



**West Midlands
Combined Authority**

Transport Delivery Committee

Date	7 February 2022
Report title	Network Resilience Update
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Report has been considered by	n/a

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Transport Delivery Committee is requested to:

- (1) Note the contents of the report.

1. Purpose

1.1 This report provides an update on crime and anti-social behaviour, the RTCC and wider network management and road safety.

2. Crime and antisocial behaviour

2.1 The last update to TDC was March 2021 and an update is provided below with the latest figures for consideration by the committee.

2.2 The Year to Date crime figures for 2021/22 are Bus 3,369, Rail 1,271 and Metro 9. When comparing these figures to 2019/20 (pre-pandemic) there has been a 49% increase in bus crime with public order, sexual offences, criminal damage and assaults seeing the largest rises and a 28% reduction in rail crime with vehicle crime, theft from person and aggression towards staff seeing the largest decrease.

2.3 The Year to date performance figures mentioned above taken from the Safer Travel tactical assessment document include both pre-COVID (19/20) and COVID (20/21) year comparisons.

2.4 When looking at the COVID year comparison there will always be a large percentage increase as the rate of patronage on both the bus and rail networks were low, so very little crimes were committed and recorded to West Midlands Police and British Transport Police.

2.5 When examining pre-COVID levels of bus crime, we have seen a large increase overall and for certain crime categories. There are various factors which could have fuelled this increase, not just one single cause, so it is difficult to provide a response which is entirely accurate. However, one thing to note is that West Midlands Police from April to December (for 19/20 and 21/22 years) have observed comparable increases that correspond with Safer Travel crime statistics.

2.6 Some potential reasons for the increases in crime on the bus network (these are difficult to evidence and will need verifying at force and national level):

- Increased crime due to exiting a national lockdown (attitudes towards crime and the police).
- Victims are reporting more crime to police.
- Further third-party crime reports to police.
- More ethically recorded crimes than previous years.
- Increased crime prevention and reporting campaigns.

2.7 Crime has increased in general this year when compared to pre-COVID levels for West Midlands Police. In particular, crime categories such as Violence Against the Person, Public Order, and Sexual Offences have risen and are likeable to the main crime categories Safer Travel has seen substantial increases. It only takes a small portion of these crimes to occur on the bus network to push the Safer Travel crime statistics upwards with dramatic effect in terms of percentage increases.

2.8 In terms of what is being done, the actions detailed later in the report show what Safer Travel Police and ASB teams have done in 2021 - there have been several arrests in

relation to 3 series of criminal damage on bus routes 19 and 29 in Walsall and no 33 in Kingstanding/Oscott.

- 2.9 Safer Travel will also, through our tasking meetings, target any increases in activity with targeted patrols and action with identified offenders.
- 2.10 In terms of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), in 2021 there were 2,332 incidents reported and 948 cases investigated, with 130 warning letters being sent out. Six Acceptable Behaviour Contracts were agreed and achieved, and 15 restorative justice meetings were held with no re-offending.
- 2.11 Safer Travel Police and the ASB Teams also carried out the following:
- 66 Knife Arches at Bus Stations and Railway Stations;
 - 24 Bus Gateway operations with National Express;
 - 30 Train revenue operations with WM Trains;
 - 148 identifications of offenders were made;
 - 3 campaigns launched on Hate Crime, See Something Say Something and Op Empower (violence against women and girls);
 - 1,144 messages received on SeeSay number 81018
 - 17,731 students engaged with at 150 workshops/assemblies, 5 fresher fayres and 10 open days.
- 2.12 In 2021 Safer Travel recruited 3 Transport Safety Officers (TSOs) whose primary role is to provide a visible presence on the Public Transport Network in the West Midlands, providing good customer service to staff and passengers to tackle low level Anti-Social Behaviour and improve the perception of safety for users of the transport network. The approach to be followed by the TSOs can be summarised as Engagement, Education, Encouragement and where necessary Enforcement.
- 2.13 Since June 2021, they have spent 2,857 hours on patrol, had 34,304 interactions with passengers and staff, engaged with 4,801 passengers and staff and issued 609 verbal warnings. There were also 5 warning letters issued to passengers and users of the bus stations in that time.
- 2.14 There has been a lot of positive feedback for the work of the TSOs and a bid for an additional 9 TSOs has been included in the authorities Bus Service Improvement Plan bid to DfT; we await a decision expected in the first quarter of this year. An initial meeting has also been held with National Express about them funding some additional TSOs and this option will be progressed further.
- 2.15 A Safer Travel Tasking meeting is held every second Thursday of the month and in 2021, 28 Tasking Actions were set and all have been actioned with Safer Travel partners working together to successfully resolve them. These have included issues at Bus Stations, train stations and series of crimes on bus routes.

3. Implementation of Bus byelaws

- 3.1 WMCA have been working with partners to implement byelaws or seek wider powers to address gaps in powers, to help officers effectively and efficiently deal with anti-social behaviour.

- 3.2 In January 2019, the WMCA Board approved a set of Bus network related Byelaws. In February 2019 a consultation took place to help us understand the views of people across the West Midlands regarding anti-social behaviour on buses, at bus station premises, bus stops and shelters. This consultation exercise confirmed significant public support for the same.
- 3.3 In May 2019, the WMCA Board agreed the next step of submitting a regulatory assessment to Government. After further work the regulatory assessment was submitted to the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) for consideration at the end of Summer 2019. This submission was based on existing legislation within their domain, namely S.235 of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 3.4 The ruling after consideration, was that vehicle nuisances are covered in a vast amount of statutory legislation and therefore, to focus on the resubmission of premises-only byelaws.
- 3.5 Negotiations restarted between MHCLG and WMCA and concluded with a set of byelaws for premises only 'Bus Byelaws' being redrafted and submitted in February 2021.
- 3.6 Leave was granted on 14th April 2021 by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government to make proposed byelaws under section 235 of the Local Government Act 1972, for the good rule and government and for the prevention and suppression of nuisances.
- 3.7 The 7 bus byelaws we have been given leave to proceed with have the following headings:
- **Management of queuing** – allows for regulation of order and safety in queues;
 - **Intoxication** – people using our premises should not enter or remain whilst intoxicated, and also shouldn't consume alcohol or be in possession of open container of alcohol;
 - **Unfit to travel** – users shouldn't be in such an unkempt or state of dress that makes them unfit to travel;
 - **General Safety** – to ensure correct use of emergency exits and communications;
 - **Loitering** – users who are loitering and causing nuisance/annoyance to others can be asked to leave;
 - **Pedestrian only areas** – users unless using wheelchairs, pushchairs or mobility scooters they should be on foot – allows us to deal with cycling, e scooters and skateboarding;
 - **Control of animals** – unless user has assistance dogs then they shouldn't bring animals to our premises and should keep under control and not allow them to soil/damage.
- 3.8 Following agreement by Leadership Team and Head of Governance to allow the delegated process to continue to formally make the byelaws the following have taken place:
- New Bus Byelaws were made under the seal of the WMCA on 14th January 2022 and were also be signed and dated;
 - The byelaws come into force 30 days after the date they are made (13th February 2022) – We must publicise that new byelaws have been made at least 7 days

before the day on which the byelaws come into force. Where practicable signage should be placed near the areas where the byelaws apply, and we must also publicise on our website. Some publicity has already gone out;

- Before any byelaws are to be enforced suitable guidance notes, supported by appropriate training will be given to all the officers authorised to enforce the byelaws. Current situation is the TSOs are the only authorised officers with the training and equipment to enforce these byelaws.

3.9 The byelaws will be enforced at our 12 bus stations, 5,000 bus shelters and 7,000 bus stop poles and will be done so using the following approach - engage, explain, encourage and where necessary enforcement.

4. Emergency Planning and RTCC

4.1 As previously reported, the TfWM Emergency Planning team continue to engage with the Local Resilience Forum and ensure a multi-agency structure informs resilience and future planning. The forum provides regional awareness on upcoming challenges, training and exercise opportunities, comms and risk management focused meetings. TfWM's engagement within this forum ensures transport considerations are always at the forefront of discussion, and importantly how the transport community can assist a wider regional response.

4.2 The team have been actively involved with Strategic Local Resilience Forum engagement in relation to continued Covid-19 planning. This has involved submitting situational reports on staffing levels, impact to operations and wider concerns as a result of the pandemic. This allows us and partners to greater understand the impact of key deliverables and areas of concern from all key stakeholders within the region. This communicative and intelligence led approach assists in keeping the region moving through what has been a challenging period.

4.3 Engagement with local authorities who have initiated 'Incident Management Groups' to oversee the multi-agency response is also ongoing. As above, this approach assists planning arrangements should a response be required at a more local level.

4.4 This forum has provided the opportunity to work alongside partners for testing and readiness exercises with a focus on this year's Commonwealth Games. They involve many key stakeholders including blue light responders, Environment Agency, DfT, DCMS, NHS, Network Rail, National Highways and Local Authorities. Utilising all partners resources helps inform planning and ensures each stakeholder engaged will have further knowledge of how we collectively respond to an incident. The Regional Transport Coordination Centre (RTCC) has been underpinning the transport community's collective response.

4.5 The Regional Transport Coordination Centre continues to work with relevant Local Highway Authorities and other partners in the creation and coordination of scheme specific mitigation governance, including Cross Partner Mitigation Group and thematic sub-groups. One such group involves the progress of the Sprint A34 works, including weekly client catch up calls and specific liaison with key personnel to ensure oversight and coordination.

4.6 Through the coordination of works a Single Point of Contact is allocated to all Events and Engineering works. They then will be responsible for ensuring an appropriate

response through mitigations, communications, travel demand management, security considerations and focused RTCC response. This approach allows us to work with relevant partners to create composite traffic management plans and better inform our travelling public on how best to use the transport network during these events or engineering schemes.

5. RTCC and Wider Resilience and Network Management

- 5.1 Network Resilience (NR) Officers continue to work with, and support, our Local Authority Highway Officers on the development and delivery of tactical transport strategies to minimise the disruptive impacts of major infrastructure projects across the region's transport network. These major infrastructure projects currently include HS2 construction impacts across both Birmingham city centre encompassing the new Curzon Street Station and the new HS2 Interchange Station in Solihull. In addition, we are working closely with the Black Country Authorities on the M6 J10 Major Improvement Scheme, Dudley Town Centre Regeneration and M5 J2 Birchley Island Improvement scheme. Over in Coventry the Travel Demand Management have supported in the delivery of National Highways A46 Binley Junction improvements.
- 5.2 NR officers work alongside our LA Highway Officers to engage with partners and major scheme owners to understand and assess the impacts of major scheme delivery on the transport network. Through this NR Officers support the overseeing and managing the delivery of all mitigation and targeted interventions to help keep the region moving through disruption. This has included highway scheme development to maintain resilience for local buses, working with transport operators to provide increased capacity during demand surges and development of travel demand management strategies such as Perry Barr Mitigation Measures, that was implemented to look to manage and reduce the potential disruption of the major schemes beginning delivered through 2021/2022.

6. Regional Road Safety

- 6.1 The latest analysis of killed and seriously injured (KSI) data relating to road traffic collisions, shows a reduction by 9.7%, which is in line with our linear projections for meeting the 2028 target of a 40% reduction. However, if we consider this in relation to the average increase in population over the same period, KSIs over the same period have reduced by 13.2%. The reductions have been made in each of the six strategic road user types (pedestrians, cyclists, powered two-wheelers, cars and taxis and public transport).
- 6.2 We continue to assess the data to identify specific road safety trends. These include pedestrian KSI involvement with vehicle type, overall road user age performance and KSIs involving goods vehicles. Results of these analysis will be circulated over the coming weeks.