

<b>Report Title</b>	Quarterly Bus Update
<b>Portfolio Holder</b>	Transport and Air Quality Portfolio Holder
<b>Summary of decision being sought</b>	The purpose of this report is to update the Transport Committee on key bus issues relating to the fourth quarter of 2021/22.
<b>Is this report exempt?</b>	No
<b>Is this a Key Decision</b>	No
<b>Is the report urgent</b>	No
<b>Is this decision to be exempt from call in</b>	No
<b>Local Authorities affected</b>	All
<b>Impact and implications of this report</b>	None – for noting and information only
<b>Financial impact</b>	No
<b>Delegation (s) sought</b>	
<b>Supporting the Corporate Plan</b>	A Fairer City Region ✓ A Stronger City Region ✓ A Cleaner City Region ✓ A Connected City Region ✓ A Vibrant City Region ✓
<b>Climate Change Implications</b>	Yes see paragraph 4.1 and 3.9
<b>Equality and Diversity implications</b>	Yes see paragraph 4.2
<b>Social Value implications</b>	Yes see paragraph 4.3
<b>Human Resources implications</b>	No
<b>Physical Assets implications</b>	No
<b>Information Technology implications</b>	No
<b>Legal implications</b>	No
<b>Risk and Mitigation</b>	Yes see paragraph 4.4
<b>Privacy implications</b>	No

**Communication and consultation implications**

Yes see paragraph 4.5

**Contact Officer(s)**

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**Appendices**

No

**Background Documents**

No

# LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY

## TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

7 JULY 2022

### REPORT OF MERSEYTRAVEL

#### QUARTERLY BUS UPDATE

## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Transport Committee on key bus issues relating to the fourth quarter of 2021/22.
- 1.2 Specifically, the report will provide an update on the milestones of the Bus Alliance, report progress on the assessment into Bus Reform, Hybus Trial Project and Green Bus Routes Programme, along with an overview of how the Bus Team continues to work with bus operators to support the maintenance of a safe and reliable bus network whilst dealing with the challenges of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. It is recommended that the Transport Committee:
  - (a) notes the contents of the report

## 3. BACKGROUND

### 3.1 Covid-19 Response

- 3.1.1 Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, The Bus Team worked closely with LCR bus operators as part of the LCR Resilience Group, to ensure a safe and reliable network for key workers in the region.
- 3.1.2 With the easing and removal of restrictions coming into effect in late January 2022 the Transport Network Performance and TravelSafe teams have continued to support the actions of the LCRCA transport cell in providing safety assurance to the travelling public.
- 3.1.3 Current patronage levels on the LCR bus network are averaging around 80% compared to the equivalent period in 2019. Covid-19 related absence has greatly improved since the last reporting period for bus operators, helped by a removal of restrictions.

3.1.4 Funding to support local bus networks for the first six months of the 2022/23 financial year was previously announced, with further allocations and conditions announced in April 2022. The Bus Teams have worked closely with operators on their plans for the bus network from September 2022 onwards, including network plan and public and stakeholder consultation.

## **3.2 LCR Bus Alliance**

3.2.1 Partners of the Bus Alliance worked closely together to collate the priorities of and data behind the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) submitted in October 2021, with BSIP funding allocations announced in April 2022

3.2.2 The agreed BSIP forms the basis of the Bus Alliance Business and Improvement Plan for 2022/23 and progress on delivering this will be reported to members through further Quarterly Reports.

## **3.3 Green Bus Routes**

3.3.1 Further work has taken place with relevant constituent local authority partners to agree the measures proposed for the Liverpool to St Helens bus route, 10A, progress includes;

- a) Resource request submitted as part of the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) Pipeline Pre-Development Funding;
- b) Funding agreements for Prescott Bus Station and Bus Boarder works currently being signed off by LCRCA legal team
- c) Drafts of the Economic, Financial, Commercial and Management dimensions have been submitted to LCRCA colleagues and LA Partners for review. Final comments will be submitted to Atkins for finalisation of the documents.
- d) Progress on the social value component of the project including a Graduate appointment by Waterman and social value funding for local groups along 10a route as part of 10a works
- e) Presentation of strategic modelling results to local authority partners.
- f) Consultation with members of the public is planned for Autumn 2022 in collaboration with Local Authority partners for the 10a route.

3.3.2 Discussions regarding progressing work on the next two Green Bus Routes (53 and 86 bus corridors) are continuing and will develop plans and designs that are 'shovel ready' to enable the Combined Authority to invest in these key travel corridors when further funding is made available through the CRSTS or National Bus Strategy /BSIP funds. Consultant tender returns for the 53 and 86 bus routes have now been received and have been assessed and moderated. It is planned to have a final decision for these routes by the end of June 2022.

3.3.3 Work continues to ensure that there is adequate resource both within the Combined Authority and within Constituent Local Authorities to support delivery. A new Bus Priority Programme Manager has started in post in January 2022, and two project managers have been appointed for the 53 & 86 routes, who are also assisting with the 10a. It is expected that additional resource could be in place by summer 2022 to enable Combined Authority to accelerate the GBR programme along multiple corridors. The pipeline funding document has been resubmitted following a Path to Delivery workshop with senior and project officers within Combined Authority to agree delivery strategy.

### **3.4 LCR HyBus Trial**

3.4.1 British bus manufacturer, Alexander Dennis Ltd was selected as the supplier of the first twenty hydrogen fuel cell electric buses and the order is expected to be submitted in July at the same time as the operator lease and refuelling contracts are signed.

3.4.2 Arriva have continued to lead commercial negotiations on fuel supply and a preferred supplier has now been selected with progress now being made on contracting.

3.4.3 The Combined Authority were unsuccessful in receiving ZEBRA funding but continue to deliver the 20-bus project and to secure further funding for the additional 20 bus extension.

### **3.5 Bus Reform**

3.5.1 The draft assessment into options for reforming bus services in the Liverpool City Region was completed in January 2022.

3.5.2 A report on the next stages towards bus reform in the Liverpool City Region was considered by the Metro Mayor and members of the Combined Authority on 4 March 2022, and amongst others, the recommendation to continue to endorse bus franchising as the Liverpool City Region's intended future model of bus governance was endorsed.

3.5.3 The business case will now be completed, and an independent audit of the assessment will be undertaken.

3.5.4 A panel to provide political oversight to Bus Reform is to be established and progress reports against the delivery of recommendations will be made at appropriate intervals to the Combined Authority at appropriate intervals during the municipal years 2022/23.

### **3.6 Open Buses Programme / Transport Information**

3.6.1 The Transport Information Team continue to act as Bus Open Data Service (BODS) Agents on behalf of the LCR's smaller operators and support them in meeting their Open Buses obligations through publishing routes and timetables files and automatic vehicle location feeds.

- 3.6.2 The team continue to liaise with DfT, local bus operators and database providers to address issues relating to the publishing of fares data from the Ticketer portal.
- 3.6.3 The Liverpool area bus network map and the Belle Vale Interchange map have been approved for production, installation and publication online. The Transport Information team are working with the cartographer on the initial stages of the production of a Wirral area bus network map. The procurement process for the supply and fit of on-street frames for the display of the area maps and local bus network interchange maps is underway.
- 3.6.4 Following the appointment of WSP to support the development of a Transport Information Strategy, work is progressing on the review of transport information. Initial evidence gathering is focussed on semi-structured interviews with Combined Authority colleagues in Hubs, Marketing and Evidence and Intelligence, and members of the WSP team will be undertaking site visits across the network to assess the current transport information offer. A review of transport information from comparator organisations in the UK and overseas will also be used to develop the strategy.

### **3.7 TravelSafe Partnership**

- 3.7.1 Merseyside Police continue to restore the establishment of the Merseyside Police dedicated TravelSafe PCSOs and the review of the Merseyside Police TravelSafe team. The team have started developing the new partnership three-year strategy which will be presented at the TravelSafe Partnership Board for members approval following local elections and the confirmation of the new TravelSafe Board elected member composition.
- 3.7.2 The partnership continues to work with local neighbourhood policing in areas such as St Helens where there has been a sudden increase in anti-social behaviour on the Transport Network.
- 3.7.3 The project team overseeing the Home Office Safer Streets 3 funding are progressing a range of measures to improve safety on the transport network. This includes CCTV upgrades at Liverpool One and Queen Square bus stations, bystander training for transport staff, a marketing campaign and a text reporting service that will be delivered in the next few months. An official launch of the project took place on 7 March 2022.
- 3.7.4 The Violence Against Women and Girls Transport Champions, Laura Shoaf (Chief Executive of WMCA) and Anne Shaw (Managing Director of TFWM) have held a series of roundtable events and have now produced thirteen recommendations for the DfT, alongside other government departments and the transport industry and trade bodies, to endorse and deliver. This includes making transport infrastructure safer, national communications initiative into tackling VAWGs, which is promoted nationally across transport networks, training across the transport industry to help manage incidents involving VAWGs, encouraging the increased uptake of women working in the transport industry and reviewing current safeguarding practices and DBS checks.

### **3.8 Contract Management Streamlining**

- 3.8.1 All Electronic Ticket Machines data and payments are now being processed through EP Morris (EPM - software provider). The implementation of the system has streamlined the returns process and generated a number of efficiencies whilst also improving the quality and robustness of data.
- 3.8.2 Initial dashboards have been delivered and the Combined Authority has become the first organisation/authority to develop and use the new dashboard module. Agreement is in place to work and develop the dashboards over the coming months to ensure it is capable of monitoring the necessary KPIs and performance information required for Bus Reform.
- 3.8.3 The EPM system currently in user acceptance testing for some development work which was needed to allow contract inflation to be applied to contracts. It is expected that this testing will be completed and put into the live environment. The rest of the system is now in a Business-as-Usual state and the team will begin discussions with both IT and the service provider to extend the contract which is due up for renewal in 2023.

### **3.9 Electric fleet vehicles**

In line with organisational commitments to improve the environmental impact, a fleet of electric vehicles has been procured to deliver the services of the Transport Network performance team.

All vehicles are ordered, and the first 2 vehicles have arrived. Further deliveries are expected throughout 2022.

## **4. IMPACT AND IMPLICATIONS**

### **4.1 Climate Change**

Investment in bus has a positive impact on climate change through reducing CO2 emissions

### **4.2 Equality and Diversity**

The equality and diversity implications of individual activities will continue to be fully considered. There are no direct implications for any protected characteristics resulting from this report.

### **4.3 Social Value**

Social value is built into major procurement such as the hybus Manufacturing and refuelling contracts.

### **4.4 Risks and Mitigation**

Separate Risk registers for Green Bus Routes, HyBus and Bus Reform are maintained and reported on regularly and integrated into the corporate risk register

#### 4.5 **Communication and Consultation**

All bus projects and ongoing activities have associated communications, marketing, and engagement strategies in place

### 5. **CONCLUSION**

- 5.1. This report has key bus-led projects and an overview of how the Bus Team has been maintaining a safe and reliable bus network whilst dealing with the challenges of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

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