

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY

To: The Chair and Members of the Transport Committee

Meeting: 10 October 2019

Authority/Authorities Affected: All

EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL ITEM: No

REPORT OF MERSEYTRAVEL

QUARTERLY BUS REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members of the Transport Committee on key bus issues relating to the second quarter of 2019/2020.
- 1.2 Specifically, the report will provide Members with information on Bus Alliance Patronage figures, progress to deliver the Bus Alliance Business and investment plan in the second quarter of 2019/20, progress on developing the commitment of the LCR Devolution Deal in respect of improving bus services and other key deliverables of the Bus Team.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

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

3. BACKGROUND

3.1. Increases in Patronage through Bus Alliance interventions

- 3.1.1 The original target (2013/14 baseline year) to grow fare paying patronage by 10% has been exceeded, with new targets of 20% up to April 2020.
- 3.1.2 9% growth in fare paying patronage year on year (2017/18 vs. 2018/19), has been witnessed which bucks the national trend in bus patronage.
- 3.1.3 For the first time, adult patronage increase is now driving overall growth with over 150 million bus journeys are now made in LCR.
- 3.1.4 Patronage figures for Quarter One 2019/20 are in the process of being collected and will be reported on once verified

3.2 LCR Bus Alliance

- 3.2.1 The LCR Bus Alliance 2019/20 Business and Investment Plan was completed and approved in Quarter four 2018/19 and is now being delivered.
- 3.2.2 The milestones and Key Performance indicators of the LCR Bus Alliance are laid out on the Performance Management framework 2019/2020, along with the 2019/20 investment plan.
- 3.2.3 In quarter two of 2019/20, the following milestones have been completed or there has been significant progress made:
- (a) Green Bus Routes - Consultants Waterman Infrastructure & Environment Ltd have been appointed to lead on the development of interventions and options along key corridors in the Liverpool City Region as part of buses ask to the Transforming Cities Fund. Work has already begun on reviewing issues along the route, engaging with stakeholders and suggesting potential options for guaranteeing punctuality and reliability and improving the bus offer. Commonplace – a digital engagement platform – has been created and launched to engage both users and non-users of buses in the Liverpool City Region.
 - (b) One hundred per cent of buses in the Liverpool City Region are now able to take contactless payments with the installation of new ticket machines on all commercial and supported services buses. Initial uptake has been positive and continues to rise, further information provided in point 3.4.1
 - (c) The Customer Growth and Development Workstream have developed and agreed the Better by Bus campaign brief for 2019/20, with activities to be delivered under a “We cannot wait to tackle climate change” theme. The creative material is currently under development and the campaign theme is supportive of 2019 being the year of the environment and commitments to support the Clean Air Agenda and reduce CO2 Emissions across the city region.
 - (d) Better By Bus ran a week-long campaign in September to raise awareness of International Car Free Day and catching the bus as an alternative to private car use. As part of the campaign, a fifty per cent off discount code was activated on Stagecoach and Arriva's M-Ticket apps for people to try the bus for less on Car Free Day itself. Altogether 23 discount codes were activated, while the accompanying social media campaign generated 414 thousand impressions, 149 engagements and 507 website clicks, along with nine press mentions

- (e) Work is progressing with planning and implementing the Bus Rerouting Strategy as part of the LCC Connectivity (LCCC) Programme. The City Centre Bus Hub is due for completion later in 2019 along with works on Duke Street to enable an increase in bus movements being completed alongside this timescale. Changes to route plans will be introduced in January 2020.
- (f) The Opportunity to Comment on the Bus Re-routing Strategy as part of the LCCC works commenced on 18 Jun and closed on 2 August. Merseytravel are currently reviewing the options alongside Liverpool City Council and the bus operators, with an update to be provided in quarter three.
- (g) The second phase of consultation for the Sefton Network review commenced in early June with and changes implemented on 1 September 2019. The majority of services were maintained on a like for like basis, but there were some minor timing changes and some changes in Operator on Merseytravel services. The following key changes were made to supported and commercial services (these were consulted on as part of the Network Review process);
 - (i) Maghull Circulars: Service 34/34A will be withdrawn following the opening of Maghull North Station. A new peak time 32A service will be introduced creating a new link to Maghull Station. The evening & Sunday provision will be streamlined with journeys introduced on the 32/33 route.
 - (ii) Cumfybus service 15A: Journeys will be routed – still serving Birkdale but from Southport Town Centre will then operate via Walnut Street (an area that Arriva are withdrawing from) to Southport Hospital and then round the Kew Estate (a residential area that has been without a bus service for a number of years.
 - (iii) Arriva service 44: Journeys to Formby are unchanged, but the other journeys will no longer serve Walnut Street. This area will instead be served by the re-routed Cumfybus 15A.
 - (iv) Arriva service 46/46A: Service 46 is increased from every 30 to every 20 minutes, however the 46A will be withdrawn, meaning no service to High Park.
 - (v) Arriva service 54: Journeys will no longer operate via Crosby, Islington.
 - (vi) Service 133: Journeys will be provided by Huyton Travel rather than Hatton's
 - (vii) Service 144: Journeys will no longer operate through to Magdalene Square. The time that this saves will help to improve punctuality and reliability.

- (viii) It is anticipated that the majority of the review will be received positively, though the withdrawal of the 46A from High Park is likely to cause some concern.

3.2.4 A date of Wednesday 25 September has been set to begin the 2020/21 Business Plan development for the Bus Alliance, with further information to follow on interventions agreed in next quarter's report

3.3 The LCR Devolution Deal – alternative delivery model for bus

3.3.1 The conclusions of the Strategic Outline Case and progression to the OBC were recommended for approval by Merseytravel and the Transport Committee on 28 February and 5 April 2018 respectively, and then endorsed by LCRCA on the 20 April 2018. The development of the OBC commenced in September 2018.

3.3.2 In Quarter one, the data provided by bus operators in the LCR was analysed to understand the operational costs and revenues associated with running bus services in the LCR. The analysis of operator data confirmed previous assumptions made on a need for intervention, meaning that one of three options identified should be implemented.

3.3.3 Building on the achievements of the LCR Bus Alliance, an updated vision for bus has been developed which intends to tackle issues identified by customers, further support the aims of the Bus Strategy, capture new innovations and technology in the sector and region, and better recognises the important role of bus services in improving air quality through greener buses and modal shift from car. This vision for bus was approved by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority in July 2019 and sets out the following objectives:

- (a) Hours of bus operation should be increased, with services running across the network between 0500 and 0000, and on core bus corridors 24 hours a day;
- (b) A service frequency principle adopted, setting out improvements in bus frequency in the early morning, evening and weekend, and setting a minimum frequency of one bus per hour on all routes between 0500 and 0000;
- (c) Based on existing services, these changes would increase overall bus operation by approximately 25%;
- (d) A city-region wide fare zone(s);
- (e) The development of a framework for ticketing;
- (f) The availability of "short-hop" and "hoppa" tickets;
- (g) Account-based contactless, mobile and smart ticketing and the removal of cash as far as possible in order to speed up boarding times;

- (h) The availability of good value multi-operator and multi-modal tickets;
- (i) Fare capping;
- (j) Bus fares rises pegged to inflation;
- (k) The retention of the enhanced concessionary travel scheme;
- (l) One brand for the City Region's bus network, linked to a wider transport brand and identity;
- (m) Phasing in of zero/ultra-low emission buses including ultra-low emission Euro 6, electric and hydrogen powered buses;
- (n) Real time on board passenger information, added to USB charging and Wi-Fi as standard features of buses in the LCR; and
- (o) Adopting the principle of new rolling stock for the local rail network, bus interiors and layout to be designed in conjunction with bus users.

3.3.4 The focus in quarter two has been options assessment and strategy development – particularly in relation to network, fleet and ticketing – which the alternative delivery models of franchising and enhanced partnerships will be assessed against. A series of meetings to discuss Enhanced Partnerships with all bus operators across the LCR have been planned for October 2019.

3.3.5 It is the intention for a preferred option to be identified in 2020.

3.4 Other key work areas and achievements

3.4.1 ETM Roll out

The roll out of the new Electronic Ticket Machine (ETM) to all smaller operators was completed as per the project timetable deadline of 31 July 2019. Coupled with Arriva going 100 per cent contactless in quarter one, this has enabled the opportunity for 100 per cent contactless payment across the whole of the Liverpool City Region Bus Network. Initial uptake has been positive with the total EMV (Electronic MasterCard and Visa) sales on bus across supported services LCR network reaching 8.28% of all transactions, within its first week, this has been followed by a week on week rise, with the total for the first month reported at 11.67%. Within the same period, Arriva have seen around a 20 per cent uptake in contactless payments and Stagecoach are at 22, as of the end of August 2019. Contactless uptake as a percentage of transactions is now being tracked at a KPI

In addition to the project, the bus team are looking to add a further operator, Warrington's Own Buses to the project.

3.4.2 RTI Punctuality and Reliability

RTI System Accuracy has improved dramatically since the installation and roll out of the new ETMs. The early aggregate percentage for August stands at 95.3% accuracy for the LCR

3.4.3 Tendering

A new innovative year-long Demand Responsive Travel (DRT) trial has been introduced in the Speke area in September 2019. LCRCA is working alongside Arriva and introducing a Speke Click zone to replace the tendered 211 service. This will offer a better quality of service and reduced waiting times for passengers.

After six months, bus operator Selwyn's is now fully embedded in the old Avon depot and are preparing service for the new academic year on services to serve Wirral schools. Officers have agreed a six weekly monitoring and performance regime with the operator and will provide assistance with operational issues. In quarter two a large proportion of the Selwyn's fleet has been refurbished, ticket machines replaced and with assistance from Wirral MBC, trees and vegetation, have been pruned and managed to reduce potential damage to vehicles.

3.4.4 Engineering Audits

The tendering exercise for the procurement of another three years of engineering audits has been completed with approval to be sought in September 2019.

3.4.5 Roadmap to Zero Emissions

The Bus Team are currently collating data relating to operators fleets in order to assess the network in terms of engine emissions and understand the work required to meet future clean air targets. This will support the work of the LCR Air Quality Task Force.

3.4.6 Travelsafe

Operation Mosca is a joint Merseytravel and Merseyside Police initiative run through the Travelsafe scheme, which targets illegal parking by motorists in bus stops and layover facilities that would otherwise create safety and operational difficulties for the travelling public and bus drivers. The Scheme uses children from local schools as with a mini court on a dedicated bus. A magistrate is in session on each bus and drivers can be issued with fines and/or warnings on the spot. The project has been running for two years and plans for the next phase of operation Mosca have been completed and will commence in September 2019.

Operation Banger is a long standing initiative which Travelsafe delivers in partnership with bus operators and Merseyside Police to tackle antisocial behaviour on and around the bus network during the week around Halloween, a period where high levels of vandalism and Anti-Social Behaviour are observed. The operation includes dedicated patrols and

diversionary activities designed to keep passengers and drivers safe and to reduce incidents on the network.

Also commencing in quarter two is Red Umbrella, a new project working with Merpol and a local charity to tackle hate crime and improve the health and wellbeing of communities in the Anfield Area.

3.4.7 Stops and Shelters Inspection Programme

The original trial has now been fully integrated into business as usual. The team are now approaching a full six month data set for this survey programme and from September the survey function will be increased to audit roughly 60% of the stops and shelters infrastructure. The survey team are currently mid-way through their Market Research accreditation training which will expand the team's function further.

3.4.8 Customer Information

The Customer Information team were involved in the various consultations relating to the changes to services as part of the Sefton Review, providing optional timetables and mapping for discussion and highlighting the consultations with information included at key bus stops displays along the affected routes/across the affected areas.

August saw the completion of the various information strands relating to the significant number of bus service changes over the weekend of 1st September. This included pre-notice bus stop information displays for services withdrawn or re-routed, inputting of all the timetable, route and stops information into the corporate database, the compilation of bus timetable leaflets for print and website and stop-specific bus stop timetable information displays.

The Customer Information Manager also been attending Transport for the North meetings and presentations relating to the introduction of Open Data in early 2020 and other developments of an open data Service Disruption tool and the first steps to look at the provision of comprehensive bus fare information.

3.5 National Transport Awards 2019

LCRCA has been shortlisted for City Region Authority of the Year, the LCRCA Bus Alliance has been shortlisted for three awards, these being; Improvements to Bus Services, Transport Team/Partnership of the Year and Information & Marketing initiative of the Year (Better by Bus). The winners will be announced at the NTA presentation ceremony on 31 October 2019 in London.

3.6 Older tyre ban

Tyres older than 10 years could be banned from use on buses, coaches, lorries, and minibuses from early 2020. This has followed on from the 'Tyred' campaign launched by Liverpool resident Frances Molloy following the tragic death of her son in a coach crash in 2012. Proposals for the new rules have been consulted on

since 23 June 2019 and both Merseytravel and the LCRCA have fully supported the campaign.

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 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

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

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

8. COMMUNICATION ISSUES

- 8.1 A communications plan to support City Centre Bus Routing is in place, which will include bus operators and Liverpool City Council.
- 8.2 The LCR Bus Alliance has a joint communications strategy and the Bus Team works closely with colleagues in Corporate Communications and Corporate Engagement. Some of the items mentioned above have been subject to separate communications.

9. CONCLUSION

This report has highlighted activities delivered in quarter two of 2019/20 by the LCR Bus Alliance and the commitment of the LCR Devolution Deal in respect of improving bus services.

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Background Documents:

None

Appendices

None

Background Documents:

None