other modes and organisations.
- 3.7 Customer Experience and feedback- User surveys have been undertaken annually on the scheme, with the latest survey in 2023 indicating that almost half (45%) of users use WMCH to get to or from other modes of public transport, highlighting the added benefit of WMCH alongside our wider public transport services. Scheme users tend to be younger (47% aged 16-34), male (72% in 2023) and are less likely to have access to a car compared with the regional conurbation average (60% vs 73% average)
- 3.8 From the same survey, WMCH is used most regularly for work trips (24%, weekly), with 18% and 17% of users travelling weekly for leisure and education respectively. Users highlighted being able to travel where they like, the speed of journeys versus other modes, and the environmental benefits of travelling by bike, as the main factors influencing WMCH use.
- 3.9 In terms of the integration of the cycle hire and e-scooter schemes, again from the latest user surveys, 86% of cycle hire users noted that they were aware of the new e-scooter offering, with a quarter (26%) having used them, again helping to demonstrate the added value of an integrated and consistent regional micromobility offering. Use of e-scooters was highest amongst those aged 35-44 (30%) and more regular WMCH users (34%).
- 3.10 The TfWM Transport Planning team have used the Department for Transport (DfT) Active Mode Appraisal Toolkit (AMAT) to make some initial estimates of annual impacts, and benefits – although note AMAT does not cover all the possible benefits of the scheme (e.g. employment, or time savings), nor are all AMAT benefits necessarily aligned to scheme objectives as benefits in a scheme appraisal would need to be. Further information on this is covered in Appendix 1.

3.11 The TfWM Transport Planning team have additionally collected some information on the benefits of cycle sharing schemes generally and shared with the WMCH team as high-level support for AMAT work, and any other benefits estimates that might be made – highlights include:

- the better physical and mental health reported by beneficiaries of a cycle share programme in Edinburgh and Glasgow (10% went on to buy their own cycle, and note TfWM satisfaction surveys suggest some WMCH users might give up their cars if more cycles were available)
- and how 20% of cycle share scheme users said that it formed ‘all’ or a ‘major part’ of the physical activity they undertook
- whilst completing 20 minutes of exercise each day cuts the risk of many diseases – achieving this via cycling is linked to reduced heart disease and cancer, and reductions in anxiety and (by 31%) depression (with better worker productivity too)
- and if cycling rates were elevated to London levels across other UK cities, this would avoid around 30,000 incidences of eight life-threatening conditions by 2040

4 WMCH Scheme Challenges and Operational Improvements

4.1 Whilst the scheme has been used successfully in many areas it has experienced challenges. The first of these is bike availability, which 783 bikes available to the scheme in October 2023, well below the required targets. This is as a direct result of vandalised and missing bikes, This figure has since recovered to over 1000, as of the 30th January 2024 and is predicted to be back to over 1100 by the end of March 2024.

4.2 Secondly, instances of vandalism increased significantly on WMCH in 2023. The cost of vandalism repairs increased eight-fold in the period of April – June 2023 compared to the same corresponding months within 2022. Other schemes including Manchester have reported similar challenges with vandalism highlighting this is an issue across the country. Vandalism costs for WMCH are covered jointly between TfWM and Serco, up to the value of £100k per year, with TfWM taking full liability for any costs beyond this £100k figure. This figure reached £166k for the 2023/24 financial year to October 2023, and the total cost of putting the 281 bikes (242 pedal / 59 ebike) awaiting repair back into service is around £150k further and will take around 4 months to complete.

4.3 There was also a high number of missing bikes across the region and a full mitigation and recovery plan is in place and currently proving very successful in recovering a large number of the 300 bikes that went missing. TfWM and Serco are working closely with police resources to tackle this issue,

4.4 Finally, another challenge impacting the scheme is the numbers of bikes left outside of the docks (OOD) and outside of the zones (OOZ) they should be returned to, which then makes the bike more susceptible to vandalism or theft if not recovered quickly. The higher levels of bikes left OOD and OOZ recently resulted in an increase of fines for doing this, as well as a marketing campaign to dock your bike.

4.5 Whilst issues with bike availability, vandalism, missing bikes and bikes left out of dock and out of zone appear high, it must be noted that these are in keeping with issues seen on other schemes both nationally and internationally. We are looking to learn from best practice implemented within other schemes to continue to combat these challenges as we move forward with our contingency planning and the work with police and partners is pivotal to this.

5 Scheme realignment and next steps

- 5.1 Options have been considered with respect to the ongoing operation of the scheme, as per Appendix 1. Given the relatively consistent financial forecasts for each available option, the recommended way forward is to proceed with Option 1, ensuring a full scheme is maintained until the end of the contract in October 2025. This is consistent with the originally approved WMCA Board Report in July 2020, providing a single cycle hire scheme across all 7 West Midlands Local Authorities.
- 5.2 In advance of the contractual end point, TfWM will develop a regional micromobility strategy in order to set out and endorse a regional approach to shared mobility across the region. This will subsequently allow for the procurement of a replacement micromobility scheme to serve the West Midlands, from October 2025 onwards, with the aim of reducing the financial liability placed on WMCA, whilst still providing a beneficial product to users. This approach has been utilised more recently in other local authorities within the UK, with the more financially viable e-scooter offering potentially helping to subsidise cycle hire operations in shared schemes.
- 5.3 The key objective moving forward is to ensure a stabilisation to the existing scheme, prioritising asset protection, with a focus on improved operations across the region, whilst ensuring a long-term approach to micromobility across the region via a more favourable commercial model. This will be reported through 6 monthly updates to Transport Delivery Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and the Strategic Transport Board.
- 5.4 In addition the new Local Travel Points pilot scheme will be implemented and trialled in Halesowen along with the additional security features which will test this type of operation in the region as well. Some additional security features will be considered at other locations of the scheme within the region during this time.
- 5.5 Whilst an expansion of the current WMCH scheme has previously been referenced, the revenue benefits of an additional order are not forecast to be at a level to justify the capital expenditure. However, the purchase of additional bikes will be considered, subject to funding, in line with the Local Travel Points scheme, and its growth, and will further help address any bike availability issues across the WMCH scheme.
- 5.6 To start to consider the procurement strategy from October 2025 for a combined micromobility service across the West Midlands which meets the needs of users across the region, has minimal financial liability on WMCA and has strong KPIs which will ensure operational excellence throughout the whole scheme. This will also embed learning from the upcoming Local Travel Points pilot to ensure a comprehensive approach to our future approach to micromobility.

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 When the forecasting cost model was created to determine the level of subsidy required over the life of the contract, the central case forecasted a £2.7m deficit, although a total financial provision of £4.6m was made to cover this eventuality. However, due to the lower than anticipated revenue over recent years, the latest modelling indicates that the project will generate a total deficit of approximately £6.7m by the end of the 5-year contract which terminates in October 2025, resulting in an anticipated shortfall of £2.1m against the provision. This reflects a further (up to) £400K pressure on the Levy and MTFP compared to £1.7m pressure which was previously reported in May 23. This is a

result of the additional vandalism and reduced bike availability during 2023-24 to date as noted in the report above.

- 6.2 Based on the current performance forecast, without any sponsorship deals forthcoming, it is anticipated that the £4.6m reserve ceiling will be breached in April 2024, with 18 further months of MTFP pressure for the remainder of the contract. As noted above, the forecasting does not consider any revenue uplift because of the new tariffs which have been implemented due to lack of data available. This will be modelled as data becomes available.
- 6.3 The current e-scooter arrangement provides the WMCA with a share of profits. Based on performance to date, this would lead to a revenue injection of circa £50k per annum, though this is a lower figure than anticipated because of relative low usage and fleet volume, which are both expected to increase. Income generated from the e-scooter arrangement will be used to offset some of the deficit on cycling. The integration of the micro-mobility budgets for e-scooters and cycle hire will provide a more holistic approach to managing the overall deficit and assist in improved decision making for future scheme changes.
- 6.4 As outlined within the options in Appendix 1, the forecast benefit for Options 2, 3 and 4 do not materially favourably impact the pressures on the remaining WMCH scheme. It is noted that withdrawal of the scheme at this point, also carries significant risk to the MTFP and exceeding the available reserves balance. The final settlement would be subject to negotiation, but notwithstanding this, the £4.6m approved reserves ceiling based upon the current performance levels will be breached in April 2024.

7 Legal Implications

- 7.1 WMCA and Serco Limited are party to an Agreement dated 23rd November 2020 in respect of the provision of the West Midlands Cycle Hire Scheme (“Scheme”). Pursuant to clause 32 of the Agreement and subject to the Change Control Request Procedure set out at schedule 7 of the Agreement, WMCA may at any time amend the details of the Scheme, including the geographical extent of the Scheme.
- 7.2 Legal Services notes Option 4, within Appendix 1 of this report, in respect of exploring other options such as termination of the Scheme. Legal Services have previously provided advice in respect of termination options and the consequences thereof. If termination of the Scheme is to be explored further, the clients will need to liaise with Legal Services.

8 Equalities Implications

- 8.1 The reviewed changes highlighted in the report relate to the geographical spread of stations and bikes, and therefore the impact on users and citizens with respect to one or more of their protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010 is likely to be neutral. There is likely a positive impact on reducing health inequalities due to improved air quality with this scheme, and therefore a positive impact on the health of all citizens.
- 8.2 Section 4 details some of the major challenges with the scheme, and there is a potential minor challenge and impact with respect to bikes not being returned to their designated docking and parking stations which as a result may pose a trip hazard to citizens, especially blind and partially sighted citizens in particular.

9 Geographical Area of Report’s Implications

- 9.1 West Midlands Cycle Hire provides for residents in all seven WMCA constituent authority areas.

Appendix 1 – Options Analysis

With respect to addressing immediate pressures relating to bike availability, and in order to provide clarity on the level of service that can be maintained across the West Midlands moving forward, the below options have been assessed as requested by Strategic Transport Board.

| Description | Summary of analysis |
|---|---|
| Option 1. (Recommended): Retain the scheme in its current form until the end of contract in October 2025. | Latest scheme modelling indicates the total scheme deficit of this option would be £6.7m, resulting in an additional pressure on the MTFP of £2.1m over and above the costed scheme reserves. This option will include the delivery of Local Travel Points across the region and the re-allocation of resources in order to support this rollout. The safety and security aspects of the Local Travel Points will also be reviewed with respect to enhancing existing WMCH docking stations. If this recommended option is approved, a report will go to WMCA Board requesting up to £2.1m to ensure the continued operations until October 2025. |
| Option 2. Reduction of stations in Sandwell, Stourbridge, Solihull, and Walsall, to be re-deployed in Birmingham and Coventry. | Latest scheme modelling indicates the total scheme deficit of this option would be £6.7m, resulting in an additional pressure on the MTFP of £2.1m over and above the costed scheme reserves. There is an immaterial benefit of £24k over the remaining project life with Option 2 compared with Option 1. |
| Option 3. Full removal of assets within Sandwell, Stourbridge, Solihull, Walsall, and Wolverhampton. | Assets would then be re-deployed in Birmingham and Coventry, where scheme usage has been highest. Latest scheme modelling indicates the total scheme deficit of this option would be £6.6m, resulting in an additional pressure on the MTFP of £2.0m over and above the costed scheme reserves. There is a small benefit of £87k over the remaining project life with Option 3 compared with Option 1. |
| Option 4. Termination of WMCH scheme. | Serco have provided a without prejudice estimation and subject to further discussion cost for withdrawal. The indicative termination estimate provided ranges between £1.4m and £2.0m. This includes, three months' notice period, stranded costs (redundancies, assets, depot) and subcontractor terminations. This option is deemed to be unrealistic as the costs to withdraw the scheme is largely consistent with continuing the contract until October 2025, and would likely bring with it negative media coverage regarding a commitment to Active Travel schemes within the region. |

Implementation of Option 2 and 3 do provide small revenue uplifts however, it is anticipated that there will be additional costs to move the docking stations.

For Option 4, withdrawal from the scheme, it is assumed that the cost to Serco for termination is up to £2m based upon the high estimate provided and a termination to be implemented by the end of the 2023-24 financial year.

The pressure to MTFP, for costs more than the £4.6m reserves ceiling, from April 24 ranges between £1.9m and £2.1m. The table below summarises the financial implications of the options outlined above.

| Option | Description | Monthly Revenue Uplift | Estimated Implementation Cost | Project Life Outturn Forecast | Reserves Ceiling | MTFP Pressure April 24 to October 25 |
|--------|--|------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | Retain scheme as is until end of contract | - | - | £6,684k | £4,600k | £2,084k |
| 2 | Remove up to 70% of stations and re-distribute | £2k | £20k | £6,660k | £4,600k | £2,060k |
| 3 | Remove all and concentrate in Brum, Cov & Sutton | £6k | £45k | £6,597k | £4,600k | £1,997k |
| 4 | Withdraw scheme (Terminated at March 24, £2m cost) | - | - | £6,515k | £4,600k | £1,915k |

The table shows the low and high estimates, based on AMAT as per section 3.10 (more work and time for checks would be needed to narrow this), for the current scheme, and also for options to either move some or all of the cycles to the best-performing Birmingham and Coventry areas:

| Annual benefits from AMAT (£000s) | Option 1 | | Option 2 | | Option 3 | |
|---|----------------|---------------|--|---------------|---|---------------|
| | Current scheme | | Move 70% of cycles from other areas to Birmingham and Coventry | | Move all cycles from other areas to Birmingham and Coventry | |
| | Low estimate | High estimate | Low estimate | High estimate | Low estimate | High estimate |
| Increased physical activity (reduced risk of early death) | 155 | 275 | 174 | 308 | 183 | 325 |
| Reduced workplace absenteeism | 48 | 85 | 54 | 96 | 56 | 101 |
| Net benefits from reduced car use (air quality, carbon, decongestion, maintenance, noise, safety) | 29 | 52 | 33 | 58 | 34 | 61 |
| Total (from AMAT alone) | 232 | 413 | 260 | 462 | 274 | 487 |

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Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Date | 26 February 2024 |
| Report title | Member Engagement Groups - Progress Report |
| Accountable Chief Executive | Laura Shoaf, West Midlands Combined Authority email: laura.shoaf@wmca.org.uk |
| Accountable Employee | Pete Bond, Director of Integrated Transport Services email: pete.bond@tfwm.org.uk |
| Scrutiny Champions | Air Quality, Congestion & Environmental Impact - Councillor Ian Ward Finance & Performance - Councillor Pervez Akhtar Passenger First - Councillor Carol Hyatt Passenger & Road Safety - Councillor David Stanley Rail, Metro & Sprint - Councillor Tim Huxtable Sustainability & Active Travel - Councillor Martin McCarthy |

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- (1) Note the report, and consider whether it wishes to any of the matters discussed at the recent Member Engagement Groups to be incorporated into the Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee's work programme..

Background

1. At its meeting on 9 June, the WMCA Board agreed revised transport governance arrangements for the forthcoming year. These new arrangements included the amalgamation of the former Transport Delivery Committee and Transport Scrutiny Subcommittee into a new Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee. Part of these arrangements include six Member Engagement Groups, which provide members with an opportunity to meet and discuss in more detail transport-related issues that are grouped around broad thematic areas.
2. Although the Member Engagement Groups are not decision making, they provide a forum for members to develop a deeper understanding of those matters that would not otherwise be able to be discussed in such detail at committee meetings.

Member Engagement Groups Meeting Updates

3. An update from Member Engagement Groups that have met since the last meeting of the committee is set out below:

Rail, Metro & Sprint - 5 February 2024 (Councillor Tim Huxtable)

4. The Rail, Metro, and Sprint Member Engagement Group Meeting met on 5 February with an agenda covering topics across all three modes.

- **Highlights and Performance**

5. The MEG received a presentation on the Dudley Port Integrated Transport Hub project. Dudley Port is a major focus for transport investment with a new tram stop on the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill West Midlands Metro extension, currently under construction, alongside plans for high-quality walking, cycling, and public transport measures in the area. Together, these contribute to a future network of sustainable transport options for residents who want to use an alternative to the private car to get around. These works are due to be completed by the end of 2024, ready for the launch of phase one of the Metro extension from Wednesbury to Dudley town centre.
6. The MEG then heard about the Buy Before You Board (BBYB) concept being introduced for Midland Metro. BBYB is a model used by others across the UK, including Manchester and Nottingham. BBYB will include moving Metro from on-tram sales to buying before you board via at platform ticket machines (TVMs) and at stop ticket validators. Passengers will validate their travel permits (e.g. Swift card) prior to boarding the vehicle compared to buying on the tram but also validate when leaving the vehicle (Tapping in and out). There will be revenue teams with validator devices doing inspections throughout. Metro will include having TVMs and validators throughout the network to accommodate the demand at the stops, at certain tram stops there will be additional equipment to serve customer. The go live

date is proposed to be in late 2024. A paper is due at WMCA Board in March 2024 to close out the final requirement relating to the introduction of an increased Penalty Fare.

7. The MEG were updated on the progress of the Birmingham to Longbridge, and Hagley Road (Edgbaston) to Halesowen Corridors – Mass Transit Options Appraisal Studies. The aim of the brief for each corridor is to develop an options assessment to improve connectivity and produce a consistent approach to strategic and multi-modal travel planning and growth. Procurement is underway with a consultant(s) expected to be appointed February 2024 (Longbridge Corridor) and March 2024 (Hagley Road Corridor). The Appraisal Studies (Stage 1) are anticipated to be completed by the end of 2024 followed by SOBC (Stage 2) submission to WMCA's SAF early 2025.
8. The MEG discussed the proposed open access rail proposals from the Wrexham, Shropshire and Midlands Railway (WSMR) company. Unlike other train operators, open access companies receive no government subsidy and take full revenue risk. The WSMR proposals would see five trains a day in each direction (Monday-Saturday, four trains a day on Sunday) operate between Wrexham and London Euston via Shrewsbury, Wolverhampton, Walsall, and Nuneaton.
9. The MEG were updated on the new stations studies currently being undertaken by WMRE. This work has seen a long list of potential stations assessed against a range of criteria. Internal approval is being sought for a Programme Business Case application to release funding for further Strategic Outline Case work for those with the strongest case.
10. Finally, the MEG received an update on the West Midlands Rail Programme. The expanded University station opened to the public on 28 January. The planned MEG site visit to the Camp Hill Line stations was postponed due to availability, but the group reviewed progress slides for all three stations. The MEG heard that the timetabling and car parking studies for Aldridge were due to be completed imminently. In relation to Witton station, the MEG were advised that consultants WSP were working on the SOBC.

- **Challenges and Risks**

11. The new WSMR service potentially delivers strong benefits for a number of towns in West Midlands and aligns well with economic, social and environmental objectives. WMRE therefore is supportive of the proposal in principle. However, there are a number of technical issues that still need to be resolved. WMRE is in dialogue with the promoters to find solutions to these issues.

- **Recommendations**

12. It was agreed that the following items would be considered by the MEG at its March meeting: -
 - West Coast 250
 - Update on Network North and Midlands Rail Hub
 - CrossCity Bus
 - Pay As You Go on Rail

Passenger & Road Safety - 1 February 2024 (Councillor David Stanley)

13. The Passenger & Road Safety Member Engagement Group met on 1 February 2024.

- **Highlights & Performance**

14. Passenger Safety:
 - Year to date crime across the public transport network decreased 22% compared to 2022 figures.
 - We now have 12 Transport Safety Officers on the network
 - Against Last month West Midlands force crime has decreased by 6.9%.
 - Bus crime has decreased during the past month with 338 crimes (8.7%).
 - Train crime has increased last month with 159 crimes (16.4%).
 - Metro crime increased with 13 crimes last month (116.7%).
 - Anti-Social Behaviour, the number of incidents reported a decrease from 423 to 415 (1.89%).
 - In November there were 18.9 million passenger journeys were made by bus in that time period and approx. 5.3 million train passenger journeys, and 754,129 tram passenger journeys.
 - On the bus network 0.002% of journeys were impacted by a crime, on the rail network 0.003% were impacted, and on the Metro 0.002% of journeys were impacted.

Road Safety:

15. Darren Divall stated that the first part of the partnership delivered the refreshed regional road safety strategy 2023 – 2030, with a link in the slides to the strategy. The strategy was launched 15th Sept 2023, with the next step now to launch the action plan which currently has 50 actions spread across the principles of the safe system. The strategy will support the broader transport policy.

16. Darren Divall stated that there is no date set in stone for vision zero, when we look at London and Leeds who have a date set 2041 the stats currently show they are going in the wrong direction, with the concern of putting a date and not achieving it will only lead the plan to be discredited.

- **Challenges & Risks**

17. There were no noted challenges and risks this meeting.

- **Recommendations**

18. Councillor Hyatt recommended improved communications be made with Local Authority Comms leads for future events such as Time to Talk which was held in Wolverhampton recently. Action noted by Kerry Blakeman and closed.

19. The next meeting of the Passenger & Road Safety MEG is to be confirmed.

Air Quality, Congestion & Environmental Impact - 30 January 2024
(Councillor Ian Ward)

20. The Air Quality, Congestion & Environmental Impact MEG met on Tuesday 30 January.

- **Highlights & Performance**

21. The MEG considered the position of Public Health England in promoting active travel. This related to the discussion of walking and cycling schemes at TDOSC on 22 January, following Dr Emma Ferranti's air quality and green infrastructure presentation.

22. Public Health England's position promoting walking and cycling in England is set out in its 2018 report "Cycling and Walking for Individual and Population Health Benefits".

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5bf41840e5274a2af47c464e/Cycling_and_walking_for_individual_and_population_health_benefits.pdf

23. This includes the point that "the evidence is that the health benefits of walking and cycling outweigh any potential health risks and harms – for example from injury or pollution."

24. The meeting also considered:

- Presentations from the University of Birmingham WM-Air Project:

- i. an overview of source apportionment of PM2.5 in the West Midlands

- ii. the impact on air quality of lowering motorway speed limits in the West Midlands
- iii. the impact on air quality of bus fleet electrification

- Update on DEFRA review of bus retrofitting programme

- The role of hydrogen for buses and the wider transport sector, including an update on the ZEBRA funding bid. Expert speakers will be invited to a future meeting of the MEG on the role of hydrogen in the transport sector.

- **Challenges & Risks**

25. Challenges of improving bus vehicle fleet emissions and emissions from motorway traffic were considered.

- **Recommendations**

26. A report will be taken to TDOSC on 22 March with an update on the ZEBRA hydrogen bus funding bid.

The MEG recommended that TDOSC urge TfWM and bus operators to accelerate the transition to a zero emission bus fleet in the West Midlands.

The MEG will also seek to engage National Highways to consider the issues related to reducing 70 mph motorway speed limits in the West Midlands. This is in relation to the 2023 WMCA regional air quality framework action “TRN15 Speed limit reduction (or dynamic speed limits) on high-speed roads”.

27. The next meeting of the MEG will be held on 21 March 2024.

Finance & Performance – 16 January (Councillor Pervez Akhtar)

28. The Finance & Performance MEG met on Tuesday 16 January. This meeting focussed on year to date financial position, 24/25 budget update and information on proposed changes to ENCTS reimbursement by HMG for 24/25.

- **Highlights & Performance**

29. Year to date revenue performance continued to perform to expectations with the year to date position to 30 November showing a £2.7m surplus, £2.2m favourable to budget. The reasons for these were noted as timing variances and staff vacancies.

30. It was noted £2m of the 23/24 efficiency target (£3m) has been delivered year to date with the remaining £1m to be delivered over the remainder of the year.

31. The revenue position for the full year quarter 2 forecast was a surplus of £1.3m, which is an improvement on the previous forecast where a balanced budget was being anticipated.
 32. The year to date capital expenditure position was noted to be behind budget by £60.8m for internally delivered schemes and £53m for externally delivered schemes.
 33. Within internally delivered schemes, the variances were across the entire programme, but the most significant were within Metro (£38.5m), Rail (£7.9m), Data and Digital (£4.0m) and Bus (£3.5m). Further detail on the specific schemes causing significant variation was given.
 34. The 2024/25 draft budget was approved by WMCA Board for consultation at 12th January meeting. This includes an assumption of a 3% increase in the transport levy giving an additional £3.5m of transport funding. £24.9m of Network Stability Fund (total £250m over 5 years) to be utilised to fund ongoing transport operations.
 35. Final budget will be presented at 9 February WMCA Board meeting for approval to meet statutory deadlines including issue of levy letters to Local Authorities.
 36. It was explained that the DfT is currently updating its model for future ENCTS reimbursement to providers with the latest target date for implementation being April 2024. It has been suggested that this will on average increase reimbursements to providers by an average of 11% but with a larger expected impact in urban areas.
 37. The revised model has been released and is currently being reviewed by WMCA technical teams.
 38. WMCA has always been an active participant in discussions with DfT about ENCTS payment methodology and will continue to provide any feedback as necessary on the new model to ensure it remains a sound tool to determine reimbursement in the future.
- **Challenges & Risks**
39. It was noted that the financial impact of the ENCTS reimbursement change was still to be determined but at this stage it was anticipated that it could be funded from existing resources. Updates would be provided to members when information was available.
 40. The ongoing challenges around a sustainable funding solution for transport were noted.

- **Recommendations**

None

41. The next meeting of the MEG will be held on 19 March 2024.

Passenger First – 7th February 2024 (Councillor Carol Hyatt)

- **Highlights & Performance**

42. This was the final meeting of the Passenger First Member Engagement Group and the following items were discussed:

- Communications
- Network Planning for January 2025 Bus Network
- Real Time Information
- Customer Services
- West Midlands Cycle Hire Scheme and E-Scooters
- An overview of operation of Air Quality MEG

43. During the meeting Officers extended an invitation to all Members to visit the Regional Transport Coordination Centre (RTCC) at 16 Summer Lane to learn about the value of this facility and the role it plays in communicating disruption information, invitations will be sent out once a date is confirmed.

44. Following on from a previous agenda item, it was also noted that Tilly from Crafty Gardeners is to visit the Ring & Ride booking centre, sharing best ways of communicating with learning disabled adults with the staff.

45. Due to the proximity of the meeting to the February TDOSC a full report will be brought to the additional TDOSC meeting on 18th March 2024.

- **Challenges & Risks**

46. To be included in the next update.

- **Recommendations**

47. A report on customer services to be brought as a standing item to each future meeting.

An update on Community Engagement be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

That the proposed visit to the RTCC takes place on the date of the next TDOSC (18th March 2024)

48. This was the final meeting of the Passenger First MEG for 2023/24.

Sustainability & Active Travel – 23 January 2024 (Councillor Martin McCarthy)

49. The Sustainability and Active Travel MEG met on Tuesday 23 January.
- **Highlights & Performance**
50. The MEG received presentations from Emma Crowton, Behaviour Change Manager, TfWM on Sustainable Travel to School, and Christopher Brown, Senior Future Mobility Developer, TfWM on Mobility Hubs & Supporting Net-Zero Targets by Reducing Car Travel.
51. The **Sustainable Travel to School** presentation explored how we are encouraging the use of Active Travel Infrastructure, which is known as Activation or Travel Behaviour Change specifically around schools.
52. The Living Streets Walk to School Programme is funded by Active Travel England (ATE) and is in response to the second cycling and walking investment strategy which sets out the government’s ambition for walking and cycling until 2025. The ambition is to make cycling and walking a natural choice for shorter journeys or as part of a longer journey by 2024, with a target to increase the percentage of children who usually walk to school from 49% (2014) to 55% in 2025.
53. The Walk to School Programme supports primary aged children and families to walk to school. In this academic year, Living Streets will be working with at least 114 primary schools across the West Midlands region to encourage and promote walking to school. The Living Streets team are eager to recruit new schools; schools within the region have the opportunity to be recruited through liaising with TfWM, as well as other methods, such as [interest forms online](#), media campaigns and newsletters.
54. The presentation introduced members to Mini-Street Reviews, where Living Streets and Local Authorities work with schools to undertake class-based street audits with children, allowing them to identify barriers of walking to school such as blocked pathways and parking on zig-zag lines. An approach to tackle this was seen in Walsall where there is currently a trial of CCTV cameras to enforce poor driver behaviour on zig-zag lines outside school grounds.
55. The **Mobility Hubs & Supporting Net-Zero Targets by Reducing Car Travel** presentation was based on Local Travel Points – an innovative transport intervention, which has seen success in cities across Europe and increasingly within the UK also. Local Travel Points bring together a range of transport and community services to ensure they are where the community need them to be, such as transport interchanges.

56. Local Travel Points are green public spaces that bring together everything the community require to get from A to B, sometimes avoiding the need to travel at all. This includes shared micromobility schemes, such as West Midlands Cycle Hire, helping residents travel actively by providing local services such as bike storage and social space, and car clubs for when cars are needed, such as EV charging ports and by-the-hour rental services.
57. The pilot project includes a mini-network of Local Travel Points in Halesowen. The current hubs for the pilot are: Andrew Road, Huntingtree Park and Cross Street. In terms of future hubs, the project team are still at SOBC stage, therefore, specific locations have not yet been set out. However, the team are exploring different use cases for intervention in various areas with a priority for areas of high car-dependence.

- **Challenges & Risks**

58. **Sustainable Travel to School.** Members queried what approach is taken by enforcement agencies in terms of poor driver behaviour on zig-zag lines. This is reliant on resources available within Local Authorities to enforce the legal restrictions. Members added that a deterrent is required to tackle poor driver behaviour on school streets. Members agreed we need to make our school streets safer by addressing the parking issues that often divert disabled chair and buggy users onto the road. Typically, pavement parking and delivery vehicles cause such issues.
59. Members raised concerns on the lack of school take-up as compared to the number of schools within the West Midlands area. Members were reminded that it has only been approximately three months since the start of the academic year, which could be a factor in the numbers, however, a challenge was identified of a lack of school resource.
60. **Local Travel Points.** Problems to solve were identified as the share of UK carbon emissions from transport is 26%. This highlights that transport is an unignorable aspect of our journey towards net-zero and tackling the climate emergency. 7 in 10 trips between one and two miles taken by car. Factors associated with this include air pollution from trips being taken by conventional fuel vehicles. 85% share of trips in the morning peak are not between our strategic centres. There is a lot of traffic and trip demand, going to and from destinations which are not well-served by the conventional transport system.
61. Members raised concerns about the location of the Local Travel Point pilot project on Cross Street, Halesowen. This may appeal to the wrong audience and transform into an outdoor youth club, rather than the intended focus, increasing the risk of anti-social behaviour.

- **Recommendations**

62. Members to put forward schools that may benefit from the Living Streets Walk to School Programme.

Members identified similarities with Mobility Hubs in the Netherlands. They recommended that TfWM use real photography of similar schemes to reinforce that Mobility Hubs can be a reality in the future.

One member recommended considering a location for a future Local Travel Point in a specific ward and has asked for feedback on the request. Within the location, a transport study has been undertaken by specialist planners and outcomes have been shared with TfWM.

The Chair recommended that any Local Travel Point planning application should reflect Biodiversity Net Gain requirements.

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Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

| Title of Report | Date of Meeting | Employee to Contact | Confidential |
|---|------------------|---------------------------|--------------|
| <p>Deeper Devolution Deal Transport Implementation Plan To review progress being made on the Deeper Devolution Deal Transport Implementation and to make any further recommendations to the WMCA Board.</p> | 26 February 2024 | Adam Harrison | No |
| <p>Park & Ride Estates To receive an overview on the Park & Ride Estates programme and to make any further recommendations to the WMCA Board.</p> | 26 February 2024 | Pete Bond Babs Coombes | No |
| <p>Public Transport Real Time Information (RTI) System Improvements To receive an update on progress to improve customer experience and to review and comment on a draft communications plan which is intended to inform travellers of the improvements being made and what they can expect to see over the coming months and years.</p> | 26 February 2024 | Mike Waters | No |

| Title of Report | Date of Meeting | Employee to Contact | Confidential |
|--|------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| <p>Member Engagement Groups - Progress To consider the performance, challenges and risks discussed as part of each Member Engagement Group and to make any further recommendations to the WMCA Board.</p> | 26 February 2024 | Janna Simpson | No |
| <p>HS2 Announcements and Funding of Network North Projects An update report on funding allocated to Network North projects, any funding gap for these projects based on previous funding assumptions. The funding allocated to the Midlands Rail Hub and whether any additional projects were to be include in this in the absence of the HS2 northern leg.</p> | 18 March 2024 | Tom Painter | No |
| <p>Regional Road Safety Strategy Action Plan Consultation on the draft Regional Road Safety Action Plan prior to its formal approval by WMCA Board and to make any further recommendations to the WMCA Board.</p> | 18 March 2024 | Darren Divall | No |
| <p>Capital Performance To consider the latest performance of the Capital Programme, and to make any recommendations to the WMCA Board.</p> | 18 March 2024 | Jenni MacKenzie | No |
| <p>Member Engagement Groups - Progress To consider the performance, challenges and risks discussed as part of each Member Engagement Group and to make any further recommendations to the WMCA Board.</p> | 18 March 2024 | Janna Simpson | No |

| Title of Report | Date of Meeting | Employee to Contact | Confidential |
|---|-----------------|---------------------------|--------------|
| <p>Pre-Decision: Future Bus Delivery Options To review the franchising assessment and to make any further recommendations to the WMCA Board to help inform a decision as to whether the Authority should progress further to audit and consultation.</p> | July 2024 | Pete Bond Jon Hayes | No |
| <p>Pre-Decision: West Midlands Ring & Ride and Demand Response Transport Service To report on the proposed outcome of the introduction of the revised target operating model of the West Midlands Ring & Ride and Demand Responsive Transport Service prior to WMCA Board.</p> | July 2024 | John Hayes Steve Hayes | No |
| <p>Draft Safer Travel Plan 2024 – 2027 To consider the draft Safer Travel Plan prior to its publication in the Autumn 2024, and to make any further recommendations to the WMCA Board.</p> | July 2024 | Kerry Blakeman | No |
| <p>Deeper Devolution Deal Transport Implementation Plan update To review progress being made on the Deeper Devolution Deal Transport Implementation and to make any further recommendations to the WMCA Board.</p> | July 2024 | Adam Harrison | No |
| <p>Member Engagement Groups -Progress</p> | September 2024 | Janna Simpson | No |

| Title of Report | Date of Meeting | Employee to Contact | Confidential |
|--|-----------------|--------------------------------|--------------|
| To consider the performance, challenges and risks discussed as part of each Member Engagement Group and to make any further recommendations to the WMCA Board. | | | |
| Transport Policy & Delivery Workshop A workshop to help prepare the committee for the forthcoming Q&A on transport policy and delivery related matters. | October 2024 | Pete Bond Lyndsey Roberts | |
| Q&A: Portfolio Lead Member for Transport (Transport Policy and Delivery Matters) A Q&A with the Portfolio Lead for Transport-on-transport policy and delivery related matters. | October 2024 | Pete Bond Lyndsey Roberts | No |
| Budget Workshop: Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee A joint Overview & Scrutiny workshop to prepare members from Transport Delivery Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Overview & Scrutiny Committee for the forthcoming Mayoral Q&A | December 2024 | Linda Horne Lyndsey Roberts | No |
| Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee: Mayoral Q&A - Proposed Draft Budget A Q&A with the Mayor and Portfolio Lead for Finance on the proposed draft budget. | December 2024 | Linda Horne Lyndsey Roberts | No |
| Member Engagement Groups - Progress | December 2024 | Janna Simpson | No |

| Title of Report | Date of Meeting | Employee to Contact | Confidential |
|--|-----------------|---------------------|--------------|
| To consider the performance, challenges and risks discussed as part of each Member Engagement Group and to make any further recommendations to the WMCA Board. | | | |
| Member Engagement Groups - Progress To consider the performance, challenges and risks discussed as part of each Member Engagement Group and to make any further recommendations to the WMCA Board. | January 2025 | Janna Simpson | No |
| Member Engagement Groups - Progress To consider the performance, challenges and risks discussed as part of each Member Engagement Group and to make any further recommendations to the WMCA Board. | February 2025 | Janna Simpson | No |
| Deeper Devolution Deal Transport Implementation Plan To review progress being made on the Deeper Devolution Deal Transport Implementation and to make any further recommendations to the WMCA Board. | February 2025 | Adam Harrison | No |
| Member Engagement Groups - Progress To consider the performance, challenges and risks discussed as part of each Member Engagement Group and to make any further recommendations to the WMCA Board. | March 2025 | Janna Simpson | No |

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West Midlands Combined Authority

Forward Plan

Forthcoming key decisions

| Title of key decision: | Decision to be taken by and date: | Open or Exempt: | Portfolio Lead | Employee to contact: |
|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------|--|--|
| WMCA Financial Monitoring Report - March 2024 To update on the latest financial position | WMCA Board 15 March 2024 | Open | Councillor Bob Sleigh Deputy Mayor | Beverly Sullivan, Sally Truman Financial Planning and Coordination Manager, Lead Financial Planning Accountant |
| Investment Zone Gateway Ratification / Investment & Delivery Plan To consider updates on Gateway Ratification and the Investment & Delivery Plan. | WMCA Board 15 March 2024 | Open | Councillor Stephen Simkins Portfolio Lead for Economy & Innovation | Steve Bowyer Partnerships and Engagement Strategic Lead |
| Investment Zone Finance & Funding Plan (including Business Rates Retention Memorandum of Understanding) To approve the Finance & Funding Plan and Business Rates Retention memorandum of understanding. | WMCA Board 15 March 2024 | Open | Councillor Stephen Simkins Portfolio Lead for Economy & Innovation | Carl Pearson Head of Major Funding |
| Single Settlement Memorandum of Understanding To consider the ratification of the Single Settlement Memorandum of Understanding. | WMCA Board 15 March 2024 | Open | Councillor Sharon Thompson Portfolio Lead for Levelling Up / Devolution | Jonathan Gibson Head of Policy & Public Affairs |
| Black Country Innovative Manufacturing Organisation To consider the latest BCIMO update. | WMCA Board 15 March 2024 | Open | Councillor Bob Sleigh Portfolio Lead for Finance | Linda Horne Executive Director of Finance & Business Hub |

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|--|-----------------------------|------|---|---|
| <p>Skills Funding To agree delegations for the commissioning of skills funding.</p> | WMCA Board 15 March 2024 | Open | Councillor George Duggins Portfolio Lead for Skills & Productivity | Dr. Fiona Aldridge Head of Insight & Intelligence |
| <p>Penalty Fares for Midland Metro Following public consultation, to agree a new penalty fare amount and to consider moving to a proposed two-tier penalty structure, where the fee amount will reduce for early payment.</p> | WMCA Board 15 March 2024 | Open | Councillor Mike Bird Portfolio Lead for Transport | Chris Hopkinson Owner Representative - West Midlands Metro |
| <p>Cycle Hire Scheme Update To endorse the additional funding requirements to operate the scheme to October 2025.</p> | WMCA Board 15 March 2024 | Open | Councillor Mike Bird Portfolio Lead for Transport | Andrew Thrupp Head of Operational Assets |
| <p>Zero Emission Bus Regional Area (ZEBRA) Update To provide an update on the latest ZEBRA developments.</p> | WMCA Board 15 March 2024 | Open | Councillor Mike Bird Portfolio Lead for Transport | Pete Bond Director of Integrated Transport Services |
| <p>Bus Service Improvement Plan Additional Funding Allocation To consider additional funding received in respect of BSIP.</p> | WMCA Board 15 March 2024 | Open | Councillor Mike Bird Portfolio Lead for Transport | Adam Lane, Jon Hayes Consultant SPM, Head of Bus |
| <p>Request by Warwick District Council to become a Non-Constituent Authority of WMCA To consider the request submitted by Warwick District Council that it should be granted equivalent status as the non-constituent councils with the right to be represented on the WMCA Board and other boards.</p> | WMCA Board 15 March 2024 | Open | | Julia Cleary Head of Corporate Support & Governance |

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|--|-----------------------------|------|---|--|
| <p>Arrangements for Mayoral Question Time with MPs To agree the arrangements for mayoral question time sessions with the region's MPs.</p> | WMCA Board 15 March 2024 | Open | Andy Street Mayor of the West Midlands | Jonathan Gibson Head of Policy & Public Affairs |
| <p>Private Sector Representation To consider retaining existing private sector representation on WMCA boards until such time as the future Single Settlement governance structure is known.</p> | WMCA Board 15 March 2024 | Open | Councillor Stephen Simkins Portfolio Lead for Economy & Innovation | James Hughes Member Relationship Manager |
| <p>Bus Depot Strategy To consider a new Bus Station Strategy.</p> | WMCA Board 14 June 2024 | Open | Councillor Mike Bird Portfolio Lead for Transport | Ian Shore Asset Delivery Manager |
| <p>Bus Options Report To consider options for the future delivery of the region's bus network.</p> | WMCA Board 19 July 2024 | Open | Councillor Mike Bird Portfolio Lead for Transport | Steven Hayes Head of Network Transformation |
| <p>Key Route Network Review 2023/24 To approve the amended Key Route Network within the WMCA area.</p> | WMCA Board 19 July 2024 | Open | Councillor Mike Bird Portfolio Lead for Transport | Rachel Ing Corridor Manager |

The Forward Plan

This document sets out known 'key decisions' that will be taken by the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) over the coming months.

Forthcoming key decisions are published online to meet the statutory 28 day notification rule for each meeting where a key decision will be taken. Where it has not been possible to meet the 28 day rule for publication of notice of a key decision or an intention to meet in private, the relevant notices will be published as required by legislation as soon as possible.

What is a key decision?

Page
77

A 'key decision' means a decision of the Mayor, WMCA or officer which is likely:

- (a) to result in the WMCA incurring expenditure, making savings or generating income amounting to £1m or more; or
- (b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the area of the WMCA

The report relating to a decision, together with any other documents being considered, will be available five clear working days before the decision is to be taken (unless the documentation contains exempt information).

The forward plan also provides notice of when the WMCA may decide to exclude the press and public during consideration of a particular matter due to the potential for disclosure of confidential or exempt information. The grounds upon which local authorities can exclude the press and public are specified by law and details of the exempt categories are available on request from the Governance Services team (governance.services@wmca.org.uk).

Councillors or members of the public wishing to:

- make a representation about why a matter should be heard in public, or
- submit information to the decision-making body about an item in the forward plan, or
- request details of relevant documents, or
- seek advice about the WMCA's decision-making arrangements,

Page 78

should contact the Governance Services team: governance.services@wmca.org.uk