

Transport Delivery Committee

Date	28 th June 2021
Report title	Sprint Progress Update
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Report has been considered by	Sandeep Shingadia Development and Delivery Director, TfWM

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

Transport Delivery Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the progress of the Sprint Programme;
2. Note the Cabinet decisions required to support delivery of schemes;
3. Note the relationship between Sprint and other local schemes.

1. Purpose

1.1 The previous report to TDC outlined progress of Sprint, the Cabinet decisions required to progress the works, and set out the principles of integration of Sprint with other local schemes. This report will update on progress on key deliverables for the first two routes (A34 and A45), refer to A456/Hagley Road (advanced works) being delivered by MMA, and future pipeline schemes. It will also update on progress being made on the zero emission challenge and the role Sprint is playing in the agenda.

2. Priority deliverables and key achievements since last report

2.1 Since the last report in June 2020, both the A34 and A45 schemes have been contracted and work to deliver the schemes has commenced. This includes a review and change to the contracting model on the A34 as costs provided by ECI contractor Morgan Sindall at target cost stage were prohibitive, and almost double those (cost by km) noted on the A45. A detailed assessment of these costs, in addition to scope and programme, was undertaken on receipt of this target price and it was determined, working with F&G as our commercial support, that significant savings could be made by splitting the route into packages delivered by tier 3 suppliers. The expectation was that a tier 1 supplier for the full route deemed the risk associated with multiple LHA areas, conflicts with other CWG deliverables, and the activism along the route opposed to disruption as very high risk, and priced accordingly.

2.2 In September's Sprint Programme Board, it was agreed that we would approach tier 3 suppliers in the market, of which 8 were identified, package up the work, and stagger the procurement of the routes in line with the proposed Cabinet decision dates required for works to commence within each package. Table 2.1 below provides detail of key Cabinet decision dates. Table 2.2 notes key dates for contract awards.

Table 2.1 – Cabinet decision date – support for Phase 1 confirmed

LA area	Cabinet decision date
Birmingham CC	17 th March 2020
Solihull MBC	8 th July 2021 (pending)
Sandwell MBC	24 th February 2021
Walsall MBC	24 th February 2021

Table 2.2 – Contract packages, contractors and award dates

Contract area	LA area	Awarded to	Award Date
A45 (Birmingham)	Birmingham	Morgan Sindall	23 October 2020 A notice to proceed to Stage 2 – Construction Works under the contact terms.
A45 (Solihull)	Solihull	TBC	Exp – August 2021
A34 – Package A	Walsall and Sandwell	Colas	04 May 2021
A34 – Package B	Birmingham	Fitzgerald	26 February 2021
A34 – Package C	Birmingham	Fitzgerald	26 February 2021
A34 – Package D	Birmingham	Mc Phillips	06 April 2021

2.3 A closed tender was run for each of the A34 packages, in compliance with the procurement regulations. Each scheme was pre-determined by F&G to be under the OJEU threshold, which enabled the exercise to run within sufficient time to both procure and deliver the works by March 2022. The tender documentation, construction design and programme of works was all informed by the ECI stage, and supported the September board decision to proceed under this change in delivery model.

3. Construction progress to date

3.1 At present on the A45 we have sections between Bordesley Circus and Heybarnes Circus running down to one lane. Excavation works have commenced on this section, and any remaining utilities diverted.

3.2 On the A34, traffic management is out on the Fitzgerald sections where traffic is down to one lane. Our engagement on this residential section of the A34 is a critical part of our delivery plan and we seek to ensure that residents and businesses maintain access to their properties, with notice of any disruption

being provided as far in advance as we can. All our contractors have public liaison officers working with TfWM's own team to support this element of the works. We also maintain to monitor traffic impact of the traffic management making use of our RTCC and cameras on these corridors.

3.3 Whilst we have undertaken some Traffic Regulation Order consultation on the routes, some further TRO consultation is expected in the following locations set out in table 3.1

Table 3.1 – TRO consultations

Local Authority	Package affected	Start date	End date
Birmingham CC	A45	29 th June 2020	20 th July 2020
Birmingham CC	B, C & D	29 th June 2020	20 th July 2020
Sandwell MBC (Red Route etc)	A	07 th September 2020	13 th October 2020
Sandwell MBC (Bus Lane)	A	03 rd December 2020	15 th January 2021
Walsall MBC	A	28 th January 2021	25 th February 2021
Solihull MBC	Solihull	18 th June 2021	09 th July 2021
Solihull MBC (Remaining stops)	Solihull	TBC	
Birmingham CC (Re-Advertisement)	B, C & D	TBC	

4. Operator and EP

4.1 Bus services operating on the Sprint corridors are primarily commercial services usually operating without subsidy (excluding current COVID-19 specific challenges). An Enhanced Partnership Scheme will cover the corridor and require enhanced standards of bus vehicle provision with more exacting requirements as years go by. For example, by 2030 all buses in use on the corridor from larger (>20 vehicles) operators must be non-diesel. Other requirements kick in much sooner in terms of provision of items like onboard next stop announcements etc.

4.2 The Enhanced Partnership Scheme has been through all required informal and formal consultation stages with bus operators and stakeholders and is in the process of being 'made'. We expect this to be concluded before the end of summer 2021.

4.3 In advance of the Commonwealth Games and in line with Sprint infrastructure phase 1 delivery, National Express West Midlands will be introducing the first cross Birmingham bus service for many years, operating between Walsall and Solihull. This will introduce new direct travel options, improving access to growing employment and education zones around Digbeth, Aston University, the Food Hub, JLR, and parts of UK Central.

4.4 We are now planning for Sprint Phase 2, which will complete our infrastructure delivery on the corridor. The operation of the service fully meeting the Sprint Standards, using tram-like multi-door vehicles, will be operated commercially. Currently we have one operator interested in rolling this out and providing the requisite investment in vehicles, National Express. This was explored via a market sounding exercise which we undertook in 2018 to determine the level of interest in the investments being made on Sprint in the West Midlands. Delivery of the Phase 2 infrastructure is expected to be dependent on securing formal commitment to purchase and operation of 20+ articulated buses meeting the Sprint Standards. The commitment to the vehicle purchase and operation would be enshrined in a legally

binding Voluntary Partnership Agreement. Table 1 provides a breakdown of how the commitments and enhanced standards will be secured.

Table 4.1 – Breakdown of EP scheme and VPA

Network Outcomes		A34 and A45 EP Scheme	Voluntary Partnership Agreement
Better Journeys	Phase in non-polluting vehicles, WiFi, USB charging, audio visual	✓	
	Minimum service frequency		✓
	Co-ordinate route timetables		
	Set how and where bus service information is provided to passengers	✓	
	Set how local bus services, fares and/or ticketing arrangements are marketed and/or publicized	✓	✓
	Specify options of contactless to pay for a journey	✓	
Better Places	Specify certain vehicles (Sprint and feeder buses) must carry branding agreed by TfWM	✓	✓
	Control when timetables may be changed	✓	
	Set what services run where and when	X	✓
	Set the sort of buses that must be used on the network		✓
Better Value	Sell and accept a multi-operator or multi-modal ticket (except designated school services)	✓	
	Market particular tickets in a certain way (including promoting multi-operator tickets not just their own tickets)		
	Set all their tickets and fares on a standard set of 'zones' that apply to all operators		
	Follow common ticket rules for their own tickets (such as a standard length of 'period' tickets or age to qualify for a youth concession if offered)		
	Accept any ticket on a particular technology (such as a smart card)	✓ – Contactless but not specifically Swift	✓
	Charge a set price for a multi-operator ticket		X
	Charge a set price for their own, single-operator tickets	X	

- Not included
- Included EP/Planned to be included VPA
- Possible but not planned to be in EP/VPA agreement

5. Zero emission vehicles

5.1 Prior to the Commonwealth Games in 2022 and in line with Sprint Phase 1 infrastructure delivery, National Express will be introducing 20 hydrogen fuel cell, zero emission, vehicles on to the new cross Birmingham service referred to in Section 3.

5.2 The delivery of full zero emission vehicles will be introduced as part of Sprint Phase 2. At the time of writing, funding is yet to be secured for the delivery of phase 2. However, Transport for West Midlands has submitted an expression of interest for Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (Zebra) funding. This EoI seeks support for 234 zero emission buses including 24 articulated zero emission hydrogen fuel cell vehicles.

5.3 In addition, TfWM has sought funding from GBSLEP to support the introduction of Electric Vehicle Opportunity Charging Infrastructure in Walsall and Solihull which could support electric vehicle services on the corridor. A full business case has been submitted, but no funding is currently available from GBSLEP to support this.

5.4 TfWM's role in the current deregulated bus market is to encourage the move to zero emission bus operation and as outlined above, we are working to support operators in their ambitions, be they Electric Vehicles or hydrogen, while at the same time using the Enhanced Partnership to require introduction of non-diesel buses on the corridor by dates set out in the EP.

6. Engagement

6.1 Our commitment to engage throughout the development and disruption phases of Sprint remains, and we are working with each of our LHA partners and their Cabinet members to understand specific requirements and tailor our approach according to local need. TRO consultation is currently underway in Birmingham in support of the works and changes proposed to the corridors in this authority area, and a similar activity will follow in due course and where appropriate in other Local Authority areas.

6.2 In addition, and where COVID-19 may have impacted on the public's ability to go through specific designs or issues, we are putting extra measures in place over and above statutory requirements to help facilitate access to information and the option to comment.

6.3 An example of this includes the recently published TRO notices in Birmingham. In addition to published notices on lamp columns, which is the statutory requirement, we have written to all properties within 100m of the route alerting to the formal TRO consultation. We have also provided further additional information online to support this process and will provide support for those who want to further understand the proposed changes.

6.4 Where statutory undertakers are currently doing preparatory works on the network, residents will be contacted in real time by those undertaking the works, to ensure that any inconvenience or access restrictions are managed and minimised. As we get into the construction disruption phases, Morgan Sindall's communications and engagement team will support local residents, and it will be very much a joint effort between MS, TfWM and the LAs to ensure that the messaging is correct into the purpose and duration of these works as they happen.

7. Critical path

7.1 Our next key milestones include:

- Close out remaining legal agreements between LAs and TfWM;
- Award A45 Solihull Civil works;
- Section completion of works (BCC area);
- All Phase 1 works concluded and off site by March 2022;

- Agree detail of Phase 2 and secure funding (National Bus Strategy Bid);
- Work to secure introduction of zero emission articulated vehicles (ZEBRA funding).

7.2 We maintain to pursue funding for A34, A45 Phase 2, electric vehicle charging infrastructure and Park and Ride (A34).

8. Other development work

8.1 The WMCA committed in 2017 to a Sprint network for the opening of HS2. All schemes have Strategic Outline Case status. The schemes are:

- Walsall to Birmingham (A34);
- Birmingham to Solihull and Airport (A45);
- Birmingham to Halesowen and Dudley (Hagley Road);
- Longbridge to Birmingham (A38);
- Sutton Coldfield to Birmingham via Langley (SBL);
- Hall Green to HS2 Interchange via Solihull (HGIS).

8.2 Phase 1 of the A34 and A45 schemes are currently in delivery. Phase 2 deliverables are subject to local authority approval and funding.

8.3 The next scheme to commence detailed feasibility is the further works on Hagley Road, which is being progressed as part of our development programme. This work has started and is being progressed as part of a multi-modal corridor study that considers all bus services, cycling, walking, and future compatibility with Metro. Lessons learned from the A34 and A45 schemes have been incorporated. The Outline Business Case is due to be presented in April 2022.

8.4 Additional work is also taking place to consider the advanced delivery of bus priority on the SBL corridor that responds to the recommendations of the refreshed Birmingham Eastern Fringe Bus Study. This has been incorporated within feasibility work for Cross City Bus Package 4, which will also improve bus priority between Longbridge and Birmingham. This work started in May 2021. The intention of Cross City Bus Package 4 is to deliver the majority of bus priority interventions between Sutton Coldfield and Longbridge in advance of the introduction of full Sprint measures on this corridor.

8.5 Detailed feasibility work on the remaining Sprint scheme, HGIS, will commence in 2022, which will work towards an Outline Business Case. This scheme will be delivered in advance of HS2.

9. A456 Hagley Road (Advanced works)

9.1 The original Hagley Road scheme secured £14.65m of which £6.8m was allocated to the purchase of vehicles. In the re-cast of Sprint objectives and standards, it was concluded that a further significant investment would be required to deliver Sprint on the A456, and this was acknowledged and supported in the Sprint HS2 connectivity package approved by the WMCA in February 2017. It was agreed with GBSLEP at this stage that the previously funded scheme would deliver 'Advanced works' on the Hagley Road, notably bus priority between Five Ways and Monument Road.

9.2 A market sounding exercise in 2018 concluded that part purchase of vehicles would not be the preferred model for the WMCA. This conclusion, along with the unknown delay in purchasing vehicles for the A456 when Sprint would not be operational on the corridor until an unknown time, meant that the £6.8m was removed from this programme of works.

9.3 It was concluded in 2019 by the Sprint Programme Board that given the proximity of works to the Metro Edge scheme, the £7.85m for infrastructure (including land and other previously related costs) would be delivered by the MMA team, overseen by the TfWM Metro projects team.

9.4 The Sprint team committed to secure the land required, and in January 2020, under the approval of the TfWM Leadership team, the scheme was handed over in its entirety to the TfWM Metro project teams.

9.5 The Sprint team maintain to support both GBSLEP (as scheme funders) and TfWM Metro team on a need-to basis in support of delivery of these works, and to provide information and continuity as and where required.

10. Focus of activities for 2021/2022

10.1 The focus of activities for 2021/2022 are as follows.

- Start of construction works – for A34 and A45 Phase 1;
- Operator attainment for Sprint – TfWM plan to conclude EP/EPs/VPA and secure a more public message around the operator of Sprint and progress made on vehicle and operation planning;
- Vehicle procurement – Vehicle Procurement will be undertaken by the Operator and is expected to commence around 30 days following signature of the Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme and any associated agreements;
- Assurance – LHA Cabinet approvals (Sandwell and Walsall), TfWM/LAs' legal agreements in place;
- Contractor target price approval;
- Additional resourcing for programme to support construction delivery where required;
- Localised shelter engagement within 4 months of installs;
- Phase 2 approval – pursue appropriate funding opportunities for Phase 2 of A34 and A45, to include electric vehicle charging infrastructure and Park and Ride;
- To progress OBC for Hagley Road multi-modal scheme;
- To progress OBC for Cross City Bus Package 4, to be delivered in advance of Sprint.

11. Sprint Member Reference Group

11.1 Since the COVID-19 pandemic, Sprint, as well as reporting progress to the relevant local authority Cabinet members and O&S Committees, has been reporting progress and seeking input from TDC through the Putting Passengers First Reference Group, as follows.

- Wednesday 2nd September – Sprint shelters update provided;
- Wednesday 2nd December – Sprint provided project update including:
 - Sprint video;
 - Work starting on A45;
 - Tree planting engagement.
- Wednesday 27th January – Provided project update including:
 - Tree removal;
 - A34 contractor announcement.
- Monday 8th March – Provided project update including:
 - NX operator announcement;
 - Sprint animation;
 - Work starting on A34.

12. Site visits

12.1 We will continue to explore opportunities and involve TDC in site visits moving forward (COVID-19 restrictions pending), including:

- Visit to construction site compounds and works on site where requested and/or of interest;
- Site visits with Senior Sprint Development Manager to obtain input on future schemes.

13. Legal implications

13.1 There are no direct legal implications to the recommendations/points to note regarding the recommendations section of this report. The legal team has supported and will continue to support the Sprint Programme with the commercial and procurement requirements, relating to the operator and related outputs which include construction deliverables required for Sprint infrastructure works; as well as any property, and partner agreements with our district partners which will address ancillary land requirements, and agreements to work on LA Highways.

14. Finance implications

14.1 There are no financial implications as a result of this overall update report. All Sprint schemes within the HS2 Connectivity Package have at least Strategic Outline Case approval.

Approved funding to date for the priority routes is noted in the table below.

Table 14.1

Approved funding to date for the priority routes is noted in the table below:

Sprint Scheme	Priority scheme funding approved to date £M		
	WMCA	Other 3 rd Party	TOTAL
A45 Airport and Solihull	19.9	35.2	55.1*
A34 Walsall to Birmingham	22.1	10.3	32.4
Hagley Road Phase 1	2.40	5.45	7.85
TOTAL	19.93	9.92	29.85

*£319K construction contract underspend has been transferred to Sprint A456. [£55.4m approved WMCA Board]

15. Media implications

15.1 There are no direct media implications regarding the recommendations/points to note in this report.

16. Equalities implications

16.1 Equality Impact Assessments have been conducted for Sprint routes which identify key equality issues and any necessary mitigating measures. Overall positive equality impact has been identified.

17. Inclusive growth implications

17.1 Sprint delivered as part of an integrated transport system will go a long way in improving affordable and inclusive access to opportunities across the region. The network priorities are focused on those corridors that will generate higher demand such that it can justify the investment, but also to provide maximum benefit to greater numbers of people, including areas considered to be of higher social deprivation.

18. Geographical area of report implications

18.1 Detail of geographical area covered by scheme included within this report (A45 and A34 Walsall to Solihull via Birmingham).

19. Schedule of Background reports

19.1 Published reports, including:

- Consultation response reports (December 2018) – A45, A34, SBL;
- Progress update report (June 2020) – A45, A34;
- Newsletter updates – A45, A34;
- LA Cabinet reports.