Bus Service Improvement Plan

October 2021

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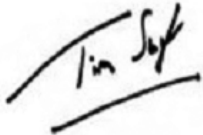
1. Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) overview

1.1. My vision for buses in West Yorkshire – Mayor Tracy Brabin

1.1.1. When I was elected Mayor of West Yorkshire in May 2021, I pledged to bring buses back under public control, introduce simpler fares, contactless ticketing and greener buses. Central to my pledges was also inclusive growth and improving safety for women and girls. The West Yorkshire Combined Authority's Bus Service Improvement Plan is a major step in working towards achieving these commitments. Buses are an essential public service and should serve all our citizens. We want buses to be the first choice for travel in West Yorkshire - not because you don't have a car, but because buses are more affordable, convenient to use, and better for the environment.

1.1.2. Our plan is ambitious but simple in its focus on the needs of people across West Yorkshire and the experience they should expect when they get on a bus, regardless of who is delivering the service. Importantly, this plan is also about more than just getting the customer from A to B – it is about ensuring that bus is able to meet the need of all customers even when they are making more complex multi-leg journeys. Our plan will also ensure that buses in West Yorkshire support our wider objectives by enabling the trips that people need to make.

1.1.3. Unfortunately, our existing bus system does not serve everyone across our region's cities, towns and villages like it needs to. As we look to support its recovery from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, it is vital that we seize the opportunity to reimagine what it can be. Fundamentally our buses need to take people where they want to go. Our system must offer a viable service for the early morning or late evening shift workers; the caregivers who need to make numerous journeys on any given day; the elderly and socially isolated; job seekers, students and the young people who are looking to embrace everything a life in West Yorkshire can offer them. Recent work has highlighted the gender imbalances that can exist in traditional bus networks – this plan will tackle this inequality. This plan seeks to address that through our commitment to creating a truly inclusive and accessible bus system that works for everyone across all our many diverse communities.

1.1.4. I want to see change quickly. Key to this will be working in greater partnership with operators through the West Yorkshire Bus Alliance – which is already delivering improvements to the day-to-day journeys of customers across the region and provides a solid foundation for delivering on the ambition of this plan. I am determined that this Bus Service Improvement will be a live, working document that pushes us to deliver the ambitions set out within it. I want to continue to listen to the public – the people who live and work across West Yorkshire and rely on our local public transport system - to make sure the plan is working for them and delivering the change to buses that they want to see. We will review the Bus Service Improvement Plan regularly to ensure it is delivering on its targets, meeting expectations from the public and to hold all members of our Bus Alliance to account.

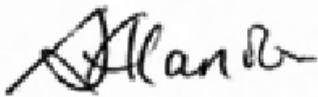1.1.5. **Tracy Brabin, Mayor of West Yorkshire (October 2021)**

1.1.6. This Bus Service Improvement Plan has been approved for submission to Government by:
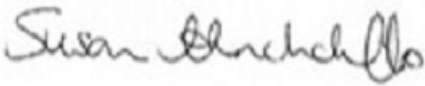
- **Tracy Brabin, Mayor of West Yorkshire**

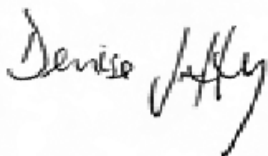- **Cllr. Tim Swift, Leader Calderdale Council**

- **Cllr. Shabir Pandor, Leader, Kirklees Council**

- **Cllr. Susan Hinchcliffe, Leader, City of Bradford Metropolitan District**

- **Cllr. James Lewis, Leader, Leeds City Council**

- **Cllr. Denise Jeffrey, Leader Wakefield Council.**

1.2. Geographical area and context

1.2.1. The Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) that this document contains is for the Local Transport Authority (LTA) of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA). A map showing the West Yorkshire region, alongside the existing regional bus network, can be seen in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 – The West Yorkshire region and the Bus Network*
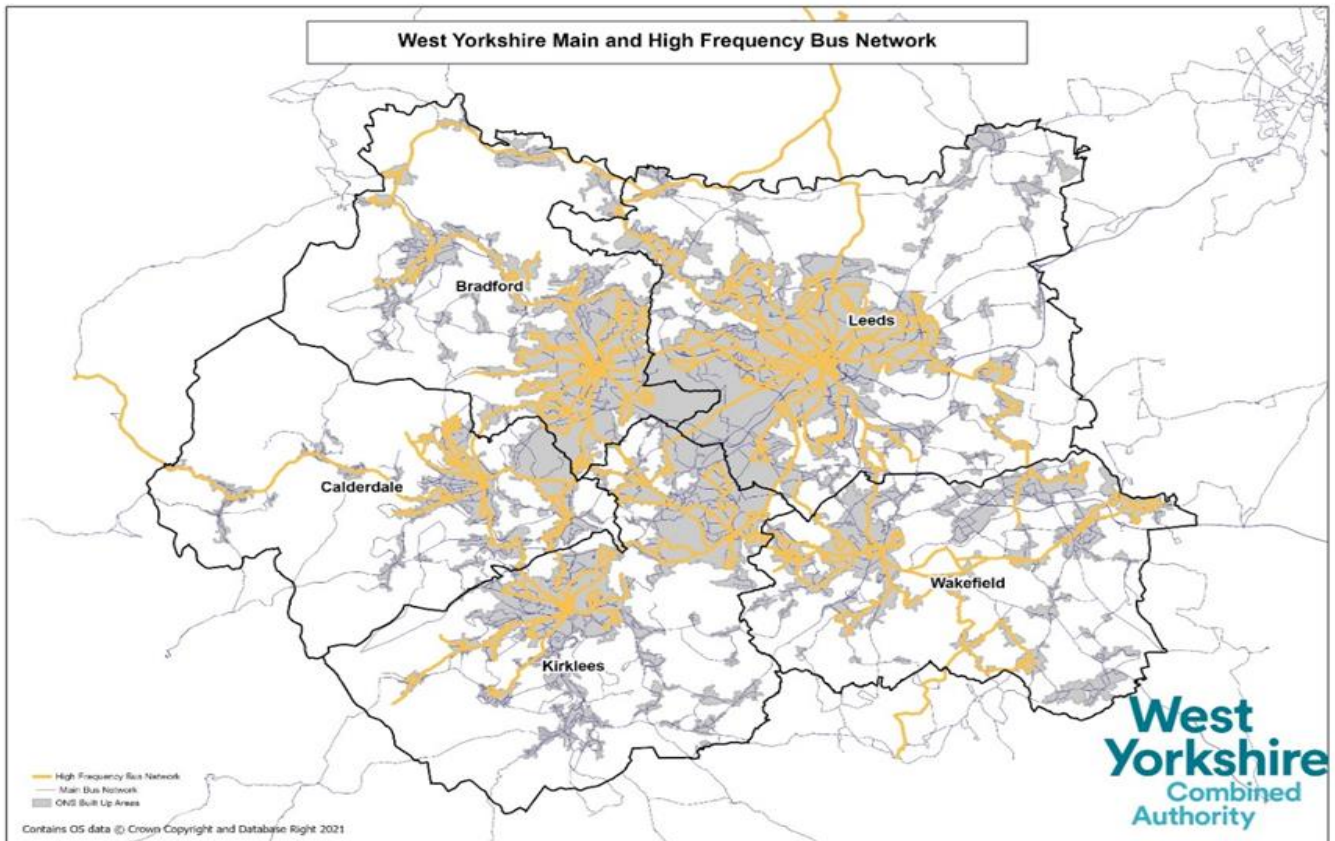
1.2.2. The West Yorkshire region covers 780 square miles of which 38% is classed as rural and has a population of over 2.3 million. The region is polycentric in nature and is comprised of five metropolitan boroughs: Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield. Within West Yorkshire, population centres are highly dispersed with a few key urban centres across the region. Table 1, below, demonstrates the population, size and population density across West Yorkshire.

Table 1: West Yorkshire in numbers

Metropolitan Borough	Population (thousands)	Size (square km)	Population Density (pop./sq. km)	Rural / Urban split (Source: DEFRA)
Leeds	789	552	1,429	29% / 71%
Bradford	537	365	1,471	24% / 76%
Calderdale	210	363	579	60% / 40%
Wakefield	345	339	1,018	46% / 54%
Kirklees	439	409	1,073	36% / 64%

Source: Office for National Statistics 2018 Estimates

1.3. Bus Operator context

1.3.1. There are currently 29 bus operators in West Yorkshire, with First, Arriva and Transdev running approximately 85% of commercial mileage with a combined fleet of approximately 1,300 buses. A full list including smaller operators within the West Yorkshire region can be seen in the table below.

Table 2 – List of existing bus operators in West Yorkshire

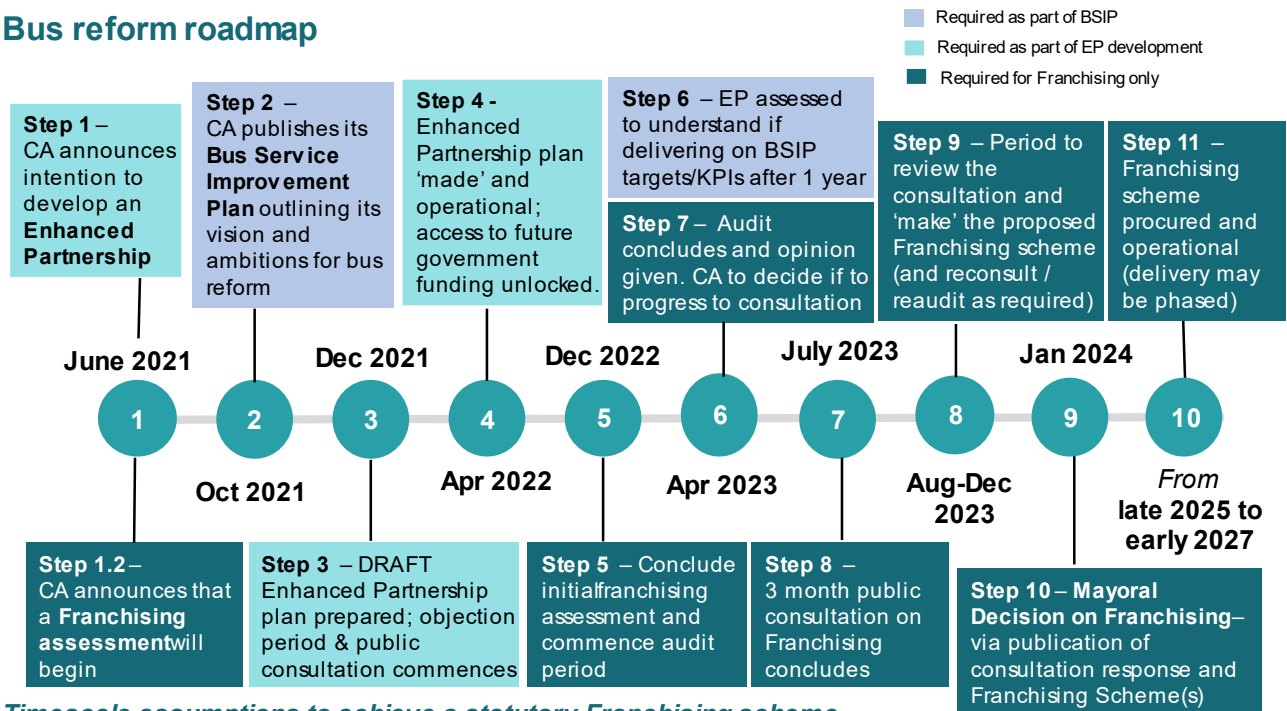| Bus Operators in West Yorkshire	
A Lyles & Son/Longstaff of Mirfield	South Pennine Community Transport CIC
Arriva Yorkshire	Square Peg Bus Ltd
CT Plus Yorkshire CIC/Leeds Alternative Travel Ltd	Station Coaches
Dales & Bowland CIC/ Dales Bus	Stagecoach Yorkshire
D K Travel	Stevenson's Travel Ltd
E Stott & Sons	Streamline
First West Yorkshire	Stringers Pontefract Motorways
Globe Holidays Ltd	Tetley Motor Services Ltd
Harrogate Coach Travel /Connexions	TLC Travel Ltd
Jacksons of Silsden	TM Travel
J and B Travel	Transdev - Keighley, Harrogate, Coastliner, Flyer
North Yorkshire County Council	Waterson's Coaches
Ross Travel Ltd	York Pullman

1.4. Approach to this Bus Service Improvement Plan

1.4.1. In March 2021 the Department for Transport published the National Bus Strategy. This set out a number of requirements for all Local Transport Authorities, including the West Yorkshire Combined Authority. It required the Combined Authority to develop a Bus Service Improvement Plan and agree to enter into an Enhanced Partnership with bus operators from April 2022. The Combined Authority held a Mayoral election in May 2021 and Tracy Brabin was elected with a pledge to "bring buses back into public control, introduce simpler fares, contactless ticketing and greener buses".

1.4.2. At the Combined Authority meeting on 24th June 2021 the Combined Authority approved a Notice for Intent to develop an Enhanced Partnership and a Notice of Intent to undertake an assessment for franchising. An assessment for franchising will be undertaken alongside a formal Enhanced Partnership with bus operators as a means of enabling public direction of bus provision from April 2022, in line with Government timescales. This will enable the Combined Authority to determine the best governance mechanism to deliver on the ambition for transformational change outlined in this BSIP.

1.4.3. Figure 2 below outlines the roadmap to reforming the delivery of bus services, including the establishment of an Enhanced Partnership by April 2022 and a mayoral decision on franchising by January 2024. A potential franchising scheme would not be operational in West Yorkshire until late 2025 at the earliest.

Figure 2 – Bus Reform Roadmap

Bus reform roadmap

Legend:
- Required as part of BSIP
- Required as part of EP development
- Required for Franchising only

Step 1 – CA announces intention to develop an **Enhanced Partnership** — June 2021

Step 1.2 – CA announces that a **Franchising assessment** will begin — Oct 2021

Step 2 – CA publishes its **Bus Service Improvement Plan** outlining its vision and ambitions for bus reform — Dec 2021

Step 3 – DRAFT Enhanced Partnership plan prepared; objection period & public consultation commences

Step 4 - Enhanced Partnership plan 'made' and operational; access to future government funding unlocked. — Apr 2022

Step 5 – Conclude initial franchising assessment and commence audit period — Dec 2022

Step 6 – EP assessed to understand if delivering on BSIP targets/KPIs after 1 year — Apr 2023

Step 7 – Audit concludes and opinion given. CA to decide if to progress to consultation

Step 8 – 3 month public consultation on Franchising concludes — July 2023

Step 9 – Period to review the consultation and 'make' the proposed Franchising scheme (and reconsult / reaudit as required) — Aug-Dec 2023

Step 10 – **Mayoral Decision on Franchising** – via publication of consultation response and Franchising Scheme(s) — Jan 2024

Step 11 – Franchising scheme procured and operational (delivery may be phased) — From late 2025 to early 2027

Timescale assumptions to achieve a statutory Franchising scheme
Timescales may be extended in the event of a legal challenge

Franchising assessment development:	Assessment audit:	Consultation period:	Consultation review & response:	Franchising procurement & mobilisation:
18 months • Issues / delays assumed re data • Model scope and build process	3 months • Audit readiness assumed	3 months • Comprehensive exercise assumed	6 months • Large volume of responses assumed	18-24 months • Work previously completed on procurement process & documentation

1.5. BSIP summary table

1.5.1. **Table 3**, below, provides a summary of the detail contained within this BSIP.

Table 3 – BSIP summary table

Name of authority or authorities	**West Yorkshire Combined Authority**
Franchising or Enhanced Partnership (or both):	**Both**
Date of publication	Submitted to the Department for Transport on the 29th October 2021, published on the 1st November 2021
Date of next annual update	October 2022
URL of published report:	http://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/bsip

Targets	March 2019	March 2021	Target for 2024/25	Descriptions of how each will be measured (max 50 words)
Journey time	4.72	4.36	10% reduction	Minutes per mile calculated as the average time taken (including dwell time) per bus stop level observation in West Yorkshire from the bus departing its journey origin to arriving at its journey destination for those operators that supply AVL data to the RTI system, combined with distances between stops.
Reliability	98%	99%	99.5%	The number of bus miles operated relative to those scheduled to run. Gathered and processed by operators and shared with the Combined Authority via the West Yorkshire Bus Alliance.
Passenger numbers	10,801,487	4,483,340	2019 levels +15%	Calculated from ticket machine data provided by the three major operators in West Yorkshire via a BSIP specific data sharing agreement.
Avg. passenger satisfaction	6.7	6.9	7.5	WYCA's annual Public Perceptions of Transport Survey contains questions covering satisfaction with local bus services which are averaged to an overall score on an annual basis.

Delivery – does your BSIP detail policies to:	Yes / No	Explanation (max 50 words)
Make improvements to bus services and planning		
More frequent and reliable services		
Review service frequency	Yes	Our five-year network plan includes ambitions to improve frequency across the region's bus network and sets out our aspiration for network frequency by 2025 – including more consistent frequency of service for a longer period of the day and, specifically, improved frequency of service in the early morning and evening.
Increase bus priority measures	Yes	We have developed a pipeline of over 50 initial bus priority infrastructure projects which will significantly increase the provision of measures regionwide. This pipeline will continue to be developed and further expanded. We also include a package of enforcement measures to improve the effectiveness of existing bus priority.
Increase demand responsive services	Yes	This BSIP includes the ambition for more demand responsive 'FlexiBus' services across each district area as part of our wider network development – particularly in rural areas less suited to a traditional bus service. This will take into account the learnings from the recently launch East Leeds trial.
Consideration of bus rapid transport networks	Yes	This is part of our existing approach to the Core Network and plans for more are included in our Connectivity Infrastructure Plan with which this BSIP is aligned. We will also work to improve the speed and punctuality of all bus journeys through region wide improvements to bus priority.
Improvements to planning / integration with other modes		
Integrate services with other transport modes	Yes	We want bus to be fully integrated as part of a region-wide sustainable transport offer and this BSIP includes plans for DRT, mobility hubs, Park & Rides and links to active travel modes to support bus services. We will also continue our multimodal approach to our information and ticketing services.

Simplify services	Yes	We are reviewing the bus network to understand where changing travel demand mean changes, including simplification of services, could be made. This will also be supported through changes to how the network is presented - including through the creation of new maps – so that services are simpler to understand and navigate.
Review socially necessary services	Yes	Our five-year network plan places strategic importance on evolving the network to better connect communities and support social inclusivity. As well as understanding where operator can enhance their services, we will invest significantly in contracting services to provide this, in line with our network review and gap analysis.
Invest in Superbus networks	Yes	Our network plan includes Superbus pilots. We have already invited local operators to submit proposals for how they would apply this concept in West Yorkshire – with the aim of understanding how flat fares, bus priority and improved branding could boost patronage in areas where services are currently less commercially viable.

Delivery – does your BSIP detail policies to:	Yes / No	Explanation (max 50 words)
Improvements to fares and ticketing		
Lower fares	Yes	We include the ambition, subject to funding, to reduce the MCard day saver from £5.50 to £4.50 which will be the maximum any passenger should pay for a day bus travel in West Yorkshire (or the 'daily cap'). This will also establish a framework for the reduction of other fares.
Simplify fares	Yes	We want affordable, good value, consumption-based fares so have not proposed a flat structure; however, our ambition is for all fares and tickets to be multi-operator and to reduce the wide range currently available. Simpler payments, such as contactless capping, and improved information will also simplify fares for the passenger.

Integrate ticketing between operators and transport	Yes	Our BSIP ambitions build on our existing, successful multi-operator, multi-modal ticketing schemes - the MCard - and includes the introduction of contactless capping across all bus services. Thanks to existing governance arrangements with operators we could deliver capping quickly, ahead of a national solution, and only require tap out readers.
Make improvements to the passenger experience		
Higher spec buses		
Invest in improved bus specifications		This BSIP includes the expectation that all new buses deployed to run local services will be fully accessible and of a high quality, with leather seats, wi-fi and audio-visual (AV) information as standard. This will be supported through retrofitting and the purchase of new, zero emission buses.
Invest in accessible and inclusive bus services		This is fundamental to our vision. We want AV on all buses and include the ambition for retrofitting as required. We want to invest in enhanced accessible information and other support – such as an orange card scheme – and ensure accessibility and inclusion is a focus of training for all staff.
Protect personal safety of bus passengers		Improved safety is a fundamental aspect of our vision a better local bus network. Our BSIP includes a proposed partnership with the West Yorkshire Police to improve safety for women and girls, as well as other measures to improve safety for all passengers, particularly at bus stops and bus stations.
Improve buses for tourists		We want to make local buses easier to understand and access for non-frequent users, including tourists. Better presentation of the network will make it easier to navigate for those less familiar and ticketing improvements will provide convenience and flexibility through contactless and time-limited mobile tickets.
Invest in decarbonisation		We have committed to a zero-carbon bus fleet by 2036, with significant progress by 2030. This BSIP includes our ZEBRA bid for 141 new zero emissions buses to be deployed across the region by 2024 as well as the

		ambition for more – including the renewal of our AccessBus fleet.

Delivery – does your BSIP detail policies to:	Yes / No	Explanation (max 50 words)
Improvements to passenger engagement		
Passenger charter	Yes	We have developed a draft Passenger Charter which will be agreed with operators as part of our Enhanced Partnership. Key to this are customer guarantees including a 'no quibble' money back guarantee if unsatisfied with the service and commitment to paying for taxis if the last bus is cancelled.
Strengthen network identity	Yes	Building on our ongoing Network Navigation project, we will use the existing, well recognised Metro brand to unify and strengthen the network's identity. This will be made more visible at every stage of the passenger journey, signifying the standard of service they should expect and the support available to them.
Improve bus information	Yes	We will build on our track record of industry leading, open-data driven information services to continue to improve the passenger offer – including through better utilisation of our real time information system, improved management of network disruptions messaging and integration of our ticketing app with our go-to journey planner, Moovit.
Other		
Improve customer service		We want to improve passenger satisfaction through improved customer service and include the ambition to have shared training for all passenger-facing staff, as well as a better coordinated, cross operator system for handling queries and complaints.

2. Our current bus offer

2.1. Policy background

2.1.1. This Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) is set within the context of a number of other regional and national policies relevant to the delivery of local bus services.

The West Yorkshire Transport Strategy (2017)

2.1.2. The **West Yorkshire Transport Strategy 2040** outlines how the Combined Authority plans to deliver on its vision for a globally-recognised economy, where good growth delivers high levels of prosperity, jobs and quality of life for everyone, fundament to which is 'a modern, world-class, well-connected transport system that makes travel around West Yorkshire easy and reliable'.

The West Yorkshire Bus Strategy (2017)

2.1.3. The **West Yorkshire Bus Strategy** is a key element of the wider regional transport strategy. Formally adopted in 2017, it sets out the Combined Authority's long-term ambition for the bus system across West Yorkshire. It sets out a vision to:

2.1.4. "Create a modern, integrated and innovative bus system, which puts customers first and contributes to the delivery of the economic, environmental and quality of life ambitions as set out in the Strategic Economic Plan and the West Yorkshire Transport Strategy"

2.1.5. It also set an ambitious target to grow the number of bus passengers by up to 25% over the next ten years.

2.1.6. Developed in collaboration with local bus operators, the Bus Strategy provides a starting point for this Bus Service Improvement Plan by setting out the basics of what the local bus system needs to deliver.

Bus Information Strategy 2019-2024 (2019)

2.1.7. The Bus Information Strategy sets out the arrangements for how the Combined Authority will provide information on bus services in accordance with its legal obligation set out under section 130 of the Transport Act 2000. It seeks to build upon the significant progress of the 2012-17 Bus Information Strategy, which aimed to encourage customers to obtain journey information using self-service options while also ensuring the provision of information via traditional sources for those who still required them.

The Connectivity Infrastructure Plan and Strategic Bus Network Review (2021)

2.1.8. The Connectivity Infrastructure Plan (2021) aims to ensure that transport should not be a barrier to people accessing jobs, to businesses choosing to invest in West Yorkshire, and to improving the health of our residents and visitors. It sets out a pipeline of future transport interventions covering bus, rail, cycling, walking, and mass transit and demand responsive transport / future mobility solutions. The pipeline looks at the needs for connectivity to 2040 and has been created to:

- Enhance productivity by connecting all of our important places with a focus on our disadvantaged and peripheral groups/communities – for an inclusive economy

- Respond to the region's carbon reduction target - for a sustainable economy

2.1.9.   Progress on a pipeline will help make the case to Government for funding – and help unlock the government's £4.2 billion infrastructure fund linked to the devolution deal, City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement.

2.1.10. The City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) outlined a pipeline of projects to secure a five-year transport settlement from government. Through this, the funding aims to address growth and productivity, levelling up and decarbonisation.

2.1.11. The City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement will enable the Combined Authority to deliver an integrated and inclusive transport network, starting to deliver a mass transit system, making buses work for people and tackle congestion through making public transport, walking and transport the first choice modes.

2.1.12. The package outlined a low, high and high plus scenarios demonstrating the case for investment across the public transport network to help achieve aims around growth and productivity, levelling up and decarbonisation. Through these packages investment in bus can be seen looking to speed up the network and deliver a better service for customers. This will be delivered through investment in bus priority and sustainable travel corridors and through integration funding linking to the delivery of our Bus Service Improvement Plan allowing for investment in ticketing, digitalisation and Demand Responsive Transport.

2.1.13. The Connectivity Infrastructure Plan includes the Strategic Bus Network Review which sets out a series of district-specific interventions that, if delivered, could generate patronage growth focussed on the Core Bus Network (commercial services with a frequency of every 15 minutes or better). It includes a bus demand assessment and projections for three future years, 2024, 2028 and 2033.

The West Yorkshire Future Mobility Strategy (2021)

2.1.14. West Yorkshire Combined Authority has been working with its partners alongside academics, transport operators and industry to explore how technology and innovation in transport can help the region meet its wider goals.

2.1.15. The West Yorkshire Future Mobility Strategy is the result of this work and sets out how new forms of transport and services can help us to build a more prosperous region, improve people's quality of life, and reduce carbon emissions.

2.1.16. The objectives of the Future Mobility Strategy are to:

- Support and enable inclusive growth

- Contribute towards our ambition of becoming zero carbon by 2038 and help to tackle the Climate Emergency

- Help us achieve our targets to increase use of bus, rail, walking and cycling whilst reducing car use.

- Help to better plan and manage our transport networks to transform the affordability, ease and experience of the people using it.

- Contribute towards the region's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.1.17. The Strategy will also set out the principles and priorities for our work on Future Mobility over the next 10 years and inform our funding and investment decisions to ensure we make the best choices for the region to have a better, fairer and greener transport system.

Tackling the climate emergency

2.1.18. This Bus Service Improvement Plan strongly aligns with the Combined Authority's efforts to tackle the climate emergency and protect our environment through reducing emissions. The Combined Authority formally declared a Climate Emergency in 2019, supported by the region's local authorities. This strengthened the ambition for West Yorkshire to become a net zero-carbon economy by 2038, with significant progress by 2030. To meet this target, and to comply with the Paris Agreement, emissions must be reduced by 14.5% year on year, with output levels being halved every five years.

2.1.19. This ambition has been explored through the Carbon Emission Reduction Pathways study, which shows transport as the largest carbon emitting sector in West Yorkshire, contributing 4.4 $MtCO_2e$/yr from road transport alone. The research modelled current and future emission scenarios and demonstrated future sustainability and efficiency of the transport network is key - building sustainable infrastructure, encouraging public transport usage and embracing new technologies. One example used within the report is modelling the use of electric and hydrogen buses, compared to traditional diesel fleets. Across all scenarios, and in line with Government targets, sales of conventional petrol and diesel buses will end by 2031 with the assumption that up to 66% of buses across the region will be powered by electric battery and up to 34% by hydrogen fuel cell.

2.1.20. In addition, the Combined Authority's ambition for Zero Emission Buses is set out through our Zero Emission Bus Roadmap undertaken in 2019, modelling scenarios against carbon emission savings and air quality improvements. By transitioning to a zero-emission bus fleet by 2036, a scenario we can achieve a carbon emission saving of 89%. The Combined Authority's ambition for increasing the proportion of Zero Emission Buses is reflected in a number of recent investments. This includes:

- **Stourton Park and Ride** -which was launched in September 2021 and is a fully solar powered site and served by 5 zero-emission electric buses which operate every 10 minutes along dedicated bus lanes taking just 15 minutes to travel to Leeds City Centre. It has capacity for 1,200 vehicles including 26 electric car charging points, secure cycle storage and dedicated disabled, family and motorcycle bays.

- **East Leeds 'FlexiBus' Demand Responsive Transport trial** – which was launched in September 2021 and is serviced by 7 new, fully accessible, electric vehicles.

- **Zero Emission Bus Regional Area (ZEBRA) bid** – which has been developed in collaboration with all three major local operators – Arriva, First and Transdev – and puts forward a proposal for the delivery of 121 new electric buses and the infrastructure to support them, with funding from the Combined Authority to support deployment across all five district areas.

2.1.21. Urban areas in West Yorkshire have been identified as having some of the highest levels of air pollution (nitrogen dioxide concentrations) in the UK outside of London. Poor air quality in West Yorkshire accounts for 1 in 20 deaths and previous reports, including the West Yorkshire Low Emissions Strategy (WYLES) have shown that unless action is taken, government targets on the level of nitrogen dioxide emissions in the air will not fall below targets. Alongside this, WYLES identifies that carbon dioxide emissions without any change are forecast to rise 28% over the next 20 years in West Yorkshire.

2.1.22. Across the five West Yorkshire districts there are currently 36 Air Quality Management Areas; these are areas in which emissions are over the statutory limits and that require a Local Air Quality Action Plan to bring levels within the legal limits. Different districts have taken different approaches with the specification of AQMAs as can be seen by the variance in geographic scope in the following graphic.

2.2. The West Yorkshire Bus Alliance

2.2.1. The West Yorkshire Bus Alliance was established in 2019 and is a legal Voluntary Partnership Agreement between the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, the five West Yorkshire Districts and all local bus operators.

2.2.2. Together the Alliance has achieved:

- The introduction of an Under 19 fares deal to provide cheaper travel for young people travelling on any service in the region.

- Secured funding and managed the delivery of over 400 retrofitted buses to make local buses cleaner and greener

- Collaborative working through the Covid-19 pandemic, which ensured services ran for essential travel and supported passengers to stay safe – including the publication of new bus crowdedness information.

2.2.3. Through the West Yorkshire Bus Alliance, the Combined Authority has taken steps to address the failures of deregulation and worked with operators to ensure buses have been available throughout lockdown and beyond. However, the economic pressures created by the pandemic and the urgent need to put services on a sustainable footing for the long-term, means further action is needed now.

The West Yorkshire Bus Alliance Review (2021)

2.2.4. A peer review of the West Yorkshire Bus Alliance was conducted in 2021 to evaluate progress since its inception in 2019, acknowledging any positive progress made but also considering any improvements it could implement moving forward. The review found that:

- Close collaboration fostered over many years between Alliance members has proved invaluable, especially in managing the Covid-19 response.

- This collaboration needs to go further to achieve buy-in from key stakeholders, particularly the local authorities.

- The Alliance has been functional to date but now needs to change as the Alliance Voluntary partnership Agreement evolves to a new governance mechanism.

- There is some disappointment in the pace and progress of Alliance delivery which needs to be addressed, potentially through workstream refinement and targeted resource.

- Raising the identity and presence of the Alliance has become critical to reinforce its impact.

- The Alliance developing into recovery and enhanced partnerships is a positive step and will provide future stability and funding.

MCard - West Yorkshire Ticketing Company Ltd (WYTCL)

2.2.5. A statutory ticketing scheme enables the existing MCard multi operator, multi modal smart ticketing offer in West Yorkshire. This provides a range of day and season ticket products delivered on ITSO smartcard and mobile barcode app. MCard is the largest smart ticketing scheme outside London

2.2.6. Prior to the pandemic, the sales turnover of MCard was £34 million per year. The scheme is administered by the Combined Authority under the direction of the West Yorkshire Ticketing Company Ltd (WYTCL). WYTCL is a joint venture company co-owned by the Combined Authority, bus and rail operators.

2.2.7. The existence of a statutory ticketing scheme which compels all bus operators to accept MCard and a mature governance structure with WYTCL places West Yorkshire in a very advantageous position to develop multi operator ticketing and capping under the MCard brand.

2.2.8. Additionally, the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Sheffield City Region Combined Authority are co-owners of Yorcard Ltd, a company initially established to operate and develop the ITSO smart ticketing infrastructure and has recently developed the MCard Mobile barcode ticketing capability for WYTCL.

2.3. Existing bus services

2.3.1. As set out in the previous sections of this document, West Yorkshire has an existing, extensive network of bus services, as well as a mature governance structures and other bodies which support the delivery of this across multiple local operators, the five district areas and the Combined Authority. The delivery of programmes such as the Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme has demonstrated that with investment real change in the bus offer can happen.

2.3.2. However, despite these positives, bus patronage in the region is decline, with the number of bus trips falling from around 170 million bus trips in 2009 to around 144 million in 2018/19. While this is reflective of the overall trend across England, passenger journeys per head of population are declining at an even faster rate in West Yorkshire than the average across England. This, alongside both the perceived failure of the bus deregulation and the impact of the Covid-19 on the industry, presents a clear case for action to improve the existing offer.

2.3.3. A full Case for Change, identifying all challenges and opportunities relating to existing bus services in West Yorkshire, is included as **Appendix A** to this report.

2.3.4. In summary, there are number of key factors that have a negative impact on passengers' experience of using existing bus services in West Yorkshire. These include:

2.3.5. **A network that is difficult to use and not meeting travel needs** – an unequal network with different provision across West Yorkshire that is not designed to meet customer needs. Existing provision has been shaped by historic demand patterns, with 60% of bus routes requiring some level of financial support from public funds.

2.3.6. **A perception of poor value for money** – the cost of bus travel has risen in West Yorkshire; research shows that nationally, there has been a 56% increase in bus fares over the past 20 years, after adjusting for inflation. This means bus travel is currently too expensive and unaffordable for many customers and nearly 50% are not confident about purchasing the best value bus ticket for their journey.

2.3.7. **Poor quality of some waiting environments** – existing bus stations and stops, as well as vehicles themselves, are often perceived as unclean, unsafe and unappealing which add to a general stigma surrounding bus travel.

2.3.8. **A network which is not consistently reliable** – analysis of real time information confirms that buses across the region have consistently underperformed against targets. Traffic congestion is a significant factor in bus reliability together with operational resilience. There is also variability in the standard and design of bus priority measures and enforcement, which is adding to these poor outcomes for customers

2.3.9. **Highway policy** – a lack of consistent highway policy across West Yorkshire has resulted in patchy bus priority measures and differing parking measures and enforcement. Moving forward, there needs to be better understanding of demand management, enforcement and parking measures across West Yorkshire. A consistent approach could help ease congestion and create a more attractive bus service, helping to achieve a reduction in car trips.

2.3.10. **Road space reallocation** – there is no consistent approach or overarching strategy for road reallocation. Road space reallocation is integral to the Bus Service Improvement Plan, including better bus priority measures and integration across public and active travel modes.

2.3.11. Cumulatively, these factors mean existing bus services in West Yorkshire fall short of what passengers expect of their local bus system and present a serious challenge to future patronage growth. Furthermore, they identify why the local bus system fails to provide, to the fullest extent possible, the wider benefits to the region that a better system could - including improved economic productivity and social inclusivity. To unlock the full benefits of buses in West Yorkshire, this Bus Service Improvement Plan needs to address these factors specifically.

2.4. Local Transport Authority financial support for bus operators

2.4.1. The West Yorkshire bus network is dominated by three major operators largely providing radial services into the major towns and cities in the region. They provide 85% of total bus miles on a commercial basis. The remaining 15% (9.5m miles pa) operates under contract with the Combined Authority at a net cost of £16.5m pa.

2.4.2. Rural, orbital and other connecting services mostly operate under contract with the Combined Authority funded by 55% of the budget for supported services.

2.4.3. Since deregulation, bus operators have assessed the commercial viability of services on a route and journey by journey basis. This has necessitated the Combined Authority funding early morning, evening and weekend journeys in routes which operate on a commercial basis at times of the week when demand is higher. 65% of the Combined Authority spending on supported bus services enables the temporal extension of otherwise commercial routes. Only 38% of all bus routes in West Yorkshire operate with no supported journeys whatsoever.

2.4.4. Around 9.5 m bus miles per annum (15%) operate with financial support under contract with the Combined Authority. Only 38% of bus routes operate without any contracted journeys. The Combined Authority currently spends a net £16m pa on contracted bus services. 55% of this spend supports wholly tendered routes, the remaining 45% funds journeys on otherwise commercial routes

2.4.5. **Figure 3**, below, shows a breakdown of mileage and purpose by supported bus services. It indicates that subsidised services are important to support access for employment, potentially outside of the 9-5 work pattern, travel on Sundays and for supporting communities without a daytime bus service.

Figure 3: Supported Bus Mileage in West Yorkshire
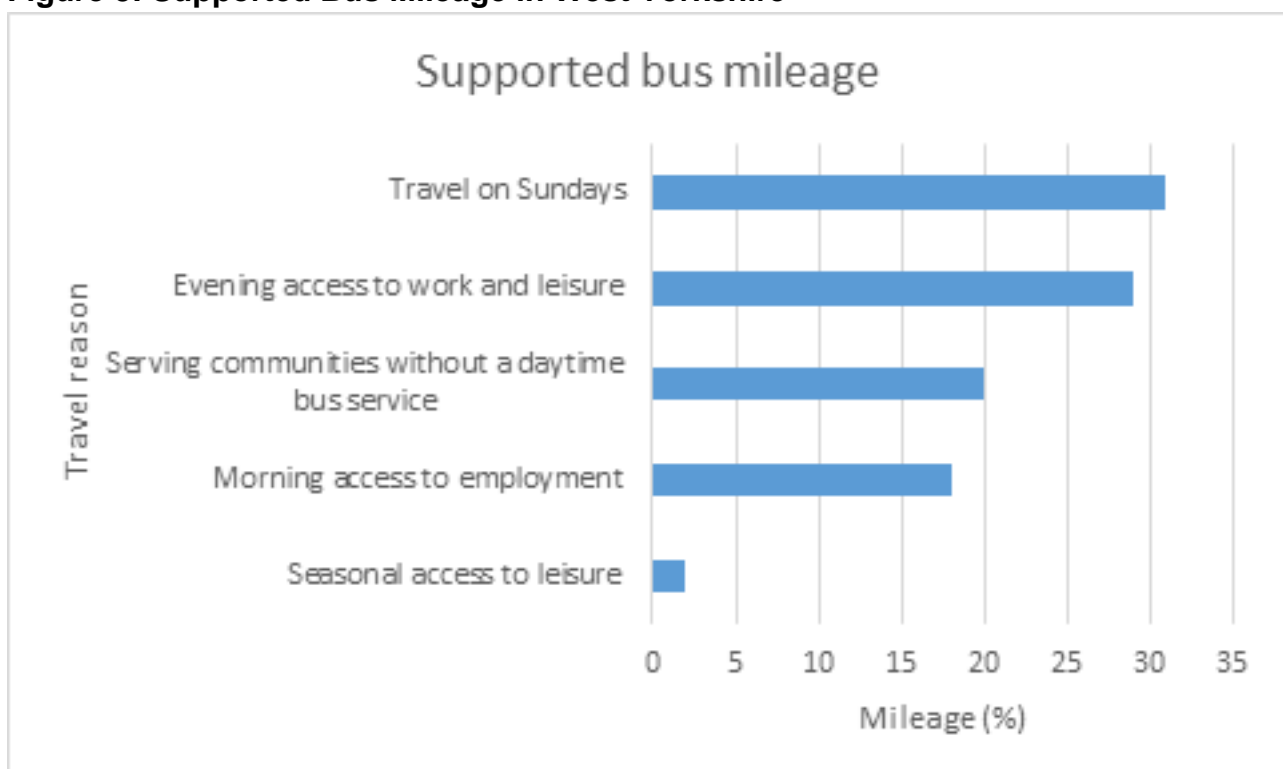
2.5. Understanding local passengers

2.5.1. Understanding what people want from public transport services and their wider travel needs should be at the forefront of improving buses.

2.5.2. 'Putting customers first' is at the core of the West Yorkshire Bus Strategy but when talking about improving services and increasing market patronage, bus passengers are often talked about uniformly.

2.5.3. This BSIP realises that the bus passenger market – and the West Yorkshire population more broadly - is diverse, with many different factors at play that encourage or form barriers to travel for individuals. Understanding different passengers and their behaviours is crucial to retaining them, attracting new passengers and growing the bus market, and ultimately delivering a better bus service for the region

Public engagement

2.5.4. **Table 4**, below, summarises the consultation and engagement that has taken place with key stakeholders in recent years:

Table 4 – Summary of West Yorkshire Consultation and Engagement

Consultation & Engagement	Description
West Yorkshire Transport Strategy 2040 (2016)	Public consultation focused on the strategy aims of enhancing business success and people's lives by providing modern, world-class, well-connected transport that makes travel around West Yorkshire easy and reliable
West Yorkshire Bus Strategy 2040 (2016)	Public consultation focused on the strategy aims of creating a modern, integrated and innovative bus system, which puts customers first and contributes to the delivery of the economic, environmental and quality of life ambitions as set out in the West Yorkshire Transport Strategy
Leeds Transport Conversation (2016)	In partnership with Leeds City Council, the public consultation focused on speaking to the communities of Leeds about the future of transport in the city
Bus18 Youth Voice (2018)	A workshop with members of the West Yorkshire Bus Alliance and youth representatives of the regional youth councils to discuss improving bus travel for young people in the region. See summary report in **Appendix B**
West Yorkshire Bus Information Strategy (2019)	Public consultation seeking feedback on how bus service information is provided that best meets people's requirements
Fare Deal for Young People (2020)	Public consultation seeking views on proposals to improve the system for bus fares for young people
Leeds Core Bus Network (2020)	Public consultation regarding the proposals to make it easier to plan and take bus journeys through user friendly, accessible maps and colour coded on-street infrastructure

Future Mobility Strategy (2020)	Public consultation in relation to the strategy's focus on how innovation, technology and new ways of travelling can help to create a better, fairer and greener transport system
West Yorkshire Connectivity Infrastructure Plan (2021)	Public consultation seeking feedback on aims to better connect places, communities and economic assets within West Yorkshire and beyond
Bus Service Improvement Plan Stakeholder Roundtable with the Mayor of West Yorkshire (2021)	A workshop with the Mayor of West Yorkshire and local bus user groups and key stakeholders to understand their ambitions for bus reform and the key outcomes that need to be delivered for the passenger
West Yorkshire Police and Crime Plan (2021 – On-going)	Public consultation seeking views on the strategic policing and crime priorities for West Yorkshire

2.5.5. Key stakeholders who interact with local passengers regularly and have important insight regarding how bus services can be improved, have also been engaged in this process through regular working group sessions, open forums, and workshops. This includes:

- All large and smaller operators in West Yorkshire
- Local authorities
- Transport Focus
- West Yorkshire Ticketing Company
- Local passenger groups
- Local equality and accessibility groups

Letters of support from some of these organisations are included in **Appendix K**.

Future Consultation*:*

2.5.6. As part of the requirements for statutory public consultation through the Enhanced Partnership, further engagement will take place with key stakeholders and members of the public as follows:

2.5.7. **Enhanced Partnership Forum** – members of the West Yorkshire Bus Alliance, as well as passenger interest groups and authorities in neighbouring areas

2.5.8. **November 2021** – informal consultation and engagement through 7 focus groups with the following stakeholder groups:

- Modal connectivity – active travel and rail
- Equality and those with protected characteristics
- Education and Young People
- Business and Major Local Employers
- Tourism/Retail
- A summary session with all the stakeholders above to discuss the outcomes of the focus groups, and provide opportunity to check and challenge ideas coming forward

- **Phase 1 Public Consultation** (January / February 2022) – statutory public consultation on the Enhanced Partnership Plan and Initial Enhanced Partnership Scheme

- **Phase 2 Public Consultation** (Summer 2022) - statutory public consultation on the remaining Enhanced Partnership Schemes

Defining different passenger types

2.5.9. There are a number of primary ways we currently identify different bus passengers. At a broad level, West Yorkshire residents and visitors can be sorted into three key categories – regular, occasional and non-bus users (see **Table 5** below).

Table 5 – Definitions of Regular, Occasional and Non-bus Users

|	
Regular bus user - uses bus at least once per week. Approx. 39% in 2019/20 based on figures for 'At least 4 days per week' (17%), '1 to 3 days per weeks' (22%).	These passengers likely use bus as their primary mode of transport, particularly for travel to work or other regular, essential purposes such as to access healthcare service or shopping. These passengers are likely to use season tickets but may be interested in more flexible ticketing offers.
Occasional bus user - uses bus less that once per week but at least once every 3 months. Approx 21% in 2019/20 based on figures for '1 to 3 times per month' (15%), 'Every 2 to 3 months' (6%)	These passengers likely do not use bus as their primary mode of transport but do use it occasionally, largely for leisure purposes and for either ad-hoc journeys or to travel to particular locations. They are most likely to use single and return fares.
Non bus user - rarely (less than every 3 months) or never uses buses. Approx. 40% in 2019/20 based on figures for 'Once or twice a year' (10%) and 'Less than once per year' (3%) or never' (27%).	These passengers rarely use bus and it is definitely not their primary mode of transport – they would only ever use bus by exception or for irregular journeys.

2.5.10. The Combined Authority's Public Perceptions of Transport Survey tracks frequency of travel as 'At least 4 days per week', '1 to 3 days per weeks', '1 to 3 times per month', 'Every 2 to 3 months', 'Once or twice a year' and 'Less than once a year' or 'never' which helps us estimate the approximate number of passengers and the proportion of the regional population that these categories comprise.

2.5.11. Over the last 8 years that the survey has been conducted, the proportion of people using bus in West Yorkshire has fluctuated, with those using buses most frequently (at least 4 days per week) changing from between approximately 15% and 22%. In 2019/20, 17% of bus users were in this category.[1] To improve buses in West Yorkshire, efforts need to be made to retain and grow the number of regular bus users and support non bus users to become occasional bus users.

2.5.12. Bus users can also be categorised by age (and other characteristics) which determine their eligibility for certain ticket types and concessionary fares. The below pie chart, Figure 4, identifies these key categories and the approximate number of these passengers who travelled on bus in West Yorkshire per weekday, prior to the Covid 19 pandemic. The largest category in this sense was the adult market, approximately 47% of the total and comprised of 221,000 daily passengers.

2.5.13. Understanding how the market is broken down into these different categories is important for many reasons, including understanding the different fares and revenue streams. A large full-fare-paying adult market is important for the financial stability of the bus network, giving the highest return per ticket sale, but an offer entirely targeted to their needs would likely exclude other passenger types and limit bus's wider social value.

Figure 4 – Composition of the West Yorkshire Bus Passenger Market (March 2020)
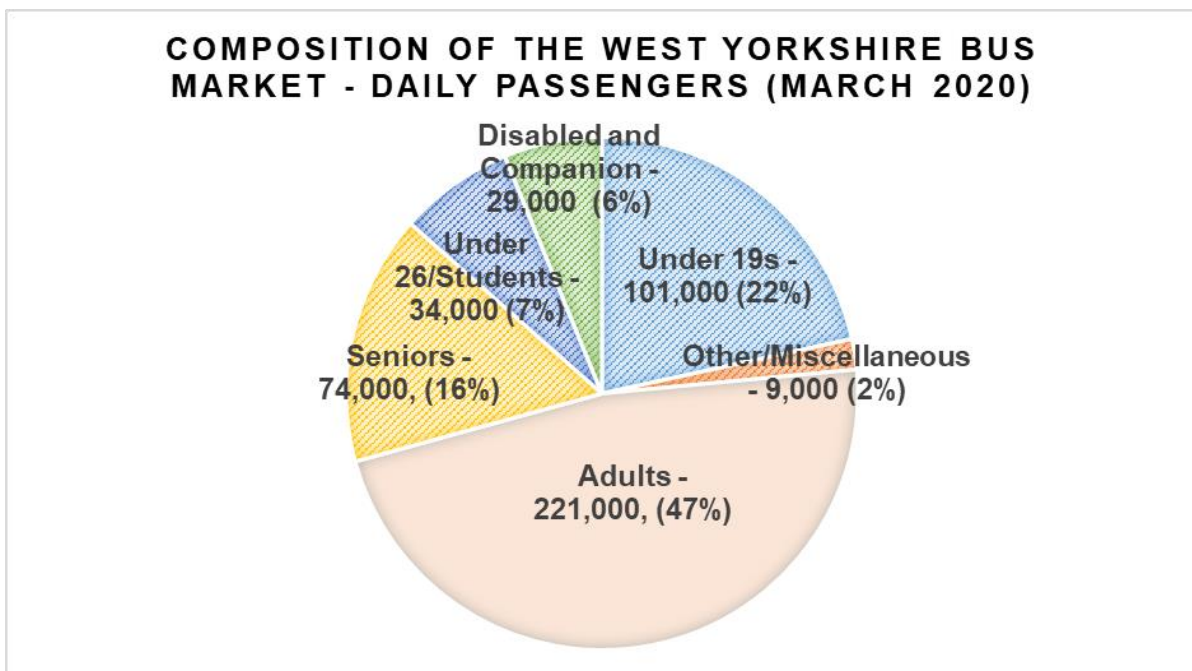
Source: Bus operator ticketer data (March 2020)

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[1] West Yorkshire Public Perceptions of Transport Survey, April 2020

Developing our approach

2.5.14.Although these broad categorisations are useful, frequency of use and age/ticket eligibility are not the only factors that determine a passenger's relationship with bus. They do not capture the many other behaviours, barriers and motivations that influence why, when and how someone chooses to use the bus, and thus are limited in what they can reveal about the best ways to reform and improve the overall bus offer.

2.5.15.Understanding different passenger types in more detail supports development of more effective behaviour change initiatives and helps to prioritise different elements of reform through the likely number or specific subsect of people they would attract on to the bus. Some structural changes to the running of bus services could bring about mass benefits, but it is accepted many interventions will have a more targeted appeal and support bus use by specific types of passengers.

Introducing our personas

2.5.16.As part of our passenger-first approach to bus reform, we have initially developed six example passenger personas (see **Figure 5** below) to frame the ongoing discussion and development of an appropriate strategy for improving the West Yorkshire bus offer.

2.5.17.These personas do not capture all passengers but seek to reflect the variety of experience different people face when it comes to using - or not using buses - and highlight different behaviours, barriers and influences at an individual level.

Figure 5 – West Yorkshire Bus Passenger Personas

West Yorkshire Bus Passenger Personas

	Regular Bus Users		Occasional Bus Users		Non-bus Users	
	Regular commuter into city centre	**Young job seeker**	**Professional with flexible travel patterns**	**Young rural resident**	**Regular commuter to out of town industrial site**	**Occasional leisure traveller**
Passenger type						
Behaviour and influences	• Reliant on bus to travel daily into city centre for work. • Has a M-Card season ticket. • Unhappy with the punctuality and reliability of services.	• Reliant on bus but poorly served by local bus network and connections to employment. • Unhappy with the cost of travel. • Undetermined travel patterns and needs to navigate network.	• Uses bus because of satisfaction with local service. • Travels irregularly across W.Yorks and beyond by bus and other modes. • Frequently WFH and keen for new ticketing options.	• Poorly served by local bus network. • Benefits from young person travel concessionary fares. • Increasingly has independent travel needs - sees car use as the best option for fulfilment.	• Private car user. • Works shifts but travels daily to same out of town location. • Enjoys personal freedom and flexible of car use – but dissatisfied with peak time traffic.	• Private car user. • Travels primarily for leisure. • Limited knowledge of local bus offer and where to gain this information.

Gathering evidence and passenger insight

2.5.18.To develop these initial draft passenger personas, a range of bus passenger insight studies have been considered, alongside some generally accepted truths and expertise shared by Combined Authority officers.

2.5.19.However, these personas will need to be developed more thoroughly in the future to provide a truly representative and statistically sound basis for further consideration, which will then help target interventions through bus reform.

2.5.20.As part of the ongoing delivery of this BSIP, the Combined Authority plans to conduct a focused piece of research work exploring barriers and motivations to bus travel, as well as potential behaviour change initiatives that could support modal shift.

2.5.21.Extensive passenger engagement and public consultation will also need to take place to test and further explore our understanding of passengers' wants, needs and their own ambitions for bus reform.

Listening to passengers and communities - our commitments

2.5.22.To support this BSIP, the Combined Authority's ambition is that our Enhanced Partnership with local councils and bus operators will include commitments to listen and respond to people through:

- Market research and face to face sessions to listen to what people say. This will build upon our rich experience of gathering passenger insight and intelligence though our annual Public Perceptions of Transport Survey, the Covid-19 Transport Survey, State of the Region and other reports.

- Targeted engagement with key customer groups including women, young people, and people of protected characteristics, to ensure we understand the diverse and specific needs of different demographics – and that we are not just serving certain groups.

- Formal and informal sessions with elected members and community groups to ensure we are always responsive to the needs and issues of local people.

- Formal public consultation to meet statutory requirements of delivery of services.

- Monitoring of KPIs to ensure our investment is improving customer satisfaction.

- Ongoing partnership working with the independent watchdog, Transport Focus, to help us to understand and evidence the priorities of bus users at both a local and national level.

2.6. Our key strategic themes

2.6.1. The following section outlines the key themes that are central to the Combined Authority's vision for better buses in West Yorkshire. These take into account our analysis of the challenges and opportunities presented by the existing network, as well as our wider organisation's strategy and policy ambitions. These are:

A safe and inclusive bus system

2.6.2. This means getting the basics right including ensuring all our buses and related passenger services are fully accessible for those with physical disabilities and other health and social needs. More broadly, we need to reimagine how we design services and attract customers to our bus system so that it better serves more people than just the traditional urban commuter. This includes providing new services that operate for longer periods of the day, offer more flexibility, and are easier to understand and use. It is imperative that our buses are safe, and everyone feels safe when they travel by bus. We will deliver initiatives that support women and girls – and other vulnerable groups - to feel empowered to travel by bus when they want to, without the fear of intimidation or anti-social behaviour.

2.6.3. The Combined Authority understands that many factors – such as the provision of accessibility support, actual and perceptions of safety while travelling, and other operational and structural issues – means the existing bus system does not currently serve everyone equally which both impacts overall satisfaction and can deter use altogether.

2.6.4. Section 2.5 of this BSIP set out the Combined Authority's ambition to understand local bus passengers in greater detail by social demographics and their different travel behaviours which will be key first step to creating a fully safe and inclusive bus network.

2.6.5. Full accessibility is a fundamental aspect of the Combined Authority's vision for a safe and inclusive bus system. In West Yorkshire more than one in five working age residents are disabled or have a work-limiting disability, and this figure is significantly higher in people over state pension age. An improved local bus system will require consistent and high-quality accessibility support at every stage of a bus journey.

2.6.6. Evidence shows certain groups, particularly women and girls as well as people of other protected characteristics, are more likely to feel nervous or unsafe while travelling on bus. This is in large part because of and compounded by wider, complex societal issues, but improvements to the local bus system can and should still play a role in overcoming these problems and supporting an increase to everyone's actual and perceived safety within the West Yorkshire region.

2.6.7. The Combined Authority's bid to the Home Office for support from the Safety of Women at Night Fund, submitted in July 2021, focussed on transport interventions to support improvements to women's safety and its strategy has been incorporated into this BSIP (see **section 4.2.35** for further information). The bid is included as **Appendix C** to this report.

2.6.8. A specific call for evidence to improve safety for women and girls across the region was included as part of the Combined Authority's consultation on the West Yorkshire Police and Crime Plan 2021-2024 which will conclude in November 2021. As part of this consultation evaluation, the Combined Authority will seek to identify any issues relevant to the local bus network, and transport provision generally.

2.6.9. Beyond safety, emerging research identifies the impact of gender bias on transport planning and existing public transport networks, including the perpetuation on gender inequalities. For example, in Caroline Criado's 'Invisible Women: Exposing Data Bias in a World Designed for Men' (2019) she highlights how:

- Ingrained patterns of work mean that men are more likely to do the '2-way commute', while women are more likely to take more complex 'chains' of trips (dropping children off, shopping, caring responsibilities etc).

- That women are more likely to use public transport, while men are more likely to drive.

- But that the public transport networks are geared towards centres of employment and around traditional peak hour working patterns, not the more complex (and challenging to serve) trip patterns of many women.

- That data on trip making needs by gender were rarely, if ever, used in the planning of these networks. Often such data is not even available.

- That this gender bias then extends to funding - whereby taking funding out of the bus networks and cutting services disproportionality impacts women more than men. It also exacerbates the impacts of inequality of income and across areas of deprivation.

2.6.10. As part of this BSIP, it is the Combined Authority's ambition to understand this problem in more detail and its impact in a specific West Yorkshire context, identify and deliver potential solutions to overcome it and, ultimately to achieve a fully inclusive network free from biases against gender and other social characteristics.

Better connected communities

2.6.11. West Yorkshire is a large region with multiple different urban centres, as well as many towns and villages. Our bus network needs to connect these different communities - particularly areas of high deprivation - to ensure the people living in them have fair access to all the employment, education and leisure opportunities that our region has to offer. The solutions to provide this - shaped by existing and potential passenger demand - will not be the same everywhere. However, it is crucial that buses provide a relevant and reliable way to get to the places that matter to our communities such as health facilities, high-street shops, out-of-town employment sites and retail parks, education, parks, and other places of cultural and community interest. We also need to extend the hours of the day that buses serve these communities and aim for a better frequency and regularity of services throughout the week so that the lack of convenient bus routes and timetables do not leave communities of West Yorkshire cut off from the thriving region around them.

2.6.12. Analysis shows that while 97% of addresses within the region are within 400m of a bus stop, this drops to 67% when mapped against our 'core' network of high frequency services. Access also varies greatly when broken down by district area – for example 79% of addresses in Leeds are within 400m of a bus stop on the core network compared to 60% in Kirkless. While this unequal access is in part because of demand and other factors such as geography, it highlights the need to both expand the existing bus network and look at other models, such as demand responsive transport, which could ensure connectivity is more fairly provided.

2.6.13. Furthermore, as part of the Combined Authority's ambition to ensure buses - and public transport more broadly - support inclusive growth, analysis has sought to understand the state of bus connectivity in areas of high deprivation within the region. Many of the areas not served by the core network of high frequency bus services are also the most deprived 20% according to IMD Barriers to Housing and Services. Interestingly, it highlights that provision is better in highly deprived areas where they fall around a major town or city. Deprived areas further away from major conurbations face some of the worst connectivity. These inequalities must be addressed – through BSIP interventions and other programmes - as we seek better connectivity and improved prosperity for all local communities.

Decarbonisation and integrated sustainable travel

2.6.14. In 2019 the West Yorkshire Combined Authority declared a climate emergency. As part of our response to this we committed to becoming a net-zero carbon economy by 2038. Supporting bus travel can –and must– play a major role in achieving this. Currently transport emits the most carbon of any key sector in West Yorkshire, with more than 90% of transport emissions coming from cars and vans. Enabling more journeys by bus will be integral to reducing this. But just 1% of all buses operating in West Yorkshire are zero emission, which must be improved as a priority. Buses must also be better integrated as part of a multimodal public transport offer so that alongside rail travel, cycling and walking, customers are able to make sustainable door-to-door journeys.

2.6.15. Currently, 1% of buses operating in West Yorkshire are zero emission, with 3% of vehicles being hybrid. The 121 buses included within this bid would increase the proportion across the region to 10%, with the potential of decreasing carbon emissions by 57 tonnes a year. Furthermore, this proposal targets zero emission buses on routes through poor air quality areas. These routes also correspond with priority routes for electrification as identified in the Combined Authority's Zero Emission Bus Roadmap which prioritises routes of greatest need based on CAZ and AQMA data.

2.6.16. A green, zero emission bus system is a core element of the Combined Authority's long-term vision for buses in West Yorkshire. To support this BSIP, we are retaining our key commitments to all buses being EURO VI or alternative by 2026, and to transition to a fully zero-emission bus fleet by 2036, with significant progress by 2030 (as part of wider organisational ambition for the region to be a net-zero carbon economy by 2038). Beyond the obvious environmental benefits, the new vehicles that will be required to achieve this will also play an important role in enabling the high standard of onboard facilities and accessibility support that we want to see across the fleet.

2.6.17.The Combined Authority's current Zero Emission Bus Regional Area (ZEBRA) bid is a key way we will work, in partnership with local operators, towards this greener bus fleet in the short to medium term. This bid is currently in development after passing through first stage approval by the Department for Transport. If successful, the scheme will deliver 121 zero emission electric buses across West Yorkshire by 2024. Beyond this ZEBRA bid, the Combined Authority will work with bus manufacturers and the Department for Transport to enable more zero emission buses to come to market and make them common place.

2.7. Our vision and objectives

2.7.1. Our Bus Service Improvement Plan builds on the ambitions set out in the West Yorkshire Transport Strategy (2040), the West Yorkshire Bus Strategy (2017) and the West Yorkshire Connectivity Infrastructure Plan (2021), which put connectivity and sustainable travel at heart of a thriving and inclusive regional economy where everyone can build great businesses, careers and lives.

2.7.2. **To support our vision for West Yorkshire, the Bus Service Improvement Plan must:**

- Be inclusive of all groups in society.

- Support inclusive growth and social well-being ambitions of West Yorkshire.

- Contribute to improved economic productivity in West Yorkshire.

- Provide cleaner, greener buses supporting sustainable travel and contributing to the environmental targets of West Yorkshire.

- Be as competitive as possible against private car use in urban areas.

2.7.3. **To achieve this, the objectives of the Bus Service Improvement Plan are to:**

- Establish bus as a key mode of choice for travel in West Yorkshire.

- Establish a financially sustainable bus service.

- Improve operational delivery to provide the passenger with a service they can feel confident in using.

- Improve connectivity for communities facing deprivation, inequality and exclusion.

- Ensure the bus service is integrated to deliver sustainable connectivity

3. Headline targets

3.1.1. This BSIP puts forward an ambitious vision for better buses in West Yorkshire. This is reflected in our ambitious targets for decreased journey times, improved reliability and punctuality of bus services, increased bus patronage and customer satisfaction, as well as additional indicators focused on other key strategic objectives of our plan.

3.2. Developing our Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

3.2.1. This BSIP's KPIs and targets have been developed based upon:

3.2.2. **What matters to passengers** - the Combined Authority has reviewed and analysed passenger insight / research and targeted KPIs to ensure they are driving forward and measuring the changes that matter to passengers.

3.2.3. **The initiatives contained within the BSIP** – the KPIs have also been selected to meaningfully measure the impact of the initiatives proposed within this BSIP and ensure they are delivering improvements for the passenger.

3.2.4. **Existing policy and strategy targets** - the West Yorkshire Transport Strategy 2040 sets out a mid-point transport target of 25% more trips made by bus by 2027, and is underpinned by a commitment to inclusive growth, the environment, health and wellbeing.

3.2.5. **Transport Focus guidance** - Transport Focus have produced guidance documents aimed at supporting authorities in drawing up their BSIPs by outlining core principles and practical advice. This includes a guide on Setting Targets in Bus Service Improvement Plans, released June 2021.

3.2.6. **Strategic priorities** – better transport, as well supporting equality, diversity and inclusion are central to the strategic priorities of the Combined Authority (see section 2.6 for further details). These key priorities are also outlined through local Mayoral pledges.

3.3. Our KPIs and targets

3.3.1. **Table 6** below, identifies our primary Key Performance Indicators and targets, which will be used to measure the success of delivering this BSIP against our ambition.

3.3.2. Importantly, to achieve these targets, the Combined Authority will require sufficient BSIP and other funding support - particularly with regards to the delivery of bus priority schemes which will be vital to enable improved journey times, punctuality and reliability.

Table 6 – Primary KPIs and Targets

Key theme	Key Performance Indicator	Baseline		Targets	
		Mar 2019	Mar 2021	2025	2030
All three themes	Increased bus patronage	10,801,487	4,483,340	2019 levels + 15%	2019 levels + 30%
	Increased customer satisfaction with local bus services (score 1-10)	6.7	6.9	7.5	8
	Weekday mode share on radial routes into district centres moved from car to bus	Bus 18%, Car 61% (2018/19)	N/A	Increase bus share by 5%	Increase bus share by 10%
Safe and inclusive bus network	Improved service provision (bus miles) for those travelling in the early morning and evening	226,749	197,800	2.5% increase	5% increase
	Improved satisfaction with personal security while on the bus	81% (autumn 2019)	N/A	85%	90%
	Improved satisfaction with personal safety at the bus stop for female passengers making complex journeys	80% (autumn 2019)	N/A	85%	90%
	Improved passenger satisfaction with value for money	62% (autumn 2019)	N/A	70%	85%
	Improved satisfaction with information provided on the bus for passengers with disabilities	63% (autumn 2019)	N/A	70%	85%
Better connected communities	Improved journey times (mins/mile)	4.72	4.36	10% reduction	15% reduction
	Improved punctuality	88%	90%	95%	99.5%
	Improved reliability	98%	99%	99.5%	99.5%
	Improved housing accessibility via the core bus network	48%	51%	55%	65%
	Improved employment accessibility via the core bus network	56%	N/A	60%	70%
Decarbonisation and integrated, sustainable travel	Improved environmental performance and reduced carbon emissions of the bus network	39% Euro VI, 0% zero emission (Q3 19/20)	59% Euro VI, 1% zero emission	100% Euro VI fleet 10% zero emissions fleet	50% zero emissions fleet

3.4. How we will measure our KPIs

3.4.1. The following section outlines how the Combined Authority will measure each primary KPI.

Improved journey times:

3.4.2. The Combined Authority has access to historic real time information (RTI) based on bus automatic vehicle location (AVL) systems. We are able to calculate the average time taken (including dwell time) per bus stop level observation in West Yorkshire from the bus departing its journey origin to arriving at its journey destination for those operators that supply AVL data to the RTI system. By combining these with distances between stops from the Combined Services and Assets (CoSA) system for those same operators' services, vehicle journey times can be reported at different levels of granularity. We have established a bespoke process to calculate the baseline position that is repeatable at intervals of 6 months. We will explore options to analyse further granularity in journey time data.

Improved punctuality:

3.4.3. Baseline punctuality has been measured from AVL data covering a period of 3 months (January to March of the year considered). The indicator is defined as the proportion of non-frequent services on time, given by the formula: **(0.5) * (% of buses starting their route on time) + (0.5) * (% of buses on time at intermediate timing points)**

3.4.4. 'On time' is defined as between 1.00 minute early and 5 minutes 59 seconds late.

3.4.5. Non-frequent services are those with a frequency of less than 6 buses per hour.

3.4.6. We include indicators for weekdays (at different times of the day) and weekends, at West Yorkshire-area level. At this point in time, we are providing an indicator for non-frequent services only; however, we intend to explore an excess waiting time measure for frequent services, using the DfT methodology, based on a refined version of our RTI data.

Improved reliability:

3.4.7. Reliability is defined as the number of miles operated relative to those scheduled to run. These statistics are gathered and processed by operators and shared with the Combined Authority in virtue of the ongoing West Yorkshire Bus Alliance's data sharing agreements.

Increased bus patronage:

3.4.8. We will use ticket machine data provided by the three major operators in West Yorkshire to calculate patronage estimates. In this submission, we present major patronage indicators by time of the day and day of the week at a West Yorkshire area level, but we will work with the bus operators to explore further granularity.

Increased customer satisfaction with local bus services:

3.4.9. The Combined Authority procures the annual Public Perceptions of Transport Survey, which explores residents' attitudes towards transport provision in West Yorkshire. One question covers satisfaction with local bus services, meaning there is an existing measure which can be applied directly to BSIP as an annual indicator.

Weekday mode share on radial routes into district centres moved from car to bus:

3.4.10. West Yorkshire's partner districts undertake an annual cordon survey around their major district centres in order to obtain a regular snapshot of transport modal share. This provides an existing data set which can be used as an annual BSIP indicator.

Improved environmental performance and reduced carbon emissions of the bus network:

3.4.11. The Combined Authority declared a Climate Emergency in 2019, supported by the Region's local authorities. This strengthened the ambition for West Yorkshire to become a net zero-carbon economy by 2038, with significant progress by 2030. Improved environmental performance and reduced carbon emissions will be supported by use of the highest Euro standard bus fleet and an increase in the number of zero emission vehicles. The West Yorkshire Zero Emission Bus Regional Area bid contains baseline statistics which have been used to form this indicator, building on the Carbon Emission Reduction Pathways study that informs the future decarbonisation of the bus fleet.

Improved service provision for those travelling in the early morning and evening:

3.4.12. Enhanced bus provision to assist vulnerable users is a core element of the Combined Authority's commitment to enhancing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion for people travelling outside traditional commuting hours. Additional service provision in the non-peak hours (school weeks before 7am and after 6pm) may help people who travel at these times feel more comfortable, safe and empowered to use public transport. Scheduled bus mileage is available via our CoSA database. We have produced bespoke baseline figures for BSIP, for different time periods. CoSA also allows the reporting of the proportion of services being run under contract.

Improved housing accessibility by bus via the core bus network:

3.4.13. Housing accessibility will be measured as the proportion of West Yorkshire residents living within 800 m distance of a core bus network stop. The accessibility analysis (distance to core stops) will be conducted using accessibility software (TRACC). The in-scope population will be estimated at output area level i.e. assuming all the population of an area is concentrated in its centroid (population weighted).

Improved employment accessibility by bus via the core bus network:

3.4.14. Employment accessibility will be measured as the proportion of the West Yorkshire working-age population able to access a major employment centre within 45 minutes, using the core bus network. Major employment centres are defined as those areas (lsoas) with more than 1,500 employees, according to the Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES). The origin-destination analysis (journey times) will be conducted using accessibility software (TRACC), with the following parameters:

- Origins: output area centroids
- Destinations: major employment area centroids

- Time period: weekday, from 06:30 am to 18:30 pm

Improved satisfaction with personal security while on the bus / Improved satisfaction with personal safety at the bus stop for females making complex journeys:

3.4.15. Transport Focus run the Bus Passenger Survey which has been on an annual basis before the Covid-19 pandemic. Two questions cover satisfaction with personal safety at the bus stop and personal security while on the bus. Data is available at West Yorkshire level which can be filtered by gender, journey purpose (non-commuting) and day type (weekday), meaning there is an existing measure which can be applied directly to BSIP as an annual indicator, assuming Transport Focus choose to resume this frequency.

Improved passenger satisfaction with value for money:

3.4.16. The Transport Focus Bus Passenger Survey also has a question covering passenger satisfaction with value for money, meaning there is an existing measure which can be applied directly to BSIP as an annual indicator, assuming Transport Focus choose to resume this frequency.

Improved satisfaction with information provided in the bus for passengers with disabilities:

3.4.17. The Transport Focus Bus Passenger Survey also has a question covering passenger satisfaction with information provided in the bus which we can filter by respondents who reported a disability, meaning there is an existing measure which can be applied directly to BSIP as an annual indicator, assuming Transport Focus choose to resume this frequency.

3.5. KPI breakdowns

3.5.1. Many of the data sources which the primary KPIs are reliant on permit more granular analyses. This includes protected demographic characteristics such as gender and ethnicity. Given the Combined Authority's focus on equality, diversity and inclusion, tracking the effects of BSIP interventions on priority groups allows the impacts to be measured and reported at these levels.

3.5.2. The Combined Authority will work with external organisations to conduct further research into access to the bus network and inclusivity to better understand how we can improve our overall customer offer.

3.5.3. **Appendix D** contains all the primary and secondary KPI breakdowns. Further development is required to rationalise the breakdowns to those which provide the most valuable insight into the BSIP. This ensures a proportionate methodology can be applied to ensure it is updated on the six month cycle.

4. What we want to deliver

4.1.1. Taking into account the key themes, vision and objectives, as well as the existing challenges outlined in the previous section, the interventions and initiatives proposed within this BSIP will work to deliver the following overarching outcomes:

4.1.2. **A radically enhanced, fully inclusive and more cohesive bus and public transport network** – which takes people where they need to go, when they need to go, and caters for the complexity of modern travel patterns.

4.1.3. **Clear and simple fares**– to make paying for bus travel more affordable, easier, convenient and flexible.

4.1.4. **Improved, more inclusive customer service and support** – so all passengers have the right tools to travel with confidence and help they need if their journey does not go to plan.

4.1.5. **Priority for buses on our road** – so journeys by bus are quicker, with less time spent stuck in traffic, and are a viable alternative to the private car.

4.1.6. **More green and better vehicles** – to improve the onboard experience and make bus the sustainable choice for travel in West Yorkshire.

4.1.7. These outcomes will also work to enable an enhanced journey proposition which is explored in the following sections.

4.2. Our Bus Passenger Journey Proposition

4.2.1. This BSIP sets out to deliver a modern, attractive and inclusive passenger experience on all buses across West Yorkshire. **Figure 6**, below, outlines the experience we want to provide for all bus passengers regardless of who they are, the service they are travelling on or the journey they need to make. New policy interventions and initiatives will be delivered to enhance the experience at every stage and support the overall enablement of this proposition. The following sections detail these.

Figure 6 – Bus passenger journey proposition

1.	**Before travel -** the passenger can log on to the app or website of their choice and find up-to-date, accurate and consistent information - detailing everything from route options, time and cost - which helps them easily plan a journey by bus.
2.	**At the bus stop -** The passenger easily finds their way to the correct bus stop thanks to the recognisable branding and colour coded flags which instantly let them know they are on the right route. The stop has printed information to reassure them they are at the right stop while they wait before the bus arrives quickly and on time. Busier stops will have an electronic display showing the time until the next bus. On all stops, customers can scan a QR code and obtain this information on their phone.
3.	**Boarding and payment -** All buses are low floor and accessible. When the passenger boards the bus, they know they have different options for how to pay. They may have already bought their ticket using a mobile phone app but can also turn up pay the best price fare for the journey or - easier still - just 'tap on' and go with their contactless bank card or mobile and know they'll be charged. at most, a capped fare at the end of the day.
4.	**Onboard -** the passenger takes a seat in comfy and clean chairs and enjoys the free Wi-Fi while they travel. Both the buses' audio-visual information and their mobile journey planning app help to keep them up to date as they travel and let them know about any potential journey disruptions. The bus is modern and welcoming, and the journey is smooth and enjoyable.
5.	**Service interchange and last mile -** to get to their destination, the passenger may need to change to a different service. Coordinated wayfinding information and network planning ensures making a connection is simple and hassle free with no long delays or too short layovers. Whether on to another bus, train or tram, their ticket is also still valid or they can just tap and go once again. When the passenger gets off at the bus stop, which is not far from their destination, they are still supported on the final leg of their journey through safe, convenient and integrated cycling and walking links - ensuring sustainable travel door-to-door.
6.	**Post-journey -** back at home, the passenger relaxes knowing they'll be charged appropriately for their day's travel and any service queries will be resolved quickly via the coordinated travel helpline.
7.	**Retaining and attracting new passengers –** potential passengers are encouraged to travel by bus thanks effective, engaging marketing that presents it as a viable, attractive option for travel.

Before travel

> **Before travel** – the passenger can log on to the app or website of their choice and find <u>up-to-date, accurate and consistent information</u> - detailing everything from route options, time and cost - which helps them easily plan a journey by bus.

Passenger insight:

"Online information on bus services is not easy to access at the moment."
(WY Bus Strategy Consultation)

**"When planning a journey it would be helpful if the journey costs
were provided too, like a fare calculator?"**
(WY Bus Strategy Consultation)

Evidence shows that bus users are embracing new digital channels and platforms to plan and find out about options for travel on bus and other modes of public transport. However, the specifics of this can vary by age and other factors, and it is clear there is currently still a subsection of passengers who rely on printed information and other traditional sources. There is also an ongoing need to enhance and promote the information available to passengers and ensure it is accurate and easy to understand, no matter where they are looking for it.

- WYCA's Public Perceptions of Transport Survey (2020) found that of all respondents last bus-only journeys, 33% were planned via a website, 16% by timetable leaflets and 15% by an app.

- Frequent public transport users had on average 6.9/10 satisfaction with the information available via the Metro website. Of all bus-related information sources, satisfaction was highest with YourNextBus via smartphone or internet (7.4), however awareness of this source was lower (54%) compared to the Metro website (65%) and timetables at bus stops and stations (83%).

- Over 89% of respondents aged 16-24 had a smart phone, compared to 55.5% of those aged 65-74 and just 30% of people aged 75+.

- Real time information, provided by WYCA, was accessed 53 million times via the wymetro.com website and other third party apps such as Google during 2018/19.

4.2.2. To improve the passenger experience at this stage of the journey, we want to deliver:

Improved and more consistent travel information:

4.2.3. The West Yorkshire Bus Information Strategy (2019-24) provides a foundation for the Combined Authority's approach to delivering industry-leading travel information to passengers across the region. We remain committed to its key objectives and principles, which are:

- Digital First – focus delivery to mobile devices
- Always Live – up-to-date information on the move
- Customer driven – the customer selects the information they need
- Network-wide – fixed information at stops and interchanges
- Inclusive – everyone has access according to need and requirement.
- Cost-effective – for the local taxpayer

4.2.4. We will continue to implement this strategy across all travel information produced by WYCA. Additionally, through publication of open data and partnership working, we will seek to ensure that all operator-owned and other third party apps and information sources provide consistent, accurate and up-to-date information – including that they provide information for all services, not just those of a single operator, so that passengers can benefit from a holistic view of what the West Yorkshire bus network can offer them.

Better utilisation of our Real Time Information system and more 'Your Next Bus' screens:

4.2.5. Real time and live vehicle location information is key to the Combined Authority's vision for a more attractive customer offer. Expansion and improvement of our well-established system will provide passengers with more confidence about when their next bus will arrive and when they should set off on their journey, reducing the time they have to wait at a bus stop or station.

4.2.6. WYCA manages a Yorkshire-wide Real Time Information (RTI) system on behalf of its partners. We have recently completed a tendering process to secure modifications to the system. In 2022, working with operator partners, WYCA will:

- **Build upon the introduction of vehicle loadings / capacity information** - introduced in 2020 to ensure that the information is even more reliable and draws not only from 'actual' passenger numbers on the day, but also from historic data to inform the likely capacity of vehicles at certain times of day / week moving forwards

- **Make greater use of a more advanced historic reporting -** suite to identify areas of the bus network where delays are regularly experienced. This will inform work undertaken by WYCA and its highways authority partners to locate bus priority measures where they will deliver maximum value to bus journey times. It will also help WYCA to work closely with bus operators to ensure that their timetables are operable.

4.2.7. RTI is available through an increasing number of mobile and web-based channels. It also feeds into WYCA's partner journey planners, ensuring that, alongside live disruption messaging, customers are informed of the best way to travel based on live journey conditions.

4.2.8. WYCA believes that on-street real time information displays at bus stops - branded 'Your Next Bus' screens locally - continue to give confidence to the customer that they are in the right place for their bus and awareness of when their bus will be arriving.

4.2.9. There are currently nearly 2000 'Your next bus' displays across the West Yorkshire. In 2020-21, WYCA introduced over 400 battery powered displays (and will be increasing this to 500), removing the need for often costly mains power provision. Most of these have been located in the Leeds area.

4.2.10. Moving forwards, the Combined Authority will look to further bolster provision of these displays at busy stops and other key locations across the West Yorkshire core bus network and address the balance of RTI provision across each local authority area to ensure they benefit bus passenger's region-wide.

Enhancements to our journey planner and MCard Mobile ticketing app:

4.2.11. The Combined Authority's open-data-driven approach to providing travel information means we work to enable, accurate and up-to-date information in whatever channel a passenger chooses to look for it.

4.2.12. Moovit is the Combined Authority's journey planner partner with whom we are developing features to enhance this service to passengers. Our development roadmap includes:

- Integration of Moovit's journey planner within the MCard mobile ticketing app (Autumn 2021)

- Vehicle occupancy data feeds to be incorporated within the Moovit app (Autumn 2021)

- Live vehicle tracking feeds to be incorporated within the Moovit app in 2022

- Journey specific fares information, including both operator and MCard products, to be made available via Moovit - subject to availability via the DfT's Bus Open Data Digital Service

- Introduction of the ability to purchase MCard tickets via the Moovit app

4.2.13. Furthermore, subject to further development funding, the Combined Authority will seek to develop the MCard mobile ticketing app to enhance its usability and the benefit this tool provides to bus passengers throughout their journey.

Case study: Partnership with Moovit and use of open data

WYCA has embraced the Department for Transport's open data driven approach to publishing and making bus travel information readily available for passengers. We also worked collaboratively with Transport for the North and led the way with development of the innovative Disruptions Messaging Tool – being one of the first local transport authorities in the country to make such data openly available in this way. We have entered a zero-cost partnership with global journey planning provider, Moovit, to work with them offer their service as a 'go-to' journey planner for bus passengers in our region. As part of this partnership, Moovit have introduced several developments at our request – all delivered at zero charge – including integration of disruptions data. There have been over 500,000 journey plans in the first year of the partnership, and since the easing of COVID-19 travel restrictions we are now seeing up to 50,000 journey plans being made per month. West Yorkshire is currently the most heavily used of Moovit's UK journey planning areas. Adopting this partnership approach has had cost saving benefits for WYCA as our previous bespoke journey planner attracted a £250k annual fee for Yorkshire partners (WYCA paid £128k).

Printed information for those who need it:

4.2.14. Although the Combined Authority's information strategy is clear on its digital first approach, we recognise printed sources of information are still relied on by some passenger groups and are an important aspect of an accessible and inclusive bus service.

4.2.15. During the Covid-19 lockdowns, due to the scale and regularity of service changes, printed timetable information was removed from a majority of bus stops and replaced with barcodes that provided access to up-to-date online information. However, as a priority we will seek to reinstate printed information and ensure some level of timetable and other journey information is available at every bus stop and shelter on the network. To support this, we would also like to produce printed timetable brochures - aligned with our new Network Navigation maps (see 4.2.26 for more information) – to provide more information about the services on the core bus network which would be available at Metroline travel centres and onboard some buses.

4.2.16. Beyond printed information, the Combined Authority will also retain its commitments, embedded in the Bus Strategy, to accessible information at every stage of the journey – including audio-visual technology, British sign language (BSL) and easy read material.

4.2.17. **In summary, interventions at this stage of the journey will provide:**

- Enhanced, accurate and more readily available 'live' information so passengers can more easily plan journeys by bus and feel confident using them.

- Better integrated ways to more conveniently plan and pay for bus travel

- A wider choice of digital and print based information sources so passenger can find out about, plan and stay-in the know about their bus journey in a way that best suits them.

West Yorkshire Combined Authority

At the bus stop

> **At the bus stop** – The passenger easily finds their way to the correct bus stop thanks to the recognisable branding and colour coded flags which instantly let them know they're on the right route. The stop has printed information to reassure them they are at the right stop while they wait before the bus arrives quickly and on time. Busier stops will have an electronic display showing the time until the next bus. On all stops, customers can scan a QR code and obtain this information on their phone.

Passenger insight:

"The bus network is complicated and difficult to understand, meaning that it can be hard for new or infrequent users to work out which bus to catch" (WY Bus Strategy Consultation)

"Bus stops and interchanges are also a key part of the customer experience and we need to ensure that the correct information and facilities are provided at these points" (WY Bus Strategy Consultation)

The Metro brand - which is currently visible, to varying degrees, at every bus stop and station in the region - is well recognised by West Yorkshire residents but there are misconceptions and confusion about the company's role in the delivery of bus services. The WYCA Metro and Active Travel Perceptions Survey (2021) found that nearly 6/10 people were familiar with the Metro brand and only 4% had not heard of it. 77% thought Metro was the 'provider of bus and train information' while 55% thought Metro was responsible for 'running the buses'.

Satisfaction with the information available at bus stops and stations - including printed timetable posters and electronic displays - has fluctuated over recent years but overall decreased from a high of 7.9/10 in 2015/16 to a low of 7.3/10 in 2019/20. However, in our most recent survey conducted during the pandemic, satisfaction was highest with electronic time displays (8.1) compared to any other bus related information source – perhaps reflecting a reliance on this as other sources were less reliable through the many service changes.

Punctuality and reliability of services continues to be of great importance to local customers and heavily contributes to their confidence in bus service and their ultimately decision to take the bus. It was one of the top 3 issues highlighted by residents through the West Yorkshire Bus Strategy Consultation.

The bus stop and station environment play an important role in the overall passenger experience. However, in West Yorkshire, passenger surveys show a decreasing satisfaction with the quality of local bus stations (7.1/10 in 2018/19 to 6.3 in 2019/20), as well as with the quality of street lighting (7.4/10 to 6.9/10). Enhancements to waiting infrastructure in order to improve passengers' personal safety or sense of safety whilst waiting at stops and interchanges at different times of service hours are vital, especially for those with protected characteristics.

4.2.18. To improve the passenger experience at this stage of the journey, we want to deliver:

An evolved, more visible Metro brand to unify the bus network

4.2.19. The Combined Authority ambition is to evolve our existing Metro brand and use it to unify the entire West Yorkshire bus network and help passengers understand this as a cohesive system, alongside other forms of sustainable travel.

4.2.20. Across all West Yorkshire bus services, passengers will be able to identify with this brand and understand the quality standards / assurance it signifies, as well how 'Metro' can support them in their journey - through fare offers, travel information and other customer support services - on bus and other modes of public transport.

4.2.21. The evolution of the Metro brand will also include a review of how active travel, including both cycling and walking, are incorporated under this and how we can better represent them as part of sustainable transport mix alongside bus and other modes of public transport.

4.2.22. A new brand hierarchy - We expect a new brand hierarchy to be established to simplify the existing mix of different bus-related brands and make clearer what they all mean to the passenger. This will be as follows:

- **The Metro brand** – will be visible across the region's network; it will signify the standard of customer service a passenger can expect, and that the service they are using is part of a wider public transport network. It will also be an overarching brand used to represent the many organisations that work in partnership to deliver buses.
- **Service-level brands** – will retain an important role to connect with passengers at a local level and promote the use of specific services.
- Operating company brands – may still be visible across the network where there is a clear utility for the passenger – for example to make clear who is actually running a service or where something is of relevance beyond West Yorkshire - but use of these will be pared back as much as possible to promote the sense of a cohesive, integrated regional bus network.
- **The West Yorkshire Combined Authority brand** – as the 'background' enabler of regional transport, this will have limited visibility on the network and only a supporting role in passenger-facing communication, where relevant.

4.2.23. Implementation - Through this BSIP, the Combined Authority is seeking to support the design and subsequent implementation of this evolved Metro branding across the network. Key principles used to drive the evolution of the Metro brand will be to:

- Unify all bus services and corridors into one West Yorkshire wide network that is understandable for the passenger.
- Provide an external face for the West Yorkshire Bus Alliance.

- Reflect the greater role the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (under the Metro brand), has over the delivery of all regional bus services through closer partnership working with operators.
- Better incorporate other forms of public transport and active travel, including walking and cycling.

4.2.24. Following a redesign, the updated Metro brand will be implemented consistently across customer-facing communications channels and physical assets including:

- Bus stop and in station displays
- On board vehicles.
- On tickets and in apps.
- Websites and social media.
- At metro travel centres.

4.2.25. This implementation will ensure that the Metro brand is visible at all key customer touchpoints throughout a bus journey in West Yorkshire no matter the operator they are travelling with.

## Continued rollout of Network Navigation:

4.2.26. Key to the implementation of the evolved Metro brand will be the ongoing rollout and further development of the Combined Authority's ongoing 'Network Navigation' project.

4.2.27. Throughout 2022, the existing Leeds-based initiative will be delivered in all districts across West Yorkshire. This will provide a user-friendly and accessible set of maps and new colour coded bus stop flags, shelters and other on-street infrastructure that link to bus lines on the Core Network.

4.2.28. Furthermore, as part of this BSIP, we want to extend the project and develop further wayfinding principles to support access to the secondary commercial and community networks, as well as at modal interchange points. Additionally, we would like to support further digitisation of the outputs of these projects to ensure these maps are accurately reflected online and in apps.

Case study: Network Navigation

Network Navigation is an ongoing initiative that is being delivered in partnership between the Combined Authority, our district partners and local operators as part of both the Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme and the Transforming Cities Fund. The project aims to give people greater visibility of the region's core, high-frequency bus network and better support them in understanding, accessing and navigating their way across it as they travel from A to B. It is doing this through the creation of a user-friendly and accessible set of maps and colour coded bus stop flags, shelters, on-street infrastructure and in bus stations that link to local bus lines, on the high-frequency network. The line names are also represented on the bus destination blinds to provide seamless integration from the bus stop to on-bus. The roll-out of the initial Leeds phase of the project will conclude in November 2021, and the rest of West Yorkshire by 2023.
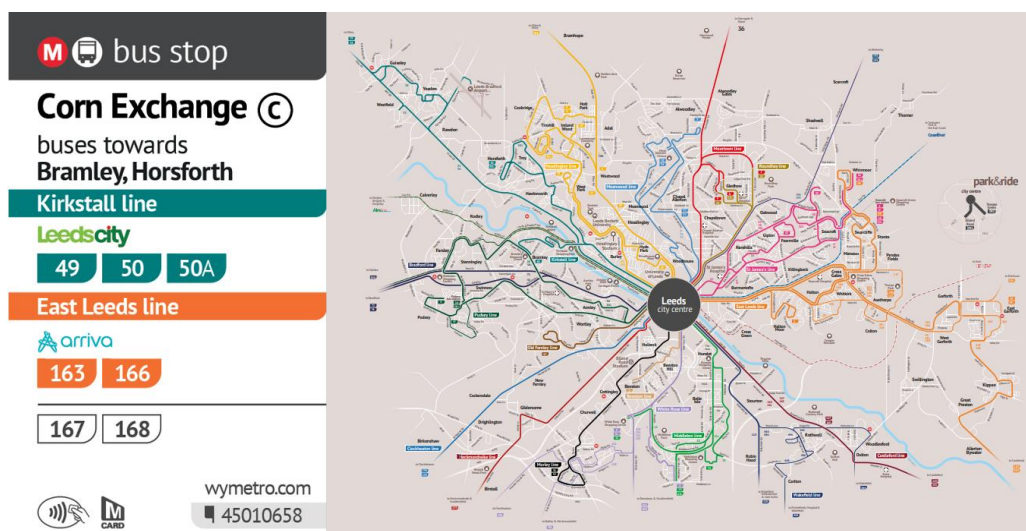
Bus stop and station upgrades:

4.2.29. The Combined Authority will continue to modernise and maintain a high standard all our bus stops and stations, so that they make for accessible, safe and attractive places to wait for services, as well as provide community hubs with wider benefits to the public.

4.2.30. Working with local authorities and bus operator partners, the Combined Authority will deliver new or refurbished bus stations across all five of our district areas, to serve as major network interchanges, at locations including but not limited to:

- Bradford city centre
- Dewsbury
- Halifax
- Heckmondwike
- Huddersfield
- Leeds city centre
- Wakefield city centre

4.2.31. This BSIP also includes plans for an ongoing bus stop repair programme, as well as a bus stop replacement programme which will enable the Combined Authority to replace over 1400 expired bus shelters across the region.

4.2.32. Bus stop and station upgrades will also drive accessibility, inclusivity and safety enhancements including the installation of audio-visual information, improved lighting and CCTV, the creation of safe/quiet spaces, and the introduction of specialist toilet / baby changing facilities. The Combined Authority expects that disabled people, older people and people belonging to other protected groups will be consulted with as part of the design and development of these spaces.

4.2.33. Furthermore, the Combined Authority would like funding to support an audit of all bus stops and stations in the region to identify any existing potential safety, accessibility or other general issues to help develop a plan of action to resolve them and achieve our vision for these assets.

Bus stop cleaning enhancements.

4.2.34. Enhanced, more regular cleaning - and the promotion of this to customers - has formed a key part of the Bus Alliance's response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Combined Authority's ambition is for it to now continue as part of business-as-usual in order to ensure bus stops and stations provide safe and attractive environments that enrich the overall travel experience rather than deter bus use. Regular cleaning will also support the Combined Authority to identify other maintenance issues and tackle antisocial behaviour, such as graffiti and vandalism, and other potential safety concerns.

An enhanced, safer travel partnership with West Yorkshire Police.

4.2.35. The Combined Authority's ambition is to ensure that bus stops and stations - as well as the bus network in general - provide as safe as possible an environment for all passengers, especially woman and girls.

4.2.36. In July 2021, the Combined Authority submitted a joint bid with the West Yorkshire Police for financial support from the Safety of Women at Night Fund, focussed on transport interventions to support improvements to women's safety. The ambitions of that bid are incorporated into this BSIP and include:

- **Bus and train safety campaign and outreach through the MCard App and Metro website –** including creation of a safety reporting tool that allows passengers to feedback their feeling of safety at any given time, place and route within West Yorkshire's public transport network.

- **'Trojan' bus interventions** - which would deploy plain clothed Police Community Support Officers at crime and harassment hot spot areas as identified by the MCard app data and other intelligence.

- **Awareness and behaviour change campaigns** - aimed at promoting the tools available to support personal safety such as live bus tracking information and the MCard's reporting functionality.

4.2.37. The original bid to the Safety of Women at Night Fund – included as **Appendix C** to this report - was a one-year funding bid. Through the BSIP, the Combined Authority would like to ensure initiatives are continued beyond that time frame where relevant.

4.2.38. Building on this bid, the Combined Authority will continue to work with the West Yorkshire Police to develop proposals aimed at keeping all passengers safe while they travel on local buses and as they go about their lives in the region more generally.

4.2.39. **In summary, interventions at this stage of the journey will provide:**

- A better unified (under the Metro brand), more understandable and easy-to-use bus network
- Colour-coded 'London tube style' maps to make it easier for passengers to navigate the bus network in each district area and across the region.
- Safer, cleaner and more accessible bus stops and stations to wait for services at.

Boarding and payment

Boarding and payment – All buses are low floor and accessible. When the passenger boards the bus, they know they have different options for how to pay. They may have already bought their ticket using a mobile phone app but can also turn up pay the best price fare for the journey or - easier still - just 'tap on' and go with their contactless bank card or mobile and know they'll be charged, at most, a capped fare at the end of the day.

Passenger insight:

"It can be difficult to work out which bus ticket offers the best value for money"
(WY Bus Strategy Consultation)

"Fair pricing based on distance travelled. I can walk halfway to work (2 miles), get on a bus for the remainder of the journey and it costs only a few pence less than the whole journey" *(WY Bus Strategy Consultation)*

Local passengers have told us that the cost of bus travel is a key factor influencing their decision to take the bus (Bus Strategy Consultation) and confidence is low (52%) regarding which is the best value ticket to buy (Combined Authority Public Perceptions of Transport Survey). Specifically, residents over 65 are more likely to be satisfied with the affordability of public transport than those in lower age ranges (and this age range has a high proportion of eligibility for free bus travel).

Nationally, there is decreasing satisfaction in the affordability of public transport corresponding to research by the Urban Transport Group which has demonstrated a 56% increase in bus fares over the past 20 years. Evidence from Transport Focus has found that passengers would like to be reassured of best value for travel whilst using the system, and fare capping was considered a natural way to do this, with 70% saying they found the principle of fare capping attractive (Smart ticketing the North, what do passengers think?)

4.2.40. To improve the passenger experience at this stage of the journey, we want to deliver:

Clear, simpler, and better value fares and ticketing:

4.2.41. The Combined Authority's ambition is to provide a simple and easy to use fare system that people in West Yorkshire can have confidence in. We aim to reduce fares to make the bus service affordable again and to create a mechanism where decisions about bus fares are accountable and reflect the needs of our communities.

4.2.42. **How will bus fares work in West Yorkshire?**

4.2.43. The Combined Authority will establish the West Yorkshire Bus Fare Framework overseen by the West Yorkshire Ticketing Company which will set a daily cap "base" fare - bus passengers will never pay more than this price no matter how many journeys they make. The base fare will shape the price of other fare products as follows:

- Single fares will be no more than half the base fare.

- Return fares will be twice single fares less a discount factor

- Local zone day tickets will be available at less than the base price

- Season tickets and multiple day ticket prices will be determined using the base price less a discount factor

4.2.44. This will enable decisions about overall bus fare levels to be taken collectively within the Enhanced Partnership whilst providing scope for local variations within the pricing framework.

4.2.45. Market research in West Yorkshire indicates that customers only want to pay for the amount of the journeys they take. Given our multi centric geography, journey lengths vary. This would suggest that a simplified graduated "consumption based" pricing structure personalised to individual travel needs is preferred to a single flat fare as in London. Our approach to capping will be that the system charges the customer the best value fare up to the value of the cap. To enable this will require a tap in/tap out system.

4.2.46. Currently passengers making two leg journeys involving different bus operators are paying more than they would if both legs were operated by the same company. To overcome this, we would trial a new 90 minute ticket initially available through the MCard Mobile app. If successful this would form part of the best value options in a capping system.

4.2.47. We recognise that changing travel patterns following the pandemic will require a new approach to pricing

- Incentives to encourage irregular travellers to use the bus more
- Enable part time commuters to personalise pre-paid discounted ticket products
- People who have a regular travel pattern will be able to buy travel in blocks of a day, a week, a month or a year at a discount
- Multi journey tickets will be able to be used on any bus company's services

4.2.48. We will maintain the simplified, concessionary "Fare Deal for under 19s" introduced in 2021 and continue to provide discounted products for 19-25 year olds

4.2.49. Reduced fares and travel offers will also be used to promote bus use and sustainable travel behaviours by particular groups.

4.2.50. **How will we make fares cheaper?**

4.2.51. Initially the capped "base" fare will be set at the current MCard Day Saver rate of £5.50. This is the multi operator day ticket for any journey throughout West Yorkshire and the maximum anyone should be paying for a day's travel in 2021.

4.2.52. Subject to funding availability, we would reduce this base price by 10 to 15%. The current London capped fare is £4.65. Affordability analysis suggests that £4.50 would bring fares into an affordable range. Adopting the Framework, this will adjust the price of single fares below the cap.

4.2.53. Fare subsidy would be distributed to operators using the methodologies currently established by WYTCL to distribute MCard sales. Fare subsidies will be tapered over two years reduced as volume grows.

4.2.54. **How will we make fares simpler?**

4.2.55. Customers will be advised that they will never pay more than the capped daily bus fare for their travel throughout West Yorkshire.

4.2.56. A fare price promise will apply giving assurance that customers will only pay the cost of the journeys they make and they won't pay anymore if using more than one company's services

4.2.57. The MCard Mobile app will be a "go to" place for discounted pre-payment ticket products tailored to customer needs

4.2.58. Fares data will be available in all digital information systems giving customers to reassurance they are paying the correct price for their journey.

4.2.59. **How will people pay?**

4.2.60. A contactless pay-as-you-go capping system - across all services will enable passengers to choose to just 'tap on' with their mobile phone or bank card in the confidence they will be charged, at the most, no more than the daily fare cap. 'Tap off' readers will also be installed on all buses, enabling the ability for passengers to indicate when they disembark a bus so a fare can also be calculated that charges them just for the specific journey they made.

4.2.61. Mobile phone apps – operator only barcode ticketing apps have proved popular and, since its introduction earlier in 2021, customers have switched from smartcards to the MCard Mobile app. These apps are suited to pre travel purchase and enable the customer to feel in control. They also allow "gifting" where employers and other organisations can purchase tickets and transfer them to the individual's phone.

4.2.62. Smartcard – concessionary travel passes and some season tickets will be issued on a smartcard which registers each journey as the customer boards.

4.2.63. <u>Cash on boarding the bus</u> – passengers will still be able to pay on boarding however this will be kept under review with a view to its removal when other payment methods are well established and nobody will be disadvantaged

4.2.64. **How will this be implemented?**

4.2.65. A multi-stepped-approach is proposed to roll out a contactless pay-as-you-go capping system:

4.2.66. **Step 1 - Fares and ticketing reform (from January 2022)**

- the MCard Day Saver price (currently £5.50) will be adopted and promoted as the maximum daily fare with customers encouraged to purchase from the MCard Mobile app.
- New district MCard Day and Week products will be introduced at a price equivalent to the prevalent operator only tickets in the area.
- To make multi legged journeys easier, we will pilot a new time based multi journey bar code ticket sold through the MCard Mobile app (e.g. 90 minutes travel for half the DaySaver price).

4.2.67. **Step 2 - Reduce fares and trial the capping system (from April 2022):**

- Subject to funding, lower the base fare and introduce the West Yorkshire Fare Framework overseen by West Yorkshire Ticketing Company under the Enhanced Partnership.
- Install on bus equipment to support capping, upgrade SME operators equipment
- Selective trials of capping on certain routes/ areas
- As capping extends, operator only tickets will be withdrawn with multi operator products

4.2.68. **Step 3 - Full introduction of capping system (2022-24)** - implementation date determined by availability of on bus tap out equipment and capping back office.

4.2.69. **Step 4 - Capping back office**: further development of capping including customer accounts and a configurable, automated reimbursement process will require a back office system available at regional or national level.

4.2.70. West Yorkshire is in a unique position with all operators using the same specification electronic ticket machines (ETMs) and contractual arrangements in place with the same payment provider. Once the tap-out readers are installed, the region will be ready to introduce capping ahead of the potential introduction of a national back office to ensure local passengers benefit from this innovation at the earliest opportunity. We will also be able to integrate with the national back office when this becomes available.

Case Study: MCard Mobile

MCard Mobile is the first multi-operator/multi-modal mobile phone ticketing app which retails bus and rail QR code tickets. It was launched on bus in Autumn 2020 on bus and incorporated bus and rail products in spring 2021. Within a year of its release, the MCard Mobile App now accounts for 60% of MCard sales. The app enables customers

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> to pre purchase day and season tickets in the form of a time limited barcodes which are readable by both local bus ticket machines and rail station gates.
>
> MCard Mobile also has a facility which enables organisations to purchase tickets and "gift" them to the app. Since introduction this facility has been used by colleges buying tickets for bursary students, JobCentre Plus for job seekers and has enabled charities assisting people fleeing domestic violence and asylum seekers to arrange travel on their behalf.
>
> The App will also play a major role in encouraging commuters back to public transport in West Yorkshire with the introduction of Mega-DaySaver products in bundles of 50 and 100 day tickets for those who will return to a blended, flexible working pattern. Organisations will be able to purchase products on behalf of their employees, gift the tickets via the app and claim the monies back from employee salaries.

A trial of time-limited barcode tickets:

4.2.71. Ahead of the delivery of capping, we want to trial time-limited barcode tickets using the MCard mobile app. Rather than offer travel from point to be point, these tickets would be valid for travel on any or all services for a limited time period - provisionally 90 minutes. These would suit passengers who need to make a journey that requires them to switch between services run by different operators - which they currently pay a financial premium for - but who would still not necessarily get good value from a full day multi-operator MCard ticket.

4.2.72. The key principles for these tickets are that they would be:

- Valid for a set time following activation
- Cheaper than an MCard or single operator day ticket
- Available for use on any operator / number of buses with the set time period
- Available via the MCard mobile ticketing app

4.2.73. A trial would help us to determine:

- Passenger reaction / uptake – do the tickets attract new passengers to bus?
- The commercial viability of the scheme and reimbursements mechanism.
- Potential customer service issues – such as late connections preventing travel within the time period.

4.2.74. Subject to further commercial discussions and agreements with WYTCL, the technological capability is ready to start trialling these tickets in early 2022.

New and adapted concessionary fares schemes:

4.2.75. Reduced fares and travel offers will also be used to promote bus use and sustainable travel behaviours by particular groups who are either particularly dependent or excluded by bus travel.

- Under 19s - reduced pre purchase and pay on bus fares.
- 19 to 25 year olds - reduced pre purchase.
- Targeted groups e.g. jobseekers, apprentices etc - reduced pre purchase.
- Older and Disabled People eligible for statutory concessionary fares – free within terms of Concessionary Fare Scheme. -a review will be undertaken to understand how this can be extended to pre-9.30

Case study: **Under 19 Fares deal**

The Combined Authority has recently worked in partnership with operators to deliver a new range of tickets offering cheaper, discounted travel for under 19s on all bus services across West Yorkshire. Launched in summer 2021, the new fares and tickets offer extra value for money options, including:

- Single (one way journey) tickets – with just three easy to remember fares at 60p, £1.20 or £1.80, based on the distance travelled.
- Under 19s making a one-way journey will never pay more than £1.80, no matter how long their bus journey within West Yorkshire.
- As now, single tickets will be available from bus drivers – and now also from bus operators' mobile apps.
- The £1.20 single fare will also be available to buy on West Yorkshire's Mcard Mobile App.

The impact of these new fares on bus use by under 19s will be monitored and evaluated over autumn/winter 2021 to understand the success of this model in growing bus patronage and improving passenger satisfaction, as well as its potential application in encourage other key passenger groups to travel by bus.

Cheaper fares

4.2.76. Ultimately, a reduction in the cost of a bus journey will be a key incentive to encourage more people to travel. Our ambition is that bus fares in West Yorkshire will be reduced to match the price of equivalent tickets and products in London, and that there will be parity with other Mayoral Combined Authority areas across the North of England and beyond.

4.2.77. Steps we will be taking as part of this BSIP to reduce bus fares in West Yorkshire include:

- Seeking to reduce the price of a MCard Day Saver ticket (the most any passenger needs to pay for a day's travel in West Yorkshire) from £5.50 down to £4.50 or less.

- The introduction, by 2023, of contactless daily capping (priced at the same value as the MCard DaySaver ticket), with a fair price promise that the passenger will be charged the best value price for their day's travel.

- The trialling of reduced bus fare offers as part of a series of Superbus pilots (see section for 4.3 for further information).

- The examination of the arrangements required to offer free travel on bus for Under 19s.

- Working with operators to understand the steps they need to take to offer a reduction in the price of their single operator tickets for 'walk on' bus users and how these could be applied consistently.

4.2.78. **In summary, interventions at this stage of the journey will provide:**

- Cheaper more affordable fares for all passengers – including a reduction in the maximum cost for a day's bus travel (the MCard DaySaver or daily 'fare cap') so people in West Yorkshire never pay more than those in London.

- More flexible and convenient ways to purchase tickets and pay for bus travel including pay-as-you-go contactless capping and time-limited mobile tickets which can be used across all bus services.

Onboard

Onboard – the passenger takes a seat in comfy and clean chairs, and enjoys the free Wi-Fi while they travel. Both the buses' audio visual information and their mobile journey planning app help to keep them up-to-date as they travel and let them know about any potential journey disruptions. The bus is modern and welcoming, and the journey is smooth and enjoyable.

Passenger insight**:**

"Drivers seem dis-engaged and they have a huge impact on the overall experience as they have a big role in delivering the service - from greeting you onto the bus, driving it and delivering you to your destination" (WY Bus Strategy Consultation)

"Audio-Visual is essential and should be on all buses now. It would help everyone not just those with visual impairments" (WY Bus Strategy Consultation)

Evidence continues to show that the on-board experience for passengers is of great importance, and there are certain areas where this could be improved to ensure customers have a comfortable journey and can make best use of their time whilst travelling.

Young people particularly would like to see better quality of buses in terms of free Wi-Fi and USB charging and have commented that the driver is key to how they feel about the journey – a friendly, approachable driver makes young people feel relaxed when they board. This is also a key issue for passengers generally, as Transport Focus's most recent survey of West Yorkshire passengers found 71% of customers were very or fairly satisfied with the greeting/welcome of the bus driver.

Audio-visual information has been highlighted by passengers as lacking on vehicles locally, making it difficult for them to know where to alight. Whilst implementing this was desirable for accessibility groups in particular, it was acknowledged that this would also benefit users who used the bus infrequently, or were new customers as it would increase their confidence in using the services. 64% of customers were very or fairly satisfied with the information provided inside the bus, yet more people were satisfied with information provided on the bus when audio-visual information was present (Transport Focus Bus Passenger Survey).

National research also continues to show the importance of cleanliness on-board as we emerge from the pandemic, as Transport Focus's regular tracking research shows 82% of passenger are satisfied with cleanliness on bus, and for half of people surveyed coronavirus is still a major concern.

To improve the passenger experience at this stage of the journey, we want to deliver:

Improved onboard vehicle standards:

4.2.79. All buses running on the West Yorkshire network need to offer a safe, clean and attractive experience for passengers. The Combined Authority would like to see comfy leather seats, free WiFi and electric charging points available as standard on any new bus, and retrofitting of existing buses where possible.

4.2.80. The enhanced onboard cleaning regimes delivered in response to the Covid-19 pandemic should also continue, as part of business-as-usual activity, in order to support these expected vehicle standards – and efforts should be made to promote and make this process visible to reassure existing passengers and attract new ones who may be unsure about the standard and safety of their local buses.

4.2.81. As standard, all buses should be low floor and have designated space to safely accommodate wheelchair users and / or passengers with pushchairs. The Combined Authority expects that wheelchair users be prioritised and that other passengers (who are not wheelchair users) be required to vacate the wheelchair space if it is needed by a wheelchair user – with pushchair users being asked, in the first instance, to fold them up if the space is not available to accommodate both at the same time.

Audio-visual information and other accessibility enhancements:

4.2.82. The Combined Authority want all buses running on the West Yorkshire network to be equipped with audio visual (AV) information technology onboard. This will support all passengers to feel more confident while traveling on bus - through clear announcements of stops, helping them know when to get on and off - as well as particularly support people with hearing / visual impairments and other accessibility needs to more easily use their local bus service.

4.2.83. The Combined Authority would expect any new buses deployed within the region to be equipped with AV technology as standard, and through this BSIP we are seeking funding for this to be retrofitted on all existing vehicles which do not currently have this feature. Subject to funding, retrofitting vehicle with AV technology may require a prioritised implementation plan. Working with operators, the Combined Authority would seek to target high frequency corridors and services first, as well as ensure a balance in provision across our different district areas to maximise the benefit of this investment.

4.2.84. Beyond the provision of AV information onboard all buses, the Combined Authority want to support accessibility enhancements at every stage of the bus passenger journey, with interventions including but not limited to:

- Accessible information at all stages of the journey including for journey planning, wayfinding, and interaction with customer services staff.

- Promotion of new technologies and initiatives that can assist with journey planning and wayfinding.

- Improved bus station facilities, such as changing places toilets and safe/ quiet spaces

4.2.85. The Combined Authority's existing Bus Strategy makes a number of further commitments to improved accessibility which this BSIP will continue to support. As such we will:

- Ensure that the agreed Passenger Charter (see Section 4.6) reflects the priorities and expectations of disabled passengers.
- Expect that all bus related information, customer services and customer feedback processes are accessible and easy to use, and that staff understand the needs of disabled people and are trained and confident in providing assistance.
- Encourage greater use of orange wallets and travel assistance cards to increase confidence in travel.
- Involve older people and disabled people in the design and delivery of the bus system.
- Record and monitor accessibility related complaints and seek other accessibility-related data to inform service improvements.

More green buses:

4.2.86. A green, zero emission bus system is a core element of the Combined Authority's long-term vision for buses in West Yorkshire. To support this BSIP, we are retaining our key commitments to all buses being EURO VI or alternative by 2026, and to transition to a fully zero-emission bus fleet by 2036, with significant progress by 2030 (as part of wider organisational ambition for the region to be a net-zero carbon economy by 2038). Beyond the obvious environmental benefits, the new vehicles that will be required to achieve this will also play an important role in enabling the high standard of onboard facilities and accessibility support that we want to see across the fleet.

4.2.87. The Combined Authority's current Zero Emission Bus Regional Area (ZEBRA) bid is a key way we will work, in partnership with local operators, towards this greener bus fleet in the short to medium term. This bid is currently in development after passing through first stage approval by the Department for Transport. If successful, the scheme will deliver 121 zero emission electric buses across West Yorkshire by 2024.

4.2.88. The bid focuses on delivery of electric buses, and the infrastructure to support them, at three operator depots in West Yorkshire. As part of the scheme there is also a match funded Combined Authority element which would provide electric buses to deliver tendered services in Calderdale and Kirklees and ensure a geographical spread.

4.2.89. Currently, 1% of buses operating in West Yorkshire are zero emission, with 3% of vehicles being hybrid. The 121 buses included within this bid would increase the proportion across the region to 10%, with the potential of decreasing carbon emissions by 57 tonnes a year. Furthermore, this proposal targets zero emission buses on routes through poor air quality areas. These routes also correspond with priority routes for electrification as identified in the Combined Authority's Zero Emission Bus Roadmap which prioritises routes of greatest need based on CAZ and AQMA data.

4.2.90. Beyond this ZEBRA bid, the Combined Authority will work with bus manufacturers and the Department for Transport to enable more zero emission buses to come to market and make them common place.

Improvements to the publication of live journey disruptions messaging:

4.2.91. The Combined Authority understands that clear disruptions information – such as that about delays, service changes or cancellations - plays an important role in ensuring passengers feel confident about bus travel even when their journey might not be going to plan. However, currently, disruptions information is provided by a number of different organisations in an uncoordinated way which leaves the passenger dealing with a confusing mix of sometime conflicting messaging – if they are given any information at all.

4.2.92. Through this BSIP, we want to improve the management and publication of disruption messaging across the region's bus network in order to ensure it is consistently and readily available for passengers in a way that is easy for them to understand and act upon. It is the Combined Authority's ambition to take the lead role in coordinating this information and providing a single source of truth that can be used by any interested providers.

4.2.93. To support the identification of disruption incidents, their cause and the subsequent flow of this information across all relevant parties, we propose to deploy a dedicated resource within our Urban Traffic Control (UTC) room. This resource would be responsible specifically for liaising with operators regarding any disruption incidents on the bus network, and accurately disseminating the required messaging.

4.2.94. Furthermore, the Combined Authority currently openly publishes some communication about network disruptions via the Transport for the North Disruptions Messaging Tool. This provides a single source of truth and feeds the information available via our social media channels, wymetro.com and the Moovit journey planner. We would like to see all partners, including operators, integrate this data feed into their own services, as well as encourage them to innovate with it to provider wider operational and customer facing enhancements.

Shared training for all passenger facing staff

4.2.95. To improve the quality and ensure consistency of customer service across the network, working with local operators, the Combined Authority's wants to develop a shared training programme for all passenger-facing staff (including drivers, bus station staff and metroline call handlers etc). The aim of this would be to help deliver a 'West Yorkshire standard' of customer service to all passengers, ensure staff are trained to provide additional support to passengers with accessibility and other needs, as required, as well as to encourage staff to see themselves as ambassadors for the region's bus network.

4.2.96. Providing high-quality customer service - particularly for drivers - will need to be balanced with other requirements of staff's roles, especially concerning safety and legal duties. However, it will be key to realising the Combined Authority's ambitions for an inclusive bus network which supports all people to use their local services.

4.2.97. This training would comply with existing Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) training and incorporate the requirements of operator's own existing staff training programmes. As a minimum, the Combined Authority will work with operators to share best practice around the staff training they all currently offer to help raise the standard overall.

4.2.98. The Combined Authority also want to compliment staff training with a network-wide mystery shopper programme to highlight any issues and reward good customer service. Findings from the programme will also be used to monitor progress and identify areas for further improvement.

4.2.99. **In summary, interventions at this stage of the journey will provide:**

- Clean, accessible, safe and more attractive buses for passengers to travel on and enjoy.

- Improved more accessible and more consistently available facilities / services to support passengers while they travel including audio visual and live disruptions information.

- A personable, well-trained workforce with the skills to consistently provide good customer service and support passengers - particularly those with accessibility and other needs – throughout their journey

Service interchange and last mile

Service interchange and last mile - to get to their destination, the passenger needs to change to a different service. Coordinated wayfinding information and network planning ensures making a connection is simple and hassle free with no long delays or too short layovers. Whether on to another bus, train or tram, their ticket is also still valid or they can just tap and go once again. When the passenger gets off at the bus stop, which is not far from their destination, they are still supported on the final leg of their journey through safe, convenient and integrated cycling and walking links - ensuring sustainable travel door-to-door.

Passenger insight:

"A successful modern bus network should not just be integrated with other bus services but all other transport modes as well" (WY Bus Strategy Consultation)

Passengers tell us there is there is a real need to integrate bus with other modes of sustainable travel, particularly rail - with well signposted stops at train stations and guaranteed connections (Bus Information Strategy). Our Connectivity Infrastructure Plan engagement also found that two thirds of respondents were in full agreement with proposals to join up differing modes of transport for easier door to door journeys.

However, only 68% of customers have rated local connections with other forms of transport as 'very or fairly good' (Transport Focus Passenger Survey). Not only are customers keen to see integrated changes made on the physical network, they also want payment methods to reflect this with inter-availability of ticketing not just across multiple bus operators, but across modes too.

4.2.100.   To improve the passenger experience at this stage of the journey, we want to deliver:

Improved integration with active travel and other modes of public transport

4.2.101.   Every bus journey begins and ends with an active travel leg. It is therefore vital that an attractive walking and cycling environment is built to enable and improve access to and from our bus network.

4.2.102.   Improvements for buses and active travel are also often complementary. Reducing or removing private motor traffic reduces delays and increases reliability for bus journeys but also enhances safety for active travel modes. Wherever we implement either active travel or bus priority schemes, we will therefore look to ensure that other sustainable modes are catered for and enhanced as part of the project.

4.2.103.   Active travel has great potential to remove short journeys from the bus network, enabling the bus to focus on medium distance journeys and longer, providing a more competitive alternative to the private car.

More 'Park and Ride' schemes

4.2.104.   West Yorkshire currently has three successful 'Park & Ride' schemes which have been delivered in partnership between the Combined Authority, Leeds City Council and bus operators. These are:

- Elland Road (opened in 2014)
- Temple Green (opened in 2017)
- Stourton (opened in September 2021)

4.2.105.   These existing Park & Ride schemes have proved popular with an estimated usage of 1.1 million passengers in 2019. As such, they provide a strong model to encourage passengers to move from private cars and use bus for at least part of their journeys, supporting our modal shift ambitions.

4.2.106.   The Combined Authority is currently in the process of writing a new Park and Ride Strategy to understand how the successful model developed in Leeds can be rolled out across other locations in West Yorkshire.

4.2.107.   As part of this BSIP, the Combined Authority will work with the Local Authorities to identify suitable locations and expand the number of Park and Ride schemes across West Yorkshire.

More 'FlexiBus' Demand Responsive Transport services

4.2.108.   Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) service proposals have been developed for several different geographies – including a former coalfields area, a Pennine valleys location and a market town in order to improve access to public transport in areas that are currently poorly served by the scheduled bus network. Demand for services in these areas has been identified through the network analysis – in these areas scheduled bus services are not suitable due to the low levels of population density and the constrained nature of the road network (particularly in Calderdale).

4.2.109.   DRT services together with the provision of mobility hubs will help to improve physical integration into the existing bus and rail network and ensure that sustainable options are provided for first and last mile journeys (to connect with existing bus and rail services).

4.2.110.   DRT service help to expand the reach of the bus network and can make public transport attractive to new customer groups – especially those who may struggle to access the existing bus network.

Case Study: East Leeds 'FlexiBus'

Our FlexiBus scheme provides bookable demand responsive transport link within two areas of East Leeds – the first zone was launched in late September 2021 (grey zone on map). The service collects passengers from a safe and convenient place within 200m of their location. The zones of operation are indicated in the map below. The service can be booked either via the Flexiroute passenger app or by phone and can be made up to an hour before your selected journey time.

All buses are fully accessible and can accommodate one occupied wheelchair. ENCTS permit holders, senior, disabled, blind persons pass holders travel free after 9.30am. Companion passes are also valid.
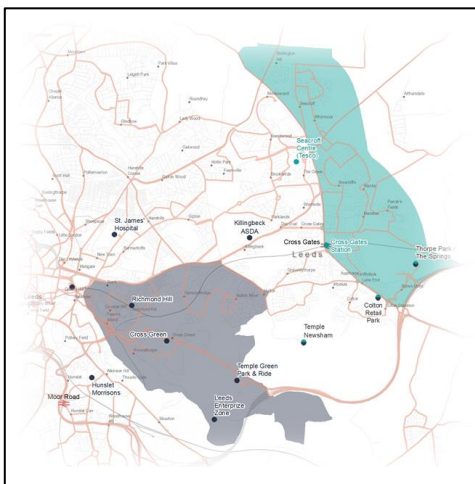
Improvements to our Access Bus service

4.2.111.   The Combined Authority currently own and operate 33 access buses, which currently are all low floor, Optare Solo vehicles and can each accommodate 15 passengers, two of whom can be in occupied wheelchairs. AccessBus operates as a flexibly routed registered local bus service and is operated by two local PCV operators.

4.2.112.   The Combined Authority have approximately 5,000 regular passengers who use the service on a regular basis (mostly weekly) and provide transport to local shopping facilities to support independent living. We also provide transport to a number of voluntary sector lunch clubs, afternoon social groups, chair exercise classes etc for the likes of Age UK, the Stroke Association and a number of community groups throughout West Yorkshire.

4.2.113.   The service is currently operating Monday to Saturday only due to the drivers shortage. Since COVID-19 we have not yet reinstated the Sunday service which predominantly catered for places of worship. The service runs between 9am (first pick up) and 5pm (last pick up at 4pm) and has a dedicated team of drivers who are specially trained in all relevant areas including safeguarding. The service was suspended between April and July/August 2020 but only after we had ensured that our regular passengers had alternate means of getting shopping via family, neighbours or community Covid support groups that have since disbanded.

4.2.114.   The AccessBus service contributes strongly towards the Combined Authority's inclusion objectives. Without AccessBus many of our passengers would lose their independence and the social element of travelling to the supermarket with people in a similar situation. Many would not have any social interaction and would thus become socially isolated which would have a detrimental effect on their mental wellbeing, as well as putting a financial burden on any council or voluntary funded support services. The vast majority of AccessBus users are of advanced age and/or limited mobility and are ENCTS permit holders so travel free of charge on the service.

4.2.115.   The fleet is currently retrofitted with Euro VI equivalent emissions systems and part of the fleet is in receipt of DfT funding to bring it up to the standards required by the Bradford Clean Air Zone. The City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement provides opportunity to replace the AccessBus fleet to zero emission.

New mobility hubs across the region

4.2.116.   Mobility hubs help to enable shorter trips to be made by more sustainable modes and also reduce the need to travel by co-locating community and transport facilities in one location. Facilities that could be provided include cycle parking, EV charging points, car club bays, passenger information for onward bus/rail travel, parcel lockers, co-working spaces and information about demand responsive transport services. An indicative design for a small mobility hub is included below.

Figure 7 – Mobility Hubs concept drawing
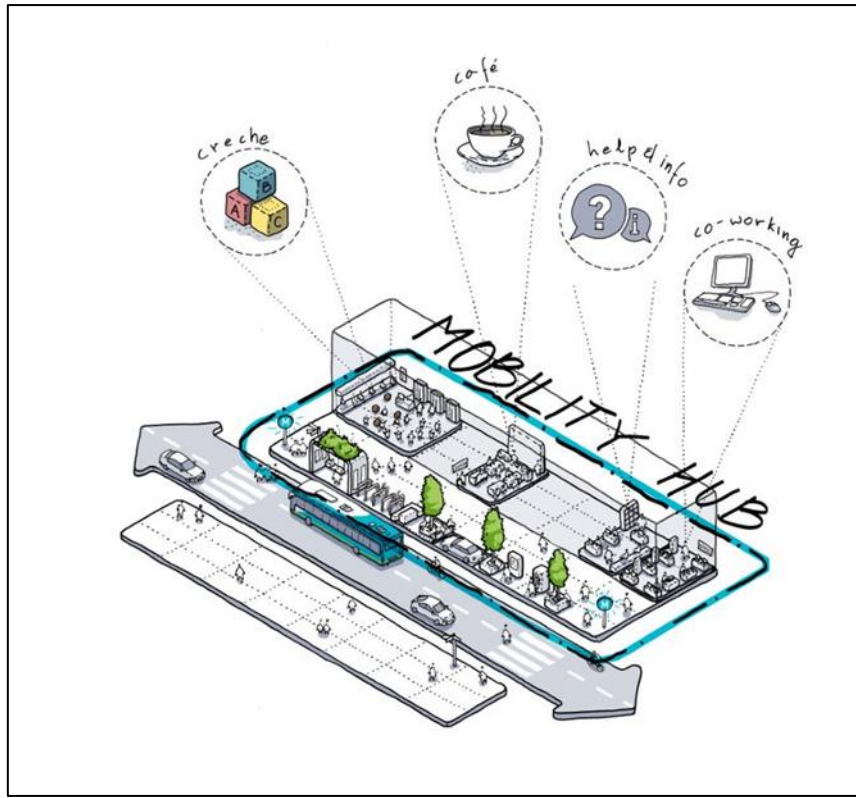
4.2.117.   The development of mobility hubs will contribute towards reducing the need to travel (through the co-location of transport options and community amenities) and help promote sustainable travel options including bike share, cycling and walking (through the provision of better information and cycle parking facilities). Improved levels of cycling and walking will also bring environmental and health benefits.

4.2.118.   Improving access to public transport and improving integration between transport modes can also help to support wider access to jobs, education, training and services, particularly for first and last mile connectivity.

4.2.119.   Proposals for ten mobility hubs have been developed as part of the CRSTS submission – these locations will be prioritised from the long list included in **Appendix E** on the basis of deliverability within the five-year timescale of the CRSTS funding.

4.2.120.   **In summary, interventions at this stage of the journey will provide:**

⊙   New and improved, accessible, and more flexible ways for passengers to travel and complete door-to-door journeys sustainably - – instead of needing to rely on a private car or taxi.

⊙   Better sustainable travel options for people living in rural and other kinds of areas less suited to a traditional bus service.

⊙   More seamless integration between different modes of public transport and other forms of travel, including cycling and walking.

4.2.121. To improve the passenger experience at this stage of the journey, we want to deliver:

A coordinated cross-organisation response to handling customer queries and complaints

4.2.122. To support better management of passengers queries and complaints we will develop a new, more coordinated system across Metro and all local operators. This will work to ensure that the passenger gets an initial response at their point of contact within a set number of days and have a smoother experience in getting the answer they need.

4.2.123. This intervention aims to move away from the existing system whereby passengers are often passed between organisations depending on the nature of the contact and ensure greater level of consistency in the support they receive.

4.2.124. Members of the Bus Alliance will take on a collective responsibility to handle customer complaints and queries. This will require:

- New service level agreements (to be agreed as part of the Enhanced Partnership).
- Share and analyse a log of all passenger queries and complaints
- Greater Metro resource

4.2.125. A highlight of this approach will be our 'no quibble money back guarantee' (included as part of the Passenger Charter) which will refund any passenger who is not satisfied with the service they receive.

Monitoring customer satisfaction

4.2.126. Building on our Tracker Survey and the Transport Focus Survey the Combined Authority will undertake a further customer satisfaction survey to understand more clearly the areas which customers see as going well and those that need further development. The survey will consider how this varies across our diverse geography and bus offer.

4.2.127. **In summary, interventions at this stage of the journey will provide:**

⌚ A simpler and more convenient way for passengers to make a query, complaint or seek redress regardless of the journey made.

⌚ A user-friendly bus system, better suited and more receptive to a passenger's personal travel needs and behaviours.

⌚ Additional survey analysis to understand customer satisfaction

Attracting and retaining passengers

> **Retaining and attracting new passengers –** potential passengers are encouraged to travel by bus thanks to effective, engaging marketing that presents it as a viable, attractive option for travel.

Passenger insight:

"It is important that the negative perceptions many people hold towards bus travel are challenged/overturned" (WY Bus Strategy Consultation)

In recent years, our local engagement has found that many customers believed there was an opportunity for improving and increasing marketing of services in order to encourage more people to shift to more sustainable modes of transport such as bus. Some stakeholders also believed a cultural change was needed to achieve local transport strategies (West Yorkshire Bus Strategy Consultation). This will be even more important as we tackle the challenge of retaining and attracting passengers as we recover from the pandemic.

Segmentation analysis of survey respondents nationally through Transport Focus's 'Travel During Covid-19' research will prove useful to be able to understand how people are feeling about public transport now and, in the future, so the appropriate communications can be tailored towards them. Particular examples of areas cited by passengers as being of great importance at present is reassurance around cleanliness and safety on bus, not only to current passengers but lapsed users, by using trusted and effective channels to communicate efforts and to build their confidence (Transport Focus – A Cleaner Future?)

4.2.128.   To improve the passenger experience at this stage of the journey, we want to deliver:

A modern, dynamic approach to Metro marketing:

4.2.129.   Communications and marketing will be vital to maximising the benefits of this BSIP across key customer touchpoints, supporting the attraction and retention of bus passengers, as well the increasing customer satisfaction and confidence to travel.

4.2.130.   While such activity is already undertaken by Metro, the Combined Authority want to make this more modern and engaging moving forward – ensuring our comms and marketing is industry leading.

4.2.131. Key to this will be to ensure we are better targeting and effectively engaging customers through a deeper understanding and analysis of the potential passenger base and different travel behaviours across the region. Through this BSIP, the Combined Authority's ambition to secure funding to bolster the capabilities of our in-house team and the resources available to deliver effective marketing campaigns.

Joint campaigns and shared key messaging:

4.2.132. Working with members of the Bus Alliance, the Combined Authority – via Metro – will work to deliver more cross-operator, joint communications and marketing activity to maximise the reach and impact of efforts to promote a cohesive West Yorkshire bus offer and attract new passengers.

4.2.133. To do this, the Alliance will develop a joint marketing and communications strategy to set out the principles for how we will work together to jointly promote buses under the Metro brand.

4.2.134. We will also work to a joint **communications activity plan** to coordinate the delivery of this strategy. It will include a programme of campaigns, such as:

- **Back to bus** – encouraging people to return to buses as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic
- **Safe travel** – promoting the measures we are taking to ensure passengers feel safe using buses and our 0-tolerance approach to harassment.
- **Our Passenger Charter and customer satisfaction guarantee** – promoting the measures of redress in place for passengers who experience a problem .
- **Promotion of fares deal** - and other initiatives delivered as part of the BSIP.

4.2.135. There will also be agreed, shared key messages that all members of the Alliance can use in any passenger-facing communication – be it a single operate or joint activity - to reinforce the benefits of bus travel in West Yorkshire.

A behaviour change activity plan:

4.2.136. As well as traditional marketing and advertising campaigns, the Combined Authority want to implement a programme of behaviour change activities to encourage and support people to use bus as their primary mode of travel across West Yorkshire.

4.2.137. The Combined Authority will conduct further research into the specific barriers and motivating factors to bus use, and initiatives which could influence these, through desktop analysis, public surveys and direct passenger engagement

4.2.138. Using the research outcomes, the ambition to then develop, deliver and monitor the success of a number of different behaviours change initiatives that support modal shift to bus.

4.2.139. This work is already planned as part of the Transforming Cities Fund programme but will be key to fully realising the benefits of this BSIP. Subject to the success of these activities, further funding could be utilised to roll them out more widely and encourage even more people to travel by bus.

More partnership activity and expansion of our Travel Plan Network:

4.2.140. The West Yorkshire Travel Plan Network is an existing free membership scheme for any employer in our region who is committed to encouraging their staff to travel sustainably to work. Through the BSIP, the Combined Authority is looking to expand the capabilities of this team to enable us to create new partnerships with businesses and organisation who want to encourage sustainable travel to their customers and patrons.

4.2.141. The Travel Plan Network already has more than 530 member organisations. Existing benefits include discounted corporate MCards and business travel passes, support with car clubs and car sharing, as well as on-site real time information and sustainable travel events and seminars.

4.2.142. Expansion of the Travel Plan Network team would enable us to create more bespoke partnerships with different types of business, such as cultural institutions or one-off events, and offer different incentives such as combined entry/transport ticketing or product activation events.

4.2.143. Improved Partnership activity would enable us to better engage potential passengers and influence their travel behaviours.

4.2.144. **In summary, interventions at this stage of the journey will provide:**

- Clearer and less confusing public messaging that supports people to better understand and feel confident about using their local bus service.

- Engaging and far-reaching marketing campaigns that excite, change perceptions and encourage more people to try bus travel.

- New incentives, offers and initiatives to make travelling by bus more attractive and encourage people to do so as part of their day-to-day lives.

4.3. The West Yorkshire Bus Network

4.3.1. Fundamentally, our local bus network of different services, routes and corridors needs to take people where they want to go, when they want to go, in order to be a viable option for travel.

4.3.2. West Yorkshire has a diverse, multicentric geography. Demand for bus travel is similarly diverse with a mix of significant city/ town centres, smaller local centres and an extensive rural community. The West Yorkshire Bus Network therefore needs to be adaptable and offer tailored solutions to effectively service all our communities and cater to the complexity of modern travel patterns.

4.3.3. Our ambition is to radically evolve and grow the existing network in order to improve connectivity across the region and provide a more convenient, attractive and fully inclusive service offer for both existing and potential passengers. To do this we need to:

- Enable the bus network to support the complexity of journey patterns needed to sustain modern life, especially for those who mix work, childcare and other caring responsibilities.

- Enable more households to be within walking distance of a frequent 'core' bus service to their nearest city/town centre.

- Enable better access by bus to edge and out of town employment.

- Ensure the hours of operation of buses fit with the needs of people and the economy especially those on shift work and in the evening economy.

- Provide a viable bus network which enables people to switch from the private car.

- Identify viable new links between communities where demand indicated.

4.3.4. This will support us to meet this BSIPs ambitious KPIs and targets, including those to:

- Increase bus's weekday mode share on radial routes into district centres by 5% by 2025 and by 10% by 2030.
- Improve housing accessibility via the core bus network to 55% by 2025 and to 65% by 20230
- Improve employment accessibility via the core bus network to 60% by 2025 and to 70% by 2030
- Increase service provision (in bus miles) for those travelling in the early morning and evening by 2.5% by 2025 and by 5% by 2030

4.3.5. To work towards achieving these targets, this BSIP provides the foundations of a five-year network plan which will map out changes and improvements on a year-by-year basis between March 2022 to March 2027.

Key network principles:

4.3.6. The evolution of our network will be guided by key principles. Firstly, we propose to retain our existing operational concepts of a region-wide:

- **Core Network** – of services with a frequency of every 15 minutes or better, and primarily all operate on a commercial basis.

- **Strategic and Secondary Commercial Network** - of services operating at less than 15 minute frequency

- **Secondary Community Network** - which is made up of less frequent services and are partially or wholly subsidised by the Combined Authority to maintain socially necessary connectivity.

4.3.7.   These networks, as they currently exist, are mapped in **Figure 8** below.

4.3.8.   To improve these networks, essentially, we are looking to expand the core network – delivering more frequent services on more routes and across service hours - and make the secondary networks more regular and consistent. Primarily this will:

- Expand the number of services and routes so that more people can access a bus that runs every 15 minutes or quicker.

- Ensure buses running on our less frequent routes are more consistent and regular so they can still be relied upon for travel.

- Ensure service frequencies extend throughout the day from early morning until evening and are designed to serve the particular needs of families with children, shift workers and those working in the night-time economy.

4.3.9.   For the passenger this will mean better access by bus to the places they want to go, when they want to go – with less time spent waiting at the bus stop and a greater awareness of the options bus can provide them for travel. They will also travel with more confidence that if their bus did something yesterday, it will do it today.

Figure 8 – The existing West Yorkshire Bus Network
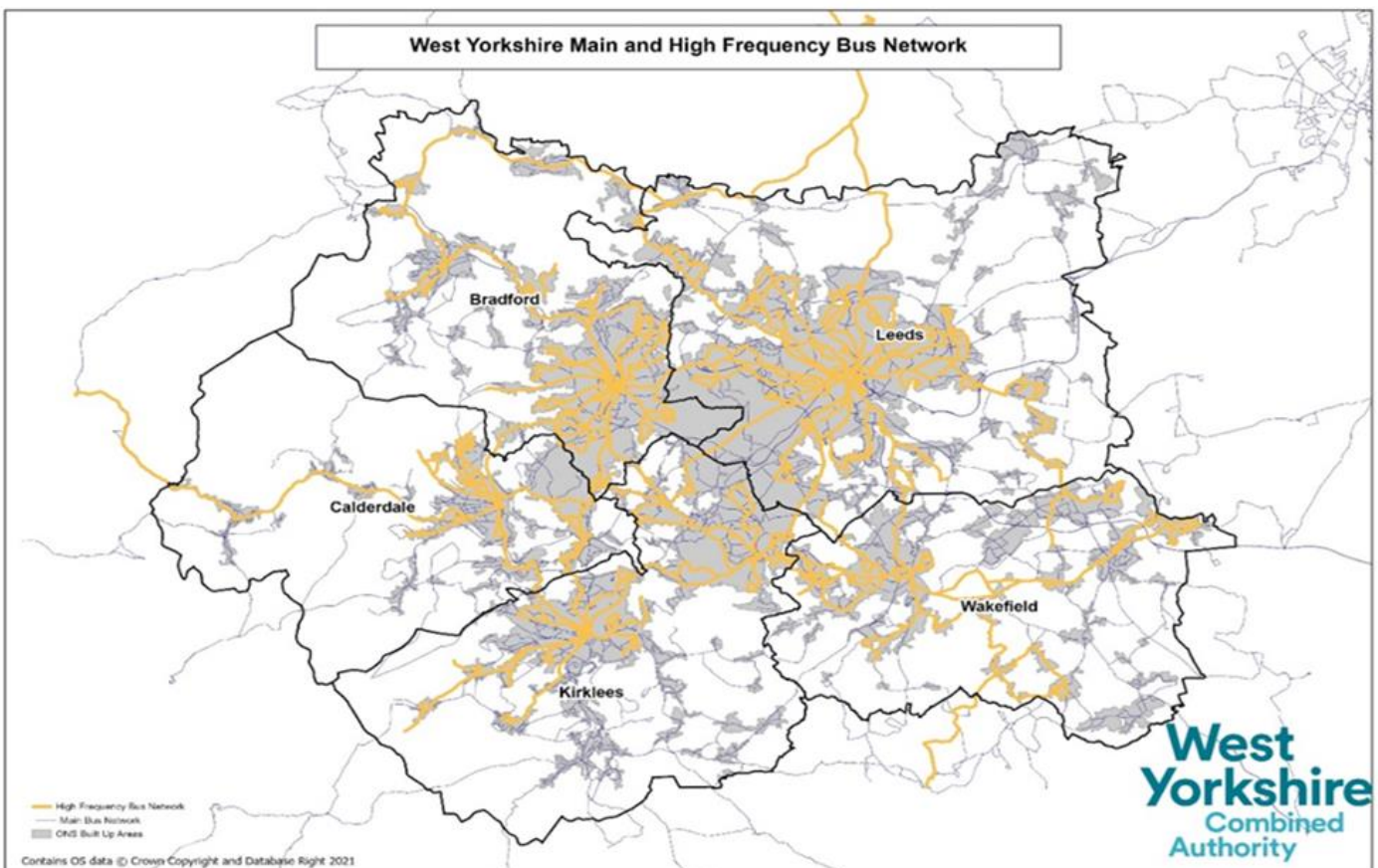
Our Five-Year Network Plan

4.3.10. A full report on the initial work undertaken to review our network and develop a delivery plan is included as **Appendix F** to this BSIP.

4.3.11. As a result of the assessment of the current bus network and identification of gaps, we have started to develop a five-year network plan. The approach taken to developing this network is as follows:

Managing the network through the pandemic:

4.3.12. In June 2021, the Combined Authority established the principles under which funding to support bus operators would be deployed, as they emerged from the coronavirus lockdowns and faced reduce revenue. The following principles were agreed:

- To maintain connectivity to communities currently served by buses.

- To maintain the integrity of the current bus network for the remainder of 2021/22 in advance of reviewing it from April 2022 under the Enhanced Partnership.

Base year 2022 bus network:

4.3.13. Following emergence from the pandemic, in 2022, the focus will shift from maintenance to evolving and growing the bus network. This will require us to:

- Determine the impact of the pandemic on demand and the consequential changes to travel habits. A starting position of 80% of pre pandemic demand in April 2022 is assumed.

- Identify opportunities for passenger growth to meet changed demand.

- Identify where existing capacity could be redeployed to better meet demand.

- Identify opportunities to expand availability of service with a view to generating new bus journeys.

2023-2027 pilot new routes and service offer:

4.3.14. Following the network's initial growth, further enhancements and interventions will be made to support key strategic aims and deliver operational efficiencies, including:

- Restoring early morning and evening journeys to better meet employment patterns
- Strengthen service provision in towns
- Stronger performing radial routes strengthened to become "core services"
- Convert some infrequent services to demand responsive
- Provide new links and improved modal integration

Improved frequency across the network:

4.3.15. The plan will helps build towards the Combined Authority's ambition for a more frequent bus system. **Figure 9**, below, show current bus connectivity on weekdays and **Table 7** outlines the proposed frequencies we would like to see across the network by 2025, including a consistent 7am to 7pm service offer seven days per week.

Figure 9 – A map showing current bus weekday frequency across the existing network
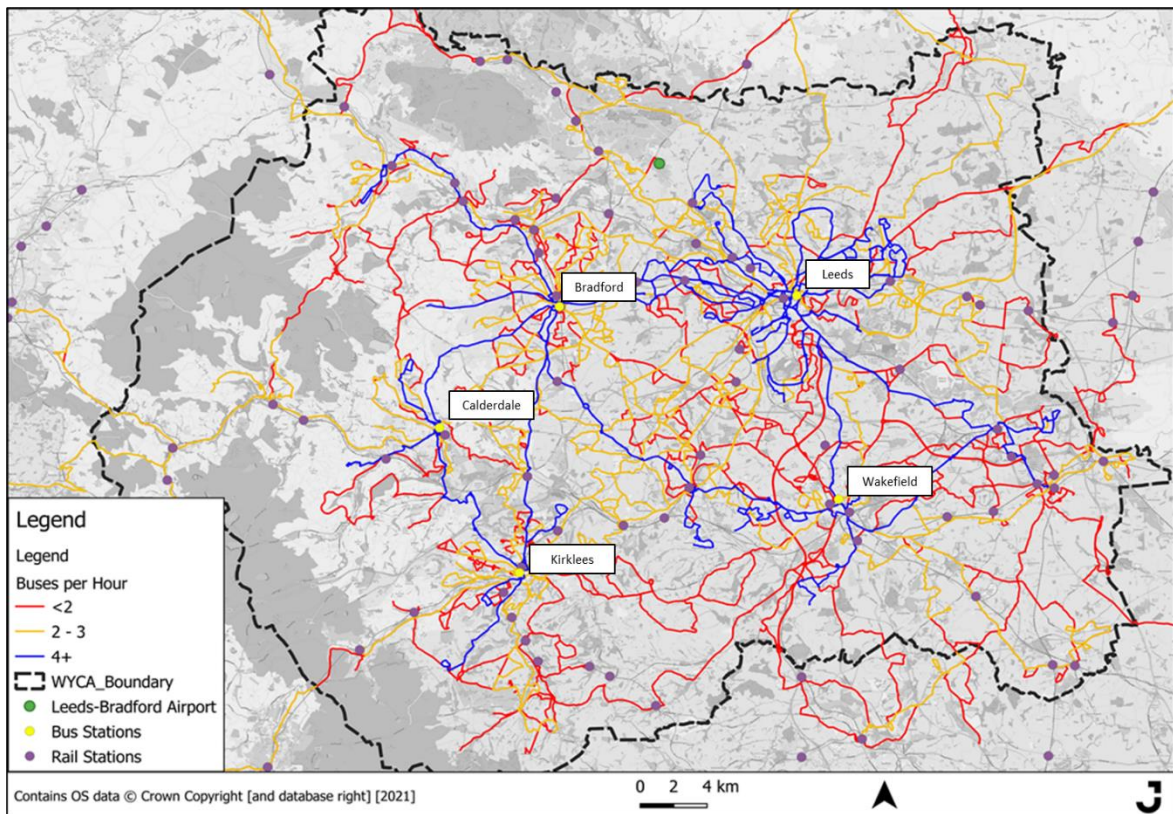

Table 7 – targets for network frequency by 2025

Network	Weekday service hours	Current	By 2025
Core	12am – 5am	As required	As required
	5am – 7am	Every 30 minutes	At least every 15 minutes
	7am-7pm	At least every 15 minutes	At least every 10 minutes
	7pm-9pm	Every 30 minutes	At least every 15 minutes
	9pm – 12am	Every 30 minutes	Every 30 minutes
Other services	12am – 5am	As required	As required
	5am – 7am	As required	Every 30 minutes
	7am-7pm	Every 20,30,60 minutes	Every 20,30, minutes
	7pm-9pm	As required	Every 30 minutes
	9pm – 12am	As required	As required

Delivering our plan – developing solutions with operators:

4.3.16. As part of the network's development, the Combined Authority has worked with local operators to use their knowledge of the network to identify areas where they believe, with the right financial support, new links and enhanced provision could generate additional bus travel and growth of the commercial network.

4.3.17.Operators proposed solutions have been collated and analysed to understand where their delivery could fit within the five-year network plan to support its strategic aims.

4.3.18.Details on the assessment, costing and prioritisation of operators suggestions are included in **Appendix F**

Superbus pilots

4.3.19.As part of the development of the network plan, the Combined Authority invited proposals from local bus operators as to how the National Bus Strategy's 'Superbus' concept could be applied and piloted in West Yorkshire.

4.3.20.The overall aim of the pilots will be to understand the effectiveness of local flat fares, higher frequency services and bus priority measures in increasing bus patronage and influencing other travel behaviours.

4.3.21.The Combined Authority's preferred approach to Superbus in West Yorkshire, through which operator proposals have been initially evaluated, includes a:
- Focus on towns and surrounding areas.
- Commitment to patronage growth within the area – an indicative target of 20% is recommended.
- Simplified, fare flat fare system, integrated with MCard and the West Yorkshire concessionary fare provisions.
- Balance of schemes across the region.
- Strong communications and engagement strategy and / or a strong local brand image which relates to the Metro branding.

4.3.22.Furthermore, proposal which:
- Encourage connectivity to parts of West Yorkshire with key destinations in adjoining areas will be considered and can make links to cross boundary services.
- Include more early morning services and later evening connectivity will be supported.
- Would directly abstract passengers from services operated by another company will not be supported, however proposals which improve connectivity in areas currently served by other operators will be considered.

4.3.23.Additionally operators were invited to identify complementary public sector investment which could support the proposition to become commercially viable in the longer term.

4.3.24.The Combined Authority would enter into a three-year contract to deliver the pilot for an annual fee paid monthly. It is expected that the fee profile would reduce annually as fare revenue increases. The contract may be extended by a further two years by mutual agreement on the basis of a reduced or zero fee. We would also agree conditions under which the proposal would become commercially viable.

4.3.25.The below table, **Table 8**, provides an overview of the operator proposal which we would like to bring forward as part of our BSIP, subject to Government funding. These propositions will be developed in further details with bus operators

Table 8 – Superbus proposals overview

Calderdale	Enhanced services between Halifax and Huddersfield and bus/rail links at new Elland Station
Bradford	Expand Keighley network and improved links between North Bradford and Leeds
Kirklees	Enhanced services in Spen Valley and improved links from Holme Valley to Huddersfield
Leeds	Limited stop inter urban links between Wetherby and Leeds
Wakefield	Enhanced services and cross boundary links in South East Wakefield, and improved bus/rail co-ordination in the Five Towns area.

Demand Responsive "FlexiBus" Service development

4.3.26. In September 2021, the Combined Authority launched the FlexiBus East Leeds demand responsive service jointly funded with the Department for Transport through the Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme. Learnings from this pilot service will inform the design of up to five further FlexiBus services to be delivered during the life of the five year Network Plan.

4.3.27. A long list of options for Demand Responsive Transport services is in development with the first prioritised five services to be delivered over the next 5 years. The FlexiBus services will be trialled in locations where a scheduled bus service is not suitable and a different model for providing connectivity is needed.

4.4. Bus priority and our supporting highway infrastructure pipeline

4.4.1. In addition to the network enhancements outlined, the Combined Authority recognises that bus priority will be crucial to unlocking traffic congestion and ensuring buses can travel quickly and without delay across West Yorkshire. For the passenger this will mean that journeys made by bus are smoother, more reliable, and a more attractive alternative to the private car - especially in urban areas.

Our approach to bus priority:

4.4.2. As part of the ongoing delivery of this BSIP, we will seek to implement a region-wide approach to bus priority - and supporting infrastructure - across all of West Yorkshire's five district areas to improve consistency and ensure that measures are matched to the journeys passengers want to make, not local authority boundaries.

4.4.3. Our approach to bus priority will support us to meet our ambitious regional targets for:

- A decrease in journey times by an average of 10% by 2025, and 15% by 2030
- An improvement in reliability of services to 99.5% by 2025 and maintenance of this through to 2030
- An improvement in punctuality of services to 95% by 2025, and 99.5% by 2030

4.4.4. Our vision for bus priority measures extends beyond just new bus lanes, and includes bus gates, traffic signal priority, improved kerb spaces and access. It also will include a review of highway and traffic demand management measures, including the potential creation of a Key Route Network.

4.4.5. Furthermore, in partnership with our West Yorkshire local authorities, we will examine the evidence and blend of policy options required to reduce car trips and encourage a modal shift to bus, and other forms public transport and active travel - while recognising that ultimate control for parking related measures rests with West Yorkshire local authorities.

4.4.6. We will do this by:

- Considering measures that reduce parking supply to manage demand for car trips and show how the space can be reallocated to other uses such as car clubs, active and sustainable transport infrastructure, parklets, wider resident and business use, and micro-consolidation.

- Considering how banded parking charges could be implemented, for example by incorporating both tailpipe and other emissions, safety standard scores, dimensions incorporating weight, height, width, length etc., and on-street / off-street public parking.

- Considering how travel planning and other measures could be implemented to manage demand for business related travel.

- Work in partnership with West Yorkshire local authorities as the responsible bodies for the regulation of parking on the development of highways demand management measures.

Our bus priority scheme pipeline:

4.4.7. As part of our BSIP, we have developed an ambitious pipeline of highway infrastructure schemes to support bus priority across West Yorkshire. It is our ambition that this pipeline would be delivered as a multi-year programme to substantially improve the provision of bus priority measures across the region, as sought by the National Bus Strategy. This would be financed through capital investment via both the Bus Service Improvement Plan and the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement funding pots.

4.4.8. Potential bus priority schemes have been pooled through consultation with WYCA's District partners and local bus operators, as well as using evidence-based sources such as those identified within our Strategic Bus Network Review (2020).

4.4.9. Development of the pipeline will be an ongoing process and will be updated alongside this BSIP. Schemes will continue to be identified, evidenced and refined as we monitor the network and gain a deeper understanding of its existing and emerging needs as it evolves – including key congestion hotspots and areas in need of journey time improvements.

4.4.10. A prioritisation of the highway scheme pipeline has been undertaken – based on key objectives of our BSIP together with deliverability. A full report on this prioritisation – including methodology and assessment outcomes - is available as **Appendix G**.

Highways Management and review of Key Route Network powers

4.4.11. Through the West Yorkshire Devolution Deal, the Combined Authority secured new powers to set up and co-ordinate a Key Route Network (KRN). Since the Mayor came into post in May 2021, work on developing a KRN Strategy has now commenced and will build on the strong tradition of partnership working with our five constituent authorities in order to ensure the benefits of highway improvement schemes on the KRN are fully realised. Managing the KRN in this collaborative way has a huge advantage in terms of improving traffic flow, reducing congestion and providing opportunities to introduce bus priority, which we have achieved previously through delivery of successful funding programmes such as the West Yorkshire plus Transport Fund and Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme.

4.4.12. The Combined Authority has responded to the recent public consultation regarding expanding the KRN powers for Mayoral Combined Authorities and has set out its intentions to review these working arrangements and delivery with our partner councils over the next 18 months.

Enforcement

4.4.13. As well as new schemes, improved enforcement of existing measures needs to be a fundamental element of our plan for bus priority in West Yorkshire. Traditionally the approach to enforcement of bus lanes especially across our five local authority areas has been varied, which has lead to the following risks:

- Inconsistencies leading to confusion for general road users
- Delays for buses impeded by unauthorised vehicles
- Safety of vulnerable road users
- Inconsistency and confusion for taxi's making cross border movements

4.4.14. Work has been undertaken with partner councils to understand the differing approaches and achieve greater consistency of application of bus lane enforcement, but it is acknowledged that this need to go further to achieve a West Yorkshire wide consensus and ultimately provide better journey time benefits for passengers.

4.4.15. As part of this BSIP the Combined Authority will work with the Local Authorities to deliver a package of measures to support enforcement including:

4.4.16. Employment of bus priority wardens, who can deployed as required across the region to support waiting passengers in town and city centres and assist buses in navigating the network at times of severe congestion

4.4.17. Enforcement cameras on new bus priority infrastructure to ensure appropriate use of the provision

4.5. How we are addressing our key strategic themes

4.5.1. The initiatives and interventions detailed across the previous section all work to address our key themes for better buses in West Yorkshire.

A safe and inclusive bus system

4.5.2. This BSIP seeks to support this theme through specific interventions including:

- Evolution of the bus network to support more varied travel patterns beyond the 9 to 5 commute in and out of urban city centres.

- Cheaper, better values fares so bus travel is affordable for all; and better provision of bus services in areas of high deprivation.

- Improved engagement with, and analysis of, the bus passenger market to better understand different passenger demographics and travel behaviours; and support the Combined Authority to develop tailored and effective solutions.

- Efforts to improve the safety and general environment of bus stops, stations and onboard vehicles, particularly for women and girls.

- The provision of audio-visual information on all buses, and other accessibility support including

- The retention of printed travel information to support those at risk of digital exclusion.

- Staff training, including how to support passengers with additional social and physicals needs.

- Commitments in our draft Passenger Charter to safe and inclusive bus network including a zero-tolerance approach to abuse and antisocial behaviour.

4.5.3. An overarching Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been conducted to support this BSIP and is included as **Appendix H** to this report. The BSIP will then be followed by the development of an Enhanced Partnership which will contain detailed, specific schemes. Individual scheme specific EIA's will be produced in due course, once the detail of the schemes have been further defined and are considered to lead to significant impacts for any group(s) with protected characteristics.

Better connected communities

4.5.4. This BSIP seeks to support this theme through specific interventions, including:

- Evolution of the network work to ensure more homes are in closer proximity to the core, high frequency network.

- Better consistency and regularity of service provision on non-core service to ensure the bus can still be relied on for travel.

- Ongoing funding support for socially necessary services.

- The provision of alternative models of service, such as FlexiBus, to provide connectivity where a traditional bus service may be less feasible.

Decarbonisation and integrated, sustainable travel

4.5.5. This BSIP seeks to support this theme through specific interventions including:

- A commitment to a net-zero carbon bus fleet by 2036, with significant progress by 2030, including through 121 new green buses as part of our ZEBRA bid.

- Mobility hubs, Park and Ride schemes to support modal shift and better integrated between

Summary of the strategic relevance of all proposed interventions

4.5.6. **Table 9**, below, summarises the relevance of the over 30 initiative and interventions proposed throughout the Delivery section of this report against this Bus Service Improvement Plan's key themes and objectives. **Appendix I** contains a logic map, which sets out how the interventions we propose to deliver are linked to the strategic themes and objectives.

Table 9 - Summary table to show the relevance of initiatives to the BSIPs key themes and objectives

Headline interventions and initiatives	Key themes and objectives				
	Safe and inclusive bus system		*Better connected communities*		*Decarbonisation and integrated, sustainable travel*
	1) Establish bus as a key mode of choice	2) Establish a financially stable bus service	3) Improve operational delivery to provide passengers a service they can feel confident in using	4) Improve connectivity for communities facing deprivation, inequality and exclusion	5) Ensure the bus service is integrated to deliver sustainable connectivity
1. Improved and more consistent travel information	✔		✔	✔	✔
2. Better utilisation of our Real Time Information System and more "Your Next bus" screens'	✔		✔		✔
3. Enhancements to our journey planner and MCard mobile ticketing app	✔		✔		✔
4. Printed information for those who need it	✔		✔	✔	✔
5. An evolved, more visible Metro brand to unify the network	✔		✔	✔	✔
6. Continue rollout of network navigation	✔		✔	✔	✔
7. Bus stop and station upgrades	✔		✔		
8. Bus stop cleaning enhancements	✔		✔		
9. Enhanced safer travel partnership	✔			✔	
10. Cheaper, simpler and better value fares and tickets	✔	✔		✔	✔
11. A trial of time-limited barcode tickets	✔	✔	✔		
12. New and adapted concessionary fares schemes	✔	✔		✔	
13. Improved onboard vehicle standards	✔		✔	✔	

West Yorkshire Combined Authority

	Col 1	Col 2	Col 3	Col 4	Col 5
14. Audio-visual info and other accessibility enhancements	✓		✓	✓	
15. More green buses	✓		✓		
16. Improvements to the publication of live disruptions messaging	✓		✓		✓
17. Shared training for all passenger facing staff	✓				✓
18. Improved integration with active travel and other modes	✓	✓	✓		✓
19. More Park and Ride schemes	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
20. More 'FlexiBus' Demand Responsive Transport Services	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
21. Improvements to our AccessBus service	✓		✓	✓	✓
22. New mobility hubs across the region	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
23. A coordinated response to customer queries & complaints	✓		✓		
24. Improved monitoring of customer satisfaction	✓	✓		✓	
25. A modern, dynamic approach to Metro marketing	✓		✓		✓
26. Joint campaigns and shared key messaging	✓	✓	✓		✓
27. A behaviour change activity plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
28. Partnership activity + expansion of the Travel Plan Network	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
29. Five-year network plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
30. Superbus pilots	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
31. Highway Infrastructure Scheme pipeline	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
32. Enforcement measures	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
33. Highways Management and Review of Key Route Network	✓		✓		✓

4.6. Passenger Charter

4.6.1. The following Passenger Charter sets the Combined Authority's ambition for the standards of service and guarantees any user of any bus in West Yorkshire should expect.

4.6.2. This Passenger Charter is still in draft, and it is the Combined Authority's ambition to further develop and seek agreement on it with local operators through development of the Enhanced Partnership.

The West Yorkshire Passenger Charter [DRAFT]

Bus passengers in West Yorkshire, deserve a high-quality, safe and enjoyable experience no matter the bus service they are on. Whether you are travelling from Bradford to Shipley or Brighouse to Huddersfield, you should be able to trust the bus will turn up and get you there on time. This Passenger Charter sets our everything about the standard of service you should expect across the West Yorkshire bus network.

Everyone is Welcome Onboard – Supporting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Bus travel should be for everyone. While we are doing our best to try meet people's different needs, and ensure the network takes people where they need to go when they need to go, here are our key commitments to ensure an inclusive offer for everyone:

- We will provide accessibility support at every stage of a journey

- Coloured wallet scheme – if you have hidden disability, you can apply for a Metro wallet which will signal to the driver to make sure they know to provide.

- 0 tolerance – we do not tolerate harassment or discriminatory behaviour on board our buses

Our service commitments:

1. The passenger is our number one priority, and we will do all we can to ensure you are satisfied with your experience of bus travel.

2. Travelling by bus should be simple, convenient and reliable.

3. All bus drivers and in-station staff should be friendly and helpful.

4. All buses and stations should be clean, safe, fully accessible and welcoming.

5. Everyone is welcome on board our buses and has a right to travel safely without fear – discrimination, harassment or antisocial behaviour will not be tolerated.

6. If you are travelling on the WY Core Bus Network, your next bus should be at your stop within the next 15 minutes or sooner.

7. You need never pay more for a day's travel anywhere in West Yorkshire than our £5.50 MCard Day Saver fare – and if you ask, we promise to advise you on the best value fare for your journey.

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8. Head to the MCard mobile ticketing app or the Moovit journey planner for all reliable up-to-date information – including live vehicle tracking, occupancy, network disruptions and fares.

9. Got a complaint or query? You'll get a response at your point of contact within X number of days.

Our key customer guarantees:

☐ **Journey satisfaction guarantee** - if you're not happy with the standard of service provided, we will give you your money back or next journey for free.

☐ **Last journey promise** – if the last bus service on your route is late or cancelled, we will pay for a taxi to get you where you need to go.

☐ **Under 19 Fare deal** – we want to instil bus travel as a good habit for life and ensure young people have access to opportunities across the region so all under-19s are entitled to discounted 'My!' MCard tickets for use on all bus across West Yorkshire.

Queries and Complaints – Head to wymetro.com

You can make a complaint or provide any feedback on your bus service by contacting Metro or the relevant bus operating company. We work together to ensure all customers get a response to their comments at their point of contact within X number of days.

Alternatively, just give Metro a call on 0113 245 7676 if you want to chat. We're here to help from 7am - 8pm Monday to Saturday or 8am - 8pm on Sundays and bank holidays (closed Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day).

What you need to know about the West Yorkshire bus network

West Yorkshire's bus network is brought to you by Metro - the transport network of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority - in partnership with local operators.

The West Yorkshire Core Bus Network is made up of routes where services run every 15 minutes or better – 65% of homes in the region are currently within 400m of a bus stop on this high frequency network. The Secondary and Community Networks are areas where services run less frequently but passengers should still expect them to follow regular patterns and be reliable.

We are also working to improving the punctuality, reliability and journey times across all services – find the full list of in development bus priority infrastructure schemes on the WYCA website.

We are committed to decarbonising our bus network and ensure it's a sustainable option for you to travel. The Bus Network is part of a wider sustainable transport offer across West Yorkshire.

5. Management and implementation

5.1.1. This section will set out the approach to management and implementation of the Bus Service Improvement Plan.

5.1.2. The Combined Authority has a strong track record of delivery and through the West Yorkshire Bus Alliance the Combined Authority and the bus operators have successfully delivered a number of customers facing initiatives as set out in the case studies within this BSIP. However, with declining patronage and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, there is still a long way to go to make bus the first and natural choice for transport in West Yorkshire. This section will set out the delivery plan for the initiatives outlined in our BSIP and the funding ask to make this ambition a reality.

Implementation plan

5.1.3. This BSIP will deliver improvements both now and into the future as we work to realise better buses in West Yorkshire. **Table 10** summaries the delivery schedule of our proposed interventions across three timescales – quick wins (2020), short term (2022-24), and the medium-longer term (2024+). A more detailed programme plan is included as **Appendix J** to this report.

Table 10 – BSIP plan on a page

Quick wins (2022)	Short term (2022-2024)	Medium to long term (2024+)
➤ Maintenance of existing connectivity and early service enhancements	➤ Introduction of multi-operator contactless capping	➤ A reimagined, fully inclusive, and more cohesive bus network with more frequent services and better connectivity for all.
➤ Expand MCard mobile app to link ticket sales, journey planning and in-journey information	➤ Cheaper and simpler multi-operator fares including reduction in the cost of the MCard Day Saver / daily cap.	➤ Cheaper and simpler fare structure
➤ Reintroduction of printed timetable information at bus stop	➤ More 'Your Next Bus' screens	➤ Audio visual information on all buses
➤ Rollout of new colour coded bus stop maps and flags across West Yorkshire's core bus network (Network Navigation)	➤ A more cohesively presented bus network including more Metro branding	➤ Over 120 new electric buses by 2024, and a carbon zero bus fleet by 2036
➤ Continue to ensure enhanced cleaning standards are maintained	➤ New and improved bus stops and stations – with better safety and accessibility support	➤ All buses Euro VI clean air zone compliant by 2026
➤ Enhanced Safer Travel Partnership with West Yorkshire Police	➤ Begin rollout of audio-visual technology and other new accessible information.	➤ Stable, inclusive and resilient workforce
➤ Trial 90-minute multi journey mobile tickets		➤ Better integration with rail and mass transit
		➤ More Park and Ride

➢ Consult and agree on the Passenger Charter ➢ More marketing and promotional campaigns to attract people back to bus ➢ Develop techniques to better understand demographics and travel behaviours of the regions bus passengers	➢ Improvements to management of network disruptions ➢ New AccessBus fleet ➢ Improved system for dealing with passenger queries and complaints ➢ Growth of the bus network – new routes and more frequent services ➢ Pilot town based 'Superbus' service enhancements ➢ Delivery of existing infrastructure programmes - including more bus priority on our roads ➢ Improved customer service standards – delivery of the Passenger Charter	➢ More 'FlexiBus' Demand Response Transport schemes ➢ New Mobility Hubs across West Yorkshire ➢ Unifed communications and marketing into a single "voice" for bus Delivery of an ongoing pipeline of bus priority schemes

5.2. Funding and finance

5.2.1. This section sets out the cost of delivering this Bus Service Improvement Plan, the additional funding sought from Government fand the wider funding that is already being deployed or planned to be deployed within the timescale of the Plan. Sufficient investment and the subsequent establishment of a financially sustainable operating model will be crucial to fully realising the ambition of our plan for better buses in West Yorkshire.

5.2.2. The additional funding sought from Government to deliver this Bus Service Improvement Plan Table 11- below provides an overview of our funding bid to central Government to support delivery of this BSIP. This has been divided into separate packages targeting different aspects of bus services and our ambitions for improving them.

5.2.3. The table sets out that £227,602,000 capital and £168,780,000 revenue is needed over the five years of the Plan.

Table 11 – Summary of the BSIP Funding Bid

Package	Revenue cost (£000) BSIP funding ask Total 5 Years	Capital cost (£000) BSIP funding ask Total 5 Years	Total capital cost – inc. CRSTS (£000) Total 5 Years*
Bus priority infrastructure	0	23,400	679,877
Other infrastructure and assets	28,750	2,910	2,910
Fares support	40,540	0	0
Ticketing reform	990	2,543	2,543
Bus service support	88,384	39,000	39,000
Marketing, promotions and communications	2,650	100	100
Enhanced Partnership and Franchising delivery	550	0	0
Zero emission buses	0	120,000	176,500
Customer service and information	4,436	42,889	42,889

Monitoring and evaluation	2,480	0	0
Total:	**168,780**	**230,842**	**943,819**

*NB: Total Capital cost includes Bus Service Improvement Plan; City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement and West Yorkshire Transport Fund schemes that will be delivered across the same time period

Funding Ask Assumptions

5.2.4. **Table 11**, above, sets out a number of assumptions, as follows:

- Network Design we have included within this element a provisional sum of £22m to support the post pandemic recovery of fare revenues beyond end March 2022 on the basis of maintaining the network as it stands in September 2021. This is based upon a forecast that demand will be at 80% of pre pandemic rates on 1 April 2022 and represents a two year requirement

- The Highway Infrastructure cost included as part of the BSIP is in addition to the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement. **Appendix G** contains a pipeline of highway infrastructure schemes that requires further development work and will be costed as part of this process. It should be noted that the schemes included in the pipeline are subject to further development and conversation with DfT; and

- Green Bus Package -the capital ask assumes that fleet renewal programmes will be geared towards the aim of zero carbon by 2036. The cost of replacing diesel vehicles on this basis is therefore considered as match funding (at 2021 prices) provided by the bus industry and the additional cost of commissioning those vehicles with zero carbon technology is included in the bid; and

5.2.5. Affordable and simple fares – it is estimated that reducing the daily capped fare and the individual fares beneath as set out in this Plan will require a subsidy over up to five years to allow volume growth to offset the lost revenue. Initial forecasting identifies a value of £40,540,000 which is included in the bid. To deploy public funds in this way will require the development of a mechanism similar to that prescribed by the Department for concessionary fares. We anticipate an ongoing discussion with the Department to develop the forecasting and methodologies however it will be in the broader interest of the customer and the objectives of this Plan to secure early commitment to affordable fares.

Other funding sources that will continue to support the bus offer in West Yorkshire

5.2.6. This Plan sets targets for increasing the number of passenger journeys generating a growth in fare revenues which will offset the higher costs of operation and lower fares. Delivery of the Plan will however require the deployment of public and private sector investment and support to facilitate the conditions need to grow the overall turnover of the West Yorkshire bus network.

5.2.7. In addition to the funding ask set out in **Table 11**, the Combined Authority is delivering a number of complementary programmes which will support and enable growth in the bus network going forward. This includes:

- £1bn West Yorkshire Transport Fund
- £317m is Transforming Cities Fund
- £25m annual contracted services budget
- £53m annual concessionary fares budget

5.2.8. As part of the Spending Review, the Government announced that West Yorkshire will receive £830m from the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) bid (of which £317m is Transforming Cities Fund)

- In addition, our £58m Zero Emission Bus Regional Area (ZEBRA) bid, of which £24m is to be provided by bus operators, is also fundamental to the successful delivery of our Bus Service Improvement Plan.

5.2.9. The public sector investment will be supported by the following private sector support:

- Estimated £30m annual bus operator investment in fleet replacement (before zero carbon uplift)
- Developer funding secured through the planning process

Prioritising our spending commitments

5.2.10. The Bus Service Improvement Plan sets out the Combined Authority's vision for bus over the next 5 years. The funding ask, alongside our wider programmes and in partnership with the bus operators, will deliver a transformation in the service offer for customers in West Yorkshire, making bus the first and natural choice for public transport. **Table 12** below sets out our quick wins and early deliverables, that are included in the overall funding ask.

Table 12: Summary of the costs required to deliver the Quick Wins and Short term interventions

Quicks wins and short-term deliverables (see our plan on a page):	BSIP funding ask of DfT to support delivery	
	Revenue cost in 2022-24 (£000)	Capital cost in 2022-24 (£000)
• Maintenance of existing network connectivity and early service enhancements	32,530	n/a
• Expansion of MCard mobile app to link ticket sales, journey planning and in-journey information	308	230
• Reintroduction of printed timetable information at bus stop	n/a	30
• Rollout of new colour coded bus stop maps and flags across West Yorkshire's core bus network (Network Navigation)	n/a	n/a
• Continue to ensure enhanced cleaning standards are maintained	n/a	n/a
• Enhanced Safer Travel Partnership with West Yorkshire Police	216	n/a
• Trial 90-minute multi journey mobile tickets	n/a	20
• Consult and agree on the Passenger Charter	n/a	n/a
• More marketing and promotional campaigns to attract people back to bus	500	n/a
• Develop techniques to better understand demographics and travel behaviours of the regions bus passengers	630	n/a
• Introduction of multi-operator contactless capping	n/a	2,374
• Cheaper and simpler multi-operator fares - including reduction in the cost of the MCard Day Saver / daily cap.	19,500	n/a

• More 'Your Next Bus' screens	n/a	22,000
• A more cohesively presented bus network including more Metro branding	50	7,600
• New and improved bus stops and stations – with better safety and accessibility support	n/a	17
• Begin rollout of audio-visual technology and other new accessible information.	n/a	2,457
• Improvements to management of network disruptions	450	200
• New AccessBus fleet	n/a	n/a
• Improved system for dealing with passenger queries and complaints	450	n/a
• Growth of the bus network – new routes and more frequent services	26,700	n/a
• Pilot town based 'Superbus' service enhancements	10,531	n/a
• Delivery of existing infrastructure programmes - including more bus priority on our roads	n/a	n/a
• Improved customer service standards – delivery of the Passenger Charter	300	2,100
Total:	**92,165**	**37,028**
	129,193	

BSIP funding exit strategy – establishing a financially sustainable bus service

5.2.11. A core objective of this BSIP is to establish a financially sustainable bus service. It is important that any investment made through the BSIP has a lasting impact and creates a financially stable bus network with commercial fare revenues supplementing public sector subsidy as far as possible. As part of our management of the BSIP, we will be developing an operational cost and revenue model, which will enable us to understand the financial position of the bus offer in West Yorkshire. This will also make certain that our investment is being maximised and the bus service offer across West Yorkshire is financially sustainable beyond the BSIP funding period.

5.3. Monitoring and evaluation

5.3.1. To track progress and learn from the measures implemented in the BSIP programme the Combined Authority will develop a robust approach to evaluation aligned with *Magenta Book* guidance and standards. The WYCA Evaluation Strategy operates under the following key principles:

- Evaluation planning is an integral part of developing the business case;
- The focus of evaluation reflects the business case;
- Evaluation efforts are proportional to the intervention's scale and complexity;
- Monitoring and evaluation data are consistent across policy;
- Evaluation will be undertaken independently of delivery;
- Evaluation is a learning process and a key component in policy development;
- Evaluation data and findings are disseminated effectively.

5.3.2. Evaluation of transport schemes is also undertaken in line with the DfT Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for Local Authority Major Schemes (2012). Given the value of the proposed plan, delivery of the BSIP schemes will be subject to 'enhanced monitoring' that includes the collection of, noise, local air quality and accidents data (DfT 2012). Furthermore, the innovative nature of the schemes, gaps in the existing evidence base, and the pressing need to develop learning that effectively feeds back into policy and practice, makes it suitable for a 'fuller evaluation' approach, covering three strands of enquiry: process, impact and economic (DfT 2012).

5.3.3. Process evaluation is crucial in order to meet BSIP objectives and to develop learning that engages stakeholder at all levels (including bus operators, district partners and other local stakeholders). Alongside the ongoing collection of scheme build and delivery data, this would incorporate an initial stakeholder mapping exercise and consultation process, opportunities for regular reflection and the recording of lessons learned throughout the implementation of the services. A programme level framework will be developed that sets out the data collection requirements, which will cover the data sources used in the primary KPIs as a minimum and will also embed qualitative enquiry focused on exploring impact on user experience and developing behavioural insights.

5.3.4. Post-delivery, a stakeholder survey, and dedicated workshop/learning event would take place to develop and maximise learning relevant across the plan and beyond. Baseline data will be collected pre- and post-delivery, to evaluate impact in relation to scheme objectives.

5.3.5. Economic evaluation will be undertaken to determine whether the costs of the interventions have been or will be outweighed by the benefits achieved. Outturn appraisal assumptions will be monitored throughout the lifecycle of the schemes. Opportunities to develop enhanced understanding of net impacts and relative cost effectiveness of the interventions, through comparison with existing schemes outside the area will also be explored.

5.3.6. Finally, as well as ensuring a robust approach to local evaluation, the Combined Authority will comply with any further guidance from DfT to fulfil the funding requirements of the plan.

5.4. Risks and Opportunities

5.4.1. The Combined Authority has already started delivering customer focused improvements to services with bus operators jointly through the established West Yorkshire Bus Alliance and has significant experience of managing strategies, programmes and projects.

5.4.2. This Plan provides the chance to build on this good foundation of partnership working to further collaborate with bus operators and our local authority partners to deliver on our joint commitments to provide a better experience for bus passengers in West Yorkshire. The opportunity to attract funding will help our local aspirations to be realised and create better experiences for existing passengers and new users, as well as advance the equality of opportunities between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Risk Management Strategy

5.4.3. The Combined Authority has a Corporate Risk Management Strategy and an Assurance Framework which contains detailed guidance on project issues and risk and will continue to be adhered to through this process. As part of the management of the Bus Service Improvement Plan a risk register is in development. Some of the key risks identified at this stage have been outlined below:

Table 13 – Key Risks and Mitigations

Risk	Mitigation
Development and implementation resource availability to ensure deliverability	Undertaking resource mapping for scheme development. Identification of opportunities to undertake joint procurements with complementary and interfacing projects. Early market engagement planned for future stages. Assurance processes at scheme and package level being established
The submission doesn't attract the level of funding expected and proposed interventions have to be prioritised, meaning some are unable to be delivered	Working with partners to understand alternative sources of future funding Work to understand costs and benefits via a mechanism to prioritise schemes
Ambitions are not fully realised through the Enhanced Partnership scheme development and expected benefits not delivered	Undertake regular reviews of the schemes as they develop to ensure alignment with the programme benefits. Ensure expected benefits are defined at initial stages of project development.
On-going impacts and future uncertainty of the Covid-19 pandemic mean recovery in the bus market and associated benefits are not realised as quickly as expected	On-going monitoring and review of the Covid-19 situation and ensuring customer deliverables continue to be appropriate for the current climate. Continue to work with

	operators through the Alliance partnership to mitigate any potential issues
Through the pandemic recovery passengers don't return to using the bus which leads to negative financial impacts on operator's ability to run services	On-going monitoring of the situation and potential planning to make best use of resources available to ensure services continue to run
Delivery of the Bus Service Improvement Plan ambitions doesn't achieve public and political expectations	Continued working with partners to ensure the ambitions outlined are achievable as far as possible
Changing working relationships with local operators as the partnership moves from Voluntary to Enhanced	Using the positive foundations of Alliance and keeping established governance mechanisms in place and will ensure on-going engagement and collaboration with operators

5.4.4.   Risks will continue to be developed and reviewed by the following boards on a regular basis and escalated as necessary:

- West Yorkshire Bus Alliance Executive & Operational Boards (external)

- Combined Authority Bus Strategy Board (internal)

6. Reporting

6.1.1. The latest version of our Bus Service Improvement Plan and the six monthly performance reports will be readily accessible on the West Yorkshire Combined Authority website at: http://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/bsip

6.2. Publication schedule

6.2.1. The below table, **Table 14**, outlines the publication schedule and provides links to all current versions of the BSIP and its performance reports.

Table 14 – BSIP reporting schedule

Date		Link
October 2021	BSIP v1	http://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/bsip
April 2022	Performance Report	
October 2022	BSIP v2	
	Performance Report	
April 2023	Performance Report	
October 2023	BSIP v3	
	Performance Report	
April 2024	Performance Report	
October 2024	BSIP v2	
	Performance Report	
April 2025	Performance Report	
October 2025	BSIP v5	
	Performance Report	
April 2026	Performance Report	

7. Appendix

A. Case for Change

B. Bus18 Youth Voice report

C. Safety of Women at Night Fund bid

D. Key Performance Indicators

E. Mobility hubs long list

F. Bus network review and delivery plan report

G. Highways infrastructure report

H. Equality Impact Assessment

I. BSIP logic map

J. Draft BSIP programme plan

K. Letters of support

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