

Response to Phase 1 feedback

June 2016

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to set out how the responses from the Phase 1 consultation have influenced the development of the West Yorkshire Bus Strategy.

2. Background to Phase 1 Consultation

- 2.1. An initial consultation on the draft bus strategy core principles took place in October – November 2015. This phase 1 consultation helped to identify the priorities for the emerging high level principles of the strategy and aimed to:
 - Confirm its core principles;
 - Propose any amendments to the principles including changes to wording and the removal or addition of principles; and
 - Identify any other key points to inform the next phase.
- 2.2. WYCA identified a number of stakeholders to take part in the Phase 1 consultation. Stakeholders approached included Local MPs, WYCA Transport Committee members, District Councillors, District authorities, neighbouring local transport authorities, bus operators, representatives from the business community, other key public sector bodies, such as universities, hospital trusts, health and the Police & Crime Commissioner, campaign and transport user groups.
- 2.3. Each stakeholder was sent an invitation to take part in the consultation in the form of an email which contained a link to an online survey. WYCA circulated a brief consultation document (included in Appendix G) to help structure the consultation and this document was also placed on the WYCA website.
- 2.4. WYCA officers met with a number of the stakeholders and the feedback from the consultation took the form of meeting notes, email responses and online survey responses. The majority of responses (88) were collected through the online survey. Eleven organisations responded to the invitation via email, submitting general comments on the documentation. Whilst not specifically targeted, a number of members of the public also became aware of the consultation and responded to it.
- 2.5. WYCA commissioned consultants AECOM to undertake an independent review of the feedback received in the initial consultation. AECOM's full report, summarising the conclusions of the consultation is included in Appendix H. The views of everyone that responded to the consultation have been taken into account in the AECOM report.
- 2.6. This Appendix sets out how the conclusions reached by AECOM, through their independent review from the initial consultation, and how these have influenced the development of the strategy. It summarises how the conclusions raised in Chapter 5 of the AECOM report have been responded to in the development of the Bus Strategy document that is part of the forthcoming public consultation (phase 2).

3. Summary of key messages from the consultation

- 3.1. Overall, the AECOM report (Appendix H) concludes that the consultation indicated strong support for the vision. However, it noted that the clarity of some of the principles could be improved. As a result of these key conclusions, the draft strategy has sought to:
- Refine the vision to bring a clearer link to the overarching Strategic Economic Plan & Transport Strategy;
 - Identify separately and also clarified, the ‘Strategic challenges’ facing the bus system and the ‘customer-focused problems’ which affect passengers on a day-to-day level; and
 - Set out Policy Proposals across the five thematic areas, which address the challenges and problems identified. The ‘Core Principles’ that were consulted upon have been subsumed into these Policy Proposals.

4. Response to detailed consultation feedback

You said the vision needed to better reflect passenger needs

- 4.1. The strategy includes a chapter and further supporting evidence (see Appendix D) outlining the evidence gathered around customer needs (Chapter 4). The vision has been redrafted to make it focus more explicitly on delivering what customers want. A critical success factor, focused on customers being at the heart of the strategy is also included in Chapter 5 of the strategy. Together, these have all helped to shape the policy proposals identified in Chapter 6, including customer experience.

You said integrated ticketing was crucial

- 4.2. The strategy identifies the fares and ticketing problems and opportunities in chapter 4. In chapter 6 it includes a specific policy proposal on fares and ticketing, which sets out the ambition around integrated ticketing.

You said that a ‘clear identity that inspires passenger confidence’ was less important than the other core principles for the bus strategy.

- 4.3. The challenges received around this core principle have been taken on board and it is recognised that the terminology of this core principle could have been better articulated and needed further development. As a result of the feedback received, we have reconsidered. ‘Inspiring customer confidence’ is now included as part of the policy proposals in chapter 6. For example, the customer experience policy proposal sets out a range of actions which will help create customer confidence in the bus system.

You said that integration between *bus services*, between *modes* and between *authorities* (utilities, highways and police) was important

- 4.4. Integration of bus services as part of a coherent transport network across West Yorkshire is a theme across the Bus Strategy. Integration is identified as a headline problem (see Table 4.1 in Chapter 4), which has been translated into a number of policy proposals (see Chapter 6). For example:
- Integration of bus services with other modes is brought out in the bus services and infrastructure policy proposal and this also links back to the broader Transport Strategy cross cutting themes of ‘One Network’ and ‘Inclusion’; and

- Integration between authorities like the Police is brought out through the customer experience policy proposal and the importance of partnership with the Police is set out in the customer experience policy proposal.

You said that in general you agreed with the core principles but that the detail on how they are implemented is crucial

4.5. Chapter 9 of the strategy sets out the framework for delivery.

You said that services and networks need to reflect the different needs and characteristics of the county – for example there needs to be as much focus on rural services as on high frequency urban services

4.6. The bus services and infrastructure policy proposal included in Chapter 6 highlights the importance of implementing a programme of geographically-specific measures to improve accessibility, support regeneration and tackle deprivation. This includes different types of initiatives across rural communities and town and cities.

You said that reliable, frequent services and value for money bus fares were the most important things to increase bus patronage

You noted that the value for money principle is ambiguous as to whether it refers to the customer or public spending

4.7. Reliability features throughout the strategy as feedback has shown that it is one of the major areas of concern to customers. It is included in the customer problems in Chapter 4 and in Table 4.1. The need for frequent services to support passenger growth is similarly reflected in both the strategic challenges and customer focused concerns. These form key aspects of the bus services and infrastructure policy proposal in chapter 6.

4.8. There is also a strong theme within the strategy that bus fares should offer value for money fares to customers. This is reflected in the identification of headline problems in chapter 4 and in Table 4.1 and the policy proposal on fares and ticketing in chapter 6.

4.9. From a strategic perspective, the importance of delivering a value for money bus system as a whole is outlined in the strategic challenges section in paragraph 2.51. The strategy also includes critical success criteria around optimising value for money for the bus system.

You said you want a greater emphasis on passenger safety and security in the strategy

4.10. The Bus Strategy includes a critical success factor, focused on delivering a safe and secure environment for all.

4.11. Chapter 6 highlights the need for investment in CCTV and high quality lighting to help improve personal safety and security for bus users in the bus services and infrastructure policy proposal. Safety and security is also described within the customer experience policy proposal.

You said you want to see more commitment to the planning and delivery of ‘cross-border’ services within the strategy

4.12. The vast majority of bus services are contained within West Yorkshire. However, there are some important cross boundary services, such as the service 36 to Harrogate and Ripon. Cross boundary services provide important linkages and the Bus Services policy proposal in chapter 6 provides some further detail.

You said you wanted to see more evidence (intelligence) being used to inform the strategy development. This should include evidence on how the strategy will stimulate the economy and benefit the environment.

You said you wanted to see more emphasis on how socially disadvantaged groups could benefit from the strategy

4.13. The strategy is supported by a number of appendices which set out the evidence to support the development of the strategy. For example

- Evidence has been examined from across the UK that demonstrates that buses both support the economy and benefit the environment. This is summarised in Chapter 5 through the identification of opportunities and a more detailed evidence base can be found within Appendix E.
- The strategy has examined evidence from across the UK which demonstrates that buses not only support the economy, but also support inclusion and access to opportunity. This is outlined in Chapter 3 and a more detailed evidence base can be found within Appendix E. The bus services and infrastructure policy proposal sets out the importance of developing a bus service for improving accessibility and integration.

You said that absence of timescales for the strategy makes it less tangible.

4.14. The Bus Strategy has a 20 year planning horizon. The high level programme of work required to deliver the strategy is included within chapter 8 of the Bus Strategy.

You said that there should be more detail with regards to the hours of operation of buses

4.15. There is no specific reference to addressing the hours of bus service operation, as each service has specific markets. However, the bus services and infrastructure policy proposal in Chapter 6, does reflect the requirement to be responsive to specific needs. This could include evening and Sunday services that reflect changing work and shopping patterns, as well as spatial aspects such as changes in land use.

Some of you questioned whether both of the terms 'simple' and 'smart' should be in the 'Simple, smart and integrated ticketing' principle

You noted that smartcards may not be future proof

4.16. We recognise that 'simple' and 'smart' are not always connected or clear in what they mean. As a result we have refined the terminology and included a full policy proposal for fares and ticketing in chapter 6 and as such the policy proposal talks around 'smartcards' as part of the solution.

You noted that the vision should aim to reduce congestion through better traffic management and giving over priority to buses

4.17. The strategy identifies the importance of giving priority to buses, citing the achievements from bus priorities in West Yorkshire to date and identifying the importance of bus priorities in delivery plans in the Bus Services and Infrastructure policy proposal in chapter 6.