



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.