

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY

To: The Chair and Members of the Transport Committee

Meeting: 18 July 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 update the Transport Committee on key bus issues relating to the first quarter of 2019/2020.
- 1.2 Specifically, the report will provide the Transport Committee with information on Bus Alliance Patronage figures, an overview of the annual bus passenger survey results, the first quarterly Bus Alliance update of 2019/20, progress on developing the commitment of the Liverpool City Region Devolution Deal in respect of improving bus services and other key deliverables of the Bus Team.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. 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 now being made in the Liverpool City Region (LCR).
 - 3.1.4 For information, the trends with regard to concessionary travel is no change to slight increase

3.2 Bus Passenger Survey

- 3.2.1 The annual bus passenger survey results for 2018 were released shortly before the start of this current quarter. This survey is conducted by Transport Focus each Autumn and measures passengers' satisfaction with their local bus service for a representative sample of journeys, allowing for comparison with other areas of the UK in addition to measuring local customer satisfaction trends.
- 3.2.2 A summary of the results for the Liverpool City Region is appended to this report, with the headline results for 2018 compared with the previous year (2017) listed below;
- (a) Overall satisfaction 91% - joint highest of any UK metropolitan area;
 - (b) 5 per cent year on year increase in satisfaction with value for money – at 75% this is the highest of any UK metropolitan area;
 - (c) A rise in satisfaction with waiting facilities, coinciding with an increased focus on monitoring and addressing issues relating to these facilities; and
 - (d) Good levels of satisfaction relating to personal safety and security, demonstrating the success of the TravelSafe Partnership.

3.3 LCR Bus Alliance

- 3.3.1 The LCR Bus Alliance 2019/20 Business and Investment Plan was completed and approved in Quarter four 2018/19 and is now being delivered.
- 3.3.2 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.
- 3.3.3 In quarter one of 2019/20, the following milestones have been completed or there has been significant progress made:
- (a) Transforming Cities Fund - the consultancy brief for developing options to improve the bus offer and guarantee bus reliability and punctuality along five key bus corridors has been completed by the Green Routes Steering Group and released on the procurement chest. It is envisaged that the successful consultant will begin work on delivering the project in Quarter Two.
 - (b) One hundred per cent of Bus Alliance buses in the Liverpool City Region are now able to take contactless payments with the installation of new ticket machines on Arriva buses. Customers will be able to make contactless payments on the remaining buses operating across the Liverpool City region in quarter two.
 - (c) The Bus Performance Team's Stops and Shelters inspection programme trial has been integrated into business as usual. The team is now approaching a full three month data set for this survey programme and will shortly review

the work to date, matters arising and the initial survey programme with a view to expanding it further across the infrastructure network.

- (d) Consultants 'Mott Macdonald' have completed their research and evaluation work into independently validate the impact of the 'Better by Bus' campaign. Overall the survey focussed on three marketing campaigns: Say Yes to Bus, Vote Bus and All You Need is Bus, with 948 surveys completed in Huyton, Liverpool, Bootle, St Helens, Birkenhead.
- (e) Key findings of the research were that:
 - (i) There was a robust split of surveys across requested locations & age groups;
 - (ii) 41% of people surveyed have seen at least one of the BBB campaigns;
 - (iii) Biggest location for campaign awareness was Wirral with 64%;
 - (iv) Bus advertising, Billboards & Online/Social/Digital resonated highest in each campaign for delivering awareness;
 - (v) Say Yes to Bus & All You Need is Bus performed equally/highest for impacting perceptions & influencing behaviours (23% of respondents, for both campaigns); and
 - (vi) Growth potential to become future passengers with approx. 17% of respondents confirming they are now aware of bus benefits.

The next stage of the survey process is to hold Focus Group activity incorporating respondents who stated that they were aware of the benefits of bus but still do not / would not use it, in order to really understand their reasons for not changing their travel behaviour.

- (f) The Customer Growth and Development Workstream has 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.

This 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. The campaign brief attached in Appendix two provides some further detail and includes working with major businesses and employers across the LCR on a PLEDGE to be a part of The Change, by choosing Bus for travel.

- (g) Work is progressing with planning and implementing the Bus Re-routing Strategy as part of the LCC Connectivity 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.

The Opportunity to Comment on the Bus Re-routing Strategy as part of the LCCC works is due to commence on 18 June. A comprehensive plan has been put in place to ensure that all stakeholders and users are aware that there are planned changes in January 2020 but while there may be some scope for change, the change in infrastructure and road layout and aspirations of LCCC makes that opportunity quite limited.

- (h) Following a second phase of consultation in February, service changes as part of the St Helens Network were implemented on 28 April 2019. This was the second time that bus services in St Helens were considered holistically, following the first network review in 2016. On the whole changes were minimal and positively received. Working with operators, new links were created to Haydock Industrial Estate, a major employment site in the borough, as well as to St Helens Hospital and Newton Community Hospital. The current level of provision for evening and Sunday services was also maintained. The next review is underway in Sefton with the commencement of the second phase of consultation due to take place in early June and changes proposed to be implemented on 1 September 2019.
- (i) In Wirral, the network that was put in place as a result of the loss of Avon, is under review by Stagecoach which is currently consulting using the Bus Services Change Protocol as part of the Alliance. Depending on the changes that it introduces there may be changes to supported services. The anticipated patronage and revenue of the services was unclear when the network was put in place and now the operator can be better informed in the design of the network.

3.4 The LCR Devolution Deal – alternative delivery model for bus

- 3.4.1 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.
- 3.4.2 In Quarter One, the data provided by bus operators in the LCR has been analysed to understand the operational costs and revenues associated with running bus services in the LCR.
- 3.4.3 An update on the project, options available and financial projections in relation to LCR bus services has been provided to the Metro Mayor. The project is being delivered as per the project plan a second update to the Metro Mayor is due to take place in October 2019, with a recommendation on a preferred option due in quarter four.

3.5 Other key work areas and achievements

3.5.1 ETM Roll out

The implementation programme of the new Electronic Ticket Machine (ETM) Roll out has commenced and it is anticipated this will be completed in Q2 – with all operators in the LCR using Ticketer ticket machines or a compatible system, by the end of July 2019. This roll-out has been funded by the Combined Authority through the Transforming Cities Fund, and is primarily focused on SME operators. Arriva has rolled out the same system across its operations in Q1.

The system has been trialled and tested with Huyton Travel Ltd (who represent a significant proportion of supported bus services) with ability to make contactless payments introduced on 25 HTL service vehicles over the weekend of 25/26 May. For the new system, roles and responsibilities are being considered in conjunction with IT, and the Bus Team is seeking the ability to interrogate and intervene in back office systems to drive further improvement in real time data availability and allow for improved customer information provision.

More evidence on roll out and operational impact of the ETM upgrade will be provided in the quarter two bus update report, but the bus team has begun tracking the percentage of all transactions that are contactless and is seeing an initial week on week rise.

3.5.2 RTI Punctuality and Reliability

Daily reporting is now embedded and circulated amongst internal stakeholders and accuracy of data in relation to vehicle tracking has significantly improved with the migration to the new ETMs. In the two weeks since Arriva introduced the Ticketer system, we have witnessed consistent levels of accurate journey tracking for the network in excess of 90%.

3.5.3 Tendering

Tender round 308, which includes buses that serve Wirral schools, is now bedding in, with a new operator in place which has taken over the former Avon depot. To date, the transition to the new tenders has been relatively smooth, with support being provided by the Bus Team.

3.5.4 Engineering Audits

The new annual inspection regime has commenced with the Freight Transport Association providing support for the third year. It is anticipated that the programme will be reviewed and procured again for the 2020/21 financial year.

3.5.5 Roadmap to Zero Emission buses

The Bus Team is 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.

3.5.6 Customer Information

The Customer Information team reacted to the significant number of bus service changes that were introduced on the 29 and 30 April, including the updating of the

digital information sources, bus timetable leaflets (for print and the website) and bus stop specific timetable displays. These changes included the major review of the buses that serve schools in Wirral.

Work was completed on the inclusion of rail station related information on bus stop displays informing passengers of the change of mode opportunities (bus > rail) available on the bus services that call at bus stops in the proximity of a rail station. This information has been added to around 3000 bus stops.

Sunday 19 May saw the bi-annual rail changes. Rail timetable leaflets, full timetable posters and station specific timetable posters were updated, printed and distributed to the main rail operators – Merseyrail Electrics and Northern Rail.

The Customer Information team has worked with the Bus Team in preparing on-bus notices, alternative mapping/timetables and at-stop consultation details for a number of proposed bus service changes and they have provided before and after mapping for the Liverpool city centre connectivity consultation process.

Finally, the team has been busy with a large number of disruption notices relating to roadworks (including the LCC connectivity project) and major events, including the Grand National festival, the Rock 'n' Roll marathon/10K and Liverpool FC homecoming.

All posters, bus and rail, now include LCR and Metro Mayor branding.

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. PRIVACY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 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

- 9.1 This report has highlighted activities delivered in quarter one 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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Appendices:

Appendix One - Transport Focus survey results summary

Appendix Two - We cannot wait to tackle climate change campaign brief

