

Report of the Strategic Director – Place to the meeting of the Executive to be held on 4th December 2018

AD

Subject:

Planning for Growth: The Leeds City Region Connectivity Strategy

Summary statement:

This report provides an update on the development of the Leeds City Region Connectivity Strategy. It follows a report to West Yorkshire Transport Committee on 9 November 2018.

Building on existing connectivity priorities for each West Yorkshire district, it develops the first tranche of Inclusive Growth Corridors (those areas with greatest economic need/opportunity), as identified in the Leeds City Region HS2 Growth Strategy.

The report sets out how transforming connectivity in the communities of greatest economic need will help raise productivity, living standards and improve air quality, thereby helping to deliver Inclusive Growth.

Alongside local priorities, the approach set out in this report, the City Region Transit Network, have the potential to shape future connectivity priorities at a City Region level in the period up to HS2 opening in 2033 and beyond. The proposals are designed to complement, maximise and accelerate inclusive growth associated with HS2 coming to the Leeds City Region.

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report provides an update on the development of the Leeds City Region Connectivity Strategy. It follows a report to West Yorkshire Transport Committee on 9 November 2018.
- 1.2. Building on existing connectivity priorities for each West Yorkshire district, it develops the first tranche of Inclusive Growth Corridors (those areas with greatest economic need/opportunity), as identified in the Leeds City Region HS2 Growth Strategy.
- 1.3. The report sets out how transforming connectivity in the communities of greatest economic need will help raise productivity, living standards and improve air quality, thereby helping to deliver Inclusive Growth.
- 1.4. Alongside local priorities, the approach set out in this report through the creation of a City Region Transit Network, has the potential to shape future connectivity priorities at a City Region level in the period up to HS2 opening in 2033 and beyond. The proposals set out here are designed to complement, maximise and accelerate inclusive growth associated with HS2 coming to the Leeds City Region.

2. BACKGROUND

Context

- 2.1. Bradford is the sixth largest city authority in the UK and has a £10 billion economy and has a strongly growing population. Over 534,000 people live in the city and wider District, in an attractive mix of urban and rural Settings, including Keighley, Ilkley, Shipley and Haworth. Together, the combined economic scale of Leeds and Bradford Districts is greater than many other City Regions across the country and is of international scale and significance.
- 2.2. With more than a quarter of the population aged under 18, Bradford is the youngest city in the UK. It is home to a rich and diverse population and has a reputation for enterprise, culture and creativity.
- 2.3. The District's scale, dynamism and international outlook are at the centre of its plans for growth. It has a strong and broad-based business community and is home to many successful manufacturing businesses and a growing number of start-ups. It has been identified as the best place to start a business, as ranked by Barclays Bank SME Growth Factors Index. With a number of large headquarters, Bradford-based companies employ over 250,000 people across the country with a combined turnover of over £30 billion. It benefits from above average concentrations of high-value production businesses across food manufacturing, engineering, chemicals, digital technologies, energy and utilities. It has strong innovation assets, including a University focused on maximising its technical and research expertise, R&D heavy industries and agile SMEs. Cultural assets include the National Science and Media Museum, Saltaire World Heritage Site, Bronte Country, the Alhambra theatre and Bradford's status as the world's first UNESCO City of Film.

- 2.4. The major regeneration of Bradford in recent years is continuing with close to £1 billion of investment in the pipeline. The City Centre Growth Zone has redefined Bradford's offer, providing for high quality office and residential schemes complemented by new retail and leisure outlets including the Broadway Shopping Centre and the awarding winning City Park open space. This, alongside strategic action to create a vocationally led, business focussed education and skills offer, is helping to create the right conditions for investment to deliver on the city's growth potential.
- 2.5. The focal points for housing and jobs growth are Bradford city centre, the Shipley Canal Road Corridor and areas to the South of the City Centre. There are also opportunities for housing and economic growth as part of urban extensions to the city at Holme Wood as well as Apperley Bridge/Esholt, which will include developments which support the growth of Leeds Bradford Airport as an important economic hub. There will also be jobs and housing growth in Airedale at Shipley, Bingley and Keighley. For Keighley, the Core Strategy plans for 4,500 new houses and 30 ha of employment land in Airedale between now and 2030.

High Speed 2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail

- 2.6. High Speed 2 ("HS2") is a planned high speed railway designed to transform connectivity between our major cities, making it easier for businesses to locate across the Midlands and the North of England. Early construction work of HS2 Phase 1 has already commenced between London and Birmingham. With detailed planning already underway, construction of the line to Leeds City Region is planned to start in 2024, with the line to open in 2033. Some services will terminate at an expanded Leeds Station and others will travel onto York Station.
- 2.7. Northern Powerhouse Rail ("NPR") is a proposed network of inter-city region rail services that will support the development of a Northern Powerhouse economy, by radically improving the capacity of the north's railway to reliably move people and goods. NPR will connect the north's major East-West economic centres (including Bradford), through fast and frequent rail services that make use of:
 - HS2 through a number of junctions with the existing railway
 - Upgraded existing railway lines
 - Brand new railway lines, and
 - Upgraded/new station/transport hubs.
- 2.8. Our region is growing and at a national level, HS2 and NPR together are vital to support the next steps in transforming our economy. With the arrival of HS2 and NPR, it is vital that we plan how we can best distribute the economic benefits across the Region.

Bradford's Strategic Connectivity Priorities

- 2.9. A constraint faced by Bradford District is its relatively poor connectivity on to the regional and national road and rail networks, which is why significant investment in improved rail connectivity is seen as central to the city and the wider district in

realising their economic potential. These are illustrated through the maps in Appendix 1.

Northern Powerhouse Rail

- 2.10. Building a Northern Powerhouse Rail station in Bradford City Centre would be one of the boldest and most economically beneficial moves the Government and Transport for the North (TfN) could make. A Northern Powerhouse Rail station in Bradford City Centre isn't just about connectivity. It is key to realising the vision to truly transform Bradford and the north. To realise this transformational vision, Bradford needs to be better connected to the rest of the Northern Powerhouse. A City Centre NPR station would be a catalyst for the regeneration of much of the city centre, coming on the back of the award winning City Park and £260m Broadway retail development.
- 2.11. However, these benefits, including the creation of thousands of jobs and the multi-million pound investment in Bradford Interchange Railway Station and the land around it would be part of a wider city story. This vision for Bradford requires real improvements in our transport system to connect its businesses, but also outstanding education to support our growing population and a world class city centre to welcome visitors from across the world. Northern Powerhouse Rail provides a unique opportunity for Bradford and the North, an opportunity that must not be missed.

Airedale and Wharfedale

- 2.12. Bradford already benefits from the electrified Airedale and Wharfedale rail lines which already provide some elements of a 'mass transit' type service towards Shipley, Keighley and Ilkley. The high capacity, electric, fast and frequent 'Class 333' vehicles have led to substantial growth in rail patronage over the last decade. These rail lines demonstrate the benefits which arise as a result of investment in high capacity, fast and frequent high quality services.
- 2.13. As a consequence of the crowding on these services, further investment is proposed by Northern through the introduction of six-car electric trains (as pairs of new three-car trains) on the most crowded services on the Airedale and Wharfedale lines. The existing four-car Class 333 electric trains are also expected to continue to form many other services on these rail lines.

Calder Valley line

- 2.14. Investment in the Calder Valley line continues to be essential, with the line suffering from severe overcrowding and slow/unreliable journey times. This rail line currently serves many purposes. Network Rail recently completed major upgrade work to the Calder Valley line between Hebden Bridge and Leeds via Halifax and Bradford Interchange. This is part of a programme to increase the capacity and capability of this route and follows completion of earlier work between Manchester Victoria and Hebden Bridge which increased line speeds as well as improving operational flexibility around Rochdale station.

Current Connectivity Priorities – Summary

2.15. A Northern Powerhouse Rail hub in Bradford city centre as well as a redeveloped Bradford Forster Square and Interchange Stations are highlighted as catalysts for economic growth in the city centre. However, in addition to this, buses will continue to have an important role in supporting Bradford's growth and Bradford Council has expectations for improvements to the quality and frequency of bus services across the district and the wider City Region. The key strategic connectivity priorities for Bradford can be summarised as:

- Northern Powerhouse Rail to serve Bradford city centre
- Improving Leeds–Bradford connectivity for an interconnected urban economy
- Investment in bus services and vehicles
- Investment in walking and cycling infrastructure, building on the cycle superhighway
- Delivering transformed station gateways at both Bradford Interchange and Bradford Foster Square which support wider regeneration
- Establish the role of rail in respect of new mass transit across the Leeds City Region
- Development of Apperley Bridge station as Airport Gateway
- Additional trains to serve Low Moor Station, with additional station calls to at least a half-hourly service
- Calder Valley Line - Improving journey experience and options
- Additional East Coast Mainline through trains from Bradford and Shipley to London from May 2019
- Increasing capacity on the Airedale and Wharfedale lines
- Develop an operational solution to Bradford city centre's challenging rail network layout
- Highway junction improvements to the Bradford ring road, which would have benefits for the city centre
- Delivering Investment in the road network particularly at: Tong Street, Bradford; Hard Ings Road, Keighley; Harrogate Road New Line Junction, Bradford; Bradford Shipley Corridor; South East Bradford Link Road

2.16. Some of these connectivity priorities are being addressed through existing plans, with significant interventions planned through the West Yorkshire Transport Fund and the rail industry (although many of the details are still uncertain). However, these interventions alone will not necessarily see the distribution of the benefits to all of our communities. In particular, improvements to national and pan northern and connectivity must be complemented with a modern, fit for purpose local transport network to ensure the benefits are fully realised. Local connectivity is key to ensuring all the population can access future opportunities.

Leeds City Region HS2 Growth Strategy

2.17. During 2017 and 2018, the West Yorkshire Combined Authority has coordinated on behalf of the region, the development of the Leeds City Region HS2 Growth Strategy. This document sets out how Leeds City Region will work with

Government, businesses, schools, colleges and universities to maximise the benefits of HS2 and NPR.

2.18. This report provides an update to Bradford Council's Executive on the development of the Leeds City Region Connectivity Strategy. It follows a report to West Yorkshire Transport Committee on 9 November 2018¹, with the key messages of the Transport Committee report summarised below:

- The report develops the first tranche of Inclusive Growth Corridors (those areas with greatest economic need/opportunity), as identified in the HS2 Connectivity Strategy. The report sets out how transforming connectivity in the communities of greatest economic need will help raise productivity, living standards and improve air quality, thereby helping to deliver Inclusive Growth.
- The conclusions set out here build on the current investment in transport improvements across York, Wakefield, Leeds, Bradford, Calderdale and Kirklees. Significant improvements are already being made through programmes including Connecting Leeds and the West Yorkshire-plus Transport Fund across Walking, Cycling, Bus and Rail.
- This report seeks to 'opening a conversation' on future solutions to future capacity requirements and delivering inclusive growth - including maximising the positive impact of strategic transport investments (HS2/NPR).
- Subject to feedback received through the conversation, the proposed City Region Transit Network has the potential to form a key priority for delivery in the timeframe up to HS2 opening in 2033.
- The key 'places to connect' for the four corridors examined so far have been identified and are illustrated within Figure 1 below. The work to date proposes three new public transport services to increase capacity between key local urban communities into national hubs – the orange, green and blue lines. These services require entirely new infrastructure and whilst complementary to the existing transport system, offer the opportunity to reimagine how other modes such as bus and rail can integrate with it. Together these new services would form the first tranche of the 'City Region Transit Network' to open in parallel with HS2 opening in 2033.

¹ The Connectivity Strategy report to Transport Committee is available online under item 7: <https://westyorkshire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?MId=730>

- There is also strong evidence to suggest that even taking into account planned major investment such as HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail there remains a local capacity gap, which a city region transit network will address.
 - Significant further development work is required on the City Region Transit Network and would be informed by the conclusions of the forthcoming engagement.
- 2.19. It is important to note that for the proposals set out in Figure 1, detailed alignments, confirmation around mode choice and business case value for money assessments would be developed as part the next stage of development works and would also be informed by feedback and amendments as a result of from the proposed forthcoming engagement. At this stage Figure 1 is intended to illustrate the key communities to connect through transformed connectivity by 2033. It is likely that Mass Transit has an important role to play for these services given the scale of demand forecast and the economic needs of these communities.
- 2.20. Whilst the principle need here is to grow capacity, research undertaken by Urban Transport Group has demonstrated that mass transit systems can brings many wider benefits, including:
- The opportunity to raise living standards and productivity through regenerating areas as a result of transit-led development. The development of mass transit in conjunction with major changes in the urban fabric is an effective way of supporting development activity, as has been demonstrated primarily in London Docklands, but also in Manchester and Nottingham for example;
 - Penetration of town and city centre with permanent, visible, and acceptable infrastructure: direct access can be provided to city centre jobs, shopping, colleges and universities in a way that is highly visible, reliable and dependable and improves air quality;
 - Predictable, regular and reliable journey times and service patterns, which meet local ambitions: service levels are generally high on simple, easily understood routes, generally operating at a high level of reliability due to segregation from traffic, priority at junctions and contractual incentives to operators;
 - Raises the profile of the region and encourages inward investment: the image offered by mass transit permanent infrastructure, vehicles and operations secured in the long term, gives individuals and business confidence to make location decisions;
 - Stops which are fully accessible to all users: Vehicles are highly accessible to all users and can provide 100% level boarding at stops. Other features include highly visible stops, good information, easy to purchase tickets and security measures (visible staff or police on and around the system, CCTV etc.);
 - A high quality of ride throughout the entire journey, whether or not a system is fully segregated or mixes on-street and off-street running; short dwell-times: Multiple doors and off-vehicle ticketing ensure mass transit has the benefit of short dwell times at stops, with consequent journey time benefits;
 - Additional capacity in a sustainable way – mass transit can provide additional passenger carrying capacity to existing city centres or major developments,

whereas new road capacity would not be acceptable and bus is unable to meet the need;

- Providing capacity relief for the rail network, particularly at local rail stations close to city centres, and allowing the rail network to better serve the markets where it is the natural mode choice;
- A realistic, quality alternative to car users – a substantial body of industry evidence demonstrates that many car users would not choose to use a bus (regardless of how good a service is operator), but the same car users would be willing to travel by mass transit;
- Providing the opportunity to create a hierarchy of modes which integrate together to provide seamless interchange and services for passengers. For example, providing local communities with the ability to easily access the NPR / HS2 stations in Leeds and Bradford – spreading the benefits of these national infrastructure projects;
- Provides opportunities for an expanded network into the future for example, potentially through integration with Tram-train technologies applied to existing rail lines in the future.

2.21. However, lessons learnt from elsewhere suggest that there are also significant challenges associated with delivering mass transit. These include for example, the scale of costs involved, integration with bus within the deregulated market, engineering / deliverability challenges, as well as ensuring value for money for both users and investors. Funding and financing is a major challenge both for development and construction - early identification of the funding strategy is essential. Whilst the cost of implementing mass transit can be high, the scale of benefits which it delivers are also high (for the reasons set out above). Other cities in the UK and beyond are demonstrating mass transit does offer high value for money and can also open up new funding opportunities.

Benefits to Bradford

2.22. The Transit Network would have significant benefits for Bradford, including addressing some of the key connectivity priorities identified above. Specific benefits to Bradford include:

- Transform public transport provision through linking the Bradford Railway Stations providing seamless north-south connectivity, integrated with Northern Powerhouse Rail
- Accelerate transit led regeneration / development around the proposals within Bradford
- Provide new, additional capacity between Bradford and Leeds to serve a high density, interconnected urban economy
- Provide a reliable and frequent transport system for the city
- Provide enhanced links between the urban centres of Bradford and Huddersfield, and connect communities in between to enable better access to employment opportunities
- Create Housing opportunities through greater permeability in market areas

- Complementary investment in the Calder Valley rail route, improving journey times and travel options, including increased peak time capacity and improved options at evenings and weekends
- Provide the foundations which can be build upon and extended into the future (for example towards the airport or to west Bradford).

Next stages of work

- 2.23. The report to Transport Committee set out the next tranche of corridors to be focused upon and further phases planned to commence early in 2019, will be:
- Leeds – Five Towns (included within scope of Transforming Cities Fund³)
 - Leeds – Wakefield – Barnsley (included within scope of Transforming Cities Fund)
 - Leeds – Bradford – Halifax (included within scope of Transforming Cities Fund)
 - Bradford City Centre to Airport
 - Leeds to Airport
- 2.24. It should be noted the development work will include a focus on the demand and capacity future need. With differing areas forecast to have different levels of demand, this will mean different technologies will be required in different areas.
- 2.25. Together, the conclusions of all the corridor plans will help shape the future pipeline (the potential City Region Transit Network would form only one element), which will be set out in the overarching Connectivity Strategy. The corridors plans will also help to shape the Inclusive Growth agenda and feed into the Local Inclusive Industrial Strategy.
- 2.26. The emerging Leeds City Region Transit Network will continue to be developed through the second tranche of Inclusive Growth Corridor and work. In addition, a comprehensive conversation on future solutions to future capacity requirements and delivering inclusive growth - including maximising the positive impact of strategic transport investments (HS2/NPR) – has now begun. This will enable a whole range of stakeholders to feedback on the work to date. Subject to feedback received through the conversation, the proposed City Region Transit Network has the potential to form a key priority for delivery in the timeframe up to HS2 opening in 2033
- 2.27. It is also proposed to set up an on-going member working group to continue to oversee the work. This would enable the wider engagement and conversation with the region to formally commence after Christmas.
- 2.28. Delivery of the proposals set out here will bring new and more productive jobs within reach of people (enabling them to move job without moving house), new markets within reach of businesses, new talent within reach of employers, and new knowledge and investment in reach of innovators and entrepreneurs.

³ Transforming Cities Fund provides funding in the period between 2018-2023. Details of the Leeds City Region submission can be found here: <https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/transport/>.

- 2.29. Transformational connectivity can play key a role in tackling low levels of productivity and stubborn levels of deprivation which have both been identified as key challenges to be addressed through the Leeds City Region's Inclusive Industrial Strategy, reflecting the fact that the pattern of deprivation has changed little in decades.
- 2.30. An accelerated programme of transformational connectivity is a prerequisite to enabling the economic geography of the City Region to be reshaped through HS2.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1. None as a result of this report.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

- 4.1. There are no direct financial implications from the report, however, the workstreams outlined have high value and high cost. A funding strategy for the emerging schemes identified here is essential and will be developed as part of the next stages of development.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

- 5.1. None as a result of this report.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

- 6.1. None as a result of this report.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

The report sets out work to improve connectivity which will support communities to access work and facilities. A key element of the work is looking to support growth and connectivity in key corridors to ensure inclusive approach to the development and investment.

Equality assessments will be undertaken as appropriate in support of detailed strategies /policies and improvements.

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The report sets out proposals to improve connectivity which seeks to link communities better to jobs, facilities and services. It also seeks to encourage mode shift to sustainable modes of public transport.

7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

- 7.1. The proposals set out within this report have the potential to have substantial benefits on local air quality and also encourage mode shift from car to more sustainable modes of public transport.

7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- No community Safety Implications as a direct result of this report.

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

There are no direct Human Rights implications of this report.

7.6 TRADE UNION

No implications

7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS

Report relates to all Wards.

7.8 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS (for reports to Area Committees only)

7.9 IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING

No implications

7.10 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

No Privacy Impact Assessment required.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

- 8.1. None

9. OPTIONS

- 9.1. The report seeks to 'open a conversation' and as such a detailed option appraisal will be undertaken in the next stages of development and will be informed by the feedback received through the forthcoming engagement.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1. Executive are requested to
- 10.2. Note the update on the work undertaken to date by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and partners to progress the Leeds City Region Connectivity Strategy, as reported to the Combined Authority Transport Committee.
- 10.3. Request that officers continue to work in partnership with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority to drive forward the Leeds City Region Connectivity Strategy to deliver appropriate solutions for the city.
- 10.4. Support the proposed West Yorkshire Transport Committee member working group to oversee the connectivity and mass transit strategy.
- 10.5. Endorse the opening of a conversation with the public and stakeholders around the role of mass transit, as a part of an integrated solution to the economic and transport challenges facing West Yorkshire.

11. APPENDICES

Current Pipeline Illustrations and Future Connectivity Maps

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

West Yorkshire Transport Committee Report: 9 November 2018: "Planning for Growth: The Leeds City Region Connectivity Strategy"

<https://westyorkshire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?MIId=730>