



Transport Delivery Committee

Date	8 th January 2018
Report Title	Bus Alliance Update
Accountable Director	Steve McAleavy, Director of Transport Services (Interim) Email: Steve.McAleavy@tfwm.org.uk Tel: 0121 214 7452
Accountable employee(s)	Edmund Salt, Network Development Manager Email: Edmund.salt@tfwm.org.uk Tel: 0121 214 7305
Report Considered by	Cllr Hartley, Cllr Akhtar, Cllr Hanif, Cllr Stanley: Putting Passengers First

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Transport Delivery Committee is recommended:

1. To note the content of the report and current status of the West Midlands Bus Alliance.

Purpose of Report

1. To report matters relating to the governance, operation, delivery and performance of the West Midlands Bus Alliance.

West Midlands Bus Alliance

2. Revisions to the West Midlands Bus Alliance objectives and 50 deliverables were approved by TDC on 4th September 2017. There was a public facing signing event held at the Coach and Bus Expo in Birmingham on 5th October 2017, where the Mayor and all Alliance partners, formally signed up to the revised objectives and commitments.
3. To support the delivery of the revised objectives and deliverables, the Alliance governance and membership of the Board has been reviewed. The membership and Terms of Reference of the Board has been amended with the Mayor Andy Street and WMCA Portfolio Holder for Transport, Cllr Roger Lawrence included, alongside Cllr K Hartley representing the Transport Delivery Committee on behalf of Cllr R Worrall. The Mayor and WMCA Portfolio Holder for Transport are able to nominate an appropriate representative but retain the right to attend as is seen appropriate. The meeting dates of the Alliance Board in 2018 have been set as 21st February, 16th May, 15th August and 21st November. The chair of the Bus Alliance Board continues to be Linda McCord from Transport Focus.

4. A new Programme Delivery Board will be created, responsible for overseeing the objectives and associated deliverables. This Board will have an accountable lead officer for each of the objectives and associated deliverables, and will manage and report progress on the Alliance deliverables to the Alliance Board quarterly.
5. Sub-groups of the Bus Alliance, to assist in the delivery of the objectives and overall improvement to bus passengers remain, and include the Bus Operators Group, Bus Operators Panel and Bus Alliance Area Partnerships involving local authorities, operators and Transport for West Midlands.

Tackle congestion and make bus journeys quicker

6. Through the West Midlands Bus Alliance, a development budget of £568,000 has been allocated to support the development of bus based highway schemes, focussed on identifying solutions and developing schemes to 'shovel ready' stage for the region's worst performing bus corridors. This funding is a clear indication of the Bus Alliance's commitment to tackling the congestion challenge and, has come from partner contributions of £160,000 from Birmingham City Council, National Express West Midlands (£100,000) and £308,000 by Transport for West Midlands.
7. Knowing our investment priorities and being shovel ready has already borne significant benefit; not only in securing the partner contributions detailed above but in securing significant capital funding - totalling over £5.7 million of investment for scheme delivery since the start of 2017 alone:
 - National Productivity Investment Fund 1 (NPIF): A4124 Willenhall Road traffic signal upgrade with selective vehicle detection - £500,000
 - NPIF1 – Journey Time Reliability to Birmingham Growth Points - £762,000
 - NPIF1 – A34 Stratford Road Growth Corridor – Journey Time Reliability - £685,000
 - South Birmingham Bus Network Review Highway Mitigation Package - £410,000
 - Great Charles Street Queensway Segregated Bus Lanes - £80,000
 - NPIF2 – Birmingham Growth Point Public Transport Package - £3,270,000
8. The successful NPIF2 funding package of £3.27 million will see bus priority delivered in 2018/19 between Harborne, Selly Oak and Birmingham City Centre.

Improve bus emissions standards

9. To improve bus emissions standards, Birmingham City Council have approved a pilot scheme which will see at least 20 new cleaner, zero emission hydrogen-fuelled buses take to Birmingham's roads. The new vehicles will be delivered by March 2019, with £13.4million of funding for the pilot agreed.
10. WMCA and Coventry City Council have submitted two separate applications to the Clean Bus Technology Fund 2017-2019, to retrofit 468 vehicles to Euro VI standard. The WMCA application is for £3 million with £2.920 million match-funding from five operators. The Coventry City Council application is for £1.5m, with £240,500 match-funding from National Express Coventry. An announcement is expected in January 2018, and if successful the vehicles will be retrofitted by 31 March 2019.

11. Solihull Advanced Quality Partnership Scheme (AQPS) came into operation on Sunday 26th November 2017. This is the first new AQPS to be implemented in the country under the new Bus Services Act 2017 and includes Euro VI emission standards by 2021. Work is underway to review and implement an updated Birmingham City Centre AQPS and a new Wolverhampton AQPS in 2018.

Make bus journeys better value

12. From September 2017, apprentices and trainees aged 18 or under can get half price travel on the region's bus network under a scheme implemented by TfWM. The scheme will be subsidised by TfWM and run on a trial basis for 12 months, helping make bus travel more attractive for young people.
13. National Express West Midlands, in partnership with TfWM, is to trial a weekday pre-9.30am £1 single ticket valid for concessionary pass holders. Concessionary travel is currently available after 9.30am on a weekday, with full fares required before this time.
14. Diamond Bus has introduced an Adult City Hop ticket for just a £1 on its services 16, 16W and 50, for any journey within the Birmingham Ring Road. This ticket offer can be purchased using any payment including contactless payment via its new ticket machines.

Make it easier to buy a ticket

15. National Express West Midlands will have completed the roll-out of new state-of-the-art contactless ticket machines to all of its 1,500 buses by the end of February 2018. The new machines are now live on buses from Coventry, Wolverhampton, Perry Barr and Bordesley Green depots. It will make journeys quicker and easier for passengers, as they will spend less time buying a ticket and have more ways to pay.
16. Diamond Bus has invested £600,000 in new ticket machines, equipped with the latest technology, to offer passengers a range of purchasing options including contactless payment. As well as offering customers a more convenient way to pay, the new technology will speed up bus journey times because passengers will spend less time buying a ticket when they board. The new ticket machines are also equipped with the latest in tracking and communications; live real time information feeds can now be reported back to depot traffic offices. This means the operator will be able to report delays much more accurately to customers and liaise easily with drivers to identify and rectify problems much more quickly.

Shape the bus network to deliver economic growth

17. The Bus Alliance is committed to delivering Network Development Plans (NDPs) for the region; in order to ensure that the bus network continues to meet local needs and is able to adapt to future growth opportunities and challenges. Eight area-based NDPs are being developed and each is informed and supported by a comprehensive evidence and data-led review. Each NDP will contain a Delivery Plan, setting out the local bus improvements (i.e. vehicle standards and emissions, bus infrastructure, service quality, development planning, network resilience and congestion mitigation) to be delivered at specified timeframes. A Birmingham City Centre NDP and Coventry NDP are in final

draft, subject to the Bus Alliance Board approval. A Dudley NDP and South/West Birmingham NDP are in development. The remaining 4 NDPs are programmed for development in 2018/19. These include Walsall & Wolverhampton, Sandwell, North Birmingham and East Birmingham & Solihull.

18. National Express West Midlands is seeking further views in relation to their South Birmingham bus network, further to the 5,000 responses received via the public consultation that was undertaken over the summer 2017. They opened public consultation on the 27th November 2017, regarding services in this part of the network. National Express is looking to provide faster, more reliable, and more punctual journeys across this part of the network. They are seeking views on some of the ideas that have emerged previously, and other thoughts around a redesigned bus network.
19. The Bus Alliance Board agreed that a 'Patronage Task and Finish Group' is created, to identify what initiatives could be put into place to grow patronage, locations where these would have the most impact and to initiate schemes with the sole aim of growing fare-paying passenger numbers. The first meeting of this group was held on 12th September 2017. The group will report back to the Bus Alliance Board in 2018, with a clear understanding of the local factors and interventions that most impact on patronage, how these can be influenced, and if/how these can be effectively replicated across the network.

Make it more pleasant to travel by bus

20. National Express West Midlands has spent £10 million on 38 brand new top-specification buses for routes through Harborne. The Platinum double deckers are kitted out with comfier seats, extra leg room, free wifi and USB charge points, as well as new ticket machines, which react quicker than the older ones to speed up bus boarding times. The new vehicles will be placed on the routes in batches from December 2017.

Financial Implications

21. There are no direct financial implications as a result of this update report. Any costs incurred or support provided by TfWM from undertaking activity referred to in this report will need to be met from within agreed overall funding and resources.

Legal Implications

22. This report is for information only and there are no new new legal implications arising.

Equality Implications

23. This report is for information only and there are no new equality implications.