

Transport Scrutiny Sub-Committee

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| Date | 16 November 2022 |
| Report Title | Commonwealth Games 2022 - Lesson Learned in Transport |
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Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The committee is requested to note the report and its contents. No further actions or decisions are required.

1. Purpose

1.1 This paper summarises the lessons learned by Transport throughout the planning and delivery of a successful Regional Area Spectator and Transport Operation in support of the objectives set in the Games Transport Plan.

2. Background and Context

2.1 Between July 28th and August 8th this year, Birmingham hosted the 22nd Commonwealth Games ('the Games'), the largest multi-sport event held in England for the last 10 years.

2.2 The Games brought over 1.5M spectators and visitors to the region and Transport had to answer to a complex set of challenges; a complex and congested transport network, a compressed timescale for planning, impacts of COVID-19 and navigating the realities of strike action on the Rail network.

2.3 In terms of rail industrial action, strikes were called by the RMT Union on 27 July and the ASLEF Union on 30 July and action short of strike was called by ASLEF for the entirety of the Games period from 31 July to 8 August.

2.4 In parallel, the completion of multiple major capital transport projects across the region was a commitment of multiple delivery organisations and part of the Games Transport Plan (GTP) to provide an improved transport experience for the travelling public and providing a longer-term transport legacy.

2.5 Delivery of Transport as a partnership; national, regional, and local was endorsed early in the planning and was essential in its success.

2.6 Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) led the delivery of the Games Transport Plan, the Regional and Spectator Transport Operation (RaSTO). The breadth of delivery of RaSTO programme is summarised below:

- Games Transport Plan
- Spectator and Workforce Transport
- Traffic and Network Management
- Travel Demand Management
- Transport Communications and Engagement

3. Key Highlights and Success

3.1 Success can be viewed in many ways for Transport, but perhaps one of the easiest ways to demonstrate its success is to view it in the context of some key statistics and outcomes from the operations period:

- Successful ceremonies transport operations
- Over 650,000 journeys were taken on Spectator Bus Shuttles
- Metro patronage doubled its pre-COVID numbers
- 28,000 cycle hires with West Midlands Cycle Hire Scheme during the Games
- 255,000 passengers travelled through Birmingham New Street station during the Games – a new record high for a single day
- The Games Journey Planner was used 711,950 times
- Transport operated successfully throughout an ongoing strike period on the PT Network
- 7,500 cycle parking sessions used at venues

3.2 Equally the success of the Games will be measured against the 5 core principles in the Games Transport Plan.

- ✓ Clean and green; a public transport Games
- ✓ Safe, secure, reliable, and efficient transport
- ✓ Minimising disruption
- ✓ Valuable long-term benefits of sustainable, transport options and improved public spaces and,
- ✓ Access for all

3.3 The outcome against these principles and the wider ones that the Games Organising Committee set are measured via monitoring and evaluation work led by DCMS.

3.4 Other key outcomes include a transport operation (and Games) delivered on time and under budget – no additional budget was sought outside the DCMS Games budget and therefore a funded legacy programme was secured for the region.

3.5 Lastly, TfWM's CWG team were recently recognised for their efforts in delivering Transport for the Games:

- Travel Demand Management and Communications team for the Games from the *Institute of Couriers*.
- Spectator and Workforce Team for the Games from UK Bus Awards

4. Lessons Learned

4.1 Both positive and negative lessons were learned throughout the planning and delivery of Transport for Games.

4.2 Lessons learned have been captured across the programme for Transport and are summarised below:

4.2.1 **Stakeholder Management and Partnership Working:** A critical component for the transport community (authorities, agencies, operators) and Games transport teams to work together to balance local and Games experience and keep the network moving whilst balancing demand versus capacity.

Key Successes: Successfully kept the network moving during Games. Partnership C3 operations co-located for Games period in the Tactical Transport Forum (based within the RTCC) and a successful TDM and Comms programme engaging local residents and businesses as well as those travelling through the region.

Lessons Learned:

- The transport community should work together closely when planning for major events, good partnership working is the difference between success and failure.

- The partnership must contribute adequate time and resources to meet the size of the endeavour through the planning stages to avoid undue pressures leading into operations.
- Good early visibility and honest reporting are critical to enable issues to be addressed early and avoid adverse impacts on resource and budget.
- Impact on Business-as-Usual is not to be underestimated and should be included from the strategic planning stage.
- Prioritisation and compromise are essential to support large scale operations and minimise disruption to the travelling public.

Planning and Integration: Thorough planning and robust integration is critical to mitigating risk on a large programme with multiple stakeholders. The Transport community must hold itself to account well throughout planning and work together to mitigate risk and deliver successfully.

Key Successes: Successful completion/mitigations of multiple capital transport infrastructure projects. Improved public realm and spectator journeys. Robust traffic management planning and subsequent improvement in network performance. Testing and readiness work cross-partner and establishment of a Tactical Transport Forum. Successful Travel Demand Management and Comms and Engagement programme involving all local authority partners.

Lessons Learned:

- Integration is key to early and successful risk mitigation/management.
- Integrated planning is vital to create good visibility cross-partner and can foster more innovative outcomes for delivery.
- Integrated delivery teams and co-located operations teams foster trust and led to improved outcomes during delivery and increased legacy post-delivery.
- Integrating and/or innovating working practices is part of delivering a major event on this scale.
- Plans are made to be changed and major transport operations are agile in nature, even when a hard deadline exists.

Managing Issues and Challenges: A programme of this size and complexity requires adequate visibility and support to successfully identify, manage, and mitigate risk/issue/challenge.

Successes: All levels of the transport community were engaged on risk and issue management which led to good support across the strategic and local transport network and enabled contingency planning that mitigated or managed the majority of issues. Unplanned issues were also able to be resolved quickly.

Lessons Learned:

- Transparency in planning enables early identification of potential risk/issues.
- Clear roles and responsibilities will result in improved outcomes.
- Cross-partner working is essential to manage issues and challenges across a network that includes multiple authorities.
- Adequate contingency should be built into budget and planning to avoid any delay in mitigation and to make unplanned events manageable during operations.
- Effective testing and readiness programme will underpin operational working, validate contingency/mitigations planning.
- Any optimism bias/assumed knowledge regarding likelihoods should be validated through the planning phase via independent assurance.

Public Transport and the Spectator Journey: This is a critical component of all major events. In a public event such as the Commonwealth Games, it is a make-or-break element for Transport.

Successes: End to end spectator journey was well planned and operated at Games time. Critically ceremonies transport (opening and closing) was very successful, safe, accessible, and efficient. A combination of TDM, Journey Planner, Comms and Engagement was successful in supporting the operation and informing the travelling public. Strengthened PT, Active Travel and Funded PT were essential to managing the network, improving sustainability and accessibility.

Lessons Learned:

- Clear roles and responsibilities should be understood and agreed across the partnership. These should be reviewed and tested as part of readiness pre-Event.
- Areas where boundaries are blurred, or ownership is shared require clear decision-making criteria.
- Although transport is possibly the largest delivery agent in the spectator journey, care should be taken to review the holistic journey and prioritise accessibility to ensure an inclusive and high-quality spectator journey. Elements such as event communications, ticketing and public realm need to be weaved into the planning to ensure a good outcome.
- The integration of BaU operators and transport hubs with the overlay of strengthened PT and additional temporary transport solutions (e.g. shuttles, park, and ride) is key to success.
- Managing the network in partnership creates multiple benefits for the operation, increased visibility and communications, improved reaction times and successful issue resolution.
- It is helpful to build in a level of contingency bus fleet to address any unplanned issues.
- Active and accessible transport should be addressed as equal modes when considering spectator journeys.

5. Summary and Next Steps

- 5.1 In summary, the delivery of the transport operation for the Games was a great success and the focus now shifts to closing out remaining activities, taking forward lessons learned internally and with partners and supporting the implementation of a Legacy programme via WMCA colleagues.
- 5.2 The Monitoring and Evaluation work will be led by Department of Culture, Media, and Sport (DCMS) and continues for up to 5 years beyond the Games.
- 5.3 A wealth of legacy and benefit has already been gained through the planning and delivery across the partnership and can be taken forward into future events.
- 5.4 The members are requested to note this paper.