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Mayor
of West Yorkshire

You Said, We Did

Mass Transit Vision

January 2022

Public Engagement on the Mass Transit Vision

The West Yorkshire Combined Authority in collaboration with partner councils are developing a mass transit system which will offer a new public transport option and an attractive alternative to car travel. The plan sets out a bold and ambitious plan for a new form of transport for West Yorkshire. Alongside cycling and walking, bus and rail, Mass Transit will be essential in helping our communities thrive and the economy to flourish, bringing people and places closer together.

As part of a wider consultation exercise on the West Yorkshire Combined Authority's Connectivity Infrastructure Plan, members of the public were also invited to share their views on the Combined Authority's Mass Transit proposals. These proposals were outlined within the initial version of the Mass Transit 2040 Vision document published in January 2021 as part of the wider West Yorkshire Connectivity Infrastructure Plan. We wanted to know what West Yorkshire residents thought of our Vision and how we planned to implement it.

The public and stakeholder engagement ran from 27 January to 4 June 2021. It featured:

- Online questionnaire survey - for views on proposals for all modes;
- Detailed Mass Transit Survey - for views on proposed corridors;
- Interactive map - to place comments on issues and improvements;
- Focus groups - with young people, disability and interest groups; and
- Social media campaigns.

There was a total of 430,000 social media views of the wider Connectivity Infrastructure Plan engagement material, and we received 7,800 responses across surveys, polls, our interactive map and stakeholder feedback. This made it the largest consultation response of its type the Combined Authority has run.

Members of the public had an opportunity to complete the detailed Mass Transit Survey between 19 May 2021 and 6 June 2021. This consisted of a short questionnaire, which specifically focused on the proposals for Mass Transit connections along a series of route corridors as outlined within the Mass Transit 2040 Vision document. This gave respondents an opportunity to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with the Mass Transit vision for their area.

A total of 5,114 responses were received to the Mass Transit Survey. This represented an excellent response rate and demonstrated the level of community interest garnered towards the Mass Transit proposals. Overall, the support for our Mass Transit Vision was strong. Around 80% of respondents said they supported the Vision, either fully or in part. The full feedback report compiled engagement on the Vision. This indicated that feedback could be broadly grouped as those who: -

- Supported the Mass Transit vision and felt that it should have been delivered years ago.
- Suggested that Mass Transit was no longer needed due to changes to travel demand as a result of the pandemic.

- Were concerned around deliverability or the affordability of Mass Transit.
- Wanted Mass Transit to connect parts of West Yorkshire not identified within the Vision, or simply wanted greater investment in bus and rail.

The 'You said, we did' table below summarises people's feedback, presented in the left column, and highlights, in the right column of project team's response to some of the challenges raised by the respondents. A second version of the Mass Transit Vision document will be published in July 2022 to reflect the changes made in response to your feedback through this consultation.

General Themes

Contents:

Theme	Topics Covered
Route Options	Places to connect, opportunities for bus and rail service enhancements, opportunities for interchange.
Integration with other modes	The need for mass transit, interchange, partnership working, interaction with HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail.
Delivery & Finance	Funding and assurance, impact of Covid-19 on demand, delivery timescales.
Accessibility and Sustainability	Equality, diversity and inclusion, climate change.

Route Options:

You said:	We did:
There were certain parts of West Yorkshire not included within the Mass Transit Vision, such as Wetherby, that should be connected.	<p>We acknowledge that there are a number of communities across West Yorkshire that do not feature within the Mass Transit Vision.</p> <p>The finalised version of the places to connect displayed within the Mass Transit vision document have been arrived at through a rigorous, well evidenced, and carefully considered process.</p> <p>For some areas, we have determined that providing an enhanced bus or rail service would be a far more viable and effective way to connect the community to the region and wider Mass Transit network. As outlined within the Combined Authority's Bus and Rail Strategies, these services will continue to be improved in order to adequately fulfil this roll. The enhanced role of bus and rail in some areas will also</p>

	<p>be reflected through the Vision document. For instance, the Mass Transit Vision for Wakefield has been strengthened, and now visualises the broader context of how Mass Transit runs alongside bus and rail in some areas of the district.</p> <p>We would therefore like to reassure areas not currently included within the Mass Transit Vision that they are still an important part of the region's wider public transport network and will be served by a form of high quality rapid transit. Along with the rest of West Yorkshire, they will benefit from a wide range of opportunities to enhance the bus, rail, cycling and walking networks already serving the region.</p> <p>Furthermore, whilst the entirety of your journey may not be undertaken via Mass Transit, interchange opportunities will mean that you may benefit from being able to seamlessly transfer onto the wider mass transit network to complete the next leg of your journey.</p>
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Integration with the Existing Transport Network:

You said:	We did:
<p>Mass transit routes are not needed as the existing public transport system (bus, rail) is sufficient and will suffer a negative impact from the proposals due to services being duplicated.</p>	<p>Whilst West Yorkshire can boast a wide range of existing bus, rail, cycling and walking connections across the region, our cities and towns in particular have outgrown our transport system. Our transport networks are under increasing pressure meaning that public transport can be overcrowded and journeys can be unreliable.</p> <p>Pollution from congested roads worsens serious public health and environmental problems. A “business as usual” approach to transport will mean economic opportunities are not fully realised and effective action is not taken to decarbonise our economy</p> <p>Congestion also limits opportunities for people to access work, for businesses to connect with their customers and their suppliers, and how communities interact.</p>

	<p>The best transport networks in other regions and countries integrate different forms of transport, catering for all journey types and communities, while meeting local economic challenges and needs. Mass Transit will therefore form one dimension of an integrated transport system for West Yorkshire that will include walking, cycling, rail, mass transit and bus.</p> <p>Rather than duplicating and competing with existing bus and rail links, Mass Transit will complement and increase capacity provided by the current public transport network, whilst strengthening it through integration with other modes. For instance, with simpler fares and contactless ticketing, mass transit passengers will be able to seamlessly transfer from mass transit on to the bus network.</p> <p>Throughout the development of the Mass Transit proposals, we have been, and will continue to work closely with key figures representing West Yorkshire’s bus operators, Network Rail, and others, to ensure that mass transit will not lead to service duplication across the wider public transport network. The Combined Authority continues to strengthen its ability to work closely with partners across the wider public transport network, as exemplified by plans to build on the success of the West Yorkshire Bus Alliance with a more formal ‘Enhanced Partnership’ with bus operators.</p>
<p>Mass Transit should integrate with national government transport policy such as Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) and HS2.</p>	<p>In November 2021, the Government published the Integrated Rail Plan.</p> <p>We welcome ‘in principle’ funding for West Yorkshire Mass Transit outlined within the plan, as well as the encouragement for some parts of the network to be in operation by the second half of this decade. Whilst this is a good starting point, we are disappointed with the scaling down of ambitions for HS2 serving an Eastern Leg to Leeds, and the proposed Northern Powerhouse Rail scheme.</p>

	<p>We have carefully considered what the implications of the Integrated Rail Plan will be for the Mass Transit programme and have update the Vision document to reflect the amended delivery plan for transit, and how will interact with national schemes such as HS2 and NPR moving forwards.</p>
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Delivery and Finance:

You said:	We did:
<p>Mass Transit may be too ambitious and costly to deliver or may incur cost escalations during construction.</p>	<p>The Combined Authority makes no apologies for the ambitious nature of its Mass Transit proposals needed to deliver substantial benefits to West Yorkshire, however we also acknowledge that Mass Transit will be expensive to construct.</p> <p>Mass Transit’s ambitious proposals has received a great of support and endorsement from central government to help the delivery of the programme. In November 2021 the Government published the Integrated Rail Plan. This confirms the funding for West Yorkshire Mass Transit: - <i>“We commit today to building a Mass Transit System for Leeds and West Yorkshire, and to supporting West Yorkshire Combined Authority over the long term to ensure that this time, it gets done. That work begins now, with £200m of immediate funding to plan the project and start building it, with the first services operational in the second half of this decade.”</i></p> <p>The Mass Transit programme is overseen by a robust governance system that ensures budgets are kept under constant review, a rigorous assurance process is in place and that risk management processes are adhered to.</p> <p>Going forwards, we will continue to work in partnership with the public, our development partners, and all five West Yorkshire districts to develop the programme and maintain transparency throughout.</p> <p>One advantage of starting a Mass Transit system from scratch has been the opportunity to analyse transit systems that</p>

	<p>have been constructed across other areas of UK and the world, enabling us to learn from them, and apply good practice to West Yorkshire Mass Transit.</p>
<p>Mass Transit may not offer value for money due to changes to travel demand as a result of the pandemic.</p>	<p>Covid-19 social distancing requirements, restrictions on people’s day-to-day behaviours and on how businesses operate have led to significant changes to how West Yorkshire’s transport networks are used and how they function. They have led to reduced demand for travel by public transport and reduced public transport capacity. Government has had to step in and provide financial support to bus, rail and light rail operators. Through working from home many workers and their employers have experienced new remote working practices. Issues around the use of public transport, such as perceptions around ability to socially distance, have made private car use more appealing.</p> <p>It is too early to say what the medium to long term impacts of the Covid-19 crisis on the volume and patterns of travel will be and what this will mean for the case for investment in transport interventions such as Mass Transit. What is clear, however, is the policy imperatives – to grow the West Yorkshire economy, to have a more equitable distribution of the benefits that growth will bring, to have lasting improvements to air quality and to tackle the climate emergency – will remain and that changes to the way transport is provided will be an integral part of this. Crucially, West Yorkshire cannot afford to ‘make-do’ with its current public transport network, and action needs to be taken now in order to effectively fulfil these priorities.</p> <p>As the work around mass transit continues, sensitivity tests on the economic, commercial and financial case will be carried out to understand how changing travel patterns will impact the business case.</p>

<p>The Mass Transit proposals should ideally have been delivered already, and now that the scheme is being discussed, it should be delivered sooner than indicated.</p>	<p>The scale and ambition of the Mass Transit project means it will be significant undertaking. We share the frustration of many that Leeds is still the largest city in Europe without a rapid transit system, and we recognise that the earlier we can make start on constructing mass transit, the sooner we will be able to rectify this.</p> <p>Whilst we are always reviewing opportunities and working with central government to accelerate aspects of the programme where possible, the Combined Authority is equally committed to ensuring that the programme delivers a high quality, best in class system for West Yorkshire that will deliver on our ambitions for the region and serve the needs of all of the regions communities.</p>
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Sustainability & Accessibility:

<p>You said:</p>	<p>We did:</p>
<p>It should be ensured that Mass Transit is accessible for all.</p>	<p>Since the first version of the Mass Transit Vision was published, we recognised that there was scope to strengthen our commitment to ensuring that Mass Transit will be accessible to all.</p> <p>Through the Mass Transit Vision, we have now developed a dedicated ‘People First’ section that outlines a bold statement of intent for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). This can be underpinned by our aspiration for West Yorkshire’s Mass Transit System to be the best in class system for accessibility. Championing equality, diversity and inclusion will be at the heart of its development and design.</p> <p>The creation of this new transit system from the ground up presents an opportunity to take a clean slate approach to EDI and look to go above and beyond the legal obligations and minimum requirements around EDI and accesibility. Instead, we will be taking a more ambitious and holistic approach to the design of the mass transit.</p> <p>We are continuing to embark on a busy programme of work relating to mass transit and EDI. Consultation and engagement</p>

	<p>are going to be an integral aspect of this work over the coming months. We would like to ensure that a collaborative and partnership approach is taken to the development of the Mass Transit plans, with communities and groups having a strong voice in shaping the design of the system. We will therefore be reaching out to members of the public and industry experts in due course to incorporate their ideas and lived experiences and use this to effectively respond to and address the needs of communities across the region through Mass Transit's design.</p>
<p>Mass Transit should be environmentally sustainable and help the region meet its climate pledges.</p>	<p>The Combined Authority has committed West Yorkshire to reduce its carbon emissions to 'net zero' by 2038, with transport being the biggest carbon emitting sector of the West Yorkshire economy. To meet our target, we must reduce transport's carbon emissions, and Mass Transit will play a key role in achieving this.</p> <p>In recognition of this, we have ensured that the next version of the Mass Transit Vision will more clearly identify Mass Transit's role in helping to meet our climate and sustainability ambitions. More information can be found within the 'Environmental responsibility' section of the Vision document.</p>



Find out more

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If you require these materials in different formats, please get in contact by email at yourvoice@westyorks-ca.gov.uk or telephone 0113 245 7676 (Metroline).

All information correct at time of writing