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West Midlands
Combined Authority

Transport Scrutiny Sub-Committee

Thursday 24 November 2022 at 10.00 am

Minutes

Present

Councillor Cathy Bayton (Chair)	Association of Black Country Authorities
Councillor Chaman Lal (Vice-Chair)	Birmingham City Council
Councillor Karen Simms	Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Vera Waters	Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council

In Attendance

Pete Bond	Director of Integrated Transport Services
Dan Essex	Governance Services Manager
Graham Jones	Director of Delivery – Transport
Lyndsey Roberts	Scrutiny Officer

Item Title No.

81. Apologies for Absence

An apology was received from Councillor Rupinder Singh (Coventry City Council).

82. Inquorate Meeting

The meeting was inquorate and therefore decisions taken at the meeting would be submitted to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee for formal approval.

83. Minutes - 8 September and 13 October 2022

The minutes of the meetings held on 8 September and 13 October 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

84. Bus Network Scrutiny Update

The sub-committee received a presentation from the Director for Integrated Transport Services that provided an update on the bus network review. The presentation was supported by a suite of information including, 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 the latest performance of bus services in the West Midlands.

The Transport Delivery Committee had approved submission of the West Midlands Bus Services Improvement Plan that all Transport Authorities were required to submit to Government in response to the National Bus Strategy. During covid, there had been a series of funds provided from Government including, the Bus Recovery Grant. As part of this funding, the Government

requested all bus operators and local transport authorities to undertake a review of their bus networks as patronage nationwide had not recovered to pre-pandemic levels.

The sub-committee discussed and shared comments on the review of the commercial network, resource challenges, bus service changes within the region and mitigations, changes with regards to school services and communication, opportunities to encourage concessionary travel, travel surveys, potential business efficiency reviews, driver shortages and the work being undertaken to address this issue. Members also expressed concern at the lack of competition in the market and the challenges associated with this.

In terms of delivery, quality and encouraging behaviour change, the sub-committee questioned whether the current commercial model delivered what was needed for the West Midlands. The Director of Integrated Transport Services explained that the implications of covid had been a challenge for the West Midlands and the introduction of the enhanced partnership scheme was a mechanism in which operators would be held to account for delivery and improvements.

Recommended to Overview & Scrutiny Committee:

That the update be noted.

85. Commonwealth Games 2022 - Lesson Learned in Transport

The sub-committee considered a report of the Executive Director for Transport for West Midlands that summarised the lessons learnt 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.

Between 28 July and 8 August, Birmingham hosted the 22nd Commonwealth Games, the largest multi-sport event held in England for the last 10 years. The Games brought over 1.5m spectators and visitors to the region and transport had to answer to a complex set of challenges including, 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.

The success of the Games was measured against five core principles including, clean and green; safe, secure, reliable and efficient transport; minimising disruption; valuable long-term benefits of sustainable transport options and improved public spaces, and access for all. The sub-committee enquired as to whether the Games was the 'greenest and cleanest'. The Commonwealth Games Director explained that the organising committee had produced a report that set out a view on the greenest credentials of the Games and agreed to share the report with the sub-committee.

Recommended to Overview & Scrutiny Committee:

TfWM be commended for the success of the Commonwealth Games in terms of the transport.

86. Work Programme

The sub-committee discussed its work programme of business for consideration at its future meetings and at the WMCA Board.

Recommended to Overview & Scrutiny Committee:

The work programme be noted.

87. Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 12 January 2023 at 2:00pm.

The meeting ended at 12.00 pm.

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