



## TRANSPORT DELIVERY COMMITTEE

<b>Date</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> April 2018
<b>Report title</b>	Passenger information update
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<b>Report has been considered by</b>	Cllr. Kath Hartley

**Recommendation(s) for action or decision:**

**The Transport Delivery Committee is recommended to:**

1. Note the activities completed with respect to passenger information and the further progress being made towards all bus operator real-time information.

## **1.0 Purpose**

1.1 This report provides an update on the passenger information activities of Transport for West Midlands for October 2017 to February 2018.

## **2.0 Overview of passenger information activity**

2.1 Over the last period the team have processed and provided information to support the following:

- Changes to routes and timetables across all information outputs for Network Stability Periods (NSP) 110, 111 and 112
- Changes to timetables for online, real time information systems and third party feeds for Christmas Eve, Boxing Day, Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup>- Friday 29<sup>th</sup> December, New Year's Eve, New Year's Day and Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> – Friday 5<sup>th</sup> January
- Chinese New Year event 18<sup>th</sup> February 2018
- Freedom of the City event 24<sup>th</sup> February 2018
- Assessing the impact of over 400 diversions and advising passengers accordingly through real time information screens, Twitter, journey planner, disruption web pages and bus stop notices in Birmingham City Centre as required.

## **3.0 Partnership working**

3.1 TfWM have continued to work closely with our partners in the West Midlands Region (Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Stoke and Telford) and they have agreed to continue to use our services in order to maintain a common database for bus services in 2018/19. This allows TfWM to provide timetables and journey planning for the entire region and pass this onto the national transport data set where it is used to provide open data and feeds into national bus journey planners and mobile app providers.

3.2 The Bus Services Act (2017) requires the release of open data on routes, timetables, real time information and fares in a specific format and the Department for Transport have held workshops and visited TfWM and other Local Authorities in the region to understand how this might be achieved and as a region we have responded with a unified voice. A validation session for the Discovery phase was presented in February and again representatives from the West Midlands region attended and inputted into the session.

3.3 There are four items within the Bus Alliance deliverables that the Information team are helping to deliver. These are:

26. From January 2018, we will extend and co-ordinate route-specific colours to buses, bus stops and information.

27. We will develop and support journey planning apps to make it easier to plan your journey.

32. We will ensure every bus is tracked and provides real time information at suitably equipped bus stops, on apps and online.

33. We will improve the accuracy of real time displays at bus stops and produce monthly KPI reports.

Where there has been progress towards delivery of these in the last six months an update is included later in this report. Through the Bus Alliance we are also working with the Passenger

Champions to identify and make improvements to information products and to ensure what we deliver is useful to customers.

#### 4.0 Bus Registration changes

4.1 Bus service registrations are the main catalyst for the updating of all passenger information including printed and digital passenger information. Through Bus Operators Group the dates on which operators are encouraged to coincide any changes to services are agreed and termed “Network stability periods” (NSPs). These exist in order to reduce the amount of change to printed passenger information (and therefore minimise costs) but more importantly to deliver a more stable network to the passenger. In general, bus operators are required to register changes 56 days ahead. However if the period for the change includes a Bank holiday the process is different and the operator may make changes at short notice. Therefore for the Christmas period, the detail regarding service changes was only supplied to TfWM at the start of December. At stop printed information and timetable leaflets are not updated for holiday periods but journey planning and real time systems are, so this is actually the busiest time of year in terms of data updates. Figure 1 shows the number of registrations processed and the number of other edits to services carried out by the team by month for the last six months.

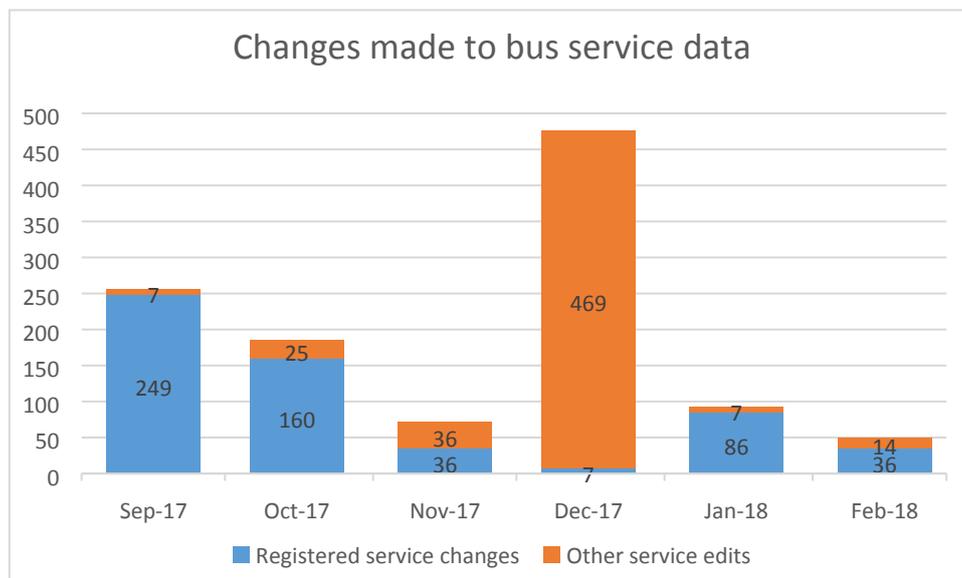


Figure 1

#### 5.0 Printed passenger information

5.1 Figure 2 shows the number of bus stop flags that were produced and positioned for each NSP that occurred over this period.

Flags			
Target Production	651	69	47
Actual production	651	69	47
% Production	100.00	100.00	100.00

Figure 2

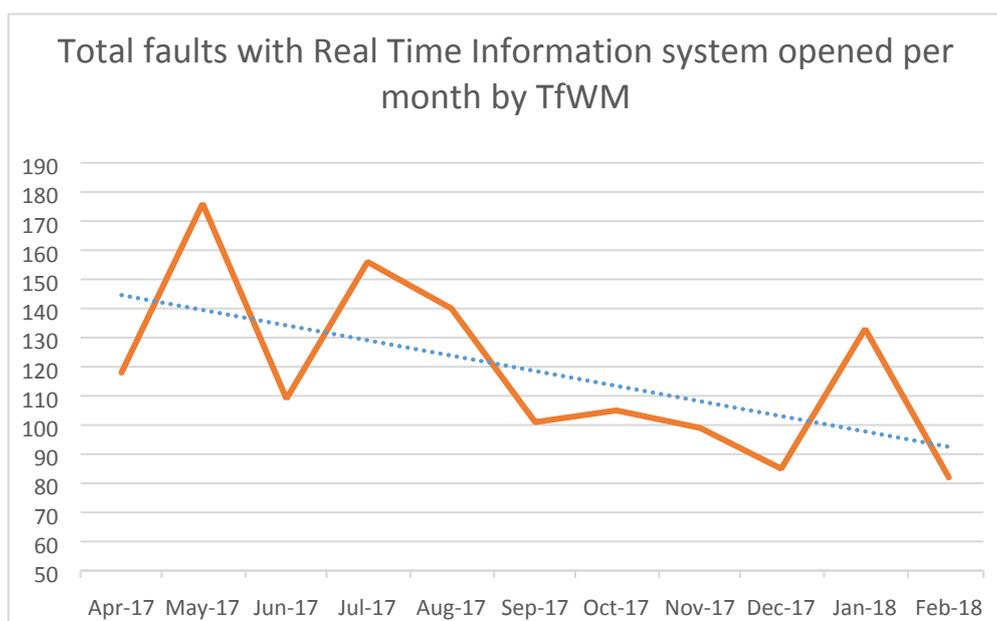
5.2 Figure 3 shows that for the registrations received, the quantity of timetable posters available within the agreed timeliness limits exceeded the 95% target for each NSP.

<b>Timetable posters</b>	<b>NSP 110 (22/10/17)</b>	<b>NSP 111 (26/11/17)</b>	<b>NSP 112 (07/01/18)</b>
Total number of posters	2884	1090	2193
Percentage positioned by target position date	97.1%	99.8%	96.2%

5.3 Where the information is eligible for re-charge the cost of this information is recovered from bus operators through the passenger information re-charging scheme. Although this scheme was updated in 2016 following approval by this Committee, it is being reviewed again following challenge received from bus operators when proposals to reintroduce recharging for timetable leaflets were presented to them. It is also being reviewed in light of the changes in the Bus Services Act 2017, which outlines that bus operators will be required to provide additional information to that which they provide now, such as real time and fares information.

## 6.0 Digital passenger information update

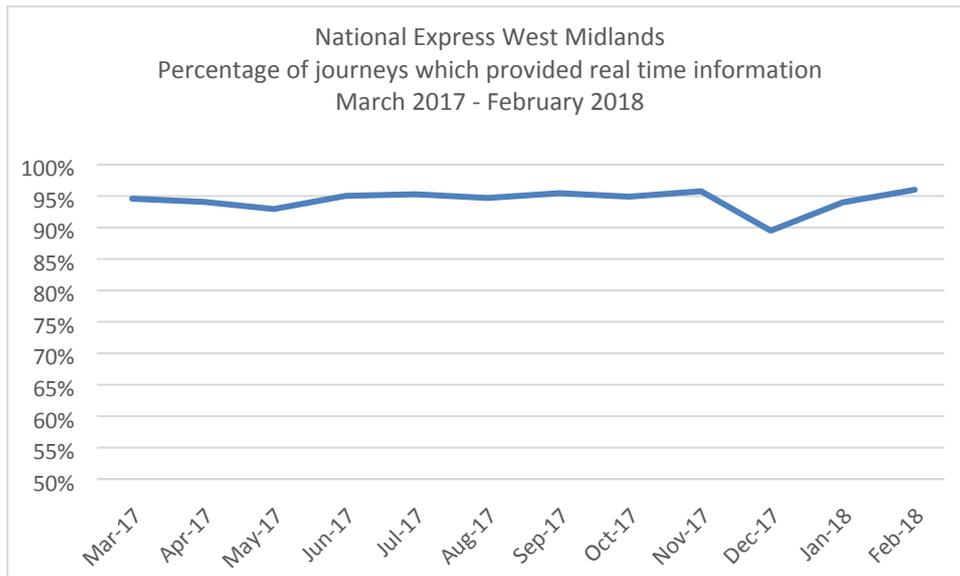
6.1 TfWM continues to seek to improve the accuracy, reliability and availability of real time information across a range of channels. The change in maintenance contracts in 2017 continues to make an impact as can be seen in Figure 3, which shows that the number of faults being raised for either data issues or screens not working correctly, continues to decrease. These faults have been identified either through proactive system monitoring or as reports from WMCA employees, bus operators or members of the public.



**Figure 3**

6.2 Figure 4 below shows the percentage of National Express West Midlands journeys that were provided as real time information. It confirms that the transition to INIT ticket machines for National Express vehicles has gone quite smoothly from an RTI perspective. Tracking of

journeys is approaching 97% on a weekly basis. The dip in December 2017 was a result of the heavy snow and other adverse weather conditions during the month resulting in many journeys being suspended and an issue with the ticket machines on 27 December.



**Figure 4**

- 6.3 Following National Express' progress in maintaining a reliable real-time system, TfWM is working with suppliers and other operators to support them in becoming Real Time providers. Some operators have installed equipment on their vehicles to allow them to be tracked and now need this integrated into TfWM passenger information systems. Working with ITO World TfWM have successfully trialled real time provision with Arriva and Rotala services. Testing of Arriva predictions and enhancements to Rotala data is under way in order to give a comprehensive coverage for these operators. A previous trial with another supplier and one of the Managed Service operators (Banga) has been discontinued due to the plan to upgrade ticket machines.
  
- 6.4 TfWM has further enhanced the customer offer for RTI through ITO World by providing predicted arrivals and departures on Google Maps as well as an API for developers to consume. A second phase of the project with ITO World is currently being agreed. Enhancements will include almost unlimited API access for TfWM and provision of data in GTFS.

## **7.0 Open Real-time Data update**

7.1 TfWM continues to make data open to third parties who may wish to use it, as part of our strategy to get good passenger information into the hands of as many existing and potential customers as possible. These third parties can be mobile applications developers, universities and even the general public. Indeed a project to make it easier for developers to access our timetable and journey planning data through an API is currently underway.

## **8.0 Financial implications**

8.1 There are no direct financial implications as a result of this update report with all TfWM activities being funded within existing budgets.

## **9.0 Legal implications**

9.1 There are no immediate legal implications flowing from the contents of this Report, however this will need to be re-visited as the review of the Passenger Information Recharging Scheme progresses.

## **10.0 Equalities implications**

10.1 No equalities implications regarding proposed recommendations.