



Transport for West Midlands

Response for the Transport Scrutiny Sub-Committee

- 1. Given the current economic situation and the WMCA's financial challenges, existing concessionary travel policies should be maintained in recognition of the wider societal benefits they underpinned.***

TfWM currently administers £80M on concessionary fares - £50M through the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme which is statutory and £30M is through discretionary policies. These discretionary policies have continued largely unchanged to assist around 500,000 people and provide up to 43 million journeys; equating to around 16% of all public transport journeys per annum. Many of the groups supported are disadvantaged and rely heavily on these concessions to access vital opportunities.

The ongoing impact of the pandemic has created further pressures for Local Authority and Combined Authority funding. Therefore, the Strategic Transport Board has commissioned TfWM to undertake a review of the current range of policies and develop options for how we might respond to both increasing funding pressures and ensure that policies are still supporting the appropriate groups of people.

These options include opportunities for efficiencies and joined up practices through 'Total Transport schemes' with our local authorities as well as cuts to our discretionary policies. This review has been shared and discussed with Strategic Transport Board. The review will provide a guide for local authorities when considering the Transport Levy for 2021/22 and the years beyond.

Development of the WMCA's Budget for 2021/22 is yet to conclude but we will do all we can to see what can be done to protect the current support we provide.

I would be happy to discuss the 2021- 22 and onwards budget with the Transport Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

- 2. The Transport Scrutiny Sub-Committee should undertake a scrutiny review of alternative ticketing policies.***

Fares, Payments and Ticketing Technologies

We welcome the support of the Transport Scrutiny Sub-Committee in this work and would be happy for you to contribute in any way.

TfWM is proud to have delivered the largest and most comprehensive smartcard solution in the UK outside London. The Swift card is regularly used by more than 250k residents who undertake over 50m journeys per annum.

In 2019, following extensive research of customer expectations and emerging trends, TfWM set out a new Fares and Payments Strategy to exploit the success of Swift and deliver new and innovative solutions for the residents of the West Midlands. This exciting strategy sets out the following objectives:

- Radical simplification through unifying the fare stage and zonal structure and the removal of niche fare types and the introducing technology;
- Payment innovations that enable customers to achieve the best fare through the use of a bank card, mobile phone or other payment token;
- A revolutionised digital first retail offer where purchase speed and accessibility are constantly improved;
- A fully integrated payment function for Mobility as a Service where access and payment for all transport services is brought together into a single App to provide a viable alternative to car ownership;
- Closer collaboration with Local Authorities, Businesses and transport operators to achieve win-win outcomes;
- A new and improved business and corporate sales solution that makes it easier than ever before to engage with businesses and provides access to mobility packages for employees;
- An evidenced and academic approach to the pricing of fares to generate increased take up whilst enabling operators to maintain profits;
- Intelligent fares information that is fully integrated with wider travel information so that customers are fully aware of the best value fare for them;
- Inclusive fares and payment functions targeted at those customers that need the most support; and
- A brave new experience led approach to marketing and promotion.

TfWM has already made significant progress towards delivering these objectives and through this has cemented its place as the leading Authority for the delivery and development of Fares & Payment solutions for public transport.

Concessionary Fare Schemes from around the UK

All Local Authorities in the England provide the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) which offers free travel on Bus Service for disabled residents and senior citizen aged 66 or over.

The concession is available from 0930 until 2300 Monday to Friday and all day on weekend and Bank Holidays. However, Local Authorities can use local funding to offer enhancements above the ENCTS offer. The table below sets out the concessionary fares enhancements provided by Transport for West Midlands and comparable Urban Transport Authorities:

Transport Authority	Age Enhancements	ENCTS Mode Enhancements	ENCTS Time based Enhancements
Transport for West Midlands	Children age 5 to 15 and young adults aged 16 to 18 can travel all day for half fare on buses, trains and trams.	Senior Citizens and disabled residents can travel on train and trams as well as local buses.	Senior Citizens and disabled residents can travel for free beyond the 2300 hours limit of the ENCTS scheme. Disabled residents age 18 and under can travel for free before 0930 Monday to Friday.
Transport for Greater Manchester	Children and young adults aged 5 to 18 travel for half	Senior Citizens and disabled residents can travel on train and	Senior Citizens and disabled residents can



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	fare on buses, trains and trams.	trams as well as local buses	travel for free beyond 2300 up to midnight.
Mersey Travel	Children and young adults aged 5 to 18 and Apprentices up to the age of 24 travel for half fare on buses, trains and trams. Those aged 60 to 66 travel for free on buses, trains and the Ferry.	Senior Citizens and disabled residents can travel on train and ferries as well as local buses.	Senior Citizens and disabled residents travel free all day every day.
South Yorkshire PTE	Children and young adults aged 5-18 are charged a flat fare of 80p when travelling on buses, trains and the tram.	Senior Citizens and disabled residents travel for half fare on local rail services and free on tram and bus services	None.
Nexus (North East)	Children aged 5-16 are charged a flat fare of 60p when travelling on buses, trains and trams and if making multiple journeys can purchase a day ticket for £1.10.	Senior Citizens and disabled residents can travel on the ferry for a flat fare of 60p and local trains for a flat fare of 50p.	Senior Citizens and disabled residents can travel for free beyond the 2300 hours limit of the ENCTS scheme.
Transport for London	Children and young adults aged up to 18 travel for free on buses and trams and for half the adult fare on the underground. DLR, Ferries and local rail. Those aged 60 to 66 travel for free on buses, trams, trains and the underground.	Senior Citizens and disabled residents can also travel for free on trams, trains and the underground.	Senior Citizens and disabled residents travel free all day every day.

3. The WMCA and Transport for West Midlands should consider undertaking a programme of appropriate lobbying in support of the ‘levelling up’ of funding for public transport services and infrastructure across the UK, to better enable residents to have the ability and capability to play their part in the region’s economic recovery.

The West Midlands has set out its longer-term ambitions for enhanced powers and flexibilities, which would enable us to deliver the Government’s ambitious agenda to level up, hit net zero carbon and build back, better.

This has been agreed by the unique regional political partnership between the Mayor of the West Midlands and the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA).



TfWM has already developed, with its local authority partners, a Covid-19 Transport Action Plan¹. This short-term transport action plan sets out how we are approaching a transition out of the pandemic for transport, in line with the wider Recharge recovery plan. This plan is;

- Redeploying our transport assets to support key workers and the NHS;
- Accelerating the deployment of new mobility platforms i.e. E-scooter trials;
- Leading the way to adopt new powers available under the Bus Services Act 2017, including a full operator support for an Enhanced Partnership Plan;
- Accelerating the delivery of transport infrastructure programmes through the HS2 Growth Strategy;
- Adopting plans to develop a future West Midlands Local Transport Plan to drive inclusive growth and meet #WM2041 (net zero carbon emission) goals; and
- Submitted plans in the WMCA's CSR submission² to work collaboratively with Government to develop adopt a new model for long term sustainable funding for Combined Authorities and Local Authorities. Also plans for a rolling five-year infrastructure programme. This single pot approach to funding has a specific focus on critical enabling infrastructure.

In addition, West Midlands Devo Next Programme³ (*Submission to Local Recovery and English Devolution White Paper*), identified clear areas for enhanced local responsibility for the development, management and operation of our transport system.

The impacts of Covid-19 has demonstrated that public transport is a vital public service. The current model for funding and managing public transport services is inefficient and will not deliver outcomes such levelling up economic opportunity or an inclusive economy. Reform proposals include:

- Devolving all Bus Services Support Grants (including BSOG and CBSSG) directly to TfWM;
- Traffic Commissioner powers awarded to TfWM to manage and approve bus service registrations;
- Local rail devolution, through the West Midlands Rail Executive, building on the clear successes of London Overground and Mersey Rail;
- Ability for TfWM and Local Authorities to have greater flexibility for innovation and wider policy/regulatory reform within the transport system. This activity could be commissioned through a special regulatory zone – called a 'Sandbox'. TfWM, working with a Government commissioned Taskforce (*consisting of DfT, DCMS, BEIS, MHCLG*), submitted a draft Sandbox proposal to Government on 19th October 2020; and
- Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCA) having access to powers, functions and duties equivalent to Transport for London. Subject to local evidence agreements, areas could have access to enhanced local powers for enforcing moving traffic offences and pavement parking; including the local retention of revenue generated from transport enforcement activities - delivering double devolution for Local Authorities.

¹ <https://www.tfwm.org.uk/media/64158/wm-covid-response-action-plan.pdf>

² <https://www.wmca.org.uk/media/4233/wmca-csr-representation-summary-document.pdf>

³ <https://dmscdn.vuelio.co.uk/publicitem/28abbfd5-147b-4634-b84f-8471cf477106>



TfWM are actively engaging with Government – to deliver better outcomes from our transport system – by driving an inclusive economic recovery and supporting communities hardest hit by pandemic.

4. Transport for West Midlands should liaise with public transport operators/providers to ensure that all workers on the public transport network were provided with appropriate personal protective equipment.

The safety of staff is paramount to Transport for West Midlands and although many employees are safely working from home, the frontline transport teams are indeed working out on the network and who are more exposed to the dangers Covid-19 presents.

Both TfWM and Operator frontline staff have worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic, under difficult conditions in order to keep the network moving and ensure public transport services remain available for our keyworkers and vulnerable groups who need to make essential journeys, and for those who rely on the integrated public transport network.

It is recognised by TfWM and their partners that roles such as bus station and transport hub staff, drivers, conductors, customer services representatives in teams like the Travel & Information Centres hubs are naturally right in the centre of public activity, often working with and supporting the public in areas where a higher infection rate exists.

In order to keep staff safe, a range of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) has been issued across the network by TfWM and individual operators across all modes of transport.

Bus – All bus operators have made face coverings and/or shields available to their driving staff as well providing hand sanitiser and gloves where needed. For drivers, such as those on Ring and Ride or other Community Transport services there are additional risk assessments and associated PPE in place due to the nature of the additional customer care provided such as handling wheel chairs or other mobility aids and shopping bags for example, but all risk assessments have been completed and safe working protocols implemented.

National Express West Midlands already have screens fitted to their vehicles but have taken additional action to block up the ventilation points between the driver cab and the main passenger saloon. A number of other operators have fitted screens to their vehicles in order to help protect the drivers. On all vehicles seats have been blocked or removed that are within 2m of the driver to prevent these being used by passengers.

All operators have put in place more robust cleaning regimes and this includes providing drivers with cleaning materials to allow them to wipe down the cab before handing over to the next driver. All vehicles are now being deep cleaned, in addition to more robust daily cleaning process, on a more regular basis to help protect front line staff and passengers.

All bus operators are members of the Bus Alliance and the group have worked together to ensure they deliver as a consistent approach to Covid measures wherever possible and the unity of the decision making and discussions have positively impacted our passengers.

Metro – On our trams, when conductors were reintroduced they were supplied with enhanced PPE, including gloves, masks and personal issue hand sanitisers as well utilising ticketing equipment to prevent the need to handle passes.



Rail – Network Rail and West Midland Trains issued staff with masks, gloves and hand sanitiser.

Bus stations/TIC teams/CIT Field Teams – Masks have been issued to staff as well as gloves for some activities. Hand sanitiser has been provided and dispensers installed at fixed work locations. In addition training has been provided to staff, risk assessments completed, working protocols updated, in general across WMCA wellbeing measures are in place and above all 'at risk' staff are shielded.

As well as providing physical PPE to employees TfWM and Operators have also implemented extra measures that contribute to the safety of staff both physically and mentally. Groups such as the Bus Alliance, Transport Recovery Cell, and Transport Recovery Communications groups have all been working together, cross party to ensure consistency in our approach and that we maintain and provide a clean, safe public transport network for our staff to work on and customers to use.

Enhanced cleaning regimes, the use of new cleaning technology such as fogging systems and e-sprayers are being utilised, we were the first area in the country to offer Covid testing to frontline transport workers, frontline staff have received training, wellbeing processes are in situ, mask compliance taskforce teams and volunteers groups have been set up to keep people safe at transport hubs, and work places have been adapted for social distancing. These are just some of the additional measures that have been taken to look after frontline staff.

TfWM are not only an operational directorate, they also deliver large transport infrastructure projects such as Metro extensions, Sprint, and rail schemes. These are often in partnership with contractors and other organisations who are ultimately responsible for providing the PPE for their staff but TfWM ensures that our partners have protocols in place to ensure compliance with the guidance. For example;

The Metro delivery team works closely with our partners at Midland Metro Alliance (MMA) and associated organisations and the MMA have robust systems in place ensuring construction teams are following government guidance and working at a safe distance.

Our Sprint have put in standard safety procedures in place for construction sites and specific requirements for COVID since March during the first lock down. These procedures are updated regularly in line with government guidelines.

All staff in the Sprint team have completed the PPE order form and are issued with the appropriate PPE required for site visit including face coverings and gloves. They also have a specific policy on COVID-19 control which is updated regularly in line with guidelines and have the following on-site procedures for their construction sites.

- Provide COVID briefing to site teams,
- Minimise car share and maximise one man per vehicle,
- Maintain social distancing and where this is not practicable due to the nature of the
- Tasks such hand digging which need free flow of oxygen/breathing, maintain same members of work teams without moving them around to mix up with other site teams
- Eliminate individual sign in; the supervisor signs everyone in/out,
- All persons including visitors wear face covering during site visits and more.



This information is provided at inductions, and is also included in the construction health and safety plan.

To summarise, the safety of employees across the integrated network has been carefully considered with PPE issued to all frontline staff. Additional measures have been in place to further protect and support staff as well the delivery teams ensuring Health & Safety is maintained with our working partners on our infrastructure projects.