

Transport Delivery Committee

Date	11 July 2022
Report title	Sprint Progress Update
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Report has been considered by	Sandeep Shingadia, Development and Delivery Director, Transport for West Midlands

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

Transport Delivery Committee is recommended to:

- (1) Note the progress of the Sprint Phase 1 delivery;
- (2) Note that Phase 2 funding secured and works underway to progress scheme;
- (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 completion of Phase 1 work 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 Phase 1 works had commenced at time of the last report, and have now been completed, on time, to budget, by June 2022. The driver for phase 1 work was to complete in time for the CWG embargo and to ensure that the games transport could benefit from the infrastructure. More importantly, phase 1 was also designed to drive in early benefits into the existing passenger transport network, and to allow for quicker, reliable journey times on those services using the new infrastructure. Phase 1 has delivered 20km of extra bus lane and 76 new shelters in preparation for the introduction of new articulated vehicles at the end of phase 2.
- 2.2 Whilst the civils infrastructure work is complete, more work is required by the Local Authorities to ensure that the new bus lanes and infrastructure are enforced, and to ensure that all Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) allow for this enforcement to happen. Some of the Bus Lane Enforcement Cameras are still outstanding but will be installed in the coming months in support of this important element of the scheme, required to secure the journey time benefits for passenger transport.

3. A34/A45 Phase 2 Development into Delivery

- 3.1 Phase 2 funding package includes £56m of investment that will see the completion of Sprint on the first corridors (A34/A45). Phase 2 was identified and allocated budget within the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS). The full CRSTS package was endorsed by WMCA in January 2022 and in March 2022. The Department for Transport (DfT) approved the package in April 2022 and the full agreement and terms were signed in May 2022.
- 3.2 The signing and acceptance of these funds secures Sprint Phase 2, and work is now underway to appoint designer and to understand construction cost for the scheme at updated market prices. The next stage will be preliminary design informed by building knowledge (phase 1), and the collection of survey data to underpin that design. The focus of activities for during 2022/23 will be completing design that will deliver further journey time benefit for Sprint, along with engagement activities associated with this design.
- 3.3 Sprint expect to be undertaking member and public engagement on the scheme later this year, and will seek to secure local Cabinet approval for each area of works before construction works commence. The design was formally consulted as part of the original scheme in 2018 and 2019. The design taken forward will be updated for local policy changes and requests, but will also reflect on the feedback from the previous consultation.

4. Operator and Enhanced Partnership

- 4.1 Bus services operating on the Sprint corridors are primarily commercial services usually operating without subsidy (excluding current post COVID-19 specific challenges). An Enhanced Partnership Scheme now covers the corridor and requires enhanced standards of bus vehicle provision, with more exacting requirements as years go by. We are now challenging Operators to ensure they meet the standards required of them on these corridors.
- 4.2 The Enhanced Partnership Scheme has recently been amended in line with the Bus Service Improvement Plan.
- 4.3 We previously advised that National Express West Midlands would be introducing the first cross Birmingham bus service for many years, operating between Walsall and Solihull. This is now planned to commence in early 2023 following the completion of the most disruptive Midland Metro works on Digbeth / Deritend High Street.

5. Zero Emission Vehicles

- 5.1 Prior to the Commonwealth Games in 2022 and in line with Sprint Phase 1 infrastructure delivery, National Express have introduced 20 hydrogen fuel cell, zero emission, vehicles on to the A34 Sprint corridor. These vehicles will be used on the new cross Birmingham service referred to in Section 4.
- 5.2 WMCA has made a successful request to Government via the Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) scheme for part funding 124 zero emission hydrogen fuel cell vehicles including 100 double deck vehicles and 24 articulated tram like vehicles. The ZEBRA funding received by WMCA is now subject to a bid process with Operators able to bid for this funding to deliver these vehicles with the articulated tram like vehicles to be operated on the Sprint corridors. We expect to confirm the outcome of the ZEBRA bid process during the Autumn. These Zebra funded articulated tram style vehicles will be introduced as part of Sprint Phase 2.
- 5.3 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, 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 and in line with wider WMCA aspirations.

6. Engagement

- 6.1 Our engagement has covered four key stages of the Sprint project, from our initial **vision** through **design** and **delivery** (construction), with the **operation** of the final Sprint service set to follow on completion of Phase 2.
- 6.2 Significant consultation with residents, business and stakeholders was carried out during 2018/19 as part of the first phase of the Sprint route with feedback from these key groups considered and revisions to the design made where appropriate.

- 6.3 Engagement has continued throughout the delivery of Phase 1 including for TROs, with regular information provided to residents and stakeholders through a monthly newsletter, Sprint website and social media posts as well as the local media.
- 6.4 During construction, residents and businesses have received notifications of forthcoming work, including details of any traffic restrictions. Over 150 separate notifications have been sent out as part of Phase 1 construction. Our contractor based Public Liaison Officers, supported by a client side Engagement Manager, provide a front line response in each area and work closely with the local community. Over 423 queries were received by our Customer Services Team during Phase 1.
- 6.5 Working closely with our local authority partners, our engagement will follow a similar approach during the Phase 2 design stage, which will be rolled out as a key part of the cabinet approval process and is expected to begin in the autumn.

7. Focus of Activities for 2022/23

- 7.1 Our next key milestones include:
- Monitor for any defects (post phase 1 completion)
 - Appoint designer for phase 2
 - Engagement on phase 2 scheme
 - Seek Cabinet approvals for phase 2 scheme
 - Commence Tender for phase 2 contractors
 - Working with colleagues, secure operator for ZEBRA and lock in vehicle specification and requirements for Sprint

8. Other Development Work

- 8.1 The full Sprint network comprises of 7 routes:
- A45 Birmingham to Solihull and Airport
 - A34N Birmingham to Walsall
 - Birmingham to Halesowen
 - Birmingham to Dudley
 - Birmingham to Sutton Coldfield via Langley
 - Birmingham to Longbridge
 - Hall Green to HS2 Interchange via Solihull
- 8.2 The first Sprint services will begin operating on the A45 and A34N in 2024 following the completion of Phase 2. Whilst there is no identified funding for the delivery of the rest of the Sprint network, there are proposals being developed by TfWM to significantly improve bus journey time reliability on A456 Hagley Road (affecting the Halesowen and Dudley services), the A38S Bristol Road (affecting the Longbridge service), and A38N (affecting the Sutton Coldfield service). This work is scheduled to be delivered from 2024 and funding has been identified through CRSTS. This work will support the future introduction of Sprint on these routes.

9. A456 Hagley Road (Advanced Works)

- 9.1 In the last annual report it stated that given the proximity of these 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. The scheme was handed over in its entirety in January 2020 after all land requirements had been secured.
- 9.2 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.
- 9.3 Subsequently, and in order to focus on delivery timescales the metro team deferred the delivery of the Sprint works on the A456. The decision was taken on the basis that works could overrun into the commonwealth games period, which would be an unacceptable risk.
- 9.4 The metro team have looked at the deliverability of the works within 2022 and due to CWG and Christmas embargo periods have requested the remaining works be completed in 2023/4.
- 9.5 The purpose of the metro team delivering the works was to combine with their scheme whilst they were on site, now the metro scheme has been largely completed the efficiencies that were expected may not be realised.
- 9.6 The metro team have explored if the Sprint Team would be better placed to complete this work now, as the Hagley Road scheme is under development and works could be combined, there is some concern within the Sprint team as there does not seem to be sufficient budget left in order to complete the works. More work is required to understand what remains in the budget and a revised works estimate provided.

10. Sprint Member Engagement Group

- 10.1 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 Sprint Member Engagement Group, as follows.
 - 26th July 2021 – Provided updates including A34 Package A, P&R, tree felling, construction progress, operator and EP, zero emission vehicles, engagement and A456 Hagley Road.
 - 6th September 2021 – Provided updates including Solihull and Walsall briefings, Sprint promotional video, P&R and Metro, and Perry Bar site visit opportunities.
 - 1st November 2021 – Provided updates including Solihull and Walsall briefings, P&R briefing and Perry Barr site visit opportunities.
 - 13th December 2021 – Provided updates including Solihull and Walsall briefings, P&R briefing, Phase 2 and Perry Barr site visit opportunities.
 - 24th January 2022 – Provided updates including Solihull and Walsall briefings, P&R briefing, Phase 2 and Perry Barr site visit opportunities.
 - 21st February 2022 – Provided updates including Phase 1, local authority briefings, cross-city packages and Phase 2.

11. Site Visits

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

- Visit to completed Phase 1 scheme in areas where there is a specific interest in doing so
- Site visits with Senior Sprint Development Manager to obtain input on future schemes.

12. Legal Implications

12.1 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.

13. Finance Implications

13.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the financial position of the Sprint Programme. All Sprint schemes within the HS2 Connectivity Package have at least Strategic Outline Case approval.

The 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
Ph1 A45 Airport and Solihull	9.8	47.9	57.7
Ph1 A34 Walsall to Birmingham	5.1	29.8	34.9
Ph2 A45	0	25.4	25.4
Ph2 A34	0	30.6	30.6
Hagley Road Phase 1	2.7	6.4	9.1
TOTAL	17.6	140.1	157.7

Note: Total Sprint Phase 1 works now includes additional £5.15m funding as per paragraph 14.3*

13.2 The full business cases for Sprint A34 and A45 Phase 1 and Phase 2 were approved by WMCA Board in February 2020 with a budget of £87.8m and £50.3m respectively (the latter being subject to the funding being secured). In March 2022, WMCA Board endorsed the addendums to Sprint A34 and A45 Phase 2 full business cases and approved a Phase 2 budget of £56m which give a total Sprint programme budget of £143.8m. The uplift in costs for Phase 2 is as a result of reviewing the original proposals in conjunction with Local Authority partners as well as making allowances for cost inflation that has been evidenced through the construction sector.

13.3 Since the approval of Sprint Phase 1 in February 2020, the Sprint A34 and Sprint A45 Phase 1 projects have been subject to scope changes which have led to the budget being increased by £5.15m fully funded due to the following broad reasons:

- Inclusion of additional A45 cycleway scope, funded by Transforming Cities Fund Cycling and Walking programme.
- Following award of the main contract, Birmingham City Council have identified additional scope for inclusion into the main contract. The additional scope comprised of additional carriageway resurfacing works along the A34 and A45, and works at Digbeth, referred to as Allison Street. The total value of these enhanced works was £4.7m and is funded by Birmingham City Council under the Highways Act 1980 S8 and S278 agreement.

13.4 The total Sprint Programme cost for both Phase 1 and Phase 2, including the enhancement works, is now £148.6m

13.5 The Sprint Hagley Road Phase 1 Target Cost was approved in March 2021 with a budget of £9.1m

14. Media Implications

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

15. Equalities Implications

15.1 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.

16. Inclusive Growth Implications

16.1 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.

17. Geographical Area of Report Implications

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

18. Schedule of Background Reports

18.1 Published reports, including:

- Consultation response reports (December 2018) – A45, A34
- Progress update report (June 2021) – A45, A34
- Newsletter updates – A45, A34
- Full Business Case, February 2022