

Name of meeting: Cabinet
Date: 19 February 2019
Title of report: Planning for Growth: the Leeds City Region Connectivity Strategy

Purpose of report

This report provides an update on the development of the Leeds City Region Connectivity Strategy. It explains what the Connectivity Strategy is and how potential future Mass Transit options are being developed that improve connectivity within Kirklees and to the City Region.

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	Not Applicable
Key Decision - Is it in the <u>Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports?)</u>	No
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Yes
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name Is it also signed off by the Service Director - Finance? Is it also signed off by the Service Director - Legal Governance and Commissioning?	Karl Battersby - 5.02.2019 Eamonn Croston - 8.02.2019 Julie Muscroft - 5.02.2019
Cabinet member Economy	Councillor Peter McBride

Electoral wards affected: Dewsbury East Dewsbury West, Batley East, Batley West, Heckmondwike, Liversedge and Gomersal, Cleckheaton.

Ward councillors consulted: None- See section 4: "Consultees and their opinions"

Public or private: Public

GDPR This report contains no information that falls within the scope of the General Data Protection Regulation.

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 and West Yorkshire Combined Authority on 13 December 2018. Similar reports have also been considered by Leeds City Council Executive Board and Bradford Executive.
- 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 national, pan-northern and local priorities, the proposed 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 are designed to complement, maximise and accelerate inclusive growth associated with HS2 coming to the Leeds City Region.

2. Information required to take a decision

Context

- 2.1. Kirklees' position on the central east/west axis of the Northern Powerhouse corridor and excellent motorway connections – both north/south by the M1 and east/west by the M62 – means cities such as Leeds, Manchester and Sheffield are easily accessible from the district. It is two hours to London by rail and 90 minutes to mainland Europe via Leeds and Manchester airports. Therefore Kirklees is well positioned to access markets within the Northern Powerhouse and beyond. Overall, its economic position is strong, as evidenced by growth in Huddersfield which now has £7.4bn GVA.
- 2.2. The focal points of growth in the district are the North Kirklees Growth Zone, where there are plans for 6,000 homes and 35 hectares of employment space. The designation of the North Kirklees Growth Zone means that future transport infrastructure needs are starting to emerge around Dewsbury and Batley town centres while also highlighting the importance of strategic transport links to the area.
- 2.3. Kirklees is a major exporter of workers commuting to other towns and cities within the Leeds City Region and good, fit for purpose transport links are key to ensuring this is possible. The polycentric nature of the wider regional economy, coupled with Kirklees' strong concentration of manufacturing means there is a need to ensure that people and goods can be moved around efficiently and flexibly now and in the future.

Transpennine Route Upgrade, High Speed 2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail

- 2.4. There are a number of important strategic transport infrastructure projects in planning over the next 20 years:
- The Transpennine Route Upgrade (TRU) is a £2.9 billion package of measures which aim to deliver faster, longer, more frequent and more reliable services across the north of England. This is a vitally important strategic asset for the whole of Kirklees and will improve key stations on the route, improve connectivity to key cities and importantly underpin our regeneration and growth aspirations across the district. These interventions are planned between 2019 and 2024.
 - High Speed 2 (“HS2”) is a planned high speed railway designed to transform connectivity between our major cities. 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.
 - 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, through fast and frequent rail
- 2.5. 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. .
- 2.6. For Kirklees, improvements in capacity and journey times both west of the district towards Manchester and east to Leeds and beyond is a key priority. This will enable greater and more efficient movement of people out of the district commuting to key employment centres. In addition, Transpennine Route Upgrade will be a key catalyst and accelerator for development around the stations which it will serve. Maximising this opportunity is a key priority. The benefits are expected to be experienced around both north and south Kirklees

Kirklees’ Strategic Connectivity Priorities

- 2.7. Kirklees is already pursuing much of its local connectivity priorities through the West Yorkshire Transport Fund. 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

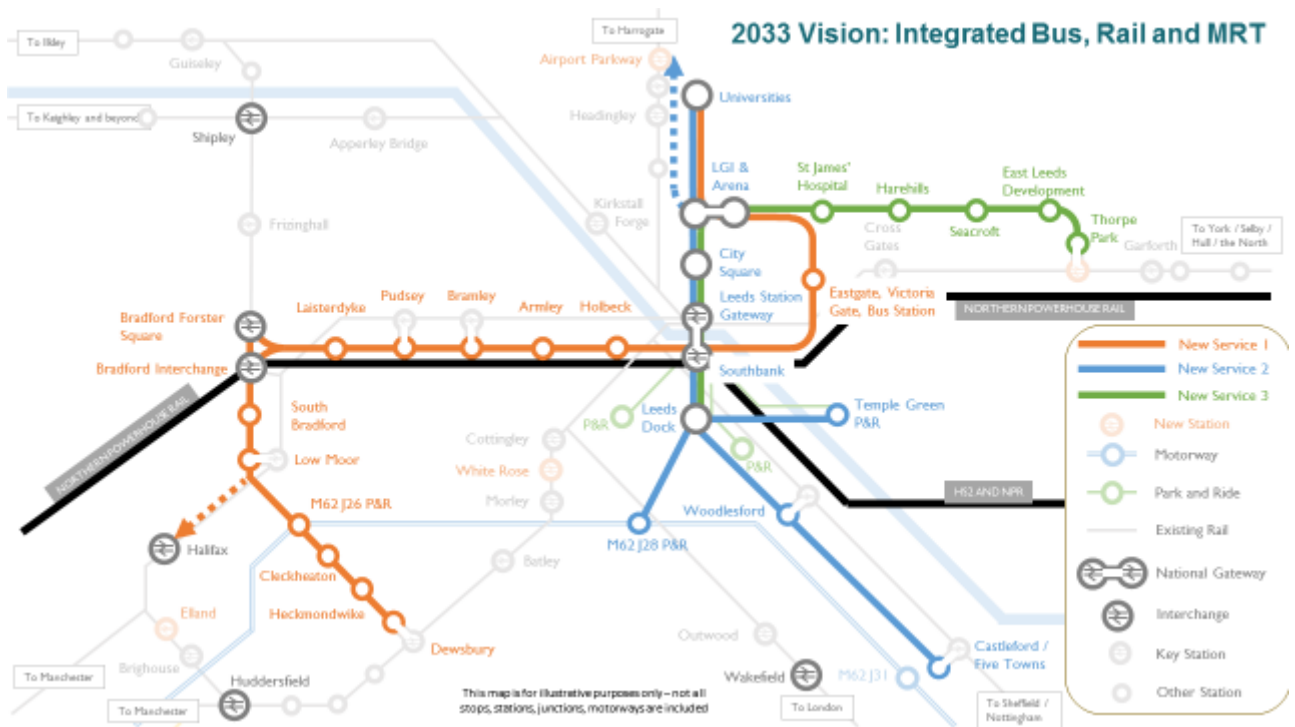
- 2.8. During 2017 and 2018, the West Yorkshire Combined Authority has coordinated on behalf of the region, the development of the Leeds City Region HS2 Growth Strategy.

The Strategy sets out how Leeds City Region will work with Government, businesses, schools, colleges and universities to maximise the benefits of HS2 and NPR.

- 2.9. This Cabinet report provides an update to Kirklees Council's Executive on the development of the Leeds City Region Connectivity Strategy. It follows a report to West Yorkshire Transport Committee¹ on 9 November 2018, 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, Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds, Wakefield and York. 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 'open 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>

Figure 1: 2033 Emerging City Region Transit Network with HS2



- Mass transit vehicles are anticipated to be required to meet the capacity need in delivering these new City Region Transit Network services. Mass transit is just one element of integrated future pipeline; the system would need to be integrated within the wider public transport offer, for example through bus services feeding the mass transit services. Bus will continue to have a very important role in the transport network.
- This is only the start of the conversation. Through the conversation with stakeholders and the public as well as through the development of the business cases, other modes such as Bus Rapid Transit or Tram-Train will continue to be assessed and may be more suitable for example, where lower levels of capacity are required or where there is direct interface with the heavy rail network respectively.
- Different modes of transport serve different needs and provide different levels of capacity. Technologies have moved forwards significantly in the last decade. For example, new battery technologies, hydrogen propulsion and autonomous innovations are changing advance mass transit vehicle technologies, which also improve air quality
- The transformed connectivity proposals set out in this report have the potential to raise productivity, living standards and improve air quality; thereby supporting delivery of Inclusive Growth to communities across the region.
- The analytical and evidence based approach applied here is focused on connecting communities in greatest economic need/opportunity. This is the logical and evidenced based next step in the City Region’s plans for transport investment.

- 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.

2.10. 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 of the next stage of development works and would also be informed by feedback and amendments as a result of 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.

2.11. 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 Kirklees

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

- Complement investment in Transpennine Route Upgrade to the Huddersfield-Leeds line - to help create major regeneration areas to help realise the economic and social opportunities for North Kirklees
- Link key new employment and housing sites in North Kirklees Growth Zone (Dewsbury) into Leeds (city centre, White Rose Centre Aire Valley Enterprise Zone) and Bradford (city centre and South Bradford) and the employment land opportunities around the M62 Junction 26 Motorway junction.
- Addressing the poor public transport provision in areas particularly from within North Kirklees around Cleckheaton and Heckmondwike for example, (where there is also no rail connectivity) connecting to Leeds and Bradford.
- Provide transformed public transport provision through new park and ride provision to better connect and speed up journeys to Leeds and Bradford and provide congestion relief to the M62
- With the scale of potential to the north side of Dewsbury (Chidswell) there is also the opportunity to explore connections into how these new communities/ opportunities could be served through further extensions to the proposed services.

Next stages of work for Connectivity Study

- 2.13. 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
 - Leeds – Wakefield – Barnsley
 - Leeds – Bradford – Halifax
 - Bradford City Centre to Airport
 - Leeds to Airport
- 2.14. 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.
- 2.15. 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
- 2.16. An accelerated programme of transformational connectivity is a prerequisite to enabling the economic geography of the City Region to be reshaped through HS2.

3. Implications for the Council

3.1 Working with People

- 3.1.1. The Kirklees Economic and Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategies recognise that improvements to public transport infrastructure are essential if residents are to sustainably access the widest range of employment opportunities possible.
- 3.1.2. A transit network, such as the one proposed here will offer a low carbon, accessible transport system that connects areas of Kirklees where there are substantial levels of deprivation and where public transport provision to adjoining districts often involve long journeys with multiple changes to these employment opportunities, saving time and widening the catchment of jobs potentially available.

3.2. Working with Partners

- 3.2.1. The City Region Transit Network will be developed in partnership with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and partner districts.

3.3. Place Based Working

- 3.3.1. The analytical and evidence based approach applied here is focused on connecting communities in greatest economic need/opportunity. The transformed connectivity proposals set out in this report have the potential to raise productivity, living standards and improve air quality; thereby supporting delivery of Inclusive Growth to communities across the region.

3.4. Improving outcomes for children

- 3.4.1. The Kirklees Joint Strategic Needs Assessment recognises that there is a strong correlation between children's socioeconomic environment and educational attainment and that improved accessibility and connectivity to education is important if young adults are to have access to opportunities to allow them to fulfil their potential.
- 3.4.2. A public transport system that allows fast and frequent connections to West Yorkshire's educational establishments and therefore the widest possible range of further education is critical in helping to achieve this.

3.5. Other (e.g. Legal/Financial or Human Resources)

- 3.5.1. 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.

4. Consultees and their opinions

- 4.1. One of the main purposes of report is to ask Cabinet to "Endorse the opening of a consultation with the public and stakeholders around the role of mass transit". The consultation will be a platform for further detailed work around the proposed routes. All Ward Members will have the opportunity through both the consultation and the next stages of work to ensure their views on mass transit as a potential solution and their local detailed knowledge are taken into account
- 4.2. It is proposed to set up an on-going member working group to continue to oversee the work. This would enable a wider engagement and conversation with the region to formally commence in February 2019.

5. Next steps and timelines

- 5.1. Next steps are identified in sections 2.13-2.16 of this report. Other than anticipated delivery of the network by 2033, there are no timelines defined as yet. Once these have been, there will be a separate report presented to Cabinet.

6. Officer recommendations and reasons

6.1. Cabinet is requested to:

- 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.
- 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 district.
- Support the proposed West Yorkshire Transport Committee member working group to oversee the connectivity and mass transit strategy.
- 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.

7. Cabinet portfolio holder's recommendations

7.1. I agree with the Officer recommendations. In particular, I endorse the work done to date on developing the City Region Connectivity Strategy. However I recognise there is still a lot of work to do around the detail of the individual routes. Nonetheless I recommend that Officers continue to work with the west Yorkshire Combined Authority to develop this scheme. I also endorse the recommendation that a conversation with the public and stakeholders is started around the role of mass transit and its appropriateness to address the economic and transport challenges facing West Yorkshire

8. Contact officer

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9. Background Papers and History of Decisions

9 November 2018: West Yorkshire Transport Committee – “Planning For Growth: The Leeds City Region Connectivity Strategy”: Agenda Item 7 (plus appendices):<https://westyorkshire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=138&MId=730&Ver=4>

13 December 2018: West Yorkshire Combined Authority meeting: Planning for Growth: The Leeds City Region Connectivity Strategy:
<https://westyorkshire.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s10082/Item%207%20-%20Planning%20for%20Growth%20-%20The%20Leeds%20City%20Region%20Connectivity%20Strategy.pdf>

10. Director responsible

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