



Transport Delivery Committee

Monday 8 June 2020 at 1.00 pm

Minutes

Present

Councillor Kath Hartley (Chair)	Birmingham City Council
Councillor Richard Worrall (Vice-Chair)	Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Timothy Huxtable (Vice-Chair)	Birmingham City Council
Councillor Pervez Akhtar	Coventry City Council
Councillor Robert Alden	Birmingham City Council
Councillor Mary Locke	Birmingham City Council
Councillor Celia Hibbert	City of Wolverhampton Council
Councillor Les Jones	Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Chaman Lal	Birmingham City Council
Councillor Roger Lawrence	City of Wolverhampton Council
Councillor Ted Richards	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Alan Taylor	Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor David Welsh	Coventry City Council

In Attendance

Councillor Cathy Bayton	Shadow Portfolio Holder for WMCA Business - Dudley MBC
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**Item Title
No.**

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Shaheen Akhtar, Samiya Akhter, Adrian Andrew, Mohammed Fazal and Diana Holl-Allen.

2. Chair's Remarks

(i) WMCA Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committee Review of Transport Governance Report

The Chair reported that she would circulate the report to members that would be considered by the O & S Committee at its meeting on 15 June.

(ii) Dave Reeves- Midlands Bus Company

The Director of Integrated Network Services advised the committee that Dave Reeves, Midlands Bus Company had died of a heart attack last month. It was noted that Mr Reeves had played a key role in created an environment where bus operators worked together prior to the establishment of the Bus Alliance.

3. To note the schedule of meetings for 2020/21

The committee noted the schedule of meetings for 2020/21 as set out below:

20 July
14 September
9 November
11 January 2021
8 February
15 March

All meetings are scheduled from 1.00pm-3.00pm

4. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

5. Action Tracker

The Chair reported that the action pertaining to the Financial Monitoring Report had been discharged.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

6. Correspondence/ Petitions

None submitted.

7. Financial Monitoring Report

The committee considered a report of the Finance Director that set out the financial outturn position for 2019/20 subject to external audit.

Councillor Pervez Akhtar, Lead Member for Finance and Performance outlined the key areas within the report.

In relation to comments regarding the loss of revenue as a result of Covid-19, the Financial Services Manager, Louise Cowen reported that this was being closely monitored on a daily basis and consideration would be given to re-prioritising projects if no Government funding was available. The Managing Director TfWM, Laura Shoaf, added that the loss of revenue funding from all sources was significant and referred to the loss of revenue from Metro operations that was supported by the DfT up until August. She added that the WMCA/TfWM was continuing to negotiate with Government to provide further funding.

Resolved.

1. That the net revenue expenditure final outturn position for the 2019/20 financial year after contributions to earmarked reserves shows a minor adverse variance of £0.020m compared to budget and the final outturn position before contributions to earmarked reserves was a £1.274m favourable variance against forecast and a £3.839m favourable variance against budget be noted and

2. That the total capital expenditure to the end of March 2020 for the overall transport programme was £130.6 million, which was £72.0m below the budget of £202.6m and the actual costs were marginally below (£4m) the annual forecast of £134.6m be noted.

8. Capital Programme Delivery Monitoring Report

The committee considered a report of the Director of Development and Delivery that provided a progress monitoring update on the approved TfWM 2020/21 programmes and projects.

Councillor Pervez Akhtar, Lead Member for Finance and Performance, outlined key highlights within the report.

Resolved:

1. That the achievements since the March meeting of the committee be noted;
2. That progress of the deliverables and the outturn of 2019/20 Capital Programme be noted and
3. That variations to the baseline programme as highlighted in paragraph 4 of the report be noted.

9. 2022 Commonwealth Games Transport Delivery Update

The committee considered a report of the Director of Network Resilience that provided an update on the progress of delivery for the Integrated Transport Programme for the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games.

The Director of Network Resilience, Anne Shaw outlined key areas of the report. This included an overview of the operations workstream, regional and spectator transport operations and transport infrastructure projects. In relation to the impacts of Covid-19 on the Integrated Transport Programme, it was noted that these are currently being assessed and further details on the workstreams would be provided later in the year.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

10. Transport Network and Covid-19

The Managing Director, Laura Shoaf reported on the impact of Covid-19 on the transport network during the last 12 weeks and the steps being taken in the short-term and long-term to recover the transport network and the challenges to overcome.

The committee had also received various briefing notes on the impact of Covid-19 on the bus network, the implications of social distancing for transport modes/ transport infrastructure and the findings from travel surveys taken during the current crisis.

The Managing Director also reported on the opportunities for the West Midlands to obtain funding from the Government's emergency Active Travel Fund and TfWM's involvement in the E-Scooter trials in the coming months.

The Managing Director expressed her appreciation to transport officers within TfWM and local authorities for their work in looking to rebuild the transport network.

In relation to the travel survey results, the Chair asked for the committee to be advised of the geographical spread of the respondents as she was interested in learning where people lived.

Resolved: That the contents of the briefing notes and verbal update be noted.

11. Bus Recovery Plan

The committee received a presentation from the Head of Network Delivery, Jon Hayes on the Bus Network Covid-19 Recovery Plan.

The presentation outlined the current position with regards to the bus network, the 4 key principles of the bus recovery plan and the key milestones.

The Head of Network Delivery provided an update with regards to the Government mandatory requirement to wear face coverings on public transport from 15 June and how this would be implemented across the bus network working with operators.

Councillor Alden asked that TfWM give consideration to the disposal of face coverings and gloves on buses and at its sites including notices/ signage at appropriate locations and for the committee to be kept informed of progress on this matter.

The Head of Network Delivery undertook to keep members updated on the matter and also outlined the enhanced cleaning regime that has been put in place by TfWM and bus operators following an enquiry from Councillor Jones.

The Chair thanked Jon Hayes for his informative presentation.

Resolved: That the presentation be noted.

12. Safer Travel Update

The committee considered a report of the Head of Safety, Security and Emergency Planning that provided an update on the performance and operations of the Safer Travel Partnership including their recent work.

The Head of Safety, Security and Emergency Planning, Mark Babington highlighted key areas in the report. This included an update on performance, public transport crime analysis, an update on the safer travel plan and Covid-19 and policing.

In relation to an enquiry from Councillor Lal as to whether the committee could receive a breakdown of the crime statistics, the Head of Safety, Security and Emergency Planning advised that he could provide this data to members on a bi-monthly basis via Councillor Holl-Allen, Lead Member for Safe and Sustainable Travel.

In relation to the recently awarded security contract that would provide for a private company (Man Commercial Protection Ltd) to have enforcement powers on the public transport network, the Head of Safety, Security and Emergency Planning undertook to provide the committee with a briefing note with further information on the matter by the end of the month.

Resolved:

1. That the details of the report be noted;
2. That the overall current crime trends as referred to in paragraph 3.1-3.3 of the report be noted and
3. That the crime analysis within section 4 of the report be noted.

13. Rail Business Report

The committee considered a report of the Director of Rail that provided an update related to the performance, operation and delivery of rail services in the West Midlands including updates on rail operator partnership agreements and West Midlands Rail Executive.

The Lead Member for Rail and Metro, Councillor Lawrence, introduced the report and highlighted key issues and challenges that would be facing the rail industry and rail operating companies as result of Covid-19.

The Head of Rail Franchising and Partnerships, Tom Painter provided an update on rail patronage since the lockdown and reported on key areas within the report.

In relation to future new stations, referred to in paragraph 7.3.5 of the report and a request from Councillor Alden for the committee to receive further information following the outcome of the DfT bidding process and a request for further information from Councillor Huxtable on the proposed Stratford-Upon-Avon line via Honeybourne, the Head of Rail Franchising and Partnerships reported that he would provide a briefing note to pick-up this matters although he advised with regards to the Stratford-Upon-Line, this scheme at this stage has not been actively promoted by West Midlands Rail Executive.

In relation to the future options being considered for Stourbridge to Brierley Hill following the draft study received from consultants and a request for a briefing note on the subject, the Head of Rail Franchising and Partnerships undertook to refer the matter to TfWM Transport Planning colleagues to take forward.

Resolved: That the contents of the report be noted.

14. Park and Ride Update

The committee considered a report of the Director of Integrated Network Services that provided an impact on park and ride matters within the West Midlands Combined Authority Area and the impacts of Covid-19 on operations and development.

The Head of Park and Ride, Babs Spooner, outlined key areas within the report which included park and ride usage, Longbridge Park and Ride delivery and park and ride development.

Resolved: That the contents of the report be noted.

15. Air Quality, Congestion and Environmental Sustainability Lead Member Reference Group - Impacts of Covid-19

The committee considered a report of the Air Quality, Congestion and Environmental Sustainability Lead Member Reference Group that reported on the impacts of Covid-19 with regards to the work of the group.

The Lead Member for Air Quality, Congestion and Environmental Sustainability Councillor Worrall, introduced the report and highlighted the positive impacts to the environment following a reduction in traffic volumes as a result of the lockdown that was introduced in March.

The Associate Policy Advisor, Jake Thrush, reported that data contained in the report was an extract from a report produced by Birmingham University and he could provide a full copy of the interim report on air quality if required.

Resolved: That the impacts of Covid-19 on air quality, congestion and carbon emissions in the West Midlands and the possible actions that could be taken in light of these impacts be noted.

16. Notices of Motion

The committee considered a motion submitted the Vice-Chair, Councillor Worrall on 27 May 2020.

“West Midlands Transport Delivery Committee welcomes the Government’s announcement of £2 billion national funding for the urgent provision of cycle and walking routes (of which £250m in the current financial year), which is to be spent on main corridors for work journeys to and from major centres of employment.

The TDC expresses its full support and encouragement to TfWM officers working to achieve this in partnership with District Council colleagues, and others, such as the Canals and Rivers Trust, Network Rail, Sustrans, Cycling UK, and other cycling, disability and community organisations.

The TDC further notes Cllr. Worrall’s report, appended to this Notice of Motion, and asks all concerned to do whatever they can to achieve an early, fit-for-purpose, well used, permanent, strategic network of cycling and walking routes to serve the whole of the West Midlands, both for work and recreational purposes.”

Resolved: That the motion be supported.

17. Questions

The committee considered a question submitted by the Vice-Chair, Councillor Worrall on 27 May 2020.

"Given that, for the initial period of lockdown, and in some cases longer, older and disabled users of railcards were not allowed to use, or otherwise have been discouraged from using, train services, would TfWM call upon and lobby National Railcards, view to them agreeing to compensate for the lost discounted rail travel opportunities by extending the validity of existing railcards beyond their current expiry dates by the amount of time lost to would-be users as a result of the Covid-19 restrictions on travel?"

Councillor Worrall advised that following the submission of his question, he would also like to include reference to the young persons' rail card as young people were similarly impacted by Covid-19 travel restrictions.

The Director of Integrated Network Services had submitted the following response:

Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) is supportive of requests by national Railcard holders to extend the validity of Railcards to reflect non-use as a result of Covid-19 travel restrictions.

TfWM's Rail Team has raised this matter directly with the Department for Transport (DfT) to understand what action can be taken to compensate customers. DfT has confirmed it is working with the Rail Delivery Group (RDG), as the owning body for Railcards, to consider options for customers but that no decision has been made as yet. TfWM is seeking an appropriate contact and will then also raise this matter directly with RDG.'

Resolved: That the question and response be noted.

18. Date of Next Meeting -20 July 2020

The meeting ended at 3.27 pm.