

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY

To: The Chair and Members of the Transport Committee

Meeting: 4 April 2019

Authority/Authorities Affected: All

EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL ITEM: No

REPORT OF MERSEYTRAVEL

QUARTERLY BUS UPDATE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members of the Transport Committee with the fourth quarterly Bus Alliance update of 2018/19 and an update on key projects being delivered by the Bus Team.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. It is recommended that the Transport Committee note the contents of the report.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. Improving Bus Punctuality.

- 3.1.1 The Combined Authority is leading on developing a range of interventions that will transform the bus offer across the Liverpool City Region and greatly improve the appeal of bus against private transport. This work aligns with both the aspirations of the Bus Alliance and the Transforming Cities Fund.
- 3.1.2 The LCRCA has agreed, as part of its approach to commissioning projects through the Transforming Cities Fund, that improving bus journeys should be one of its three thematic priorities for the region:
- 3.1.3 Through the Bus Alliance, five bus corridors have been initially identified to be targeted for improvements. These are A57 (Prescot Road), A562 (Smithdown Road), B5178 (Wavertree Road Corridor), the A59 (Walton Road / Scotland Road) and A567 (Stanley Road) Corridors.
- 3.1.4 A Steering group comprising of representatives from the Combined Authority, Knowsley MBC, Liverpool City Council, Sefton MBC and St Helens MBC and Bus Alliance operators will oversee feasibility work including the development of the overall approach, with specific working groups developing the detailed

transformational improvement plans for each corridor. The Steering Group is meeting regularly and progress on developing the Green Routes Programme will be reported to both the LCR Bus Alliance and KRN Groups on a regular basis.

- 3.1.5 Development funding has been awarded via the LCR CA Investment Team and a brief to secure expertise in developing and appraising a range of options to improve bus punctuality and progress feasibility studies and outline designs for specific bus interchanges, has been written, with consultants being invited to submit tenders via the NW Chest. It is planned that the selected consultant will commence delivery of the contract in quarter one of 2019/20, subject to a successful and timely procurement process.
- 3.2 LCR Bus Alliance.
- 3.2.1 The 2019/20 LCR Bus Alliance Business and Investment Plan has been completed and agreed by the Bus Alliance Joint Alliance Board at the 5 March 2019 meeting. This plan – attached as appendix one - outlines proposed investment and milestones which aim to improve punctuality and reliability across the network, improve the customer journey experience, ensure a simple, easy to understand bus network, reduce the environmental impact of bus travel and increase its social value and to increase patronage and bus as the mode of choice. To simplify the governance process the number of workstreams responsible for delivering the milestones has been reduced from six to three, these being known as:
- (a) Improving Network Punctuality, Reliability and Resilience
 - (b) Improving the Customer Journey
 - (c) Customer Development and Growth.
- 3.2.2 Bus patronage figures for the Quarter three of 2018/19 have now been collected and show a nine percent increase in fare paying passenger journeys compared with the same period last financial year. In addition, the figures showed an increase for the first time in adult journeys, with adult patronage largely driving the growth that has been seen. A reduction in the cost of bus operators' weekly tickets could be a contributory factor in boosting the number of adult users.
- 3.2.3 The National Bus Passenger survey was published on 14th March and while a more detailed overview of results will be provided in the next quarterly report, the key messages are that; satisfaction ratings are slightly down from 92% to 91% of bus passengers satisfied with their journeys, although despite this the Liverpool City Region has the joint highest rates of customer satisfaction of any UK metropolitan area. Within these figures, we have seen a significant increase in satisfaction with value for money, but a decrease in satisfaction with punctuality – an area that remains a priority in the City Region with a dedicated Bus Alliance workstream, overseeing the delivery of improvement interventions to tackle this.
- 3.2.4 Overall, the figures are encouraging and are an indication of the ongoing success of the Liverpool City Region Bus Alliance in encouraging more people to travel by bus by improving quality and service, marketing the offer through high profile campaigns and generating more money for investment back into the network. (A summary of this year's Bus Passenger Survey is attached at Appendix Two).

3.2.5 The milestones and Key Performance indicators of the LCR Bus Alliance are laid out in the Performance Management framework 2018/2019, along with the 2018/19 investment plan and 2017 – 2020 Outcome measures. In quarter four of 2018/19, completed milestones of the LCR Bus Alliance have included:-

- (a) The 1000 days of data project - is now complete with data analysis and troubleshooting now undertaken. We now have the foundation to build 1000 days of bus performance data for assessing problems, network solutions and improvements over longer periods of time, as well as building an evidence base for funding opportunities and general long term P&R trend reporting. In addition, the Bus Team is now producing and circulating punctuality and reliability reports each day for internal stakeholders.
- (b) The Wavertree Road topographical survey is complete and a revised road marking scheme to address the problem caused by the current narrow lane widths has been designed by Liverpool City Council and approved by Merseytravel. It is anticipated that the road markings will be installed in Q4 19/20 as part of Liverpool City Council's scheme to resurface the carriageway of Wavertree Road.
- (c) The final report on the Woodchurch Road corridor has been completed and was presented to the January meeting of the Reliability and Punctuality workstream. The main conclusion of the report is that there is a case to be made for an investment in traffic signalling and bus priority to improve journey times.
- (d) The "All you need is bus" Better By Bus campaign was launched in February with Valentine's cards and Golden bus tickets for World Book Day providing opportunities to win prizes.
- (e) Work is progressing with planning and implementing the Bus Rerouting Strategy as part of the LCC Connectivity Programme. Works have commenced on Victoria Street and the planning application for the City Centre Bus Hub has now been approved .
- (f) Proposed plans for Duke Street have been shared with Liverpool City Council Officers and all are in agreement with the design regarding parking spaces, bus stops and changes to the speed reduction measures. Waterman consultants have undertaken a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit based on the detailed design and no significant issues have been raised. LCC has agreed that Graham (LCCC Contractor) can also be appointed to undertake the stage one works for Duke Street using a 'Funding Agreement' between LCC and Merseytravel. The agreement is in preparation and only awaits estimated costs and an outline programme to be added, which were expected to be ready before the end of March. The works on speed tables and bus stops are programmed to be completed by April 2019 with further works (TRO amendments and Colquitt Street zebra crossing) to be completed by October. A revised junction layout traffic analysis has been completed for Duke Street/Upper Duke Street with the outcome yet to be discussed.

- (g) The installation of ITS (Traffic Signal Bus Priority) progresses, with 17 sets of signals on the route 86 undergoing checking, with validation of the remaining 21 signals expected to take place during March. A file containing virtual trigger points for 38 sets of signals has been prepared and sent to the bus operators and Merseytravel for consideration.

3.3 LCR Devolution Deal – alternative delivery model for bus.

3.3.1 The conclusions of the Strategic Outline Case (SOC) and progression to the Outline Business Case (OBC) were approved by Merseytravel and the Transport Committee in Quarter one and the additional funding required was secured to facilitate the development of the Outline Business Case (OBC). The development of the OBC is split into four phases with Phase one (advance preparation) having been completed during Q3 2018/19. Phase two (Option and Analytical Framework development) is scheduled to be completed during quarter four of 2018/19. Phase three (Economic and Financial Appraisal) spans quarters one and two of 2019/20. Phase four (Draft Outline Procurement Documentation) is due to be completed by the end of quarter three 2019/20. It is planned that the OBC will be finalised in Quarter 4 of 2019/20 with democratic consideration to follow.

3.3.2 Notices of intent were been published in Quarter three and data requests have now been sent out to all operators with returns expected from April 2019.

3.4 Other key work areas.

3.4.1 City Centre Enforcement - Bus Network Performance officers are at present collecting data on parking enforcement issues in and around the city centre post-Christmas. Infringements are being reported to LCC taxi licencing for action.

3.4.2 Avon and bus developments on the Wirral - Following the closure of Avon Buses in October 2018 and the award of Contract Round 308, focused on bus services in Wirral which will commence in April 2019 it is pleasing to report that Selwyn's Travel, a subsidiary of RATP Dev who provide bus services in London and Europe, has been successful in tendering for a significant number of supported service contracts. The operator is now mobilising for service delivery and has informed Merseytravel it is to take over operation of the former Avon Buses depot in Prenton. This development brings an additional operator into the Merseyside area, which is welcomed following the loss of Avon.

3.4.3 Rolling stock mock up - In April, the Bus Network Performance officers who supported the public consultation have been asked to attend a mock up stakeholder event to assist once more with visitors taking part in a technical exercise with the mock up.

3.4.4 Stops and Shelters Inspection Programme - Following a dip in customer satisfaction with the waiting environment at bus stops highlighted in the Bus Passenger Survey, the Bus Department developed a programme of stops and shelters surveys as a dedicated workstream in order to monitor and report on a range of issues that relate to customer experience at stops. This included regular quality checks on shelters across key bus corridors within Merseyside covering items such as maintenance, cleanliness and information provision.

- 3.4.5 The Bus Network Performance Survey Team - began to undertake surveys on stops and shelters across the Key Route Network in February 2019 and is now entering its second period of surveys. All matters arising have been reported for action to Asset Management. There are twelve “Stops & Shelter champions” altogether, each one dedicated to a route – they will continue to report issues as they are observed.
- 3.4.6 ETM Migration to Ticketer - All Bus operators (excluding Arriva – who are developing Ticketer themselves - and Stagecoach – who use the Vix’s system) are now signed up and plans are rolling out for complete migration to the new Ticketer system by the end of the Summer 2019. Once this process is completed, the entire LCR bus network will have contactless and mobile payment systems in place, supporting the completion of the LCR Ticketing Portal. It is anticipated that over the next 12 months there will be a significant movement away from customers paying cash for their bus journeys, which will have a number of benefits including making using the bus simpler, reducing boarding times, and working towards the ability to fare-cap, aligned with wider work being led by Transport for the North.
- 3.4.7 The opening of Newton–le-Willows station took place in January 2019 - Bus services are now using the new bus facilities, which form a high-quality, integrated transport interchange.

4. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

4.1. Financial

There are no financial implications resulting from this report.

4.2. Human Resources

There are no human resources implications resulting from this report.

4.3. Physical Assets

There are no implications for physical assets resulting from this report.

4.4. Information Technology

There are no implications for information technology resulting from this report.

5. RISKS AND MITIGATION

- 5.1. The Combined Authority’s Programme Management Office ensures that expenditure, milestones, risk and impact of each improvement that is delivered and is outlined in the Performance Management Framework 2018/19, is measured, monitored and reported.
- 5.2 The Alternative Delivery Options Business case process is led by an advisory team of Addleshaw Goddard (lead), Price Waterhouse Cooper and Steer and managed by a Governance structure lead by the Director of Resources.

5.3 To ensure compliance, the Combined Authority's Legal and Procurement teams have been heavily involved in the reform of the supported bus services contract and remain an integral part of the procurement process.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

6.1. The equality and diversity implications of individual activities have been and will continue to be fully considered as part of developing the Bus Alliance Investment plans, bus service reviews and considerations as part of the Business Case for alternative bus delivery models in alignment with the Bus Services Act 2017.

7. PRIVATE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no potential privacy implications as a result of this report.

8. COMMUNICATION ISSUES

8.1. This report has highlighted activities delivered in quarter four of 2018/19 by the LCR Bus Alliance, the development of the LCR Devolution Deal in respect of improving bus services and development work in respect of Transforming Cities devolved funding. Excellent bus passenger survey results continue to endorse the approach being taken by the Combined Authority in taking pragmatic and evidenced decisions which improve the bus offer.

9. CONCLUSION

This report has highlighted activities delivered in quarter four of 2018/19 by the LCR Bus Alliance, the development of the LCR Devolution Deal in respect of improving bus services and development work in respect of Transforming Cities devolved funding. Excellent bus passenger survey results continue to endorse the approach being taken by the Combined Authority in taking pragmatic and evidenced decisions which improve the bus offer.

**MICK NOONE –
DIRECTOR OF INTEGRATED TRANSPORT**

Contact Officer(s):

Matt Goggins, Head of Bus, matthew.goggins@merseytravel.gov.uk

Laura Needham, Bus Strategy Programme Manager,
laura.needham@merseytravel.gov.uk

Liz Storey, Corporate Communications Manager, liz.storey@merseytravel.gov.uk

Appendices:

1. 2019/20 Bus Alliance Business and Investment plan
2. BPS autumn 2018 England summary report

Background Documents:

None