



Transport Delivery Committee

Monday 10 October 2022 at 1.00 pm

Minutes

Present

Councillor Richard Worrall (Chair)	Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Timothy Huxtable (Vice-Chair)	Birmingham City Council
Councillor Mary Locke (Vice-Chair)	Birmingham City Council
Councillor Pervez Akhtar	Coventry City Council
Councillor Robert Grinsell	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Shabrana Hussain	Birmingham City Council
Councillor Carol Hyatt	City of Wolverhampton Council
Councillor Narinder Kaur Kooner OBE	Birmingham City Council
Councillor Josh O'Nyons	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Gurmeet Singh Sohal	Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Clare Simm	City of Wolverhampton Council
Councillor David Stanley	Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Julie Webb	Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

Item Title

No.

16. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Robert Alden (Birmingham), Councillor Linda Bigham (Coventry), Councillor Bill Gavan (Sandwell), Councillor Saddak Miah (Birmingham) and Councillor Anne Millward (Dudley).

17. Chair's Remarks

The Chair paid tribute to former councillor Graham Wilkes, previously a member of the West Midlands Passenger/Integrated Transport Authority, who had recently passed away.

Councillor Mary Locke paid tribute to former councillors Mohammed Azim and Mohammed Fazal, both previously members of the Transport Delivery Committee, who had recently passed away.

18. Minutes - 11 July 2022

Councillor Carol Hyatt requested that her comments made at the previous meeting in respect of minute no. 12 relating to bus funding be included within the minute as follows: 'Councillor Carol Hyatt raised concerns over the funding available for bus services until December, with a network review expected in January and a further publicity campaign to encourage the use of bus services, without consideration of the commitment of the funding available'.

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on the 11 July 2022, as amended, were agreed as a correct record.

19. Forward Plan

The committee considered items to be reported to future meetings of the committee. Further to Councillor Carol Hyatt's request for information on the Demand Responsive Transport trial in Coventry, it was agreed that this information would be included within the Bus Delivery Monitoring report being considered by the committee at its November 2022 meeting. Councillor Timothy Huxtable also noted that a Park & Ride update would also be brought to its November 2022 meeting.

Resolved:

The forward plan of items to be reported to future meetings of the committee be noted.

20. Financial Monitoring Report 2022 / 23

The committee received a report outlining the financial position as at 31 August 2022, the contents related to the financial position of the WMCA's Transport Delivery Revenue and Capital Budgets.

Councillor Carol Hyatt queried appendix four of the report relating to Other Major Works Programme and in particular the variance allocated against Dudley Interchange. Both the Head of Finance Business Partnering & Strategic Planning and Director of Strategic Partnership & Delivery Integration indicated that although there was a significant variance against the budget, there were no causes for concern, with it being acceptable for a project to overspend within a financial year as long as a project was not overspent against their allocated budget. The Director of Strategic Partnership & Delivery Integration also provided detail on the Dudley Interchange project, providing details on the delays to the scheme due to issues with the Compulsory Purchase Order of key land acquisitions. It was also recognised that from a financial perspective, this project was in line with its allocated approved budget and future consideration would be due if there was a significant overspend identified. Councillor Timothy Huxtable suggested that Dudley Interchange be a subject at an upcoming briefing of the committee.

Councillor Pervez Akhtar understood that the projects outlined within the financial monitoring report were multiyear projects. However, he asked the Head of Finance Business Partnering & Strategic Planning to look at how best to report projects overspend and underspend within the report / financial data provided to Transport Delivery Committee.

Resolved:

- (1) The year to date position as at the end of August 2022 against the Transport for West Midlands revenue budget, showing an overall favourable variance of £1.4m, be noted.
- (2) The Transport for West Midlands capital programme expenditure as at the end of August 2022, totalling £102.1m, which was £38.3m below budget, be noted.

21. Capital Programme Monitoring Delivery Report

The committee received a report providing them with a progress monitoring update on the approved Transport for West Midlands 2022 / 2023 programme and projects. Councillor Pervez Akhtar requested further information on the methodology used to consider 'DCA' against the projects outlined within appendix one. The Director of Strategic Partnerships & Delivery Integration explained the methodology used which was based on time, programming and delays.

It was again recognised that the Dudley Interchange had been given a 'DCA' status as Amber / Red. To which the Director of Strategic Partnerships & Delivery Integration explained that due to issues relating to the Compulsory Purchase Orders and key land not yet being secured, the project had been given an Amber/Red status. Councillor David Stanley confirmed this by stating the main delay related to a property that had not yet been acquired.

The Chair requested further detail as to why the Walsall Town Centre Interchange Feasibility Study had been put on hold. The Director of Strategic Partnerships & Delivery Integration explained that there had been long standing partnership work with Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council and, although the town centre regeneration progress work had progressed at a slower pace, work would continue with Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council to ensure the right interventions are in place. He also sought to provide the committee with a verbal update on this at its next meeting.

It was recognised that the reporting going forward needed to be broader to reflect the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement Programme as well as other capital funded schemes. It was therefore noted that Councillor Pervez Akhtar would be the main contact member in helping officers to develop an appropriate reporting format over the coming months.

Resolved:

- (1) The achievements since the July meeting of the Transport Delivery Committee be noted.

- (2) The progress of deliverables and outturn of the 2022/23 capital programme be noted.
- (3) Where indicated, the variations from the baseline programme be noted.
- (4) The approach on future reporting arrangements to the Transport Delivery Committee be endorsed.

22. Rail Programme Update

The committee received a report providing them with an update on the schemes in the scope of the West Midlands Rail Programme. Information and detailed updates were provided on Perry Barr Station, University Station and new stations.

Councillor Mary Locke praised officers for their engagement with residents in regard to the Camp Hill Line. Following the Director of Rail's comment relating to lessons learnt from Perry Barr Station, councillors expressed their hope that that these lessons would impact positively on the delivery of new stations.

Councillor Narinder Kaur Kooner highlighted that Perry Barr station no longer provided ramp accessibility to passengers, and therefore passengers requiring this were at a disadvantage. It was recognised that a lift was also available, however if any issues arose then there would be no access availability for those passengers. The Director of Rail confirmed that the ramp had been superseded by the addition of the lift which were more compliant. It was noted that the lift was external visibility at the control centre so if any issues arose then these would be identified. He also noted that there were currently no plans to reinstate the ramp at this station, however, he would request further information from West Midlands Trains on how it managed the issues arising from this.

Resolved:

- (1) The report be noted.

23. Bus Service Improvement Plan Implementation

The committee received a report from the Head of Network Transformation providing it with an update on the delivery of the West Midlands Bus Service Improvement Plan in the context of wider challenges faced in the bus market and seek approval to make variation 002 of the region's Enhanced Partnership scheme.

Councillor David Stanley expressed his support for the report and its potential outcomes, however highlighted concerns regarding the service from the principal operator and the negative impact the poor service was having on residents within his ward. He indicated that if the Bus Service Improvement Plan was to be implemented correctly then the operator needed to ensure they were able to supply a good service to the region. Both Councillor Mary Locke and Councillor Clare Simm echoed these comments.

Further to the announcement of Bus Ticket Freezing, Councillor Mary Locke felt that Transport for West Midlands should have communicated this better with members of the committee. Councillor Clare Simm requested assurances that the work being undertaken on simplifying fare rates did not impact on the fares that were currently available in terms of value for money for passengers. The Head of Network Transformation commented that any new ticketing structures introduced would seek to protect those existing discounted tickets. It was also highlighted that Transport for West Midlands was unable to impact the cost of operators' single fare tickets due to operating in a de-regulated market.

Further to Councillor David Stanley's comment relating to bus driver shortages, the Director on Integrated Transport Services noted that this issue was across the conurbation, however Transport for West Midlands was providing assistance to National Express to address this issue. As well as new driver programmes and campaigns, it was also recognised that retention of current bus drivers was important.

Following members concern on the poor service being provided by the region's main bus operator, it was agreed that a briefing with them would be arranged to take place ahead of committee scheduled for the 14 November 2022.

Resolved:

- (1) The proposed approach and activities to enable effective implementation of the Bus Service Improvement Plan be endorsed, recognising the detailed delivery arrangements would be subject to agreement with bus operators.
- (2) The proposal to adopt bus service registration powers from 1 January 2033 to align with the proposed amendment of the Enhanced Partnership, to include the introduction of route requirements within the West Midlands on or after this date, be endorsed.
- (3) The Enhanced Partnership variation 002 be approved.
- (4) The intent to revoke existing Advanced Quality Partnership Schemes, given they would be superseded by a further updated Enhanced Partnership (variation 003) later this year be noted, and the public consultation to this be approved.

24. Metro Monitoring Delivery Update

The committee was unable to consider this item and therefore it was agreed that it would become a key item for consideration at the next Rail & Metro Member Engagement Group meeting.

Resolved:

It be agreed that this update would be deferred and become a key item for consideration at the next Rail & Metro Member Engagement Group meeting.

25. Walking & Cycling Monitoring Update

The committee received a report relating to Transport for West Midlands-led initiatives within the Cycling and Walking Programme. The report also outlined progress of schemes within the development, delivery and West Midlands Cycle Hire work streams.

Resolved:

The progress to date of the Transport for West Midlands-led initiatives of the cycling and walking programme be noted.

26. Tram Naming Update

The committee was unable to consider the Tram Naming briefing note due to time pressure therefore it was agreed that this item would be considered at the next Rail & Metro Member Engagement Group meeting.

Resolved:

It be agreed that this it would be deferred and would be considered at the next Rail & Metro Member Engagement Group meeting.

27. Transport Services Recovery Update

Due to time constraints, it was agreed that this item would be deferred to the next meeting.

Resolved:

It be agreed that this item be deferred to the next meeting of the committee.

28. Notice of Motion

It was agreed that this item would be deferred to the next meeting of the committee.

29. Member Engagement Groups Update

The committee received a report outlining the recent activities of the committee's six Member Engagement Groups.

Resolved:

The recent activities of the committee's Member Engagement Groups be noted.

30. Exclusion of Public and Press

Resolved:

In accordance with s100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business as it was likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information as specified in paragraph 2 of the Act.

31. West Midlands Bus Network - January 2023

The committee received a report and presentation from the Director for Integrated Network Services providing them with an update on the forthcoming bus network review requested by Government of each Local Transport Authority as a condition of Bus Recovery Funding and Bus Service Improvement Plan funding. It was recognised that bus patronage had not recovered to full pre-pandemic levels and therefore Government requested that commercial operators adapt their services to the new levels of patronage.

Resolved:

- (1) The position of the West Midlands Bus Network Review, implemented as requested by the Government and due to come into place on 1 January 2023, be noted.
- (2) The changes outlined by commercial bus operators for bus service reductions across the region be noted.
- (3) The combined impact that commercial bus de-registrations and the increased costs on buying bus services contracts was having on Transport for West Midlands's ability to maintain delivery of its tendered bus network in the way it had historically in accordance with Access Standards be noted.
- (4) A revision to the Value for Money criteria to £4.10 (option 2) within the wider Bus Access Standards to allow Transport for West Midlands to support a higher number of bus services than it would without changing this be approved.
- (5) The likely impact on the West Midlands bus network due to funding shortfalls despite this revaluation of the Value for Money Criteria be noted.
- (6) The proposals to support the development and implementation of some new transformational services through the Bus Service Improvement Plan that would mitigate some impacts of bus service cuts be welcomed.
- (7) Transport for West Midlands use its best endeavours to work with bus operators to retain as much as possible of the subsidised bus network.
- (8) Transport for West Midlands lobby the Government for additional funding to support the subsidised bus network.

- 32. Date of Next Meeting**
Monday 14 November 2022 at 1.00pm.

The meeting ended at 3.15 pm.