

# Birmingham City Council

## City Council

14 July 2020



**Subject:** West Midlands Combined Authority Transport Delivery Committee

**Report of:** Councillor Kath Hartley, Lead Member

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? ☐ Yes ☒ No

### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Transport Delivery Committee (TDC) is one of a number of thematic Boards/Committees under the formal WMCA Board.
- 1.2 TDC provides political oversight and engagement on strategic transport priorities of the WMCA and its transport delivery arm, Transport for West Midlands (TfWM). This includes reviewing and providing scrutiny and challenge on TfWM capital programmes. The committee also has oversight of the operational activities of the WM Transport Authority and receives regular updates and reports across the various portfolios. Members actively participate in liaison with partners, including bus, rail and Metro operators, and with passengers' and interest groups.
- 1.3 Councillor Kath Hartley (Labour, Birmingham) was the Chair of the WMCA TDC for the 2019/20 municipal year. TDC Vice-chairs were Councillor Richard Worrall (Labour, Walsall) and Councillor Timothy Huxtable (Conservative, Birmingham).
- 1.4 All seven constituent authorities are represented on a population and political basis. Birmingham City Council was represented by the following councillors whose role has centred on ensuring that Birmingham achieves our deserved share of transport investment and network improvements as the West Midlands' largest and most strategic District and the centre of the region's travel-to-work area.
  - Councillor Kath Hartley (Labour) BCC Lead Member
  - Councillor Chaman Lal (Labour)
  - Councillor Mohammed Fazal (Labour)
  - Councillor Mary Locke (Labour)

- Councillor Timothy Huxtable (Conservative)
- Councillor Robert Alden (Conservative)
- Councillor Keith Linnecor (Labour) until his death in February 2020.

## **2 Recommendation**

2.1 That the report be noted.

## **3 Governance**

3.1 The WMCA TDC held 7 meetings in 2019/20. All meetings were held 1.00pm – 3.00pm at 16 Summer Lane and open to the public and press.

3.2 The committee had 6 Lead Member Reference Groups (LMRG) for 2019/20 as:

- Putting Passenger First – Councillor Kath Hartley, Birmingham, Labour
- Air Quality, Congestion and Environmental Impact – Councillor Richard Worrall, Walsall, Labour
- Finance and Performance – Councillor Pervez Akhtar, Coventry, Labour
- Rail and Metro – Councillor Roger Lawrence, Wolverhampton, Labour
- Safe and Sustainable Travel – Councillor Diana Holl-Allen, Solihull, Conservative
- Sprint – Councillor Timothy Huxtable, Birmingham, Conservative

The groups enable TDC Members to focus more closely on key TfWM areas of work than is the case in full committee meetings.

3.3 The committee considered the standing items of financial monitoring and capital programme delivery monitoring for TfWM projects. The role of TDC being to review the financial delivery and rigour of TfWM and scrutinise delivery.

3.4 Recurring items considered by the committee during 2019/20 included:

- Oversight of Rail Business including new stations
- West Midlands Bus Alliance
- Bus Business
- Midland Metro Operations
- Metro Investment
- Bus Network Reviews
- Oversight of Park & Ride
- Sprint
- Cycle Charter Progress
- Safer Travel

- Bus Byelaws
- Petitions
- Customer Services Performance including Bus Stations
- Enhanced Partnership development
- Commonwealth Games 2022
- LMRG Annual Reports

- 3.5 During 2019/20 the committee also received presentations on the mornings of TDC meetings on Very Light Rail, Ring & Ride, Coventry City of Culture 2021, the Birmingham Transport Plan, active travel and e-scooters and the COVID-19 transport actions and recovery. Members visits were also arranged including to the University of Birmingham to further understand the work on improving air quality.
- 3.6 Minutes of the committee are submitted to the WMCA Board. The TDC Chair attends the WMCA Board meetings to provide comment on the minutes and outcomes.

#### **4 Key Highlights in 2019/20**

- 4.1 The committee provided input, influence and challenge to the delivery of a range of transport projects and programmes during the financial year. Key highlights included the Commonwealth Games, Sprint, development of an Enhanced Partnership, member visits and the COVID-19 transport actions and recovery plans.
- 4.2 The committee considered the approach to transport planning for the Commonwealth Games in 2022, including the Commonwealth Games Strategic Transport Plan. The committee commented on proposals and the commitments required by relevant authorities to deliver transport interventions required for the Games. The committee emphasised the importance of accessibility, affordability of transport and encouraging all communities to feel involved in the Commonwealth Games with consideration of initiatives to include those communities that feel disconnected with the Games.
- 4.3 The committee and Lead Member Reference Group for Sprint has considered and input on the progress and development of Sprint schemes- A34 Walsall to Birmingham; A45 Birmingham to Airport and Solihull and Sutton Coldfield to Langley via Birmingham.
- 4.4 The committee has delegated authority for the development of bus partnership schemes in the West Midlands. In 2019/20 this has included overseeing the development of the first metropolitan Enhanced Partnership (EP) in England. An EP being one of the new powers available through the Bus Services Act 2017, to improve bus services with local bus operators. The committee has approved an Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme for public consultation and the associated consultation strategy and approach.

- 4.5 Most recently in 2019/20, the committee considered and input to the COVID-19 transport actions and recovery. Transport's role within the regional recovery will be critical to securing a fairer, greener and healthier West Midlands; post pandemic. In particular, this means the safe and well-coordinated remobilising of the transport system in the short term and accelerating the region's infrastructure delivery programmes to support recovery in the longer term. Four principles to aid the regional recovery strategy for transport have been developed, with TDC's intention to continue to help shape and monitor the actions taken:
- Recovering the transport system
  - Ensuring an essential and safe network: social distancing and capacity
  - Managing public perception, restoring trust
  - Managing positive behaviour change
- 4.6 The Committee has also led on, and participated in, activities involving the general public and interest groups, such as:
- Bus Shelter Appeals
  - Bus Passenger Champions
  - West Midlands Pensioners' Convention
  - Bus Users UK and WM
  - Rail Future
  - Metro Passenger Panel
- 4.7 The Lead Member for Birmingham has previously organised a TfWM Member Development session, attended by 25% of city councillors, and provided a Birmingham Members' booklet which addresses members' key questions and showed them how to get in touch and access network information. She has also helped to organise NXWM Bus Network Review drop-in sessions, a visit to TfWM and the Safer Travel office and CCTV suite for BCC Members and has followed up on enquiries from Birmingham Members, residents and community groups.
- 4.8 The Birmingham Lead Member attends quarterly meetings with the Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment and NXWM.

## **5 WMCA Scrutiny Review into the Effectiveness of TDC in overseeing the delivery of WMCA transport policies**

- 5.1 At the meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2019, the WMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee identified transport as a key area of focus and agreed to undertake a scrutiny review that looked at the effectiveness of Transport Delivery Committee in overseeing the delivery and impact of the transport policies three years on from the establishment of the WMCA.
- 5.2 On the 17<sup>th</sup> January 2020, the WMCA Board considered the conclusions and recommendations of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee review, and subsequently

approved the recommendations made in the scrutiny review's final report. A progress update on the recommendations arising from the Transport Governance Review was presented to the WMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2020:

### **Recommendation 1: Strengthen Transport Delivery Committee**

1. *The role of Transport Delivery Committee can be strengthened through a number of targeted changes, including:*
  - *greater clarity over the committee's terms of reference to strengthen the accountability for transport delivery responsibilities;*
  - *a clearer annual workplan aligned to the WMCA's Annual Plan;*
  - *Incorporate the work of the Lead Member Reference Groups into the main work programme of the committee to ensure full member involvement and to provide greater transparency;*
  - *a refreshed role profile for members will further help this.*
2. *Recognising that the committee could strengthen individual member accountability through a review of the size of its membership.*
3. *Formalise quarterly meetings between the Portfolio Lead for Transport and the chair of the committee to discuss matters of shared interest.*

### **Recommendation 2: Establish a Strategic Transport Board**

### **Recommendation 3: Establish a Transport Scrutiny Sub-Committee**

### **Recommendation 4: Governance Oversight**

- 5.3 Given the unexpected impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the governance of the WMCA, work to implement Recommendation 1 was delayed. This work will centre around the redrafting and refreshing of the committee's terms of reference and establishing a role profile of committee members. It will be led by the WMCA Head of Governance and officers from TfWM, and the WMCA Portfolio Lead for Transport and Chair/Vice-Chairs of TDC will be fully engaged. It is expected that this work will conclude by the end of September 2020.
- 5.4 The inaugural meeting of the Strategic Transport Board was held on 29 May 2020, with the next, third, meeting of the Board held on 10 July 2020. The TDC Chair is invited to attend, which will establish a stronger link between the transport policies and activities in the 7 Districts, TfWM and the Transport Delivery Committee.

## **6 Further Information**

- 6.1 The West Midlands Combined Authority Annual Plan sets out what the WMCA will deliver during the financial year, and the links it makes to the range of regional policy, strategy and delivery plans that articulate the action the WMCA deliver and support to make further progress towards the vision of a healthier, happier, better connected and more prosperous West Midlands.

<https://www.wmca.org.uk/media/3367/wmca-annual-plan-2019-20-web-videos.pdf>

6.2 Agendas and reports considered by the WMCA Transport Delivery Committee can be found here:

<https://governance.wmca.org.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=134>