



West
Yorkshire
Combined
Authority

Tracy
Brabin
Mayor of
West Yorkshire



West Yorkshire Bus Service Improvement Plan

June 2024 (Version 4.0)

Contents

1. Our bus vision	4
1.1. BSIP geographical area	5
1.2. Policy context	6
1.3. Successes and opportunities for bus in West Yorkshire	7
1.4. Our vision and key strategic themes	13
1.5. BSIP duration and monitoring arrangements	17
2. Current offer to bus passengers	18
2.1. Overview	18
2.2. Bus Passenger Charter	24
2.3. Ongoing challenges for bus in West Yorkshire	26
2.4. Bus driver recruitment and retention	35
2.5. Listening to bus passengers and our communities	36
2.6. Summary	37
3. BSIP Delivery Programme 2024/2025	38
3.1. BSIP Revenue programme	38
3.2. Capital Delivery Programme 2024/2025	42
3.3. Future programme development - funding ask	44
4. Ambitions and proposals for 2025 and beyond	47
4.1. Overview	47
4.2. Our bus passenger journey proposition	47
4.3. Our Bus Service Improvement Plan on a page	49
4.4. Clear and simple fares	50
4.5. Enhanced, fully inclusive and more cohesive bus network	57
4.6. Improved, more inclusive customer service, information and support	72
4.7. Priority for buses on our roads	82
4.8. Better, greener buses	88
4.9. Safe, accessible and welcoming stations, stops and public space	93
5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting	103
6. List of tables and figures	106
7. Appendices	108

Bus Service Improvement Plan 2024

Version control

Version	Submission Date	Publication Date	Link	Comments
1.0	29 October 2021	1 November 2021	Improving Buses - West Yorkshire Combined Authority (westyorks-ca.gov.uk)	Published as per DfT requirements
2.0	N/A	31 October 2022	Improving Buses - West Yorkshire Combined Authority (westyorks-ca.gov.uk)	Updated as per DfT requirements
3.0	12 June 2024	-	Improving Buses - West Yorkshire Combined Authority (westyorks-ca.gov.uk)	Updated as per DfT requirements
4.0	-	September 2024	Improving Buses - West Yorkshire Combined Authority (westyorks-ca.gov.uk)	Draft finalised

1. Our bus vision

My vision for local buses – Mayor of West Yorkshire

Since launching our Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) in 2021, we've made big strides. In March 2024, I took a bold step to bring buses back under local control through franchising. This means you have a stronger voice in shaping your bus service, and I'm held accountable for delivering improvements.

I know how important buses are to West Yorkshire, connecting people across our unique blend of cities and towns, vibrant rural communities and stunning tourist attractions. They provide an essential public service and should serve all our 2.4 million residents, as well as visitors to the region.

Franchising, which will provide the Combined Authority and I with control over the region's buses, is an unprecedented opportunity to build a better-connected local bus network that works for all. But I must be realistic and make clear that this major change will not happen overnight. To ensure a smooth transition, franchising will be rolled out in phases, with the first franchised buses up and running in parts of Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield from March 2027, and going region-wide by the end of 2028.

In the meantime, we're not standing still. In my second mayoral term I will push for renewed effort to bring about the better bus user experience that passengers expect and deserve today. I want buses to be the first choice for travel in West Yorkshire – not because you don't have a car, but because buses are more affordable, convenient to use, and better for the environment.

Through our Bus Service Improvement Plan and other funding programmes, we have made great progress in delivering the bus system we urgently need. We're already transforming buses in the region with initiatives like the affordable £2 Mayor's Fare, as well as investing to protect and enhance our network with new routes and more frequent services. We are making bus shelters, stops and stations safer, nicer and more inclusive with new stations in Halifax and Dewsbury, supported by our vital safer travel partnership with West Yorkshire Police. And finally, we have invested in more zero emission vehicles to ensure the bus network is playing its part in a cleaner, greener tomorrow.

This investment is working, with both patronage and customer satisfaction on the increase. But we know that there is still more work to be done

This updated BSIP, strengthens our commitment to these improvements, both now and as we move towards local control. We will do this by keeping fares affordable and by enhancing our network so that all of our communities are connected. We'll make buses easier to use with clear information at every step. We'll add more eco-friendly buses and prioritise them on the roads. And we'll integrate buses with other sustainable transport options, which is key as we plan for a future Mass Transit system to realise the full ambitions of our Local Transport Plan.

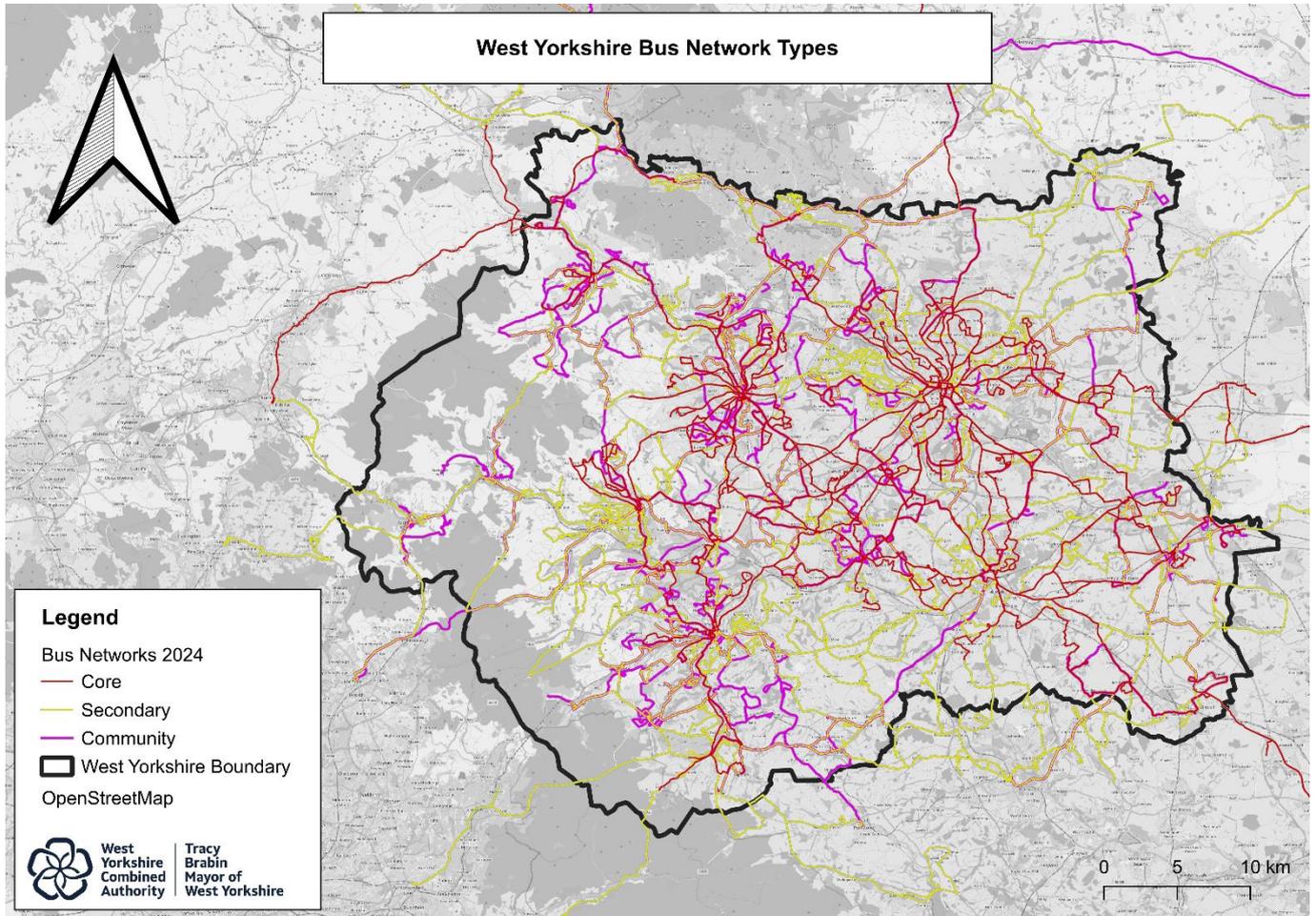
I recognise I can't do this alone, therefore I'll continue to work with local councils, bus operators, and the national government. Most importantly, I promise to always put passengers first, listening to what you need and want from your local buses, to ensure we deliver a system that works for everyone.

Tracy Brabin, Mayor of West Yorkshire

1.1. BSIP geographical area

1.1.1. The Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) that this document contains is for the Local Transport Authority (LTA) of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA). A map showing the West Yorkshire region and its five local authority areas, alongside the existing regional bus network, can be seen in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 – The West Yorkshire region and the Bus Network



1.1.2. The West Yorkshire region covers 780 square miles, of which 38% is classed as rural and has a population of over 2.35 million. The region is polycentric in nature and is comprised of five metropolitan areas: Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield. Within West Yorkshire, population centres are highly dispersed with a few key urban centres across the region. Table 1, below, demonstrates the population, size and population density across West Yorkshire.

Table 1: West Yorkshire in numbers¹

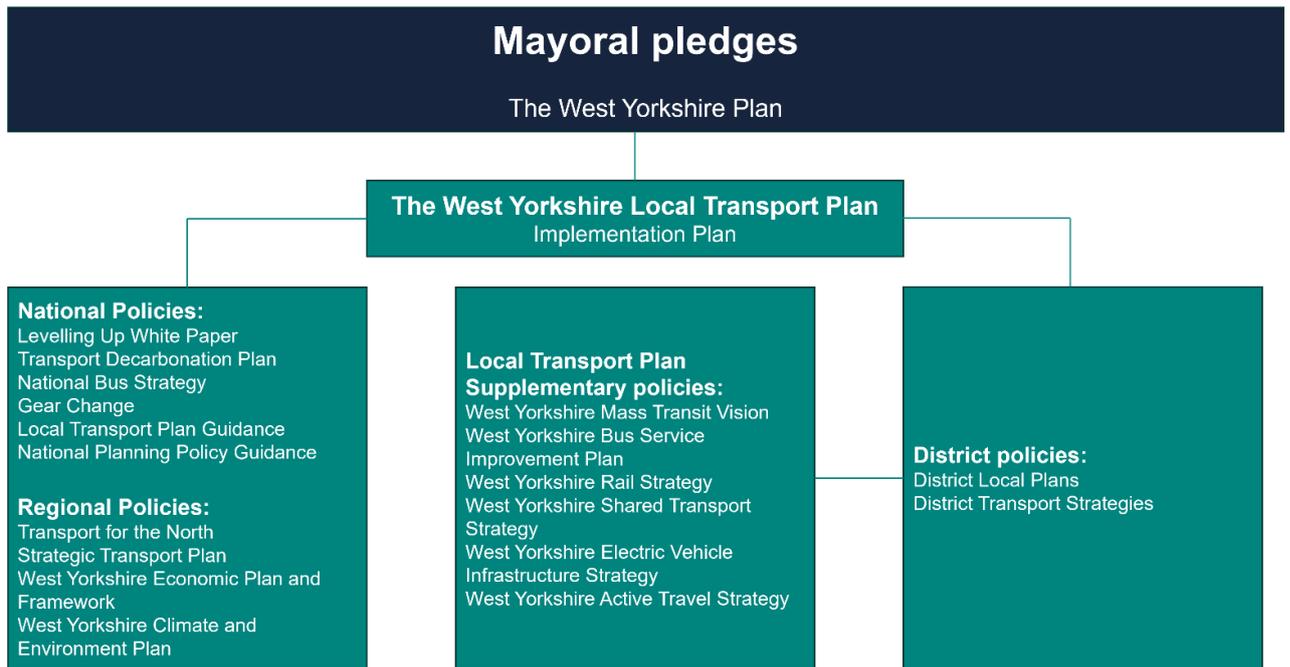
Metropolitan Area	Population (thousands)	Size (square km)	Population Density (pop./sq. km)	Rural / Urban split (Source: DEFRA)
Bradford	546	365	1,491	24% / 76%
Calderdale	207	363	560	60% / 40%
Kirklees	433	409	1,034	36% / 64%
Leeds	812	552	1,472	29% / 71%
Wakefield	353	339	962	46% / 54%
West Yorkshire	2,351	780	1,159	38% / 62%

1.2. Policy context

- 1.2.1. The Combined Authority first published a BSIP in 2021, in response to national Government’s ‘Bus Back Better: National Bus Strategy for England (2021)’. This version of the BSIP builds and reaffirms the vision set out in the 2021 BSIP and updates it to reflect changes in the local bus service since then.
- 1.2.2. The BSIP also responds to the [West Yorkshire Plan 2040](#) (2023) which sets out an ambitious vision and five missions for 2040 that will drive our work to transform lives and communities across the region, working towards a brighter West Yorkshire that is a place that works for all. These are:
- A prosperous West Yorkshire
 - A happy West Yorkshire
 - A well-connected West Yorkshire
 - A sustainable West Yorkshire
 - A safe West Yorkshire
- 1.2.3. Our BSIP is built on the ambitions set out in the West Yorkshire Plan (2040), West Yorkshire Transport Strategy (2017 - 2040) and the West Yorkshire Bus Strategy (2017 - 2040) which puts connectivity and sustainable travel at heart of a thriving and inclusive regional economy where everyone can build great businesses, careers and lives. More information on our local strategies can be found on [our website](#).
- 1.2.4. A new West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan (LTP) is being co-developed by the Combined Authority and District partners. This will be the new statutory LTP for the region, replacing the current LTP, the West Yorkshire Transport Strategy 2040, adopted in 2017.
- 1.2.5. The new LTP will bring together our existing and new policies to set out the vision for transport in West Yorkshire and how we will deliver this vision across transport modes. This updated Bus Service Improvement Plan will form a subsidiary document to the new Local Transport Plan, alongside other supplementary strategy documents which will set out in more detail how we plan to deliver on the vision and objectives of the new LTP. The new LTP is expected to be adopted in winter 2025/2026.
- 1.2.6. Figure 2 outlining the relationship between the BSIP and our statutory LTP, as well as other local plans and strategies is outlined below.

¹ West Yorkshire Combined Authority, [Census 2021 first release](#), 2022

Figure 2 – BSIP and its relationship to West Yorkshire’s Local Plans and Strategies



1.3. Successes and opportunities for bus in West Yorkshire

The West Yorkshire Bus Alliance Enhanced Partnership

- 1.3.1. In April 2022, the Combined Authority entered into an Enhanced Partnership (EP) with bus operators and local authorities. This built on six years of partnership working through the West Yorkshire Bus Alliance, with the joint aim to improve the passenger experience for bus users in West Yorkshire.
- 1.3.2. The EP comprises an [EP Plan](#) which reflects the ambitions and content of the BSIP, but focuses on the improvements that can be made in the period up to 2027. The EP includes two supporting EP Schemes:
 - **Bus Infrastructure** – concentrated on bus priority and infrastructure schemes with benefits to bus, with commitments primarily focused on delivery of the Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme A61 (South) project.
 - **BSIP** – comprising fares reductions, new and enhanced bus services and measures to support bus priority infrastructure and safety.
- 1.3.3. Letters supporting the submission of this updated BSIP from the Bus Alliance and key partners can be found in **Appendix 1**.

Successes to date

- 1.3.4. In West Yorkshire, there are a range of success stories and improvements which we have delivered in partnership through our Bus Alliance. These build on both the high levels of public sector investment and expertise gained, as well as changes in customer travel habits over recent years. Here are some of the key improvements we have achieved since the BSIP was first published in 2021:

Mayor’s Fares

- 1.3.5. In September 2022, Mayor’s Fares was launched to help make travel around the region easier and cheaper, and to help with the cost-of-living crisis. The scheme

guarantees that nobody pays more than £2.00 for a single journey across West Yorkshire, and the price of a DaySaver ticket is capped at £5.00 (initially £4.50).

1.3.6. In October 2023, the Combined Authority commissioned an online panel survey to gain insight into West Yorkshire residents' use and perceptions of the £2 single and DaySaver fare caps. Of the 1,028 respondents:

- over 40 per cent said Mayor's Fares has helped them manage the cost-of-living crisis
- nearly 60 per cent agreed the scheme makes it easier for them to get around West Yorkshire
- half of respondents who said they used the bus more often switched from using private motorised vehicles



Superbus – Keighley Town Network and Airline

1.3.7. In September 2023 we worked with Transdev to launch Superbus services in the Keighley area. The scheme increased the frequency of the number 60 bus to a bus every 20 minutes (from 30), and our K2/K3 and K7 services from every 12 minutes to every 10 minutes. We also introduced a £1 flat fare to further encourage bus usage.

1.3.8. The Superbus service has been a great success and we have seen (as of April 2024):

- 34% more bus passengers using the 60 service
- Around 30% more bus passengers using the K2/3 and K7 services
- 11% more bus passengers on other local Keighley services which adopted the £1 flat fare.



Halifax bus station

- 1.3.9. We have worked in partnership with Calderdale Council to invest £20.5 million in redeveloping a key transport hub, Halifax bus station, ensuring it can contribute to the growth of the local economy by connecting people to jobs, training and education. The facility is award-winning, having won first place in the ‘Environmental Sustainability’ category at the CIHT Awards in 2023 for its state of the art “green” roof.
- 1.3.10. The station has significantly improved the safety, comfort, connectivity and accessibility for Halifax’s bus passengers and brings the following benefits:
- **Economic growth:** the redevelopment of the station will contribute to the growth of the local economy by connecting people to jobs and training
 - **Sustainability:** the station has solar panels and charge points to support the introduction of electric buses, helping more people to travel sustainably
 - **Safety and security:** Separation of bus and passenger movements and clear visibility of all passenger areas by staff and CCTV has improved safety
 - **Accessibility:** The station provides a central level concourse, level bus boarding throughout and an additional step-free entrance
 - **Interchange:** the station provides better travel information and more retail facilities for passengers to use while they are waiting for their buses. Improved walking routes connect people more easily to Halifax town centre



Enhanced Safer Travel Partnership

- 1.3.11. The Combined Authority has invested over £1 million of BSIP funding in our local Safer Travel Partnership with the West Yorkshire Police to support the deployment of 15 Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), who are dedicated to improving safety for passengers at bus stations and on the bus network. The team has a particular focus on reducing anti-social behaviour and violent crime, as well as supporting young and vulnerable people and protecting women and girls.
- 1.3.12. Working closely with our bus operators, the partnership has already taken steps to identify individuals causing problems on the network and issue orders to avoid repeat offending, as well as link in with anti-social behaviour teams to follow up enforcement. In addition, the team has also supported people who have physical and/or learning disabilities, providing them with advice on how to stay safe when using the bus network and report any incidents.



Walk it. Ride it.

- 1.3.13. The Walk it. Ride it. Campaign aimed to encourage West Yorkshire residents out of their cars and to use more sustainable modes of transport such as taking the bus, walking and cycling.
- 1.3.14. The campaign focused on promoting the wider benefits of using these modes, experienced by real people. Using real life case studies, we promoted the campaign

physically – on the sides of buses, at bus stations, on phone kiosks and advertisement vans and digitally – through social media, Spotify, radio adverts and website banners, for example. There was also considerable coverage of the campaign in local news outlets.

1.3.15. The success of the campaign is illustrated through:

- 94% increase in off bus sales between September and October 2023
- 14% increase in total DaySaver sales between September 2023 and January 2024
- 21% increase in sales of single tickets between September 2023 and January 2024
- Increased weekly usage of public transport
- People, particularly 16 – 34 years olds, were more likely to use a bus, train, or Park & Ride



West Yorkshire Bus Alliance Youth Engagement Programme

1.3.16. The West Yorkshire Bus Alliance Youth Engagement Programme is now in its fifth year of delivering activities with young people in schools and in the community.

1.3.17. Project managed by Ahead Partnership in collaboration with the Bus Alliance, the programme has helped to create, deliver and evaluate curriculum resources aimed at primary and secondary school children to educate young people on how to use the bus and the different job roles in the sector, as well as take part in bus scheduling activities and tasks focused on clean air.

1.3.18. Over 15,000 young people from across all five West Yorkshire districts have been engaged in activities including careers panels, enterprise challenges, youth voice forums and work experience. 54% of young people surveyed following participation in an activity said they would now consider a career in the transport sector and 100% of the business volunteers who attended the activities said it allowed them to positively role model the world of work. At the UK Bus Awards 2023, the programme was a silver award winner in the category, "Partnership for Excellence: The Peter Huntley Memorial."



Moving forward to Franchising

- 1.3.19. Despite the successes of partnership working outlined above in tackling key challenges and delivering benefits for bus passengers, the Combined Authority conducted a detailed assessment in 2023 and identified that the bus system in West Yorkshire was still falling short of achieving the full expected outcomes of our BSIP vision - particularly growing the network and encouraging more people to travel by bus.
- 1.3.20. Therefore, in March 2024, the West Yorkshire Mayor took the decision to franchise the region's bus network to deliver better outcomes for passengers. This followed completion of a Bus Reform Assessment and a 12-week consultation which sought views from statutory stakeholders and the public on bus reform options.
- 1.3.21. This decision will change the way our bus network will run - under a franchised bus network, the Combined Authority will set routes, frequencies, fares and overall standards of buses in our region.
- 1.3.22. The existing commercially led market will be replaced, with private bus operators no longer being able to run most services independently. Bus services will instead be operated under franchise contracts, where bus operators will bid to run the services through a competitive procurement process managed by the Combined Authority.
- 1.3.23. There will be a gradual transition over several years before the whole of West Yorkshire is franchised. Starting in 2027, under the new system, all buses will be franchised by the end of 2028.
- 1.3.24. While passengers should not expect any immediate changes to their daily bus travel following the decision to franchise the bus network, once rolled out we'll have the following powers to support delivery of our Bus Service Improvement Plan and improve buses for passengers:
- **Fares and ticketing** - with responsibility for farebox revenue, we will have the ability to decide on the tickets available and the price customers pay for travel.
 - **Network** – we will take control over the network with buses running on the routes we specify, providing us with greater control over where buses go, how

frequently they come and the service hours they run to, supporting greater connectivity across the region. We will also have the ability to manage the performance of services across the network

- **Customer service and information** – we will be able to provide one, centralised point of contact for all customer queries and support services and offer high-quality, consistent and trusted travel information across all bus journeys.
- **Greener and better vehicles** – we will be acquiring a new, 100% zero-emission bus fleet over time as part of the rollout of franchised services, also providing an opportunity to specify the quality standards of vehicles running on the network.
- **Bus priority** - through a greater role in the operation of bus services we will be able to better align the network to maximise the benefits of new and existing bus priority schemes and have greater oversight to track and manage the punctuality and reliability of services.
- **Waiting infrastructure** - all improvements and facilities provided, as well as the look and feel, should reflect the quality of the local bus service and be integrated as part of the wider transport offer, including rail, active travel and mass transit in the future. The planned implementation of bus franchising and an integrated transport brand for West Yorkshire gives us the opportunity to provide consistency across our stations, stops and public space with common branding and customer information, support and safety measures

1.3.25. The earliest that franchised services will be operational is March 2027, at which time our Enhanced Partnership will officially conclude. Until then, positive partnership working through the West Yorkshire Bus Alliance will continue. These collaborative efforts will build upon existing successes to deliver better bus service improvements for the residents of West Yorkshire and fulfil the aims of the BSIP not just until 2027, but beyond.

1.4. Our vision and key strategic themes

1.4.1. Our shared vision for buses in West Yorkshire is outlined below, supported by key strategic themes, objectives and priorities highlighting how we aim to achieve our ambitions:

“Our ambition is to make buses as attractive as possible in comparison to private car use. Our cities, towns and villages across Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield deserve to be well-connected by a comprehensive network of better, greener bus services to support sustainable travel and reach our environmental targets. We will provide simple payment methods which give best value for passengers and high quality, safe bus stations, stops and shelters that ensure a welcoming gateway to the bus network. Ultimately, our bus system aims to be inclusive of all groups in society to support the inclusive growth and social well-being ambitions of West Yorkshire, whilst also contributing to improved economic productivity within the region.”

1.4.2. The following section provides further detail in relation to our key themes which are central to our vision for better buses in West Yorkshire. They take into account analysis of the challenges presented by the existing network, covered in Section 2, as well as our wider organisations strategy and policy ambitions.

Table 2 - West Yorkshire BSIP Key Strategic Themes, Objectives and Priorities

<p><u>Themes</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe and Inclusive bus system • Better Connected Communities • Decarbonisation and Integrated Sustainable Travel
<p><u>Objectives</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish bus as a key mode of choice for travel in West Yorkshire • Establish a financially sustainable bus service • Improve operational delivery to provide the passenger with a service they can feel confident in using • Improve connectivity for communities facing deprivation, inequality and exclusion • Ensure the bus service is integrated to deliver sustainable connectivity
<p><u>Priorities</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An enhanced, fully inclusive and more cohesive bus and wider public transport network – which takes people where they need to go, when they need to go, and encouraging confidence in the network. • Clear and simple fares – to make paying for bus travel more affordable, easier, convenient and flexible. • Improved, more inclusive customer service and support – so all passengers have the right tools to travel with confidence and help they need if their journey does not go to plan. • Priority for buses on our road – so journeys by bus are quicker, with less time spent stuck in traffic, and are a viable alternative to the private car. • More green and better vehicles – to improve the onboard experience and make bus the sustainable choice for travel in West Yorkshire. • Safe, accessible and welcoming stations, stops and public spaces – that provide a high-quality environment for passengers waiting for their services

A safe and inclusive bus system

1.4.3. A safe and inclusive bus system means getting the basics right, including ensuring that all our buses and related passenger services are fully accessible for people with physical disabilities and other health and social needs. We must also reconsider how we design services and attract passengers to our bus system so that it better serves more people than just the traditional urban commuter. For example, those who are vulnerable or have caring responsibilities. This includes providing new services that operate for longer periods of the day, offer more flexibility, and are easier to understand and use. It is imperative that our buses are safe, and everyone feels safe when they travel by bus. We will continue to deliver initiatives that support women, girls and other vulnerable groups to feel empowered to travel by bus when they want to, without the fear of intimidation or anti-social behaviour.

1.4.4. The Combined Authority understands that many factors, such as the provision of accessibility support, safety and perceptions of safety while travelling, and other operational and structural issues, means the existing bus system does not currently,

serve everyone equally, which both impacts overall satisfaction and can deter use altogether.

- 1.4.5. Understanding local bus passengers in greater detail by social demographics and their different travel behaviours, as referred to in Section 2, remains key to creating a fully safe and inclusive bus network.
- 1.4.6. Full accessibility is a fundamental aspect of the Combined Authority's vision for a safe and inclusive bus system. In West Yorkshire 54% of working age residents are disabled or have a work-limiting disability², and approximately two-quarters of disabled people are over state pension age³. An improved local bus system will require consistent and high-quality accessibility support at every stage of a bus journey.
- 1.4.7. Evidence shows certain groups, particularly women and girls as well as people of other protected characteristics, are more likely to feel nervous or unsafe while travelling on buses⁴. This is in large part because of and compounded by wider, complex societal issues, but improvements to the local bus system can and should still play a role in overcoming these problems and supporting an increase to everyone's actual and perceived safety within the West Yorkshire region.
- 1.4.8. Beyond safety, more research is identifying the impact of gender bias on transport planning and existing public transport networks, including the perpetuation of gender inequalities. For example, in Caroline Criado's 'Invisible Women: Exposing Data Bias in a World Designed for Men' (2019) she highlights how:
 - Ingrained patterns of work mean that men are more likely to do the 'two-way commute', while women are more likely to take more complex 'chains' of trips (dropping children off, shopping, caring responsibilities etc).
 - That women are more likely to use public transport, while men are more likely to drive.
 - But that the public transport networks are geared towards centres of employment and around traditional peak hour working patterns, not the more complex (and challenging to serve) trip patterns of many women.
 - That data on trip making needs by gender were rarely, if ever, used in the planning of these networks. Often such data is not even available.
 - That this gender bias then extends to funding - whereby taking funding out of the bus networks and cutting services disproportionality impacts women more than men. It also exacerbates the impacts of inequality of income and across areas of deprivation.
- 1.4.9. Through our BSIP, we will continue to explore these issues in more detail and its impact in a specific West Yorkshire context, identify and deliver potential solutions to overcome it and, ultimately to achieve a fully inclusive network free from biases against gender and other social characteristics. We will also seek to utilise existing wider professional research and resources, such as the [Gender Equality Toolkit in Transport](#), to better embed gender inclusivity into our transport planning decision making.

Better connected communities

² West Yorkshire Combined Authority, State of the Region Report, 2023/4, Available at: [State of the Region Report 2023 / 2024 - West Yorkshire Combined Authority \(westyorks-ca.gov.uk\)](#)

³ Office for National Statistics, Census 2021, Disability at a regional and local authority level: [Disability by age, sex and deprivation, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

⁴ West Yorkshire Combined Authority, [Annual Public Perceptions of Transport Survey](#), 2022/2023

- 1.4.10. West Yorkshire is a large region with multiple different urban centres, as well as many towns and villages. There are considerable spatial inequalities with more than 1 in 5 (22%) residents living in neighbourhoods belonging to the most deprived fifth in England, yet just over 10% live in neighbourhoods that are in the fifth least deprived.⁵ Our bus network needs to connect these different communities, particularly areas of high deprivation and rural areas, to ensure the people living in them have fair access to the many employment, education and leisure opportunities that our region has to offer.
- 1.4.11. The solutions to provide this, shaped by existing and potential passenger demand, will not be the same everywhere. However, it is crucial that buses provide a reliable way to get to the places that matter to our communities such as health facilities, high-street shops, out-of-town employment sites and retail parks, education, parks, and other places of cultural and community interest.
- 1.4.12. We also need to extend the hours of the day that buses serve these communities and aim for a better frequency and regularity of services throughout the week so that bus routes and timetables are not responsible for leaving the communities of West Yorkshire cut off from the thriving region around them.
- 1.4.13. Analysis shows that while 97% of addresses within the region are within 400m of a bus stop, this drops to 69% when mapped against our 'core' network of high frequency services. Access also varies greatly when broken down by district area – for example 77% of addresses in Leeds are within 400m of a bus stop on the core network compared to 44% in Calderdale (see **Appendix 2**). While this unequal access is in part because of demand and other factors such as geography, it highlights the need to both expand the existing bus network and look at other models, such as demand responsive transport, which could ensure connectivity is more fairly provided
- 1.4.14. Furthermore, as part of the Combined Authority's ambition to ensure buses, and public transport more broadly, support inclusive growth, analysis has sought to understand the state of bus connectivity in areas of high deprivation within the region. Many of the areas not served by the core network of high frequency bus services are also the most deprived 20% according to IMD Barriers to Housing and Services (see **Appendix 2**). Interestingly, it highlights that provision is better in highly deprived areas where they fall around a major town or city. Deprived areas further away from major conurbations face some of the worst connectivity. These inequalities must be addressed, through BSIP interventions and other programmes, as we seek better connectivity and improved prosperity for all local communities.

Decarbonisation and integrated sustainable travel

- 1.4.15. In 2019, West Yorkshire Combined Authority declared a climate emergency. As part of our response to this we committed to becoming a net-zero carbon economy by 2038. Supporting bus travel can –and must– play a major role in achieving this. Currently transport emits the most greenhouse gases of any key sector in the economy in West Yorkshire, accounting for 32% of emissions⁶. This is dominated by road transport, including cars, which accounts for 97% of transport-related emissions. Enabling more journeys by bus will be integral to reducing this. With just 6% of all buses operating in West Yorkshire are zero emission, this must be improved as a priority.

⁵ West Yorkshire Combined Authority, [Draft West Yorkshire Housing Strategy 2040](#), 2023

⁶ West Yorkshire Combined Authority, [State of the Region report](#) 2023/24

- 1.4.16. A green, zero emission bus system is a core element of the Combined Authority's long-term vision for buses in West Yorkshire. To support this BSIP, we are retaining our key commitments to all buses being EURO VI or alternative by 2026, and to transition to a fully zero-emission bus fleet by 2036, with significant progress by 2030 (as part of wider organisational ambition for the region to be a net-zero carbon economy by 2038). Beyond the obvious environmental benefits, the new vehicles that will be required to achieve this will also play an important role in enabling the high standard of onboard facilities and accessibility support that we want to see across the fleet.
- 1.4.17. Working in partnership with local operators through the Combined Authority's Zero Emission Bus Programme is key to working towards this greener bus fleet in the short to medium term. Beyond this, the Combined Authority will work with bus manufacturers and the Department for Transport to enable more zero emission buses to come to market and make them common place.
- 1.4.18. Buses must also be better integrated as part of a multimodal public transport offer so that alongside rail travel, cycling and walking, passengers are able to make sustainable door-to-door journeys.

1.5. BSIP duration and monitoring arrangements

- 1.5.1. The West Yorkshire Bus Service Improvement Plan is our long-term vision for buses until 2040. It will be reviewed again in 2025 to ensure that it continues to align with and deliver against the vision, objectives and priorities of the draft LTP, which is planned to be consulted on in 2025. Thereafter the BSIP will be kept under review and updated periodically, to reflect any changes in the local or national context for buses. This may include an update following the consultation and adoption of the final LTP.
- 1.5.2. The Combined Authority will comply with any further guidance from DfT in relation to monitoring arrangements. Further information on how the BSIP will be monitored and evaluated is set out in Section 5.

2. Current offer to bus passengers

2.1. Overview

- 2.1.1. Buses play a vital role in West Yorkshire, getting people to places, connecting our communities, and shaping our economy. They are the most used form of public transport in the region, with approximately over 1.7 million bus journeys taken each week.
- 2.1.2. As the Local Transport Authority (LTA), the Combined Authority supports bus customers in the region by:
- spending approximately £23 million every year paying for socially necessary services which would otherwise not be provided by bus operators (about 15% of all bus journeys)
 - overseeing the free bus pass scheme for older and disabled people (concessionary fares), as part of the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme
 - managing most of West Yorkshire’s bus stations and maintaining the region’s 14,000 stops, shelters and timetable displays
 - providing travel information online and in print for all public transport services
 - being part of the West Yorkshire Ticketing Company which provides MCard, offering reduced fares and pre-paid tickets for use across buses run by different operators, as well as trains
 - co-ordinating around 500,000 AccessBus journeys per year for 5,000 registered users who are unable to use regular bus services
 - working with national government to secure new funding for investment in local buses and other projects to encourage more people to travel by bus
- 2.1.3. Through further additional funding and partnership working the Combined Authority has achieved many successes, exemplified by the recovery from the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and ongoing delivery of our Bus Service Improvement Plan programme (explored in more detail in Section 3). This unprecedented level of investment has protected, as well as enhanced the local bus passenger offer at a time when the industry has faced significant challenges. In addition to these success stories, there are also future opportunities to improve the current offer which are strengthened by the move to a franchised bus system.
- 2.1.4. A summary of the Combined Authority’s baseline capital and revenue spending on buses in financial years 2022/23 and 2023/24, is outlined in Table 3. This shows the breadth of Combined Authority’s ongoing investment in the local bus system to both deliver business-as-usual activity and further improvements.

Table 3 – Investment in buses 2022/23 - 2025/26

Budget line		2022/23		2023/24		2024/25		2025/26	
		Cap (£000)	Rev (£000)						
Transport Operations and Passenger Experience	Tendered services	-	17,700	-	27,251	-	31,170	-	TBC
	BSOG Grant	-	-2,063	-	-2,063	-	-2,064	-	TBC
	Mobility Services	-		-	1,563	-	1,665		TBC
	ENCTS	-	41,101	-	36,653	-	37,631	-	TBC
	Concessions Young People	-	9,521	-	10,524	-	10,945	-	TBC
	Customer Services	-	TBC	-	1,834	-	2,133	-	TBC
	Processes	-	TBC	-	1,628	-	2,119	-	TBC
	Bus stations	-	TBC	-	2,252	-	2,508	-	TBC
	Other facilities and assets	-	TBC	-	3,593	-	3,532	-	TBC
	Reserves	-	TBC	-	-	-	-3,811	-	TBC
Bus Service Improvement Plan	Phase one	-	10,356	-	18,715	-	26,260	-	14,638
	Phase two	-	-	-	3,875	-	3,875	-	-
	Phase three	-	-	-	-	-	13,373	-	-
Other capital investment programmes	ZEBRA	-	-	12,635	-	13,884	-	3,789	-
	CRSTS bus priority	223	-	6,120	-	21,936	-	51,282	-
	LUF	-	-	311	-	11,826	-	29,112	-
	TCF	22,873	-	35,237	-	63,202	-	74,014	-
Totals:		23,096	TBC	54,303	105,825	110,848	129,336	158,197	TBC
		TBC		£160,128		£240,220		TBC	

2.1.5. Nevertheless, evidence shows the system still faces many challenges resulting in poor satisfaction and a long-term trend of fewer people choosing to travel by bus. These can be split into challenges for the customer, affecting the day-to-day experience of using the bus, and operator/market challenges affecting financial stability and running of bus services. This Bus Service Improvement Plan responds to both these challenges and opportunities.

Customer overview

2.1.6. Bus is a key element of the region’s transport offer and forms a vital part of the transport mix, particularly for those citizens whom it is their only form of travel.

2.1.7. Across the region, car is the dominant mode of travel, accounting for 62% of all journeys (no change from 2019) by West Yorkshire residents⁷. Bus accounts for the

⁷ Department for Transport, [National Travel Survey](#), 2020-22

highest mode share of public transport, with just 4% (down from 6% in 2019) of all journeys, which is nearly three times that of rail.

- 2.1.8. However, bus patronage trends demonstrate a long-term decline falling from 169 million trips in 2009/10 to around 133 million in 2019/20, with journeys per person declining even faster than the national average. There was a dramatic decline in bus patronage to 50 million during 2020/21 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, which has since recovered to just over 108 million trips for 2022/23 (81% of pre-pandemic levels), according to DfT bus statistics.⁸
- 2.1.9. There are several primary ways we currently identify different bus passengers. At a broad level, West Yorkshire residents and visitors can be sorted into three key categories – regular, occasional and non-bus users (see Table 4 below).

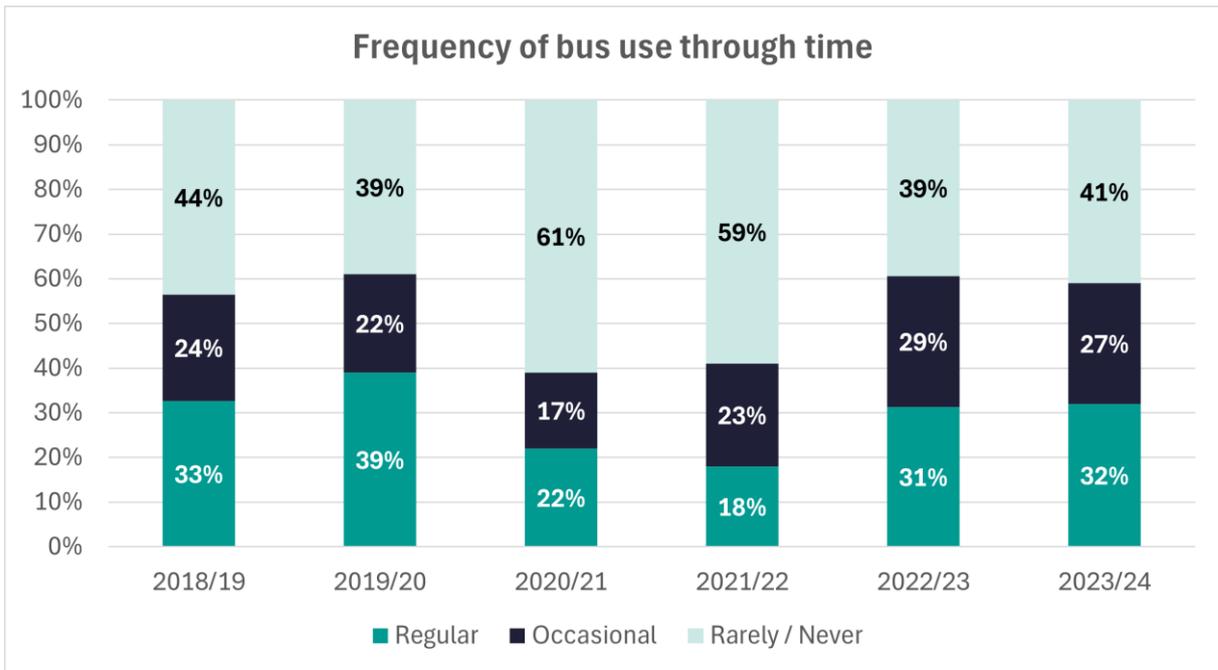
Table 4 – Types of Bus User Definitions

<p>Regular bus user - uses bus at least once per week.</p>	<p>These passengers likely use bus as their primary mode of transport, particularly for travel to work or other regular, essential purposes such as to access healthcare service or shopping. These passengers are likely to use season tickets but may be interested in more flexible ticketing offers.</p>
<p>Occasional bus user - uses bus less than once per week but at least once every 3 months.</p>	<p>These passengers likely do not use bus as their primary mode of transport but do use it occasionally, largely for leisure purposes and for either ad-hoc journeys or to travel to certain locations. They are most likely to use single and return fares.</p>
<p>Non bus user – uses the bus less than once every 3 months (rarely) or never uses buses.</p>	<p>These passengers rarely use bus and it is definitely not their primary mode of transport – they would only ever use bus by exception or for irregular journeys.</p>

- 2.1.10. Figure 3 demonstrates how the frequency of bus use by type of user has changed over the previous five years. Overall, the picture has stabilised since the pandemic, with 32% of passengers in 2023/24 using the bus regularly which is comparable with 2018/19 levels (albeit down on its peak in 2019/20). Occasional bus usage has marginally increased (by 3%), whilst non-bus users has slightly decreased by 3%.

Figure 3 – Frequency of bus use by user type

⁸ [DfT Bus statistics data tables](#) BUS01e, retrieved 6th June 2024 (noting provisional data flag covering 2020-2023)



2.1.11. Across West Yorkshire the biggest customer markets are adult tickets and under 19. Post-pandemic the composition of the West Yorkshire bus market has altered, with concessionary travel and adult travel still significantly lower than pre-pandemic (see Figure 4 below by thousand passengers per week, and Figure 5 as a percentage).

Figure 4: Composition of West Yorkshire bus market March 2020 vs March 2024 – Thousand passengers per week

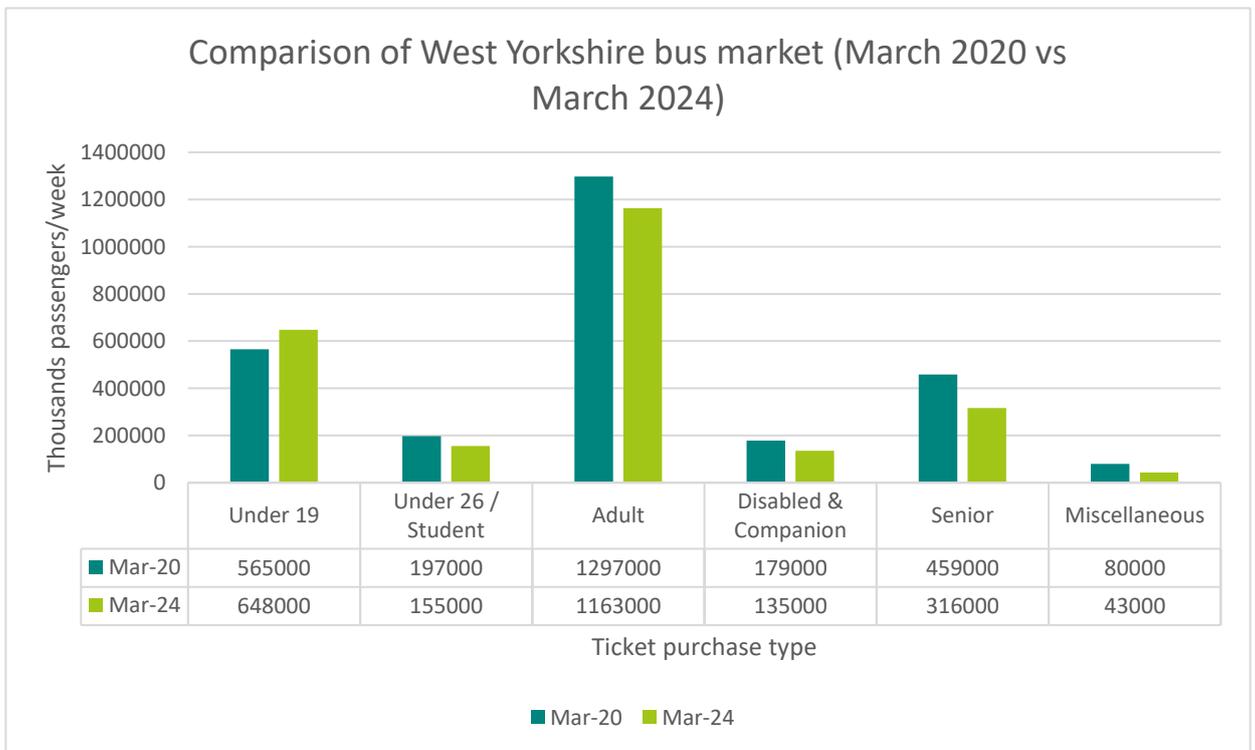
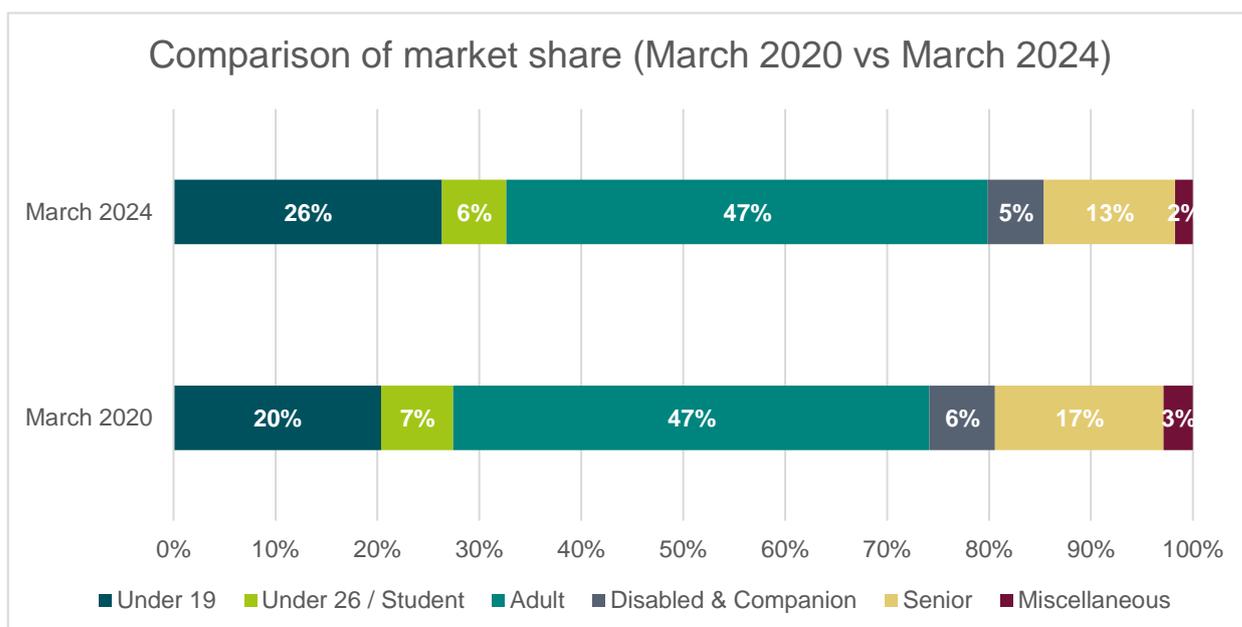


Figure 5: Composition of West Yorkshire bus market 2020 vs 2024 by percentage



West Yorkshire operator/market overview

2.1.12. At the time of writing there are 29 operators across West Yorkshire (see Table 5), with the market dominated by three major commercial operators (Arriva, First and Transdev) who have approximately 90% market share.⁹

Table 5 – List of existing bus operators in West Yorkshire

21 Transport Limited	Reliance Motor Services
Arriva Yorkshire	Rosso (Transdev)
Bee Network	Ross Travel
The Burnley Bus Company (Transdev)	South Pennine Community Transport
Coastliner (Transdev)	Squarepeg
Connexions Buses	Stagecoach in Yorkshire
DK Minibuses	Station Coaches
First Bus in Greater Manchester	Stott’s Coaches
First West & North Yorkshire	Stringers
Flyer (Transdev)	Team Pennine (Transdev)
Globe Travel	Tetley’s
The Harrogate Bus Company (Transdev)	TLC Travel
Jacksons of Silsden	Watersons Bus and Coach
The Keighley Bus Company (Transdev)	Yorkshire Buses
Lyles Coaches / Longstaffs	

⁹ West Yorkshire Combined Authority Bus Connectivity Assessment, 2024

- 2.1.13. Prior to the pandemic, 85% of operated bus mileage was operated on a commercial basis, with the remaining 15% being operated under contract to the Combined Authority (tendered services), with a net cost of £17.1 million (2018/19).
- 2.1.14. The tendered services budget is spent on uncommercial but socially necessary services to ensure community connectivity, as well as to enhance the network with additional early morning, evening and weekend services on routes which otherwise operate on a commercial basis.
- 2.1.15. There has been increasing pressure on the tendered services budget since the pandemic due to the slow recovery of bus patronage, resulting in operators making commercial cuts and the Combined Authority having to tender more services to support the network. Operators initially relied upon the Bus Recovery Grant (BRG) to continue to run services, seeing an increase in public sector support for services peaking at £25.4 million in 2020/21. These figures remain inflated, with £23.4 million spent on tendered services in 2023/24.
- 2.1.16. Government investment, announced in May 2023, has helped to support network recovery for fares, services and infrastructure to some extent however the operational environment remains challenging, and the network has continued to shrink.
- 2.1.17. Falling patronage and financial pressures has been accompanied by a slow decline in mileage across West Yorkshire since 2011, falling from 1.1 million miles in 2011 to just over 830,000 miles in 2024.¹⁰
- 2.1.18. In addition to the pressure of falling patronage, the high levels of inflation seen within the past 18 months as well as the cost of living continues to impact operators and operator behaviour, with bus services costing more to operate. Several small and medium operators have collapsed under the financial pressures of the industry and the Combined Authority has struggled in some instances to re-tender these services. This may be accompanied by a fall in customers seeking to undertake leisure journeys by bus, further reducing fare revenue.
- 2.1.19. There are also driver shortages caused through wider labour market issues which have led to high number of staff leaving the bus industry, putting further pressure on operators to maintain the bus network.

Covid-19 pandemic

- 2.1.20. The Covid-19 pandemic had a significant impact on bus patronage through the various lockdowns and restrictions that were imposed. In March 2024 patronage stood at 89%¹¹ of pre-pandemic patronage.
- 2.1.21. Post pandemic there remains uncertainty around the extent to which patronage changes we have seen since the start of the pandemic will be permanent. However, within West Yorkshire, indications suggested the demand for public transport, particularly for commuting, could continue to be lower due to hybrid working patterns. More than half of hybrid workers, equivalent to around 1 in 6 of all workers, reported commuting between 20-60% of their working week (equivalent to 1 and 3 days a week for a full-time worker)¹².

The bus reform assessment

¹⁰ West Yorkshire Combined Authority's Combined Services and Assets system (CoSA)

¹¹ West Yorkshire Bus Connectivity Assessment 2024

¹² West Yorkshire Combined Authority Research & Intelligence Team "COVID-19 Transport Recovery Survey Wave 8", November 2022, [COVID-19 Transport Survey Wave 1 \(westyorks-ca.gov.uk\)](https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk)

Bus Service Improvement Plan 2024

- 2.1.22. The Combined Authority has historically worked with bus operators through a Voluntary Partnership Agreement and most recently an Enhanced Partnership, to try to improve the bus offer for customers. Despite this, progress has been limited and an Assessment of Bus Reform Options (The Assessment) was undertaken by the Combined Authority to understand how improvements to bus services could better delivered in the future.
- 2.1.23. The Assessment looked at two bus reform options, the Enhanced Partnership Plus (EP+) (detailing how the Partnership could improve services under the current legal framework) and the Proposed Franchising Scheme (where buses are under the control of the local authority). It concluded that, following analysis of each option across all five cases, Franchising offers clear strategic benefits and greater opportunity to achieve the Combined Authority’s objectives and ambitions for West Yorkshire compared to the reference case and EP+ (albeit Franchising comes with additional capital investment and risk).
- 2.1.24. In line with statutory requirements, the options were presented during a 12-week consultation which sought views from statutory stakeholders and the public on bus reform options.
- 2.1.25. Following a recommendation by the Combined Authority, the Mayor made the decision to introduce franchising across West Yorkshire at the Combined Authority meeting on Thursday 14 March to deliver better outcomes for bus customers.
- 2.1.26. This decision will change the market and the way our bus network will run - under a franchised bus network, the Combined Authority will set routes, frequencies, fares and overall standards of buses in our region instead of commercial operators. The first franchised services are expected to be on the road from March 2027, with all buses franchised by the end of 2028.

2.2. Bus Passenger Charter

- 2.2.1. A Bus Passenger Charter was established in 2022, setting out the standards of customer service that bus passengers can expect to receive on any bus in West Yorkshire.
- 2.2.2. The Charter was developed in partnership with the West Yorkshire Bus Alliance and incorporated feedback from members of the public as part of the Mayor’s Big Bus Chat engagement. The engagement identified that passengers seek consistent standards of passenger services across the bus network. As such, the Charter outlines the following:
- What the passenger can expect from bus services in terms of on board the bus, at bus stops and stations, reliability of service and passenger information.
 - How the bus service will support equality, diversity and inclusion.
 - What the service operator will guarantee.
 - How to make comments and complaints.
- 2.2.3. The Charter is supported by ten Key Performance Indicators which were chosen as quantifiable measures to demonstrate operational performance of the bus network, access to travel information for customers and levels of customer satisfaction in terms of service delivery. These are shown in Table 6 below.

Table 6 – Passenger Charter Key Performance indicators

Passenger Charter KPI	Baseline data (2023/24)
-----------------------	-------------------------

Bus Service Improvement Plan 2024

1. Percentage of homes within 400m of a Core Network bus stop	76%
2. Customer satisfaction levels with bus services	The mean satisfaction score for local bus services was 6.0 (out of 10), similar to last year (5.9). (This measure has been in decline since 2020/21 (7.0 out of 10).)
3. Number of bus-related complaints registered with the CA and the operators	Bus operators: 11,249 Combined Authority: 4,450 (2,317 re: bus operators and 2,133 re: wider network operations)
4. Number of free travel vouchers issued by bus operators	2,514
5. Number and/or percentage of bus stops with up-to-date printed timetable / QR link to timetable	There are currently 13,068 bus stops across West Yorkshire, 10,925 (84%) of which contain up-to-date timetable information. 2,143 (16%) bus stops have either generic posters or do not have an up-to-date timetable.
6. Percentage of bus journeys running on time (+1 min/-5 min at intermediate stops)	79.24%
7. Percent of bus journeys cancelled	3.26%
8. Awareness of particular information sources	74%, Bus operators' own websites 69%, Metro's website (wymetro.com) 62%, Timetable downloads from Metro's website 56%, Timetable leaflets 28%, Metroline call centre 14%, Metro Messenger 21%, Metro travel news on Twitter / X 26%, Metro travel news on Facebook 53%, Travel Centres 86%, Timetable posters at bus stations and stops 85%, Electronic time displays at bus stations and stops 53%, Metro's YourNextBus real-time information using text message or internet
9. Satisfaction with particular information sources	7.2 - Bus/rail operators' own websites 7.1, - Metro's website (wymetro.com) 7.1 - Timetable downloads from Metro's website 7.1 - Timetable leaflets 6.8, MetroLine call centre 7.4, Metro Messenger - base 62 7.2, Metro travel news on Twitter / X 7.4, Metro travel news on Facebook 7.4, Travel Centres 6.9, Timetable posters at bus stations and stops

	7.5, Electronic time displays at bus stations and stops 7.2, Metro’s YourNextBus real-time information using text message or internet
10. Perceived safety levels on buses and in bus stations	87% of female and 88% of male respondents felt confident in their personal safety while using local buses during the day. 41% of female and 68% of male respondents felt confident in their personal safety while using local buses during the day.

2.2.4. The draft Charter for 2024 - 2025 is included as **Appendix 3**.

2.3. Ongoing challenges for bus in West Yorkshire

2.3.1. There are a range of challenges facing bus in West Yorkshire which this BSIP identifies, using the latest analysis and data as well as passenger insight from major consultation and engagement undertaken by the Combined Authority and key partners in recent years (outlined in **Appendix 4**).

2.3.2. Understanding what people want from public transport services and their wider travel needs is at the forefront of improving buses. This is why our strategic priorities have been informed by up-to-date evidence and feedback from residents, both users and non-users, across the region.

2.3.3. Table 7 summarises the local challenges for bus and aligns them to our six strategic priorities for buses in West Yorkshire, as well as the objectives of the National Bus Strategy.

Table 7 – Summary of West Yorkshire Strategic Bus Priorities aligned with National Bus Strategy Objectives and Local Challenges for Bus

Local bus challenges	West Yorkshire Strategic Bus Priorities	National Bus Strategy Objectives
<p>Network - A network that is difficult to use and does not meet travel needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus routes don’t always go where and when people need them to • Parts of the network are not financially viable without public sector funding support. • The network has continued to shrink despite investment 	<p>An enhanced, fully inclusive and more cohesive bus and wider public transport network – which takes people where they need to go, when they need to go, as well as making improvements to our network which aim to reduce social isolation and enable better access to jobs, housing and employment, especially those not in our main town and city centres.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More Frequent • More Comprehensive • Better integrated with other modes and each other

<p><u>Fares and ticketing - Confusing fares and ticketing and a perception of poor value for money:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current offer, with multiple products and retailers, can be expensive and confusing. • Despite Mayor's Fares improving satisfaction with value for money, satisfaction and confidence in buying the best-value ticket is still varied • Dissatisfaction with other aspects of the bus is preventing the realisation of the full benefits of fares subsidy. 	<p>Clear and simple fares - to make paying for bus travel more affordable, easier, convenient and flexible so that passengers are charged the best price for their journeys and within an affordable range, improving satisfaction with value for money.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheaper • Easier to understand • Easier to use • Better integrated with other modes and each other
<p><u>Customer service and support - Inconsistent and uncoordinated customer service and information:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is varying satisfaction with different sources of information and no single point of contact for customer support, making it difficult to complain and to access information. 	<p>Improved, more inclusive customer service and support - so passengers have the tools to travel with confidence and the help they need if their journey does not go to plan, with more journey information available digitally as well as at bus stops, and improving satisfaction with our service provision by ensuring the highest quality customer service is always provided to passengers.</p>	<p>Easier to understand</p>
<p><u>Bus priority - A network that is not consistently reliable and in need of more bus priority:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a lack of priority for buses on our roads as well as variability in the standard and design of existing bus priority measures • The large amount of traffic on our roads contributes towards a consistently unreliable bus network • Transport Focus's Your Bus Journey shows that timeliness, including the length of time you had to wait for the bus and journey time, are key areas of dissatisfaction for West Yorkshire bus passengers 	<p>Priority for buses on our road - so journeys by bus are quicker, with less time spent stuck in traffic, and are a viable alternative to the private car through delivery of more bus priority that is consistent and enforced effectively as well as improving management of our roads and streets to improve punctuality and reliability of bus journeys.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faster and more reliable • Better integrated with other modes and each other
<p><u>Fleet - A lack of clean, green and high-quality vehicles:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards of provision and experience on-board are inconsistent. • A small percentage of buses are zero emission 	<p>More green and better vehicles - to improve the onboard experience and make bus the sustainable choice for travel in West Yorkshire through commitments to all vehicles becoming Euro VI emission standard or better and ultimately a carbon zero bus fleet.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better to ride in • Greener • Accessible and inclusive by design

<p><u>Waiting infrastructure</u> -Varying quality of assets and levels of satisfaction with waiting environments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some existing bus stations and stops are perceived as unclean, unsafe and unappealing • Insight also shows anti-social behaviour of other passengers is pushing people to other forms of transport • There is a large gender gap for confidence in personal safety when using local buses during the dark. 	<p>Safe, accessible and welcoming stations, stops and public spaces – which provide a high-quality, attractive environment for passengers waiting for and interchanging between bus services, through well-maintained infrastructure that has accessibility, safety and environmental considerations at the forefront of their design.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easier to use • Easier to understand • Accessible and inclusive by design • Greener
---	---	--

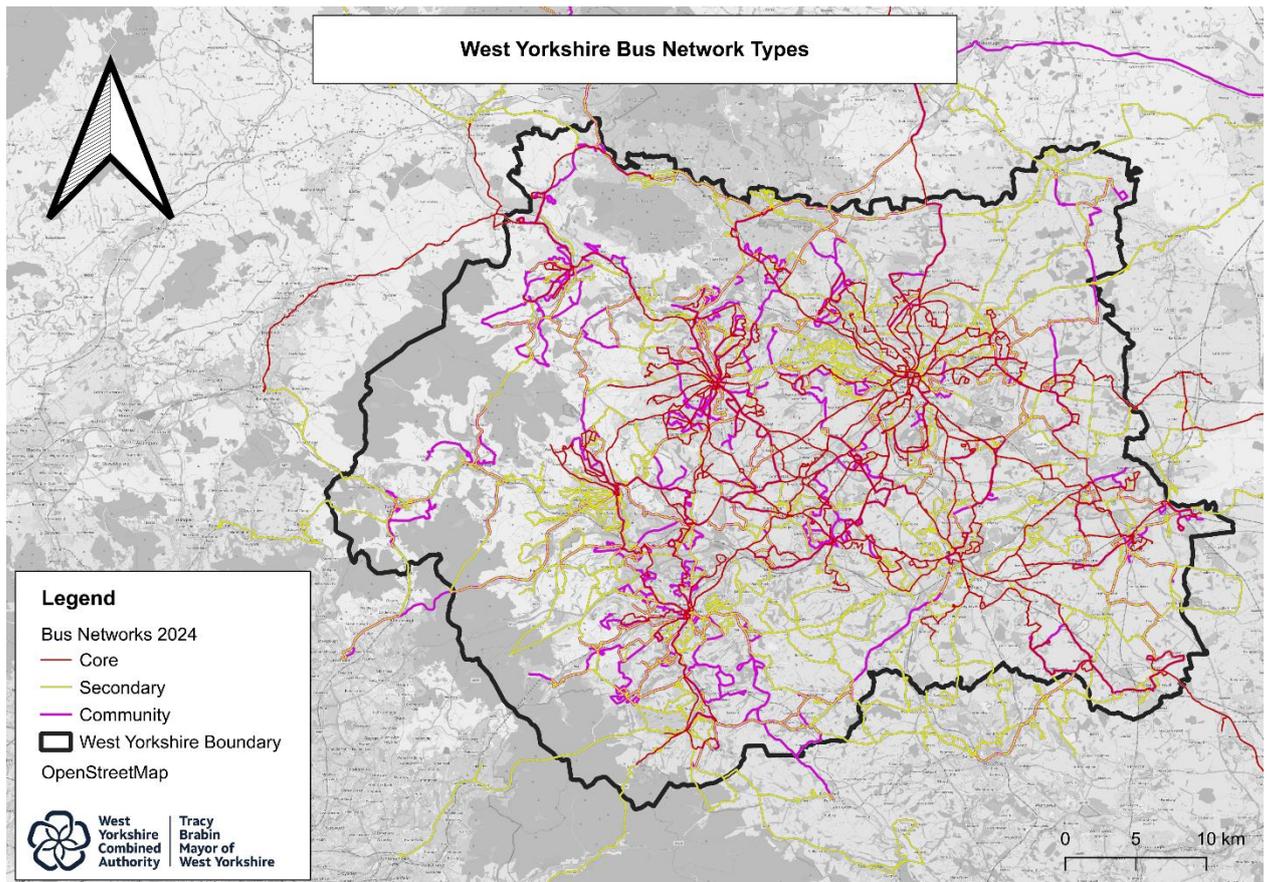
2.3.4. A full strategic Case for Change describing the current bus offer for passengers in more detail is included in **Appendix 2**. A summary of this provided in the following sections:

Network

2.3.5. The West Yorkshire bus network is broken down into three tiers (see Figure 6) which reflect the frequency and commercial basis of the services provided:

- **Core Network** – of services with a frequency of every 15 minutes on average or better, and primarily all operate on a commercial basis.
- **Secondary Network** - of services operating at less than 15 minute frequency
- **Community Network** - which is made up of less frequent services and are partially or wholly subsidised by the Combined Authority to maintain socially necessary connectivity.

Figure 6: Map of West Yorkshire Bus Network



- 2.3.6. Routes and frequencies are largely commercially set, with the Combined Authority contracting tendered services to ‘plug the gap’, extend the operation of commercial routes or operate non-commercial routes. A table setting out the supported fixed-route network is detailed in **Appendix 5**.
- 2.3.7. The current bus network largely responds to the traditional urban commuter, serving key radial corridors into larger urban centres effectively, whilst the less profitable connecting routes are not priorities for operators.
- 2.3.8. The network is under financial strain, with on-going reliance of operators on public sector funding due to decreased patronage post pandemic and increasing cost of running services.
- 2.3.9. There are several challenges for the customer with the current network including:
- **Customer network requirements:** Evidence from passengers in the 2022 Mayor’s Big Bus Chat¹³, showed that lengthy journey times, infrequent services and inconvenient routes were some of the most common reasons non-bus users do not travel by bus (55%, 51% and 50% respectively).
 - **Customer network access:** Access to the bus network is unequal across the region. Analysis shows that whilst 97% of addresses within the region are within 400m of a bus stop, this falls to only 69% when mapped against our ‘core’ network of high frequency services. Access also varies greatly when broken down by district area – for example 77% of addresses in Leeds are within 400m of a bus stop on the core network compared to 44% in Calderdale¹⁴.

¹³ West Yorkshire Combined Authority, [The Mayor's Big Bus Chat – Survey Outcome Report](#), March 2023,

¹⁴ West Yorkshire Combined Authority analysis of bus stop accessibility, June 2024

- **Addressing customer needs:** The network also has to better serve and connect areas of high deprivation in order to support our ambitions for inclusive growth across the region. Analysis demonstrates that many areas that are not served by the core network, high frequency network, are areas in the most deprived 20% according to Indices of Multiple Deprivation, especially when further away from major conurbations (see **Appendix 2**)

2.3.10. There are challenges to the bus market associated with the network including:

- **Financial sustainability:** the network is not financially sustainable and there is a reliance on public funding to maintain it. Within West Yorkshire, analysis showed that should funding have been withdrawn in October 2022, 11% of the bus network would not be financially viable affecting up to 62 routes in West Yorkshire¹⁵.
- **Risk to services:** the impact of a lack of long-term financial stability comes with the threat of declining services and bus mileage with operators regularly reviewing the existing network. This has resulted in bus network mileage declining 16.7% over the past 12 years (see **Appendix 2**)

Fares and Ticketing

2.3.11. There is a complex ticketing offer within West Yorkshire, with a wide variety of ticket options available across multiple operators and retail channels, making it difficult for customers to identify the best value options for them¹⁶. Despite the positive introduction of 'Mayor's Fares' in September 2022 as part of our BSIP programme, which capped the cost of single journey and multi-operator day tickets and made journeys more affordable, passengers cite value for money as a key factor influencing their propensity to travel.

2.3.12. There are several challenges for the customer with the current system including:

- **Affordability and increasing fares:** customer engagement indicates that the cost of bus travel is one of the key reasons not to travel by bus and remains important to travelling customers. This is against the backdrop of increasing fares which have risen quicker than the costs of car ownership and complex ticketing arrangements.
- **Customer satisfaction:** dissatisfaction with value for money of public transport continues to be flagged as a key issue for customers.
- **Cost of living crisis** – there are indications that the recent cost-of-living crisis may have altered travelling behaviour with fewer leisure travellers.

2.3.13. There are several challenges for the bus operator market across fares and ticketing including:

- **Decreasing fare revenue:** A squeeze on disposable incomes may lead to a squeeze on discretionary travel, constraining the leisure market that has been seen as public transport's best hope for growth
- **Commercially set fares:** the cost of travel beyond the capped Mayor's Fares is largely commercially set and is impacted by external factors, such as inflation and cost increases

Customer service and information

¹⁵ West Yorkshire Combined Authority Transport Committee, "Item 8 – Bus Network Sustainability", 1 July 2022 [Item 8 - Bus Network Sustainability.pdf \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](#)

¹⁶ West Yorkshire Combined Authority, [Annual Public Perceptions of Transport Survey](#), 2022-23

- 2.3.14. Currently customer service and information is fragmented across a variety of organisations and channels, including operator websites and apps with differing information, journey planners and purchase channels. In addition, there are several ways in which a customer can make a complaint and staff training is not the same across all organisations, with this differing between operators and the Combined Authority providing both front line and back-office support. Ratings for the information provided about bus services is mixed, with West Yorkshire not performing as well as compared to other urban metropolitan areas, or across England generally.¹⁷
- 2.3.15. There are several challenges for the customer across customer service and support including:
- **Accuracy of Information:** passengers regularly report that the information they have access to, whether online or printed, is unreliable and out of date. Findings from our Mayor's Big Bus Chat public engagement showed that 20% of respondents were concerned that apps and timetable displays provided poor information relating to bus services¹⁸, and this was cited as their second most popular choice for improvement.
 - **Customer service interaction:** the customer service offer is a key priority for passengers with customers, with some passengers experiencing negative interactions with bus drivers and valuing an improved customer service. Whilst both our Annual Public Perceptions of Transport survey¹⁹ and Transport Focus Your Bus Journey results show improvements with the helpfulness of bus drivers, negative driver interactions are within the top three themes cited by passengers as contributing to dissatisfaction with their bus journey.²⁰
 - **Uncoordinated customer service provision:** Findings from the Mayor's Big Bus Chat survey have shown that in relation to bus users experience there is uncertainty around dealing with issues or complaints after travel, with nearly half of respondents selecting 'not relevant / unsure' for this question, and only 14% finding this aspect works well for them.²¹

Bus priority

- 2.3.16. A map of existing bus priority measures across West Yorkshire is detailed in Figure 7, with larger maps by local authority area included in **Appendix 6**.

Figure 7 – Summary of West Yorkshire Bus Priority Measures

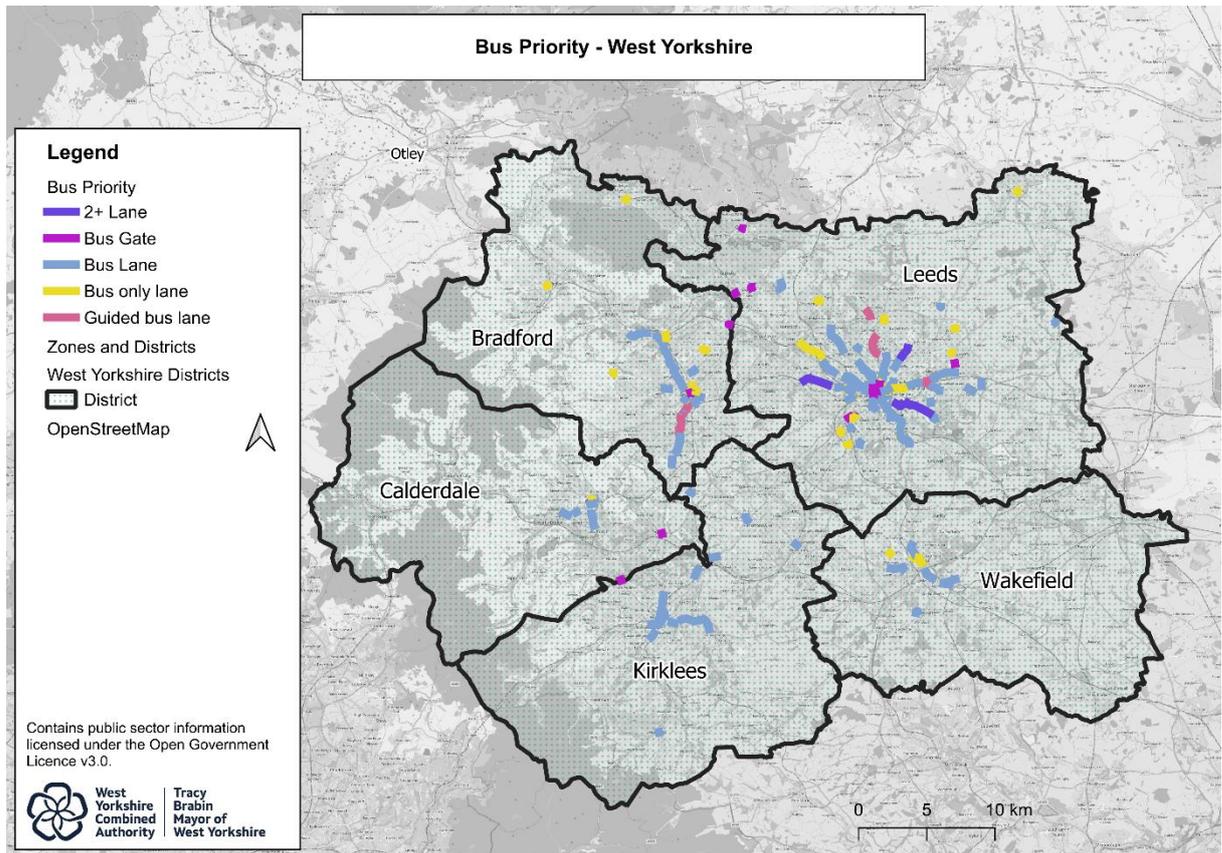
¹⁷ Transport Focus, [Your Bus Journey 2023 results](#)

¹⁸ West Yorkshire Combined Authority, [Mayors Big Bus Chat Survey Outcome Report](#) 2022

¹⁹ West Yorkshire Combined Authority, [Annual Public Perceptions of Transport Survey](#), 2022-23

²⁰ Transport Focus, [Your Bus Journey 2023 results](#)

²¹ West Yorkshire Combined Authority, [Mayors Big Bus Chat Survey Outcome Report](#) 2022



- 2.3.17. The nature of the region and where people live, with a range of different urban centres and settlements across the region, combined with dependency on car, means that high volumes of traffic and congestion is experienced across the region’s road networks.
- 2.3.18. Our bus network is affected by this heavy traffic and congestion, and measures are needed to protect bus journeys from congestion where needed and provide a competitive alternative to the car. Although the region already has significant bus priority on several key corridors, provision of bus priority is inconsistent across the network, due to constraints of investment, challenges in implementation and variations in highway policy resulting in differing measures across bus priority, parking and enforcement.
- 2.3.19. This combination of traffic volumes, congestion and the lack of consistent bus priority is one of the reasons behind poor punctuality and reliability, impacting customer satisfaction of journey times. In addition, our ability to track bus delay data is currently limited, reducing our effectiveness in identifying locations in critical need of bus priority interventions.
- 2.3.20. There are several challenges for the customer across bus priority:
- **Punctuality and reliability:** a reliable and punctual bus service is key to delivering a good bus service to customers across the region but has been hampered by increasing traffic congestion as well as operational challenges. Punctuality and reliability has continually underperformed against targets (see **Appendix 2**) and impacts customer satisfaction with the bus service, with the Transport Focus Your Bus Journey survey highlighting that 44% of comments from those who were neutral or not satisfied with their journey were in relation to punctuality.²²

²² Transport Focus, [Your Bus Journey 2023 results](#)

- **Congestion:** related to punctuality and reliability, congestion and satisfaction of congestion, affects customer perceptions of travel and impacts the length of bus journey if no bus priority measures are in place. The importance of congestion to customers is clear in the Public Perceptions of Transport Survey which ranks it with an importance score on 7.9 (out of 10), with satisfaction of levels of congestion only ranking 5.2 (out of 10). This is further supported by the 2023 Transport Focus Your Bus Journey Survey, which showed that 39% of West Yorkshire respondents waited longer than they expected for their bus compared to their expectations.²³

2.3.21. There is a key challenge for the bus market across bus priority:

- **Bus priority policy and design:** the variability in the standard, design and operation of bus priority measures and enforcement leads to variability of the bus offer and ability for operators to deliver commitments on journey times, alongside the need for wider measures to reduce delay to buses and traffic on our roads.

Fleet

2.3.22. Transport emits the most greenhouse gases of any key sector in the economy in West Yorkshire, accounting for 32%²⁴. Supporting a switch from private car use to bus use is part of the solution to this challenge if buses can be decently loaded and run on low emission technologies.

2.3.23. Delivery of over 200 zero emission buses through the Zero Emission Bus Regional Area (ZEBRA) scheme will continue to increase the proportion across the region to potentially over 20%. Therefore, achieving current ambitions for a 100% zero-emission bus fleet presents a significant challenge.

2.3.24. Bus services are provided by various operators with differing levels of standard of facility and on-board experience. In the latest Your Bus Journey survey, capacity on-board and temperature / ventilation were cited by passengers as within their top five reasons as to why they were dissatisfied with their most recent journey.²⁵ Feedback through our Mayor's Big Bus Chat also mentioned comfort onboard was important to passengers.²⁶

2.3.25. There are several challenges facing the customer in relation to green and better vehicles:

- **Zero emission buses and modal shift:** bus has an important role to play in encouraging modal shift away from the polluting private car, yet falling patronage suggests the bus currently isn't a viable alternative. Improving the bus customer offer through investment in vehicles to be better and cleaner will help position bus as a more attractive, sustainable transport option.
- **Consistent customer standard:** customers should expect a consistent customer offer from onboard facilities, and this currently differs greatly across the network.

2.3.26. There are several challenges facing the bus market in relation to green and better vehicles:

²³ Transport Focus, [Your Bus Journey 2023 results](#)

²⁴ West Yorkshire Combined Authority, [State of the Region report](#) 2023/24

²⁵ Transport Focus, [Your Bus Journey 2023 results](#)

²⁶ West Yorkshire Combined Authority, [Mayors Big Bus Chat](#) 2022

- **Zero emission fleet:** A green, zero emission bus system is a core element of the Combined Authority's vision for buses with all buses needing to offer a safe, clean and accessible experience for customers, but our targets are at risk of not being met due to limited funding and supply chain issues.
- **Investment opportunities and operator market:** Funding for green and better vehicles has to date been largely supported by Combined Authority funding bids to central government funding programmes (such as ZEBRA) and delivery in partnership and wider market challenges are risking operator investment.

Stations, Stops and Public Spaces

- 2.3.27. Some of our region's existing bus stations and stops are perceived as unclean, unsafe and unappealing which adds to a general stigma surrounding bus travel. Whilst the majority of bus stations and smaller interchanges are owned by the Combined Authority, some are the responsibility of bus operators or other third-party organisations which leads to inconsistency of quality and customer offer. In addition, insight also shows anti-social behaviour of other passengers, both on the network and around our bus hubs, is pushing people to other forms of transport and there is a large gender gap for confidence in personal safety when using local buses during the dark.
- 2.3.28. There are several challenges facing the customer in relation to waiting infrastructure:
- **Customer satisfaction:** The bus stop and station environment play an important role in the overall passenger experience. However, in West Yorkshire, passenger surveys show a decreasing satisfaction with the quality of local bus stations (7.1/10 in 2018/19 to 6.5 in 2022/23²⁷). Satisfaction with the information available at bus stops and stations - including printed timetable posters and electronic displays - has fluctuated over recent years but overall decreased from a high of 7.9/10 in 2015/16 to a low of 7.3/10 in 2019/20. It has since increased to 7.7. as of 2022/23.
 - **Accessibility:** Our organisation looks to be a leader in equality, diversity and inclusion, improving the customer experience for bus users by addressing issues that impact people with protected characteristics and making the bus waiting environment inclusive for all. In West Yorkshire around 17% of people are disabled, with nearly 10% reporting their disability affects their day-to-day activities a lot.²⁸ Yet the Mayor's Big Bus Chat reported that only 70% of people who are limited a lot by a disability agree that bus shelters are well designed for them. An improved local bus system will require consistent and high-quality accessibility support at every stage of a bus journey.
 - **Safety and inclusivity:** Safety has been flagged as a barrier to using buses more, with 21% of respondents in our Bus Behaviour Change survey indicating that respondents did not feel safe waiting at a bus stop²⁹. In addition, our Public Perceptions of Transport Survey shows that 84% of respondents are very confident or fairly confident about personal safety using a bus during the day, but this falls to 49% after dark³⁰. There is also a stark gender difference in confidence with travel during the dark with only 36% of females on bus feeling confident compared to 65% of males³¹. This highlights safety of women and girls as a key

²⁷ West Yorkshire Combined Authority, [Annual Public Perceptions of Transport Survey](#), 2022/2023

²⁸ West Yorkshire Combined Authority, [Census 2021 Topic Summary: Health, Disability & Unpaid Care](#), 2023

²⁹ West Yorkshire Combined Authority, Bus Behaviour Change Primary Research Results, March 2023

³⁰ West Yorkshire Combined Authority, [Annual Public Perceptions of Transport Survey](#), 2022/2023

³¹ West Yorkshire Combined Authority, [Annual Public Perceptions of Transport Survey](#), 2022/2023

concern of bus passengers. Whilst this is in large part because of and compounded by wider, complex societal issues, improvements to the local bus system can and should still play a role in overcoming these problems.

2.4. Bus driver recruitment and retention

Overview

- 2.4.1. The Combined Authority recognises that bus operator recruitment and retention of drivers and other key staff, including engineers, is a key issue that effects the stability and success of the local bus system. Through the West Yorkshire Bus Alliance, the Combined Authority has regularly engaged with bus operators on this issue.
- 2.4.2. As of May 2024, while a shortage of bus drivers persists in the industry there are differences across the region and between bus operators. Apart from competing for staff with other bus operators, further pressure is added by competition from coach operators and the HGV sector. These factors affect smaller operators more extensively.
- 2.4.3. Competition for staff also results in driver mobility, either between larger and smaller operators or between sectors, often on a seasonal basis for example loss of drivers to the coach industry or the HGV sector during Christmas time. In this context, the workforces of smaller bus operators fluctuate more on the basis of available work with bus operators also relying on recruiting self-employed drivers on a temporary basis. A key stumbling block for smaller operators are the CVC annual renewal requirements, for which some small operators cannot afford to cover the related training costs.
- 2.4.4. There is also a considerable need for engineers in addition to bus drivers. For example, one large bus operator relies on their own recruitment efforts including a website and apprenticeships and at present employs a full complement of bus drivers. However, while also employing a full complement of engineers, a considerable number are expected to retire in the coming years, posing a significant future challenge.

The 'Route to Success' programme

- 2.4.5. At the regional level between 2023 and 2024, the Combined Authority has invested £860,000 of its Adult Education budget - which aims to provide people with the skills and qualifications they need to enter the workforce - to train bus drivers through its 'Route to Success' programme.



- 2.4.6. The specialist programme is delivered to learners by leading training provider Realise, from a converted bus that travels to multiple locations around the region to ensure accessibility for those who otherwise might not have had the opportunity to take part. This initiative has been prioritised and supported by the West Yorkshire Mayor, including a related communications campaign.
- 2.4.7. As of April 2024, 130 new bus and coach drivers have been trained and / or recruited by bus operators. Of these, 10 are currently interviewing and 78 bus and coach drivers have been recruited by large bus operators, while 52 have joined smaller bus operators. Another 42 new bus drivers are currently in training.
- 2.4.8. While the programme has been welcomed by the bus industry, some operators observed that there are regional discrepancies with most of the new drivers joining bus operators in the Bradford and Leeds regions.
- 2.4.9. Over the course of 2024/25, the Combined Authority will consider options on 'Route to Success' follow-up initiatives including broadening the scope of training to cover engineers as well, subject to funding availability.

Impact of Franchising

- 2.4.10. Under Franchising, it will still be the responsibility of bus operators to employ bus drivers. The Combined Authority is however committed to working with operators to understand what support it can provide to the industry, building on work such as the Route to Success programme.
- 2.4.11. Further consideration relating to recruitment and employment conditions were explored in the Combined Authority's [Bus Reform Consultation Response Report \(2024\)](#).

2.5. Listening to bus passengers and our communities

- 2.5.1. We understand the importance of passengers in helping us get our bus network right and we commit to regularly engaging with both bus passengers and non-users so their valuable insight feeds into everything we do. We will continue to do this by:

- Market research, including running our annual Public Perceptions of Transport survey
- Formal and informal sessions with elected members and community groups to ensure we are always responsive to the needs and issues of local people
- Community-wide consultation and engagement as projects are developed, in line with statutory requirements.
- Targeted engagement with key passenger groups, including people with protected characteristics or at risk of social exclusion.
- Our ongoing partnership with the independent watchdog, Transport Focus.
- Monitoring our Key Performance Indicators, supported with monitoring and evaluation of projects as they are delivered

2.6. Summary

- 2.6.1. In summary, West Yorkshire has an extensive, widely used bus network but this faces several key challenges that are impacting on customers, their satisfaction and people's overall propensity to travel by bus. However, through investment, the Combined Authority has worked with partners to offer improvements and achieve success. This provides a solid foundation to further improve the bus network, as detailed in the following sections.

3. BSIP Delivery Programme 2024/2025

3.1. BSIP Revenue programme

- 3.1.1. As of June 2024, the Combined Authority has been awarded a total of £91,097,512 revenue funding, across four financial years, to support delivery of this Bus Service Improvement Plan.
- 3.1.2. The Combined Authority’s Bus Service Improvement Plan funding programme includes eighteen interventions, across three main delivery areas:
- Clear and simple fares
 - New and improved services
 - Supporting bus priority and safety
- 3.1.3. Funding allocations against key deliverables are set out in Table 8 below, alongside the allocation of the £13.3m ‘Phase 3’ funding that has been awarded to support delivery in the 2024/25 financial year.

Table 8 – Summary of BSIP Revenue Funding until March 2026

Scheme	Total programme funding allocation	‘Phase 3’ additional funding allocation for 2024/25
Mayor’s Fares	£44,974,070	£11,000,000
Bus network improvements (inc. network protection, enhancements and Superbus)	£38,907,442	£2,057,000
Enhanced Safer Travel Partnership	£1,316,000	£316,000
Other (inc. marketing and comms, internal resource)	£5,900,000	n/a
Total:	£91,097,512	£13,373,000

- 3.1.4. Significant progress has been made since the funding was first received with 15 of 18 BSIP schemes now in delivery and £38.23m spent as of May 2024. Of these, fifteen are on track to be fully delivered by March 2025, while the network elements are expected to be delivered by March 2026.
- 3.1.5. Key improvements delivered by the programme since inception are:
- **Mayor’s Fares** – in September 2022 we implemented fares reduction, capping single tickets at £2 and day tickets at £4.50 (£5 since March 2024).
 - **Network protection and enhancements** – we have invested in the network, protecting 57 routes at risk of service reductions or withdrawals, as well as funded 18 service improvements including frequency uplifts and service hour extensions, as well as three ‘Superbus’ schemes in partnership with operators.

- **Safer Travel** – funded the recruitment of a team of 15 Police Community Support Officers to tackle anti-social behaviour and other issues on the bus network, in partnership with the West Yorkshire Police.

3.1.6. Key activities and milestones for the 2024/25 financial year are outlined in Table 9 below, with further details of the progress of each scheme described later in this section.

Table 9: Key BSIP deliverables and milestones in 2024/25

Project	Date Launched	Milestone / achievements
Network	April 2024	Launch of Halifax to Huddersfield Superbus scheme
Network		Launch of 14 enhanced bus services (Tranche 1)
Enhanced Safer Travel Partnership	May 2024	Remaining two PCSOs deployed on the bus network. The team of PCSOs is now at a full complement of ten
Network		Launch of Bradford 601/602 orbital service
Programme		Transport Committee approval of the BSIP Full Business Case
Programme	June 2024	BSIP update submitted to DfT
Network	July 2024	Commence delivery of Tranche 1.5 enhanced services
Mayor's Fares	September 2024	Mayor's Fares Year 3 commences
Programme		Bradford/Leeds Superbus Year 2 commences
Programme		Walk it.Ride it behaviour change programme Year 2 to commence
Network	October 2024	Proposed delivery of Wakefield Superbus
Network	March 2025	End of delivery of BSIP+ (network protection) scheme
Programme	April 2025	BSIP delivery Year 4 commences (official end of all BSIP projects except Network Enhancements and Superbus)
Programme	March 2026	Current expected BSIP programme end date

3.1.7. Should further funding be provided, the BSIP programme could continue to successfully deliver against its existing priorities, as well as the wider strategic priorities set out in this document.

BSIP scheme updates

3.1.8. The following section provides an update on each of the schemes being delivered as part of the Combined Authority's programme of improvements.

Table 10: BSIP programme scheme updates

Scheme Title	Budget	Narrative
<p>Fares reduction and simplification – Mayor’s Fares (WYC06FRS)</p>	<p>£44,974,070</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In delivery since September 2022, capping single fares at £2 and DaySavers at £4.50 (£5.00 since March 2024); • In its first year, £24.7m journeys benefitted from the fare cap, saving passengers £14.7m • A year-one online survey in September 2023 has confirmed that bus users were either using the bus more or at least felt encouraged to use the bus at the same level as a result of the initiative. In late 2024, this survey will be repeated with face-to-face elements; • The scheme runs concurrently to a national £2 fare cap scheme This requirement to meet a nationally set fare is an additional financial pressure to the Combined Authority, which was not anticipated at the time of establishing the policy in 2022, when the Combined Authority had intended for periodic reviews against inflation and realised costs.
<p>Network Enhancements - New and improved services (WYC04NES)</p>	<p>£23,760,321</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This scheme aims to make improvements to various bus routes in West Yorkshire through investment in more frequent services and longer service hours, with delivery in phases • This principle has been applied to commercially run services, through de-minimis contracts, as well as via competitive tenders. • Tranche 1 of service enhancements was launched in February 2024. • Tranche 1.5 will be launched from July 2024 • Officers are reviewing further planned tranches of network improvements against costs and remaining available funds (see related methodology outlined in Section 4).
<p>Superbus - Town network enhancements (WYC04SNE)</p>	<p>£7,396,679</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Superbus projects seek to improve the existing bus system by delivering new and enhanced bus services in partnership between the Combined Authority and operators through BSIP and commercial investment. • The four Superbus schemes originate from proposals put forward by bus operators. The schemes are to run for five years with three years of delivery funded by the Combined Authority’s BSIP programme and the remaining two years to be operated on a commercial basis. • The first two BSIP funded ‘Superbus’ schemes were launched in September 2023 in partnership with

		<p>Transdev, delivering improvements to services operating across the Keighley town network and the 'Aireline' route between Shipley and Leeds.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As of December 2023, the improvements to these services have had a positive impact on local bus use with passenger numbers on the 'Aireline' service increasing by 28% compared to Spring 2023, the K7 by 23%, K2/3 services increased by 21% and other local Keighley services (with no frequency increase, just the £1 flat fare) increasing by 5%; • A further Superbus scheme in Kirklees and Calderdale was launched on 18 February 2024 in partnership with First, delivering improvements to the 501 and X1 services between Huddersfield and Halifax. • Work is on-going in collaboration with Wakefield Council and Arriva to develop a fourth Superbus scheme for Wakefield. The launch of this scheme is currently envisaged for October 2024.
<p>BSIP+</p>	<p>£7,750,442</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This scheme aims to protect bus services that would otherwise have been withdrawn by bus operators. • In total, 57 contracts including (30 uplifts and 27 protected services) have been implemented since July 2023, strengthening the resilience of the bus network. • A further six one-year contracts are currently being negotiated with bus operators and are expected to be launched from July 2024. • The scheme is also financially supporting the work to limit disruption at the temporarily closed Bradford Interchange bus station, which includes additional bus services.
<p>Enhanced Safer Travel Partnership (WYC09ESP)</p>	<p>£1,316,000</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through the Enhanced Safer Travel Partnership with West Yorkshire Police, the BSIP programme is funding the recruitment of a team of 10 Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) for three years and part-funding a further five who were already deployed to tackle anti-social behaviour and other safety issues across the bus network. • Eight of these PCSOs were deployed between September and November 2023, with the remaining eight officers following in May 2024. • The team is supported by a Police Sergeant and the Combined Authority's Safer Travel Manager. Key aims of the Partnership are to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, increase the safety of women and girls, and reassure and protect more vulnerable travel users.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The team is already meeting regularly with bus operators to identify problem locations and PCSOs have been deployed effectively to tackle anti-social behaviour with drivers feeding back that their presence has been welcomed. In addition, the PCSOs have provided safety and CSE safeguarding training to bus station staff and have visited schools across the region to raise travel safety awareness.
Other	£5,900,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This budget line covers additional ticketing schemes, passenger information, staff supporting the bus network in various capacities and communications and behaviour change. In addition to facilitating a communications campaign accompanying the launch of the Mayor's Fares, the BSIP Communications and Behaviour Change budget has been used to contribute to the Combined Authority's 'Walk it. Ride it' campaign. This is a wider West Yorkshire rollout of a pilot campaign that was originally launched in certain areas within Leeds. The campaign was a fully integrated, multi-modal, communications and marketing campaign aiming to change perceptions of walking, cycling and bus travel in order to influence behaviour change. An evaluation of the campaign has confirmed behaviour change in the form of increases in bus ticket sales as well as decreases in car usage. The campaign will be repeated in 2024.

3.2. Capital Delivery Programme 2024/2025

- 3.2.1. The BSIP revenue programme is complemented by capital investment in the region's transport infrastructure, which for West Yorkshire is currently being delivered primarily through our £830m City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS).
- 3.2.2. This CRSTS investment is complemented by other transport investment programmes such as the West Yorkshire Plus Transport Fund (WY+TF), Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) and proposed Levelling Up Fund programme. Only with measures introduced through coordinated programmes will the benefits to passengers, such as improved punctuality and reliability, be fully realised.

Table 11 – West Yorkshire capital delivery programmes

2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032
------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------

	Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) revenue programme								
Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme (LPTIP)									
West Yorkshire Plus Transport Fund (WY+TF)									
City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS)									
					City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement Two (CRSTS 2)				
Transforming Cities Fund (TCF)									
		Levelling Up Fund (LUF)* <i>*Subject to Business Case approval</i>							

- 3.2.3. The Combined Authority and its West Yorkshire partner councils have a strong and continuous track record of delivering a range of improvements aiming to improve bus journeys for passengers and the operational performance of bus services. Most recently, delivery of bus infrastructure improvements has been through programmes such as Connecting Leeds (the Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme (LPTIP)), West Yorkshire-plus Transport Fund, and TCF, with further investment through CRSTS and LUF.
- 3.2.4. Since submission of the BSIP in 2021, capital-led infrastructure improvements have been made to all aspects of bus journeys and operations. Recent highlights include our Network Navigation programme and customer improvements to bus stations, bus stops and shelters across the region, including delivery of a Safety Accessibility and Environment programme and the major rebuild of Halifax bus station.
- 3.2.5. Current planned infrastructure improvements through CRSTS that will either enter delivery or complete delivery by March 2025 are set out in Table 12 below.
- 3.2.6. In this period, we will also be developing a range of other bus improvement schemes, working on Outline and Full Business Cases, for delivery and completion by March 2027. These are detailed in **Appendix 7**.

Table 12 – CRSTS/TCF schemes in delivery in 2024/25

Scheme	Description/Bus Improvements	Location	Current development/delivery stage	Milestones / Completion Date
Bus passenger facilities and customer offer improvements				
Halifax Bus Station	Construction of a modern, fit for purpose bus station, creating a public transport gateway into the town centre and a key place of interchange for bus services. The new bus station includes a fully enclosed and level concourse facility (including customer information, toilets and	Halifax town centre	Complete and operational	March 2024

Bus Service Improvement Plan 2024

	retail), cycle parking and improved access for pedestrians.			
Heckmondwike Bus Hub	<p>A new bus station facility in the centre of Heckmondwike which aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase bus capacity • improve passenger waiting facilities, including new toilet facilities and better bus information • improve access arrangements to the station for buses, reducing journey times, boarding arrangements • measures to improve associated bus movements and journey times within the town. 	Heckmondwike	Full Business Case approved; proceeding to delivery phase	<p><i>Construction start: June 2024</i></p> <p>Completion: September 2025</p>
Bus journey improvements				
Thirsk Row, Leeds Bus gate	<p>Improvement to enable an existing one-way street to be two-way for buses (remaining one way for general traffic) along with a new bus gate enabling buses to avoid unnecessary and highly congested movement in the city centre.</p> <p>The scheme is part of a wider strategy to deliver better bus journeys into and through Leeds city centre, alongside improved quality of place and cycling and walking access through CRSTS and other programmes such as LPTIP which has already delivered a range of improvements in the city centre for bus</p>	Leeds city centre	Complete and operational	April 2024
Bradford City Centre Cycling and Walking Improvements	Removing through traffic from key civic areas, creating a new bus priority corridor around Bradford city centre for more efficient movement of buses, with new bus hubs serving key locations in the city centre.	Bradford	In delivery	31/03/2025

3.3. Future programme development - funding ask

- 3.3.1. To deliver on our Bus Service Improvement Plan ambition and level up our local bus system we need appropriate funding from central Government.
- 3.3.2. As per its previous award, the Combined Authority assumes that any future BSIP funding would be revenue only, with other sources such as CRSTS to provide funding for capital works.
- 3.3.3. Therefore, the following table sets out a basic revenue funding ask to continue the existing programme with the same core priorities. Additional revenue funding would enable further transformative changes in the customer offer, but the Combined Authority would want to consider the long-term sustainability of such funding.

Table 13 – BSIP programme development funding ask

Bus Service Improvement Plan 2024

Delivery area	Current Revenue allocation (£000m) to March 2025	Expected spend (due to additional fare costs) to March 2025	Proposed 4-year revenue funding ask (£000) 2025-2029	Outputs
Fares and ticketing	44,974	59,574	100,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing subsidisation of single / day fares Further fares offers / concession schemes
Network	39,857	26,352	40,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service protection Service frequency uplifts
Customer service and support (incl. Safer Travel)	2,366	2,072	15,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuation of the Enhanced Safer Travel Partnership Staff training Additional metro staff Information revenue costs
Bus Priority	CRSTS/LUF2		CRST2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capital highway and asset improvements
Stations, stops and public spaces				
Greener, better buses	ZEBRA/CRSTS			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investment in a Zero emission fleet
Marketing and communications / Internal capacity / Monitoring and evaluation	3,900	3,100	5,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further promotional behaviour change campaigns Retention of existing and additional resource M&E programme
Total revenue funding	£91,097,512	£91,097,512	£160,000,000	

3.3.4. In addition to BSIP funding, we will utilise other funding sources to support transformational change to local buses including:

- £1bn West Yorkshire Transport Fund
- £830m City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) of which £317m is Transforming Cities Fund

Bus Service Improvement Plan 2024

- £41m Levelling Up Fund
- £58m Zero Emission Bus Regional Area (ZEBRA) bid
- £25m annual contracted services budget
- £55m annual concessionary fares budget
- Section 106 funding
- Increased fares revenue obtained through passenger growth

4. Ambitions and proposals for 2025 and beyond

4.1. Overview

4.1.1. Taking into account the key themes, vision and objectives, as well as the existing challenges outlined in the previous sections, the interventions and initiatives proposed within this BSIP will work to deliver the following overarching outcomes:

- **An enhanced, fully inclusive and more cohesive bus and wider public transport network** – which takes people where they need to go, when they need to go, and encouraging confidence in the network.
- **Clear and simple fares** – to make paying for bus travel more affordable, easier, convenient and flexible
- **Improved, more inclusive customer service and support** – so all passengers have the right tools to travel with confidence and help they need if their journey does not go to plan
- **Priority for buses on our road** – so journeys by bus are quicker, with less time spent stuck in traffic, and are a viable alternative to the private car
- **More green and better vehicles** – to improve the onboard experience and make bus the sustainable choice for travel in West Yorkshire.
- **Safe, accessible and welcoming stations, stops and public spaces** - which provide a high-quality, attractive environment for passengers waiting for their services

4.1.2. These outcomes will also work to enable an enhanced journey proposition which is explored in the following sections.

4.2. Our bus passenger journey proposition

4.2.1. This BSIP sets out to deliver a modern, attractive and inclusive passenger experience on all buses across West Yorkshire. The following sections outline the experience we want to provide for all bus passengers regardless of who they are, the service they are travelling on or the journey they need to make.

4.2.2. New policy interventions and initiatives will be delivered to enhance the experience at every stage and support the overall enablement of this proposition.

Table 14 – Bus Passenger Journey Proposition

Before travel - The passenger can log on to the app or website of their choice and find up-to-date, accurate and consistent information - detailing everything from route options, time and cost – which helps them easily plan a journey by bus.

At the bus stop and station - The passenger easily finds their way to the correct bus stop thanks to the recognisable branding and colour coded flags which instantly let them know they're on the right route. The stop has printed information to reassure them they are at the right stop while they wait before the bus arrives quickly and on time. Busier stops will have an electronic display showing the time until the next bus. On all stops, customers can scan a QR code and obtain this information on their phone.

Boarding and paying - All buses are low floor and accessible. When the passenger boards the bus, they know they have different options for how to pay. They may have already bought their ticket using a mobile phone app but can also turn up pay the best price fare for the journey or – easier still – just ‘tap on’ and go with their contactless bank card or mobile and know they’ll be charged, at most, a capped fare at the end of the day.

Onboard - The passenger embarks the bus with the option of a comfortable and clean seat or safe and clear space to park a wheelchair. The passenger can enjoy the free Wi-Fi while they travel. Both the buses’ audio-visual information and their mobile journey planning app help to keep them up to date as they travel and let them know about any potential journey disruptions. The bus is modern, easy to access and welcoming, clean, sanitised, litter free, and the journey is smooth and enjoyable.

Completing the journey - To get to their destination, the passenger may need to change to a different type of transport. Coordinated wayfinding information and network planning ensures making a connection is simple and hassle free with no long delays or too short layovers. Whether on to another bus or train, their ticket is also still valid, or they can just tap and go once again. When the passenger gets off at the bus stop, which is not far from their destination, they are still supported on the final leg of their journey through safe, convenient, and integrated cycling and walking links - ensuring sustainable travel door-to-door.

After the journey - Back at home, the passenger relaxes knowing they’ll be charged appropriately for their day’s travel and any service queries will be resolved quickly via the coordinated travel helpline.

Retaining and attracting new passengers - Potential passengers are encouraged to travel by bus thanks to effective, engaging marketing that presents it as a viable, attractive option for travel.

4.3. Our Bus Service Improvement Plan on a page

Table 15 – Our Bus Service Improvement Plan on a Page

Short-term (2024 – 2025)	Medium-term (2025 – 2028)	Long-term (2029 – 2040)
<p>Clear and Simple Fares:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuation of Mayor’s Fares and exploration of long-term funding options for fares subsidy Improvements to the MCard mobile ticketing app. Development of a Fares and Ticketing and Customer Service and Information strategies. <p>Enhanced Network:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stabilise and protect the current bus network Increase bus service frequencies and operational hours through Network Enhancements and Superbus Undertake a Bus Services Review to explore how Demand Responsive Transport, Accessbus and Park and Ride can support the commercial bus network <p>Inclusive Customer Service, Information and Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New colour coded bus stop maps and flags across West Yorkshire’s core bus network Walk it, Ride it and other behaviour change / marketing and comms campaigns A refreshed Passenger Charter <p>Priority for Buses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing delivery of existing infrastructure programmes – including more bus priority on our roads Developed pipeline of future highway improvements to speed up bus services <p>Greener, Better Buses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-going delivery of the ZEBRA programme, replacing old buses with new zero emission alternatives Continued exploration of the best fuel types and technologies for the region <p>Stops, Stations and Public Spaces:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More real time information screens On-going deployment of PCSOs through the Safer Travel Partnership Accessibility audit of waiting facilities 	<p>Clear and Simple Fares:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver contactless ‘pay-as-you-go’ capped payments integrated across all bus services Revised weekly and monthly ticketing responding to increased flexible working Implement a simplified fares and ticketing offer for all franchised services <p>Enhanced Network:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transition to the franchised bus network Better integration with rail, cycling and walking infrastructure, and other sustainable modes <p>Inclusive Customer Service, Information and Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rollout of new integrated transport branding for the bus network Introduce a single point of customer contact for dealing with passenger queries and complaints A refreshed transport website and enhancements to our journey planner - including to enable real time disruption information <p>Priority for Buses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of an ongoing pipeline of bus priority schemes through CRSTS and other programmes Analysis and review of congestion, bus delay and speeds Adoption of the new Local Transport Plan – including proposals to reallocate roadspace to more sustainable modes <p>Greener, Better Buses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audio visual information on all buses Standardised onboard customer experience, including branding All buses Euro VI or alternative and Clean Air Zone compliant by 2026 <p>Stops, Stations and Public Spaces:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of a programme of bus stop, shelter and station improvements – with better safety and accessibility support, including Dewsbury and Huddersfield 	<p>Clear and Simple Fares:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further integration of bus fares and ticketing with other modes including rail, mass transit and shared mobility <p>Enhanced Network:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evolution towards an enhanced and inclusive network, with more frequent services, new routes and better connectivity region-wide. Integration with rail and mass transit <p>Inclusive Customer Service, Information and Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A single West Yorkshire app as the “go to” place for ticket purchasing, travel information and other services <p>Priority for Buses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver more bus priority across West Yorkshire that is consistent and enforced effectively to make bus journeys quicker and more reliable <p>Greener, Better Buses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transition to fully zero emission bus fleet by 2036 Vehicles with high accessibility standards, better quality interiors and USB and WiFi provision <p>Stops, Stations and Public Spaces:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmentally friendly, sustainable and high quality stops, stations and other waiting spaces.

4.4. Clear and simple fares

Overview

- 4.4.1 **Our ambition:** Clear and simple fares – to make paying for bus travel more affordable, easier, convenient and flexible.
- 4.4.2 There is a need for clear and simple fares as the current offer, with multiple products and retailers, can be expensive and confusing. Though the Mayor's Fares scheme has improved passenger satisfaction with value for money, there remains variation in satisfaction and confidence in buying the best-value ticket between different user groups. Dissatisfaction with other aspects of the bus, including quality of service, are also preventing the realisation of the full benefits of fares subsidy.
- 4.4.3 A sub-objective of the West Yorkshire Bus Reform Assessment relating to fares and ticketing referenced 'making paying for bus travel more affordable, easier, convenient and flexible, with measures identified including:
- Increased satisfaction with value for money within the first year of implementation
 - Improved simplicity of the fare structure within first year of implementation (number of different fares available)
 - Improved access to contactless and integrated ticketing within the first year of implementation
- 4.4.4. We plan to achieve clear and simple fares by:
- Continuing to provide affordable fares which offer good value for money through **Mayor's Fares**, and look into how we provide this sustainably in the longer term to ensure local residents have an equal or better offer than passengers nationally
 - Implement a **simplified fares and ticketing structure** through franchising so fares are easier to understand
 - A **West Yorkshire Fares and Ticketing Strategy** will be developed, setting out the direction of travel for fares and ticketing into the future, across bus and other modes of transport
 - We will review **weekly and monthly ticketing options** in response to changing travel patterns and increased flexible working to ensure the offer is suitable for passengers
 - Introduction of a **multi operator, contactless 'pay-as-you-go' capping system** which will mean passengers are charged the best price for their journey and never more than the daily cap
 - We will further improve our **MCard mobile app** making it a more convenient way to pay for bus travel, for example by introducing gifting and the ability to add tickets onto card
 - Pilot BSIP-funded **mobility credits**, offering free or discounted travel to incentivise bus travel by particular groups
 - **Adapted concessionary fare schemes and travel tokens** to support inclusion and encourage certain demographics, such as young people, to travel more by bus.

Ambitions, interventions and initiatives

Continuing to work with the West Yorkshire Ticketing Company and MCard

- 4.4.4 The Combined Authority's ambition is to provide a simple and easy to use fares and ticketing system that people in West Yorkshire can have confidence in. We aim to keep fares affordable in order to make bus services an attractive option for travel and to create a mechanism where decisions about bus fares are accountable and reflect the needs of our communities.

- 4.4.5 The West Yorkshire Ticketing Company Limited (WYTCL) provides the Combined Authority with a mechanism to work with local bus and rail operators to offer multi-modal, multi-operator tickets.
- 4.4.6 WYTCL is a joint venture with operators and the Combined Authority acts as a delivery partner to promote and sell ticketing products throughout West Yorkshire. Currently, it is promoted to passengers under the MCard brand, it is the leading multi-operator smartcard travel scheme in the North and one of the largest and most successful outside of London's long-established Oyster card.³²

Developing a Fares and Ticketing strategy

- 4.4.7 The Combined Authority is committed to developing a multi-modal West Yorkshire Fares and Ticketing strategy, setting out our intentions for delivery of fares and ticketing across the region and cross boundary over the next five years and beyond. This will include key principles we will implement as we transition to a franchised bus network and into the future, such as:
- **Keeping bus journeys affordable** – by reviewing existing fare structures and products and, subject to funding, continuing to subsidise bus fares to provide better value for money and incentivise more people to travel by bus.
 - **Simplifying and removing the complexities surrounding the customer fares and ticketing offer** – with the ability to set fares we will be able to reduce the number of fares and ticketing products currently available as well as explore a single ticketing offer for West Yorkshire, allowing for a more transparent pricing structure across bus services.
 - **Streamlined retail channels and integration** – introducing one organisational retailer of fares delivered under the new transport network brand, offering consistency, convenience and trust for customers and ensuring full integration of bus fares and ticketing with other transport modes.
 - **Flexibility and customer choice** – providing options for how and when to pay for tickets that suit customer travel needs, such as season tickets bought through an app, singles bought onboard from a driver or a 'tap and go' contactless system that charges at the end of a day's travel.
- 4.4.8 Value for money continues to be a key factor in motivating passengers to travel by bus, which is also why, through development of our Local Transport Plan, we intend to undertake further research into the affordability of travel to help inform our approach to fares setting and ensure it is at the appropriate level.

What does franchising mean for fares and ticketing?

- 4.4.9 Under franchising, the Combined Authority will have the ability to decide on the tickets available and the price customers pay for travel. We will ensure that the customer offer is financially sustainable as we work towards delivering clear and simple fares, with responsibility for farebox revenue guiding this, whilst allowing for additional investment where feasible.

Sustainably reduced, affordable fares for all

- 4.4.10 A reduction in the cost of a bus journey is a key incentive to encourage more people to travel. Our ambition is that bus fares in West Yorkshire are reduced to match the price of

³² West Yorkshire Combined Authority, '[MCard travel smartcard goes totally paperless](#)', 2019

equivalent tickets and products in London, and that there will be parity with other Mayoral Combined Authority areas across the North of England and beyond.

Mayor's Fares and next steps

- 4.4.11 The Combined Authority has already taken steps to reduce local fares through the 'Mayor's Fares' initiative, delivered via existing BSIP investment. This has seen the introduction of £2 single operator fares as well as enabling the MCard DaySaver, West Yorkshire's multi-operator day ticket for any journey in the region, to be capped at £5.00 (initially £4.50) – ensuring this is the maximum anyone should be paying for a day's travel.
- 4.4.12 So that local passengers can continue to benefit from a reduced cost of bus travel, the Combined Authority is exploring joining the National £2 Bus Fare Cap scheme to ensure that West Yorkshire remains in step with the rest of the country and passengers will not be penalised due to regional differences in fares pricing.
- 4.4.13 Beyond the Mayor's Fares and National £2 Bus Fare Cap scheme, the Combined Authority would consider further subsidisation of single and day tickets for all passengers, subject to appropriate and sustainable levels of funding. This would enable passengers in the region to benefit from the impacts seen from the Mayor's Fares scheme, including:
- Passengers choosing to travel more frequently by bus and / or choosing to travel by bus instead of car
 - Personal money savings and increased ability to manage the cost of living
 - Improved satisfaction with value for money
 - Increased likeliness to recommend using the bus to others
- 4.4.14 However, the Combined Authority would seek to avoid a situation where passengers could face a steep increase in the costs of travel following the end of any subsidy and / or any situation where passengers in West Yorkshire would be worse off than elsewhere in the country.

New and adapted concessionary fares schemes

- 4.4.15 Reduced fares and travel offers will continue to be used to promote bus use and sustainable travel behaviours by certain demographics who are either particularly dependent or excluded by bus travel, or as incentives to encourage irregular travellers to use the bus more, as follows:
- **Under 19s** – reduced pre purchase and pay onboard bus fares as well as maintaining the simplified, concessionary "Fare Deal for under 19s" introduced in 2021.
 - **19 - 25-year-olds** - reduced pre purchase.
 - **Targeted groups** – through either reduced pre purchase or initiatives such as mobility credits, where free or discounted travel is offered to specific groups such as job seekers, students on work experience placements, individuals described as economically inactive, refugees etc.
 - **Older and Disabled People eligible for statutory concessionary fares** – free within the terms of the Concessionary Fare Scheme. A review will be undertaken to understand how this can be extended to pre-9.30.

Mobility credits

- 4.4.16 Mobility credits are free or discounted bus tickets that can be awarded to targeted groups of people. The Combined Authority has developed a strategic approach to

determining who should receive mobility credits and for what benefit, utilising expertise from across the organisation, including transport operations and policy, skills and education, culture and behaviour change. This has determined that the initiative should balance encouraging modal shift towards bus, as well as incorporating an economic and social benefit. Therefore, the credits will be distributed with the intention to increase people's access to key destinations in West Yorkshire, such as job or education opportunities, cultural sites or health centres.

- 4.4.17 Suitable organisations to partner with will be identified, for example, the Combined Authority may establish a partnership with an organisation who works with unemployed people. Mobility credits would be provided to them for distribution to the intended user, either through our ticketing app or through a smartcard loaded with mobility credits, to ensure inclusivity. Through monitoring and evaluation we will be able to ascertain how helpful the scheme has been in helping people to access bus services, employment, education or training and the findings will help inform our fares and ticketing strategy.

Additional steps

- 4.4.18 Additional steps being taken as part of this BSIP to reduce bus fares in West Yorkshire include:

- the introduction of contactless daily capping (priced at the same value as the MCard DaySaver ticket), with a fair price promise that the passenger will be charged the best value price for their day's travel.
- reduced bus fare offers in targeted locations such as the Keighley Superbus scheme.

Choice about how and when to pay

- 4.4.19 Our ambition is to provide customers with the choice about how and when they pay for bus travel. We plan to do this by offering a mix of new and existing retail channels, including:

- Mobile phone apps – operator only barcode ticketing apps have proved popular and, since its introduction in 2021, many customers have switched from smartcards to the MCard Mobile app. These apps are suited to pre travel purchase and enable the customer to feel in control.
- A contactless pay-as-you-go capping system - across all services we will enable passengers to choose to just 'tap on' with their mobile phone or bank card in the confidence they will be charged, at the most, the best value fare up to the value of the daily fare cap. 'Tap off' readers will also be installed on all buses, enabling the ability for passengers to indicate when they disembark a bus so a fare can also be calculated that charges them just for the specific journey they made.
- Smartcard – concessionary travel passes and some season tickets will be issued on a smartcard, which registers each journey as the customer boards.
- Cash on boarding the bus – we understand that paying by cash is still important for people who are not digitally minded, therefore passengers will still be able to pay for the bus in this way when they board, and any view to its removal kept under review as part of an Equality Impact Assessment

Developing the Combined Authority's ticketing app

- 4.4.20 The Combined Authority will continue to develop its ticketing app, the MCard Mobile app, as a core part of its ticketing offer. The MCard Mobile app was the first multi-operator/multi-modal mobile phone ticketing app retailing bus and rail QR code tickets. As of 2024, the app accounts for 90% of off-bus sales, which is an increase of 70%

compared to April 2021. The app enables customers to pre purchase day and season tickets in the form of time limited barcodes which are readable by both local bus ticket machines and rail station gates.

- 4.4.21 MCard Mobile also has a facility which enables organisations to purchase tickets and “gift” them to the app. Since its introduction this facility has been used by colleges to buy tickets for bursary students, JobCentre Plus for job seekers and has enabled charities assisting people fleeing domestic violence and asylum seekers to arrange travel on their behalf.
- 4.4.22 Building on its success, further enhancements to the app will be made to improve the service it provides for bus passengers and establish it as the number one choice for fares and ticketing information in West Yorkshire. They include:
- In-app improvements to improve usability.
 - Improved journey planning features and live bus / real time information provided through the app.
 - Greater notification features that keep passengers informed.
 - Live bus / real time information provided through the app.
 - Improved anti-fraud systems.
- 4.4.23 The app is a core part of the Combined Authority’s short- and medium-term vision, with developments ensuring it is better integrated with its wider information and customer service offer. In the longer term, the Combined Authority is open to understanding how the app may need to evolve to respond to wider technology changes.

A trial of time-limited barcode tickets:

- 4.4.24 Currently passengers making two leg journeys involving different bus operators are paying more than they would if both legs were operated by the same company. To overcome this ahead of the delivery of capping, and subject to funding, we want to trial time-limited barcode tickets using the MCard Mobile app, with the option of a printed version if necessary. Rather than offer travel from point to point, these tickets would be valid for travel on any or all services for a limited time period - provisionally 90 minutes.
- 4.4.25 These would suit passengers who need to make a journey that requires them to switch between services run by different operators - which they currently pay a financial premium for - but who would still not necessarily get good value from a full day multi-operator MCard ticket.
- 4.4.26 The key principles for these tickets are that they would be:
- Valid for a set time following activation
 - Cheaper than an MCard or single operator day ticket
 - Available for use on any operator / number of buses within the set time period
 - Available via the MCard mobile ticketing app
- 4.4.27 A trial would help us to determine:
- Passenger reaction and uptake – do the tickets attract new passengers to bus?
 - The commercial viability of the scheme and reimbursements mechanism.
 - Potential customer service issues – such as late connections preventing travel within the time period.

'Pay-as-you-go' contactless capping

- 4.4.28 The Combined Authority retains the ambition for a 'London-style' multi-operator, contactless 'pay-as-you-go' capping system that works across all buses, and ultimately other modes of public transport across the region. This system should offer a best fare guarantee for passengers that charges them appropriately for all journeys made at the end of a day or week, at a price that is no more than the best value fare they could have purchased at point of travel.
- 4.4.29 This could be supported by an account-based system that the customer could access via the Combined Authority's mobile app or other web-based platforms, to review journey taps and charges.
- 4.4.30 Recognising the technological and commercial complexities of such a system, the Combined Authority has not actively pushed to develop a West Yorkshire based offer while it awaits development of the bus-industry-led 'Project Coral'. As this is rolled out, the Combined Authority supports the region joining the system as soon as is practicable (currently expected from 2026).
- 4.4.31 Furthermore, bus franchising makes the delivery of such an offer potentially less commercially complex and, subject to appropriate funding, to invest in the required onboard technology it will seek to make this 'pay-as-you-go' contactless capping across all buses part of its future fares and ticketing offer.
- 4.4.32 The Combined Authority will also continue to liaise with local rail operators, the Rail Delivery Group and Great British Railways to understand developments with capped payments on rail and identify opportunities for future multi-modal integration.

Making fares and ticketing simpler to understand

- 4.4.33 Customers will continue to be advised that they do not need to pay more than the cost of an MCard day ticket for a day of unlimited bus travel across West Yorkshire. A fair price promise will apply giving assurance that customers will only pay the cost of the journeys they make and they won't pay anymore if using more than one company's services. The MCard Mobile app will be positioned as a "go to" place for pre-payment ticket products tailored to customer needs.
- 4.4.34 We recognise that travel patterns have changed since the pandemic and this requires a different approach to ticketing offers. This is why we are reviewing our weekly and monthly product ranges for bus only, and bus and rail tickets to ensure they are more flexible and better suited to what current and potential passengers need for the journeys they want to make.
- 4.4.35 We will continue to make sure in the short-term that multi journey tickets are able to be used on any bus company's service and that for people who have a regular travel pattern they will be able to buy travel in blocks of a day, a week, a month or a year at a discount.

Summary - when this will be delivered?

4.4.36 Our ambitions for clear and simple fares will be delivered across the following time periods:

Short term (2024/25)

- BSIP-funded **Mayor's Fares** - £2 single operator fares and £5.00 multi-operator MCard DaySaver ticket - will continue to be offered.
- Explore **joining the National Fare Scheme** and agree a sustainable approach to fares subsidy moving forwards, that offers West Yorkshire residents an equal or better offer than available nationally.
- Develop the **West Yorkshire Fares and Ticketing Strategy** to set the direction for fares and ticketing across bus and other transport modes in future years
- **Adapted concessionary fare schemes and travel tokens** to support inclusion and encourage particular groups, such as young people, to travel more by bus.
- Pilot BSIP-funded **mobility credits**, offering free or discounted travel to incentivise bus travel by particular groups
- **Target reduced fares offers where necessary** e.g. through the Keighley Superbus scheme
- Continued delivery of MCard **mobile ticketing app enhancements**, enabling gifting and the ability to load to smartcard
- **Dedicated research into the affordability** of bus travel

Medium term (2025-2028)

- A review of **weekly and monthly ticketing options** in response to changing travel patterns and increased flexible working to ensure the offer is suitable for passengers
- **Trialling of time-limited mobile tickets**, increasing the flexibility and convenience of purchasing tickets
- Agree and implement a **fares and ticketing offer for all franchised services** that makes paying for bus travel affordable, easier, convenient and flexible
- Introduction of **contactless 'pay-as-you-go' capped payments**, integrated across all bus services alongside installation of tap off readers which will mean passengers are charged the best price for their journey and never more than the daily cap
- Introduce one organisational retailer of fares under a new transport network brand
- Further **expansion of the mobile app** to link ticket sales, journey planning and live information / customer service.

Long-term (2029 onwards)

- Further **integration of bus fares and ticketing with other modes** including rail, mass transit and other forms of shared mobility.

4.5. Enhanced, fully inclusive and more cohesive bus network

Overview

- 4.5.1 **Our ambition:** An enhanced, fully inclusive and more cohesive bus and wider public transport network – which takes people where they need to go, when they need to go, and encouraging confidence in the network.
- 4.5.2 The current West Yorkshire bus network is not meeting the travel needs of residents and visitors to the region. This can be seen by the way that services aren't always routed to the places that people want to travel to and at the times they need them, and many parts of the network are not financially viable without additional public sector funding support.
- 4.5.3 Despite investment to support the network, overall, it has continued to shrink with reduced service hours, frequencies and some routes cut altogether.
- 4.5.4 A sub-objective of the West Yorkshire Bus Reform Assessment relating to the network was 'taking people where they need to go, when they need to go, and catering for the complexity of modern travel patterns', with measures identified including:
- Improvement in core network coverage in the first three years of implementation
 - Improvement in service frequency in the first three years of implementation
 - Improvement in network integration (between and within modes) in the first three years of implementation
- 4.5.5 We plan to achieve an enhanced, fully inclusive and more cohesive bus network by:
- **Developing a multi-year network plan** – which will guide evolution of the existing network to deliver improved consistency, connectivity and convenience for the passenger, with core principles including:
 - **Supporting current network** provision to provide a stable and reliable service.
 - **Continuing to enhance service frequencies and operational hours** throughout the morning, daytime and evening through our BSIP Network Enhancements programme
 - **Working with operators** to continue delivery of Superbus services (locality-based pilots of enhanced services).
 - Explore opportunities to **evolve and develop the network** in the longer term.
 - **Reviewing our 'Socially Necessary' Tendered Services Criteria** to take a more holistic approach to service provision that factors in social benefits, value for money and maximises connectivity.
 - Exploring the role of **Park and Ride, AccessBus and Demand Responsive Transport** to achieve wider connectivity.

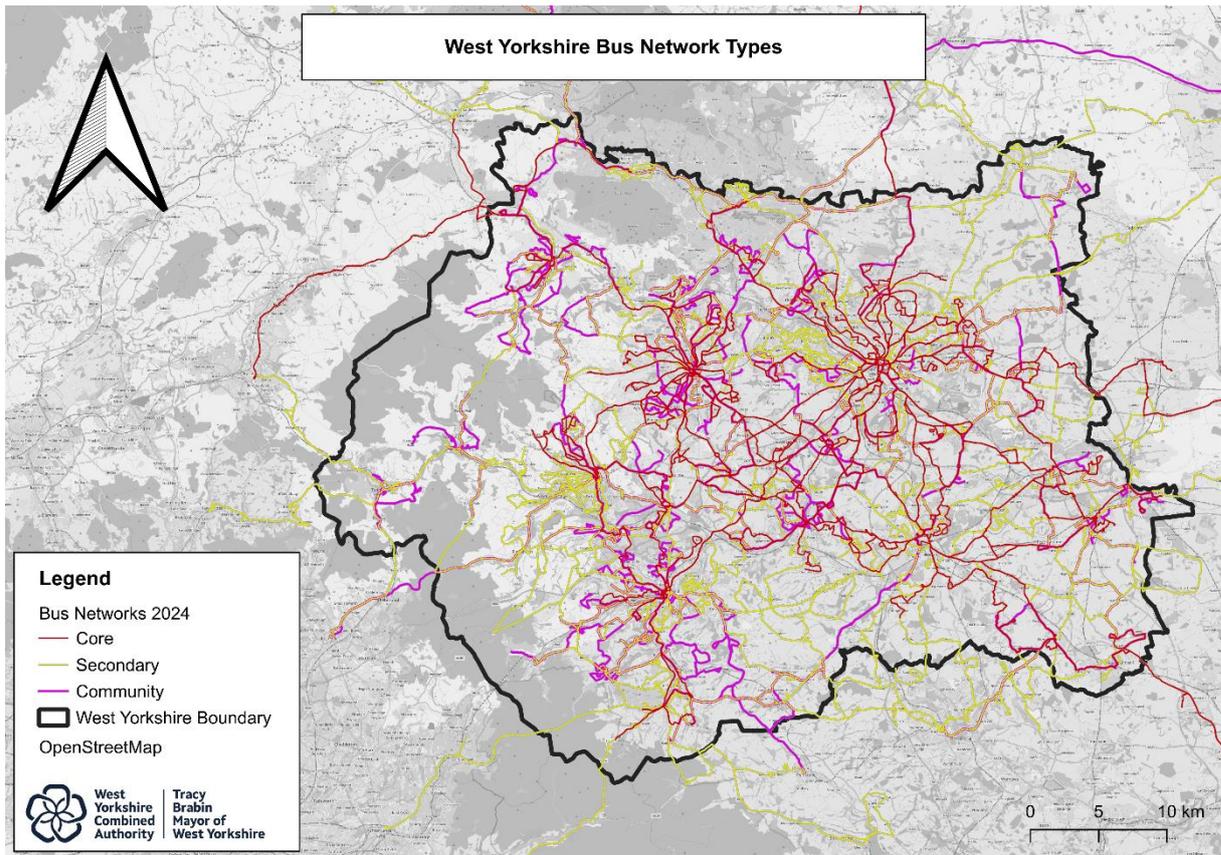
The West Yorkshire Bus Network

- 4.5.6 Fundamentally our bus network, made of different services, routes and corridors, needs to take people where they want to go, when they want to go, in order to be a viable option for travel.
- 4.5.7 West Yorkshire has a diverse, multicentric geography. Demand for bus travel is similarly diverse with a mix of significant city/ town centres, smaller local centres and an extensive rural community. The West Yorkshire Bus Network therefore needs to be adaptable and offer tailored solutions to effectively service all of our communities' complex modern travel patterns.
- 4.5.8 Our ambition is to evolve and grow the existing network. This is to improve connectivity across the region and provide a more convenient, attractive and fully inclusive service offer for existing and potential passengers. To achieve these aims, we need to:
- Enable the bus network to support the complexity of journey patterns needed to sustain modern life, especially for those who mix work, childcare and other caring responsibilities.
 - Enable more households to be within walking distance of a frequent 'core' bus service to their nearest city/town centre.
 - Enable better access by bus to edge and out of town employment.
 - Ensure the hours of operation of buses fit with the employment needs of people, especially shift workers and in the night-time economy.
 - Provide a viable bus network which encourages people to switch from the private car.
 - Identify viable new links between communities where demand indicates.
- 4.5.9 This will support us to meet this BSIP's ambitious KPIs and targets which are listed in section 5 of this BSIP. To work towards achieving these targets, this BSIP provides the foundations of a multi-year network plan which will map out changes and improvements across three time periods, short-term (2024/25), medium-term (2025-2029) and longer term (2029-2040).

Key network evolution principles

- 4.5.10 The evolution of our network will continue to be guided by key principles. Firstly, we propose to retain our existing operational concepts of a region-wide bus system:
- **Core Network** – services with an average frequency of every 15 minutes or better, that mostly operate on a commercial basis.
 - **Secondary Network** - services operating at less than 15-minute frequency up to an hourly frequency.
 - **Community Network** - which is made up of less frequent services and are partially or wholly subsidised by the Combined Authority to maintain socially necessary connectivity.
- 4.5.11 These networks, as they currently exist, are mapped in Figure 8 below.

Figure 8: West Yorkshire Bus Network Types



4.5.12 To improve the West Yorkshire Bus Network, we are continuing to seek to expand the Core network by delivering more frequent services and across longer service hours. Additionally, we aim to make the secondary/community networks more regular and consistent.

4.5.13 Primarily this will:

- Expand the number of services and routes so that more people can access a bus that runs approximately every 15 minutes or better.
- Ensure buses running on our less frequent routes are more consistent and regular so they can still be relied upon for travel.
- Ensure service frequencies extend throughout the day from early morning to evening and are designed to serve the needs of families with children, shift workers and those working in the night-time economy.

Bus Services Review

4.5.14 A review of the strategic drivers for all different elements of the bus network is currently underway to:

- Ensure a shared understanding of the reason why the Combined Authority provides these services and what it is trying to achieve, as part of a connected customer offer that supports wider ambitions for buses in West Yorkshire.
- Refresh the associated funding criteria so it is aligned to this strategy and financial/commercial realities.
- Explore where operational improvements and efficiencies, including cost savings, can be made to these services.

4.5.15 This review is expected to be completed in 2025.

4.5.16 A focus of the bus services review will be to assess not only the typical Core, Secondary and Community networks (which constitute a vast majority of the services in the region), but also to develop the alternative provision of services which support the commercial network. The services that operate outside of the general bus network include:

- **Cross-boundary services** - currently provided for by the commercial operators with some grants to third-party organisations that also tender for them (i.e. DalesBus).
- **School services** – provided by small / medium sized operators, as well as larger operators. Generally funded by the Combined Authority and local councils as a statutory requirement to provide school children access to school due to their accessibility requirements, or to other students who are requiring additional provision.
- **AccessBus** – a demand responsive service that operates predominantly to transport people who are less able to use a standard bus service. Operates door-to-door and accessed via a telephone booking system.
- **Park & Ride (P&R)** – a rapid transport offer designed to support mode shift by transporting car drivers from out-of-town car parks into the centre of Leeds. Currently there are three sites - Stourton, Elland Road, and Temple Green.
- **Demand Responsive Transport (DRT)** – A ‘FlexiBus’ pilot was run by the Combined Authority for 18 months between 2021 -2023. No DRT services are currently active, but it remains a strategic option for the region’s bus network

4.5.17 These types of services will continue to play a role in the region’s bus network where a traditional, public stop-to-stop bus service is not appropriate.

What does franchising mean for the bus network?

4.5.18 Under Franchising, the Combined Authority will take control over the network with buses running on the routes we specify, providing us with greater control over where buses go, how frequently they run and the service hours they operate, supporting greater connectivity across the region. We will also have an enforceable performance regime to ensure that bus operators manage the network to our standards.

4.5.19 The Franchising Scheme sets out the network that will be [franchised](#). This reflects the network as of March 2024, rather than a redesigned network, to support a smooth transition.

4.5.20 To manage the transition to the Proposed Franchising Scheme, bus service contracts will be rolled out gradually across West Yorkshire. It will be completed in three stages throughout 2027 to 2028, as per the [Lotting Strategy](#). Franchised services will be initially contracted for up to seven years.

4.5.21 Beyond this, there is opportunity to evolve and grow the network, including how bus integrates with other transport modes, but the Combined Authority will need to ensure it can afford the network of services that it franchises using the income from fare revenue and other funding sources.

Ambitions, interventions and initiatives

4.5.22 Our multi-year plan for development of the network can be separated into the short, medium and long term. This is summarised in **Table 16** below and explained in more detail in the following sections.

Table 16: Network Plan Breakdown

Short term: Network stabilisation and support (2024/25)	Medium term: Transition to a franchised network (2025-28)	Longer term: Network development and growth (2029-2040)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BSIP funded network protection • BSIP funded network enhancements- identifying services for further investment • Superbus • Bus Services Review • Updated tendered services criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retention • Increased frequency and operational hours • Ongoing route reviews • Opportunities for integration with other services and modes • Exploring DRT, Park and Ride 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved network performance – service optimisation, reliability and punctuality • Frequency targets • Evolving the network: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Growing with spatial priority areas ▪ New services ▪ Express services ▪ Night buses ▪ Network review options and integration with mass transit

Short term (2024/2025): Network stabilisation and support

4.5.23 In the short term our focus is on working with commercial bus operators to protect and stabilise the existing bus network, as well as making improvements where possible. This will be achieved, for example, by continuing to invest BSIP funding where available into the delivery of a pipeline of new and enhanced services and Superbus schemes, as well as encouraging commercially led enhancements and a return to pre-covid levels of services as patronage increases.

BSIP-funded network protection

4.5.24 It has been a turbulent period in the public transport market since the Covid-19 pandemic. Many factors have combined causing bus services to be reduced or even fully withdrawn since 2021 when our first BSIP was published.

4.5.25 The issues faced include, but are not limited to, the record levels of inflation causing operational costs to operators to spiral upwards, a reduction in passenger numbers due to the evolution of the job market towards new ways of working as well as a shortage of staff within bus companies. These problems have meant that the bus network does not perform as it did previously, which has added to the connectivity issues faced in the region as a whole.

4.5.26 To respond to these challenges, we have used part of our BSIP funding (referred to as BSIP+) to protect and stabilise the network, investing £10m to date to ensure that services at risk of cancellation have been saved where possible.

4.5.27 The Combined Authority will continue to invest BSIP+ and other funding to protect and stabilise the network where appropriate. Table 17 Below details the services protected as of March 2024.

Table 17 – Services protected with BSIP+ funding in 2024/25 (as of March 2024)

Service	Route	Start Date	Initially Contracted Until
7/7A/7S	Leeds - Primley Park/Alwoodley/Shadwell	23 July 2023	16 February 2025
10 (9)	Outer Leeds Circular	02 January 2024	01 January 2027
20	Halifax – Pellon – Rye Lane	27 August 2023	31 August 2024
21	Halifax – Hanson Lane – Highroad Well	29 October 2023	31 August 2024
22	Halifax, Market Street – Bus Station – Claremount – Halifax	29 October 2023	31 August 2024
55	Leeds - Cottingley Circular	23 July 2023	16 February 2025
62	Leeds - East End Park Circular	23 July 2023	16 February 2025
65	Leeds - Morley - Gildersome	23 July 2023	16 February 2025
86	Rodley- Armley - Middleton	23 July 2023	16 February 2025
91	Pudsey - Headingley- Halton Moor	23 July 2023	16 February 2025
184	Huddersfield – Slaithwaite - Oldham	10 December 2023	30 March 2024
342	Huddersfield – Almondbury Circular	23 July 2023	27 October 2024
343	Halifax – Barkisland – Elland – Blackley - Huddersfield	27 August 2023	31 August 2024
356	Huddersfield - Longwood	23 July 2023	27 October 2024
387	Huddersfield - Beaumont Park Circular	23 July 2023	27 October 2024
524	Halifax – Ovenden – Illingworth - Mixenden	27 August 2023	31 August 2024
526	Halifax – Bradshaw – Queensbury – Hungerhill / Shelf	27 August 2023	31 August 2024
530	Halifax – Pellon Lane – Pellon – Fountainhead Village	27 August 2023	31 August 2024
532	Halifax – Washer Lane – King Cross	27 August 2023	31 August 2024
534	Halifax – Shibden – Brow Lane - Northowram	27 August 2023	31 August 2024
541/542	Norton Tower - Halifax - Siddal	23 July 2023	1 September 2024
546	Halifax – Newland - Warley	27 August 2023	31 August 2024
549	Halifax - Brighouse - Huddersfield	23 July 2023	1 September 2024
561/562	Halifax – West Vale – Ripponden – Sowerby Bridge Circular	27 August 2023	31 August 2024
563/563A	Halifax – Copley – West Vale - Elland - Brighouse	27 August 2023	31 August 2024
574	Halifax – Sowerby Bridge - Midgley	27 August 2023	31 August 2024
577	Halifax – Sowerby Bridge – Hubberton - Halifax	27 August 2023	31 August 2024

Bus Service Improvement Plan 2024

579	Halifax - Sowerby Bridge	23 July 2023	1 September 2024
586	Halifax - Ripponden - Commons	23 July 2023	1 September 2024
587	Halifax – Sowerby Bridge – Ripponden – Rochdale Interchange	27 August 2023	31 August 2024
612/613/614	Buttershaw - Bradford - Shipley	23 July 2023	18 May 2024
617/618	Allerton - Bradford - Holme Wood	23 July 2023	18 May 2024
621	Haworth Road - Bradford -Bierley Circular	23 July 2023	18 May 2024
626	Bradford - Bingley - Baildon	23 July 2023	18 May 2024
671	West Bowling - Bradford - Thorpe Edge	23 July 2023	18 May 2024
D1	Huddersfield – Kirkburton – Scissett – Denby Dale	29 October 2023	31 August 2024
X84	Leeds - Otley- Ilkley	23 July 2023	16 February 2025

BSIP-funded network enhancements

4.5.28 Furthermore, we have utilised our BSIP funding to enhance the existing network through increased frequencies and longer operational hours of existing services, as well as contracting new routes. As of June 2024, we have invested £4.6m in 14 service enhancements, set out in Table 18 below.

Table 18: Tranche 1 of Network Enhancements

Service	Route	Description	Service Change Date	Initially Contracted Until
548/549	Halifax – Brighouse - Huddersfield	Daytime frequency uplift from 20 minutes to combined 15 mins/ 30 through to Huddersfield	February 2024	February 2025
14	Pudsey - Leeds	Daytime frequency uplift from 60 minutes to 30 mins, with broadly hourly evening and Sunday service	February 2024	February 2025
106	Wakefield - Hall Green via Kettlethorpe	Evening frequency uplift from 60 minutes to 30 minutes	February 2024	February 2025
148/149	Wakefield- Knottingley via Pontefract	Evening frequency uplift from 60 minutes to 30 minutes	February 2024	February 2025
189	Wakefield - Castleford via Normanton	Evening frequency uplift from 60 minutes to 30 minutes	February 2024	February 2025
268	Bradford - Wakefield via Cleckheaton	Evening frequency uplift from 60 minutes to 30 minutes	February 2024	February 2025
444/446	Leeds - Wakefield via Rothwell	Evening frequency uplift from 60 minutes to 30 minutes	February 2024	February 2025
496	Wakefield - Upton via South Elmsall	Evening frequency uplift from 60 minutes to 30 minutes	February 2024	February 2025

Bus Service Improvement Plan 2024

126	Wakefield - Dewsbury	Evening frequency uplift from 60 minutes to 30 minutes	February 2024	February 2025
195/196	Wakefield - Hemsworth via Walton & Ryhill	Evening frequency uplift from 60 minutes, and with no evening provision to Hemsworth, to every 30 minutes	February 2024	February 2025

Table 19 - Tranche 1.5 of Network Enhancements

Service	Route	Description	Service Change Date	Initially Contracted Until
601/602	Bradford Outer Ring Road	New orbital service	May 2024	July 2025
541/542	Siddal – Norton Tower	Daytime frequency uplift from 30 minutes to 20 minutes	May 2024	July 2025
324	Huddersfield – Meltham	Daytime frequency uplift from 20 minutes to 15 minutes	July 2024	July 2025
164/165	Leeds - Selby	Daytime frequency uplift from 120 minutes to 60 minutes (Micklefield/Sherburn)	July 2024	July 2025
140/141	Pontefract – Leeds via J32	Evening enhancement from 60 minutes to 30 minutes	July 2024	July 2025
135/136*	Pontefract – Eastbourne via Chequerfield and Harewood Park	Evening enhancement from 60 minutes to 30 minutes	July 2024	July 2025
102*	Wakefield – Eastmoor	Evening enhancement from 60 minutes to 30 minutes	July 2024	July 2025
122*	Wakefield - Lupset - Roundwood - Ossett - Gawthorpe	Evening enhancement from 60 minutes to 30 minutes	July 2024	July 2025
91	Halton Moor - Pudsey	Daytime frequency uplift from 30 minutes to 20 minutes	Subject to Affordability	
607	Bradford - Thornton	Daytime frequency uplift from 15 minutes to 10 minutes		
212	Dewsbury – Hospital – Alverthorpe - Wakefield	Daytime frequency uplift from 60 minutes to 30 minutes		

4.5.29 Further tranches of enhancements are in the pipeline to be delivered over the next 18 months. Our approach to identifying which services are optimal for improvement is as follows:

Identifying future services for enhancements

4.5.30 We have developed criteria to identify which services are most favourable for enhancing in the region, by choosing services which:

- Stop near the most people and jobs;
- Go past the people who need public transport the most (such as those without their own car and the most deprived areas in the region according to the Indexes of Multiple Deprivation) and;
- Routes that mainly travel through rural communities.

4.5.31 Using this criterion, we can rank all the bus services in the region based on these different metrics to decide which services will make the biggest difference if we take steps to improve them.

4.5.32 These rankings then create a pipeline of services for delivery over time with a review of the service list as the network evolves. As funding streams become available, the Combined Authority will improve services that rank the highest for their accessibility benefits.

BSIP Superbus schemes

4.5.33 As part of the development of the BSIP, the Combined Authority invited proposals from local bus operators based on how the National Bus Strategy’s ‘Superbus’ concept could be applied and piloted in West Yorkshire.

4.5.34 This looked to understand the effectiveness of combined measures such as local flat fares and higher frequency services on increasing bus patronage and influencing other travel behaviours.

4.5.35 Four proposals have been developed and / or delivered in collaboration with bus operators, as set out in Table 20 below. The Combined Authority has successfully negotiated that the services will be funded through BSIP for three financial years, with operators continuing to fund for a further two years.

Table 20 – BSIP funded Superbus schemes

Service(s)	Operator	Proposed Route	Improvement	Service Change Date	Contracted Until
K2/K3, K7	Transdev	K2/K3 – (Keighley – Braithwaite) K7 (Keighley – Oakworth)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K2/K3 – daytime frequency uplift from 15 minutes to 10 minutes combined • K7 – daytime frequency uplift from 20 minutes to 12 minutes £1 flat fare across the Keighley local network	3 September 2023	3 September 2028
Aireline	Transdev	60/60A (Keighley – Shipley – Leeds)	60/60A – daytime frequency enhancement from 30 minutes to 20 minutes between Shipley and Leeds, with this section renamed 60A. The 60A will also operate via Calverley Lane hourly to reinstate a lost link.	3 September 2023	3 September 2028
501/X1	First West Yorkshire	X1 - (Huddersfield – one stop in Elland – Halifax) 501 - Huddersfield – Lindley – Huddersfield Royal Infirmary – Elland – West Vale – Calderdale Royal Hospital – Halifax)	Service 503 to be withdrawn and replaced with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • X1, operating more directly between Huddersfield and Halifax and linking in to new Elland rail station when open. Enhanced frequency from 60 minutes daytime and 120 minutes evenings and Sundays to every 15 minutes daytime and 30 minutes evenings and Sundays. • 501, enhanced from a limited service to every 15 minutes daytime and 30 minutes evening and Sundays, 	18 February 2024	18 February 2029

			<p>providing a new direct link between Huddersfield Royal Infirmary and Calderdale Royal Hospital and Weatherhill Road area of Huddersfield with a new service</p> <p>Both services will co-ordinate between Halifax and Calderdale Royal Hospital to provide a service every 7/8 minutes</p>		
Subject to further approvals	Arriva	Normanton/ Castleford service enhancements	<p>Enhanced services through Altofts, Normanton and Castleford, with better, new direct links to Pinderfields hospital. Additional evening and Sunday provision throughout the Normanton/ Castleford area</p>	October 2024 - TBC	

4.5.36 Impacts have been positive with increased patronage seen on services (as exemplified by the case study on the Keighley Superbus service included in section 1.4).

4.5.37 Any future operator led Superbus proposals will be assessed as and when they come forward, and we will continue to work closely with operators through the West Yorkshire Bus Alliance to identify any areas of improvement that can be delivered through mutual agreement.

Medium term (2025–2028): Transition to a Franchised network

4.5.38 Over the next period, up to 2028, the region’s bus services will be transitioning towards a fully franchised network. Bus services will be operated under franchise contracts, where bus operators bid to run the services through a competitive procurement process managed by the Combined Authority.

4.5.39 To support a smooth transition, the network will be franchised in the same form as it stood in March 2024. This network definition, as published in the Proposed Franchising Scheme, creates the legal basis for the implementation of Franchising. Defining the network also enables practical considerations to be taken into account as services move to operation under franchise contracts. Looking beyond the start of franchising being implemented, there will be the opportunity to consider potential improvements in network coverage.

4.5.40 As a key element of the franchising programme, the implementation of a network performance regime would be undertaken to ensure that franchised services run to the standards expected of the Combined Authority. This will be introduced as the contracts are tendered.

4.5.41 In the interim ‘transition’ period the bus network may change, either due to commercial/ operator-led decisions to curtail or enhance the network at their discretion, or through investment into services via the BSIP funding that has currently been or may in future be allocated to the West Yorkshire Combined Authority for this purpose. Table 21 sets out the network objectives in the medium term.

Table 21: Medium term network objectives – 2025 to 2028

Network Objectives – 2025 to 2028
--

Retention of the network	Keeping the network operating at the current capacity by supporting services at risk of cancellation
Increasing frequency and operating hours of services	Enhancing the network where possible, subject to sustainable funding opportunities and user demand

Ongoing route reviews

4.5.42 As part of business-as-usual operations within the Combined Authority, bus services will continue to be assessed to ensure that they are offering the best service they can. The mechanism for route reviews involves taking feedback from operators and passengers to identify any issues arising. These are organised on an ad-hoc basis when it becomes evident that a particular area needs addressing.

4.5.43 Route reviews include:

- Ensuring that services work effectively to their timetables
- Ensuring that buses go where passengers want them to
- Preventing duplication of service and providing smooth operation between operators.

Integration with other services and modes

4.5.44 Where integration opportunities are available, the Combined Authority will work with our partners in the Bus Alliance to promote multi-modal journeys for aligning trips including bus, train, Park and Ride and active modes.

4.5.45 Examples of better integration include promoting timetable alignment between different bus operators, alignment between bus and rail timetables where appropriate and promoting active travel through the mobility hub programme.

4.5.46 During the transition to franchising the Combined Authority will design the franchise contracts to consider individual elements of each service, including where appropriate giving due attention to interchange options.

Exploring Park and Ride services (P&R)

4.5.47 West Yorkshire currently has three bus ‘Park & Ride’ schemes which have been delivered in partnership between the Combined Authority, Leeds City Council and bus operators. These are:

- Elland Road (opened in 2014)
- Temple Green (opened in 2017)
- Stourton (opened in September 2021)

4.5.48 These Park & Ride schemes generated an estimated usage of 1.1 million passengers in 2019 and have encouraged many passengers to switch from private cars and use bus for at least part of their journeys, supporting our modal shift ambitions.

4.5.49 The Combined Authority is currently in the process of writing a new Park and Ride Strategy, as part of its Bus Service Review, to reaffirm how the offer fits as part of a wider connectivity offer and understand how the successful model developed in Leeds could be rolled out across other locations in West Yorkshire.

4.5.50 As part of this BSIP’s medium-term action plan, the Combined Authority will work with Local Authorities to identify suitable locations and potentially expand the number of Park

and Ride schemes across West Yorkshire, as well as continue to support the existing sites to ensure they are delivering benefits for local users.

Exploring Demand Responsive Transport services (DRT)

- 4.5.51 DRT services are a hybrid transport option between traditional bus services and taxis. They have been used in other areas across the country and globally to provide a more flexible approach to public transport services by allowing passengers to request pick up and drop off within an area defined by the scheme. The buses in the DRT area then use mapping technology to generate a route between the locations selected by passengers.
- 4.5.52 In our first BSIP we committed to investigate locations within West Yorkshire where this type of service could be a beneficial addition to the current connectivity provision.
- 4.5.53 A pilot scheme was launched in East Leeds in 2021. Whilst this particular project was unsuccessful in meeting its goals and therefore not carried forward, reflections on why this project did not meet its stated objectives are currently being considered through development of an internal report. As part of this BSIP’s medium-term action plan, the outcomes of this report and any lessons learnt will inform development of DRT strategy and exploration of future DRT schemes as suitable projects become apparent.

Long term (2029-2040): Network development and growth

- 4.5.54 This period will see most services operate in the region under the new franchising scheme. These will be the same routes that were operational in March 2024 but with the long-term ambition to have increased frequencies and operational hours compared to their pre-franchising equivalent services.
- 4.5.55 The initial contracts for the franchised services will be for up to seven years, meaning the network would not change dramatically as the services will be agreed, with the focus on improving passenger experience and network performance, including service optimisation, reliability and punctuality.

Table 22 - Network Objectives 2028 to 2040

Network Objectives – 2028 to 2040	
Better passenger experience	Ensuring the bus network routes and frequencies are optimised and working for West Yorkshire residents, taking people where they need to go, when they need to go
Improved network performance	Improved reliability - reducing the number of cancellations
	Improved punctuality - ensuring that buses turn up when they say they will

Targets for the network

- 4.5.56 We aim to make the network run more frequently and for longer hours. Over the coming years as we transition to a franchised network, we will use funding where available and make the most of our partnership with operators through the West Yorkshire Bus Alliance to enhance the network.
- 4.5.57 Our ambition is to see the network operate to the targets developed within our first BSIP, shown in **Table 23**, subject to appropriate funding and demand. These targets are

considered stretch targets which would be the optimal viable frequencies were demand to be sufficient to maintain them at this rate.

Table 23 BSIP Bus Network Frequency and Operational hour targets 2024-2035

Network Type	Weekday Service Hours (Mon-Sat)	Current	Target by 2028 (by end of franchising transition period)	Target by 2035 (by end of first franchised contract years)
Core	23:00-05:00	As Required	As Required	When commercially viable
	05:00-07:00	Every 30 minutes	Every 15 minutes	Every 10 minutes
	07:00-19:00	Every 15 minutes	Every 10 minutes	Less than 10 minutes
	19:00-21:00	Every 30 minutes	Every 15 minutes	Every 10 minutes
	21:00-23:00	Every 30 minutes	Every 15 Minutes	Every 10 minutes
Other services	23:00-05:00	As Required	As Required	As Required
	05:00-07:00	As Required	Every 60 minutes	Every 30 minutes
	07:00-19:00	At least every 60 minutes	Every 30 minutes	Every 20 minutes
	19:00-21:00	As Required	Every 30 minutes	Every 20 minutes
	21:00-23:00	As Required	As required	As required
<p>Note - Sunday Services: These are expected to follow a similar trend. We will aim for a minimum frequency of half of a service's respective weekday frequency. For example, a 15-minute service Monday to Saturday service would be expected to be at least every 30 minutes on a Sunday and preferably more frequent.</p>				

4.5.58 It is known that the target for services operating every 15-minutes is not currently met by the core network. Developments in timetable writing software has increased the headway (the time between buses) to mean that buses run less than 4 per hour in a drive to maximise real world reliability by factoring in delay on the roads during peak hours. The Combined Authority still targets increasing the service frequency where possible.

4.5.59 West Yorkshire Combined Authority will seek to align these targets with other ambitions up to 2040. The 2035 targets are at a frequency that we consider to be the best service our bus network can provide and therefore onwards the aim will be to maintain this level of service going forward from 2035-2040 and beyond.

Evolving the network

4.5.60 Our commitment to the network is to ensure that it enables people to travel where they need to go and when they need to travel. This means that in the future, with franchised powers of network design, we will be able to evolve the network to provide this over time. To do this we have outlined proposals below to significantly improve the network.

New services

4.5.61 As set out above, to support a smooth transition, the initial franchised network will be in the same form as it stood in March 2024, and there will be an initial focus on improving the services we already have. Beyond the start of franchising being implemented, there will be the opportunity to consider potential improvements in network coverage, including new services where demand indicates.

Growing with our Spatial Priority Areas

4.5.62 A Spatial Priority Area is a designation from the Combined Authority for our key growth areas. These are places which we have identified potential for new development, either housing, employment or mixed use.

4.5.63 As these areas develop, they will require improved access to public transport to enable residents of West Yorkshire to travel sustainably to and from these sites. The Combined Authority will plan the bus network to ensure that services meet the demand for travel, ensuring that these sites will succeed.

4.5.64 We will work closely with our local authority and operator partners to ensure that developers provide suitable contributions towards transport to and from their sites, through securing Section 106 funding and promoting innovative schemes that promote sustainable transport from their outset.

Express services + Superloop

4.5.65 On top of improving frequency and operational hours we propose to investigate services that could operate with an 'Express overlay' which would provide a limited stop option between important district centres and integration with other modes.

4.5.66 These proposals could be formulated into a 'Superloop', as has been developed in other regions, where there are buses that connect together to form a loop service between key points. We welcome operator input into the creation of such schemes to ascertain the best value options that could be reached.

Night Buses

4.5.67 We are keen to identify services which would be suitable for extending their operational hours further into the evening and early hours of the morning and will work with operators to consider potential options in the future.

Future network review options and integration with mass transit.

4.5.68 In the longer term, the Combined Authority will be able to review the network in a more comprehensive way. Within the second contracting phase under franchising it will be possible to more radically redesign the network as it stands, including more orbital routes and interconnecting/feeder services where demand indicates this is sustainable.

4.5.69 This also means that opportunities to integrate bus services with the mass transit and the railway networks will provide increased connectivity options for passengers across the region.

Summary - when will this be delivered?

4.5.70 Our ambitions for an enhanced, fully inclusive and more cohesive network will be delivered across the following time periods:

Short term (2024/25)

- **Developing a multi-year network plan** – which will guide evolution of the existing network to deliver improved consistency, connectivity and convenience for the passenger, with core principles including:
- **Network protection which supports current network provision** to provide a stable and reliable service so passengers have confidence when they make their journeys.
- **Continuing to enhance service frequencies and operational hours** throughout the morning, daytime and evening through our BSIP Network Enhancements programme
- Working with operators to **continue delivery of Superbus services**, which incentivise people to travel by bus in particular areas through improved frequency and fare offers
- Undertake a **Bus Services Review** to understand how alternative forms of bus services such as DRT, Accessbus and Park and Ride can support the commercial bus network
- **Regular bus route reviews** to ensure services are running as effectively as possible

Medium term (2025-2028)

- **Retaining the network** by keeping it operating at current capacity, ensuring a smooth transition as franchised services are rolled out
- **Where possible, increasing frequency and operating hours of service**, subject to sustainable funding opportunities and user demand, including exploration of express services between key district centres
- **Implement a performance regime** to ensure the standard of the network is maintained
- Take opportunities to **better integrate bus, rail and active travel** during transition to the franchised network

Long term (2029 onwards)

- **Re-design of the bus network** post franchising, including exploring opportunities to **integrate services with a future mass transit system**
- **Delivery of new services**, including identifying **potential night bus services**
- **Work more closely with developers** to ensure further funding is secured to deliver bus improvements through planning developments

4.6. Improved, more inclusive customer service, information and support

Overview

- 4.6.1 **Our ambition:** Improved, more inclusive customer service, information and support – so passengers have the tools to travel with confidence and the help they need if their journey does not go to plan
- 4.6.2 The current customer service and information offer lacks consistency and coordination, with varying satisfaction with different sources of information (and amongst user groups). There is also no single point of contact for customer support, making it difficult to complain and to access information.
- 4.6.3 A sub-objective of the West Yorkshire Bus Reform Assessment relating to customer service and information was ‘providing passengers with the right tools to travel with confidence and help should their journey not go to plan’, with measures identified including:
- Improved satisfaction with passenger facilities within first three years of implementation
 - Increase in real time provision within first three years of implementation

- Improved customer satisfaction with personal safety within first three years of implementation
 - Improved satisfaction with information provision within first three years of implementation
- 4.6.4 We plan to achieve improved, more inclusive information and customer service by:
- Introducing a **single point of contact for customer complaints and queries**
 - Making the **MCard Mobile app the 'go to' app** for planning journeys, buying tickets in advance, tracking the bus and receiving information about disruption
 - Increasing the number of **real-time information screens** at bus stops and the number of buses equipped with **on board information systems**
 - Installing **colour coded bus stop maps and flags** across West Yorkshire's core bus network through our network navigation scheme to help people find their way around the bus network more easily
 - Continuing to provide **printed information** so that all passengers can access the same, consistent information in a format of their choice

Ambitions, interventions and initiatives

Refreshing our Bus Information and Customer Service Strategy

- 4.6.5 The Combined Authority's [Bus Information Strategy 2019 - 2024](#) sets out a five-year plan for providing bus passengers with high quality information that helps to make bus an easy, convenient and obvious choice of travel. Its principles are:
- Digital First – focus delivery to mobile devices
 - Always live – up-to-date information on the move
 - Customer driven – the customer selects the information they need
 - Network wide – fixed information at stops and interchanges
 - Inclusive – everyone has access according to needs and requirement
 - Cost effective – for the local taxpayer
- 4.6.6 This strategy's 'Digital First' principle successfully pushed the organisation to follow national trends and ensure bus information was available online, so passengers could access the information they needed about their bus services on their mobile devices.
- 4.6.7 However, the Combined Authority is now developing a new five year Bus Information and Customer Service strategy, from 2025 – 2030, which will build upon the principles and success of its predecessor and continue to set the direction for how the Combined Authority can provide improved, inclusive information and customer service at all stages of the passenger's journey. This will include:
- planning their journey through a website or mobile app
 - arriving at the correct bus stop where they can read a printed timetable or a real time information board to know how long they can expect to wait for their bus
 - knowing how far along their journey they are and if there are any delays through the onboard audio-visual information
 - using coordinated wayfinding information if they need to change modes to complete their journey
 - knowing they can provide feedback or seek advice on their journey through a coordinated customer information point

Developing a new system to provide inclusive and coordinated customer service and support

Establishing a single point of contact for customer complaints and queries

- 4.6.8 Currently when a bus passenger has a query or would like to make a complaint, they must navigate their way through different organisations and sources. This leads to inconsistent levels of support, including time taken for a response or redress and therefore varying levels of satisfaction.
- 4.6.9 To support better management of passenger queries and complaints our ambition is to develop a single point of customer contact under one brand. This will work to ensure that the passenger receives an initial response within a set number of days and a smoother experience in getting the answer they need. This single point of contact will be reachable via multiple communications channels including telephone, email, mobile app and in-person at Travel Centres.
- 4.6.10 To achieve this, a coordinated queries management system will need to be implemented 'behind the scenes' of all parties involved in delivery of the local bus system, including the Combined Authority, operators and district councils. This will require:
- New service level agreements (to be agreed as part of the Enhanced Partnership or Franchising contracts)
 - A shared log of all passenger queries and complaints
 - Greater resource within the Combined Authority
- 4.6.11 This one point of contact will support ambitions for franchising in West Yorkshire to further simplify the customer offer through a single body with communications fully aligned and coming under a single brand.
- 4.6.12 Underpinning this is the [West Yorkshire Bus Passenger Charter](#) (see Section 2). The Passenger Charter sets out what bus passengers can expect when using buses in the region under themes including services and information, reliability and complaints and comments. Over 25 West Yorkshire bus operators, including the three largest in the region, have signed up to the charter.
- 4.6.13 A highlight of the Passenger Charter is our 'no quibble' journey satisfaction guarantee which provides any passenger who is not satisfied with the service they receive with a free travel voucher.

Shared training for all passenger facing staff

- 4.6.14 To improve the quality and consistency of customer service across the network, working with local operators, the Combined Authority's ambition is to develop a shared training programme for all passenger-facing staff (including drivers, bus station staff and Metroline call handlers etc). The training programme will help deliver a 'West Yorkshire standard' of customer service to all passengers, ensure staff are trained to provide additional support to passengers with accessibility and other needs as required and encourage staff to see themselves as ambassadors for the region's bus network.
- 4.6.15 Providing high-quality customer service, particularly for drivers, will need to be balanced with other requirements of staff's roles, especially concerning safety and legal duties. However, it is key to realising the Combined Authority's ambitions for an inclusive bus network which supports all people to use their local services.
- 4.6.16 This training will comply with existing Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) training and incorporate the requirements of operator's own existing staff training programmes. As a minimum, the Combined Authority will work with operators to share

best practice around the staff training they all currently offer to help raise the standard overall.

- 4.6.17 The Combined Authority will complement staff training with a network-wide mystery shopper programme to highlight any issues and reward good customer service. Findings from the programme will also be used to monitor progress and identify areas for further improvement.

A variety of live and trusted journey information

Improved and more consistent journey planning information:

- 4.6.18 There are currently many third-party mobile apps and websites that passengers in West Yorkshire use to get the information they need about buses in the region.
- 4.6.19 In the longer term we aim to provide passengers with information from a single coordinated source which they can access if they choose to. Through publication of open data and partnership working, we will also seek to ensure that all existing information sources provide consistent, accurate and up-to-date information that encompasses services provided from all operators, so that passengers can benefit from a holistic view of what the West Yorkshire bus network can offer them.

Enhancements to our mobile ticketing app and journey planners:

- 4.6.20 We will enable accurate and up-to-date information through whichever channel a passenger chooses to look for it through our open-data driven approach. The Combined Authority is investing £525,000 into the MCard Mobile app to improve its usability and to help to establish it as the go-to source for ticketing and travel information in West Yorkshire. The development timeline includes:
- In-app improvements to improve usability
 - Improved journey planning features and live bus / real time information provided through the app
 - Greater notification features that keep passengers informed
 - Live bus / real time information provided through the app
 - Improved anti-fraud systems
- 4.6.21 Moovit is the Combined Authority's chosen journey planner partner whom we work with to enhance the service it provides to passengers. Since the first BSIP, Moovit have integrated the journey planner with the MCard mobile app and incorporated live vehicle tracking feeds into the subscription "add free" version of the Moovit mobile app.
- 4.6.22 Until the full benefits of franchising are realised, we aim to improve Moovit's offer to passengers by making journey specific fares information, including both operator and MCard products, available via its service – subject to availability of DfT's Bus Open Data Digital Service.

Real Time Information (RTI) and better system utilisation

- 4.6.23 On-street RTI displays at bus stops (locally branded as 'Your Next Bus' screens) let passengers know that they are in the right place for their bus and tell them when it is due to arrive. This information also helps to improve passenger perception of safety when waiting for buses.
- 4.6.24 There are currently around 2,200 'Your Next Bus' screens across West Yorkshire. In 2020-21, we introduced over 400 battery powered displays (and will be increasing this to 500), removing the need for often costly mains power provision.

- 4.6.25 We have increased provision of RTI at busy stops and other key locations across the West Yorkshire core bus network and will continue to install the screens on key corridors, as referenced in section 4.9. We will also continue to balance RTI provision across each local authority area to ensure a consistent regional customer offer.
- 4.6.26 Real time and live vehicle location information helps passengers plan their journeys. The information feeds into journey planners, alongside live disruption messaging, to ensure that passengers are informed of the best way to travel based on live journey conditions. Expansion and improvement of our well-established system will provide passengers with more confidence about when their next bus will arrive and when they should set off on their journey.
- 4.6.27 The Combined Authority manages a Yorkshire-wide RTI system on behalf of its partners. Since the initial BSIP we have modified this system to make greater use of a more advanced historic reporting suite to identify areas of the bus network where delays are regularly experienced. We will continue to develop our work in this area to ensure timetables are operable.

Printed information

- 4.6.28 We recognise that printed sources of information are relied on by some passenger groups and are an important aspect of an accessible and inclusive bus service. During the Covid-19 lockdowns, due to the scale and regularity of service changes, printed timetable information was removed from most bus stops and replaced with QR codes that provide access to up-to-date timetable information upon scanning them.
- 4.6.29 However, we have sought to reinstate printed information and ensure some level of timetable and other journey information is available at every bus stop and shelter on the network. To support this, we would also like to increase the amount of printed timetable brochures we produce based on demand – aligned with our Network Navigation maps – to provide more information about the services on the core bus network.
- 4.6.30 We will also retain our commitment to accessible information at every stage of the journey – including audio-visual technology, British sign language (BSL) and easy read material.

Continued rollout of Network Navigation:

- 4.6.31 The Combined Authority's Network Navigation project was initially rolled out in Leeds where it has been successful in helping signpost customers to the core bus network. It provides a user-friendly and accessible set of core route maps and colour coded bus stop flags, shelters and other on-street infrastructure that make it easier to navigate the region's network of bus services.
- 4.6.32 We will continue to rollout the project region-wide so that all West Yorkshire districts have Network Navigation by the end of 2027.
- 4.6.33 In addition the offer will also be digitalised with network navigation maps available online, alongside real-time information, including live-vehicle locations. Our ambition is to ensure this presentation of the network is reflected in journey-planners and all travel information sources.

Audio-visual information and other accessibility enhancements:

- 4.6.34 We want to improve the standards of information on-board the West Yorkshire bus fleet, as referenced in section 4.8, and ensure passengers are provided with key information about their journey such as next stop and service information and disruption warnings.
- 4.6.35 We also want to support accessibility enhancements at every stage of the bus passenger journey, with interventions including but not limited to:

Bus Service Improvement Plan 2024

- Accessible information, including for journey planning, wayfinding, and interaction with customer services staff.
- Promotion of new technologies and initiatives that can assist with journey planning and wayfinding.
- Improved bus station facilities, such as changing places toilets and safe/quiet spaces

4.6.36 To ensure we deliver on our commitments to improving accessibility on the bus network, we will:

- Reflect the priorities and expectations of disabled passengers within the Passenger Charter (see Section 4.6)
- Expect that all bus related information, customer services and customer feedback processes are accessible and easy to use, and that staff understand the needs of disabled people and are trained and confident in providing assistance.
- Encourage greater use of orange wallets and travel assistance cards to increase confidence in travel.
- Involve older people and disabled people in the design and delivery of the bus system.
- Record and monitor accessibility related complaints and seek other accessibility related data to inform service improvements

Improvements to the publication of live journey disruptions messaging:

4.6.37 We understand that clear disruptions information such as that about delays, service changes or cancellations, helps passengers to feel confident about bus travel even in instances where their journey does not go to plan. However, currently disruptions information is provided by several organisations in an uncoordinated way which leaves the passenger dealing with a confusing mix of sometimes conflicting messaging.

4.6.38 We want to improve the management and publication of disruption messaging across the region's bus network to ensure that it is consistent and readily available for passengers in a way that is easy for them to understand and act upon

4.6.39 In a franchised bus network, the Combined Authority will lead coordination of this information and provide a single source of truth that can be used by information providers.

4.6.40 To locate disruption incidents and their cause and to subsequently ensure the flow of this information across all relevant parties, we will explore deployment of dedicated resource within our Urban Traffic Control (UTC) room. This resource will liaise with operators regarding any disruption incidents on the bus network and accurately disseminate the required messaging.

4.6.41 We currently have two methods for keeping passengers informed about planned and unplanned disruptions affecting their bus journeys. For planned disruptions, our Highways and Networks management teams liaise with bus operators to identify road closures and pre-planned service changes. This information is subsequently shared with the Passenger Information team and then disseminated to passengers on the Metro website, social media and through RTI messaging. For unplanned disruptions, such as traffic accidents, there is a dedicated email that bus operators use to notify the Combined Authority. Once operators have shared this information, Passenger Information along with MetroLine to inform passengers via the previously named channels.

4.6.42 We publish some communications about network disruptions via the Department for Transport's Disruptions Messaging Tool. While this tool is not currently used by all

journey planner providers, we would like to see the numbers increase. In the future operators will be able to self-log cancelled services using the tool.

- 4.6.43 Our vision for better buses in West Yorkshire (see section 1) sets out our ambition for improved onboard facilities. We aim to ensure that onboard AV systems are enhanced so that they show passengers live disruption information.

Improved, more impactful marketing and communications

An integrated transport brand to unify buses and wider public transport in West Yorkshire

- 4.6.44 As part of making West Yorkshire a better place to live, work and visit, the Combined Authority is currently reviewing all of its transport and active travel brands, including Metro. The review will support development of an integrated transport model for the region, including a franchised bus network, local rail network, Mass Transit and increased opportunities for walking and cycling.
- 4.6.45 Our aims in reviewing the transport brand are:
- To apply a **consistent** approach to naming and visual identity across all modes including walking and cycling
 - To **simplify** the environment for passengers and improve passenger experience
 - To raise **awareness** of the Combined Authority as the local transport authority in the region

How the brand review will support the BSIP

- 4.6.46 Within a future franchised bus system, the Combined Authority aims to unify the region's bus network, alongside other sustainable transport modes, under a singular brand, presenting passengers with one cohesive transport system. This branding will aim to:
- Present existing and potential bus users with a unified, accessible and easy to navigate network.
 - Promote usage of the bus network.
 - Ensure high frequency buses are easily recognisable to current and future bus users
- 4.6.47 Across all West Yorkshire bus services, passengers will be able to identify with this brand and understand the quality standards / assurance it signifies, as well how a single, coordinated point of customer service can support them in their journey - through fare offers, travel information and other customer support services - on bus and other modes of public transport.
- 4.6.48 A consistent brand experience will help strengthen the profile of and relationship between regular and potential passengers. The extension of the network identity across other travel modes, will enable a consistent, high quality and trusted experience which passengers feel positive towards.

A new brand hierarchy

- 4.6.49 We expect to establish a new brand for the Combined Authority's transport network, with a focus on customer touchpoints. Vehicles, stops, stations, employees, timetables, cycle lanes, active travel hubs, ticketing and improvements would be promoted as product developments, whereas long term strategy and funding announcements for transport in the region would remain the preserve of the Combined Authority and Mayor. This will help to simplify the existing landscape for customers as follows:

- The new Combined Authority transport brand – will be what people see and experience - the product brand visible across the region's network; it will signify the standard of customer service a passenger can expect, and that the service they are using is part of a wider public transport network. It will be the overarching brand used to represent the many organisations that work in partnership to deliver buses.
- Service level brands – specific services or products that come under the transport network will continue to be promoted to passengers where necessary but will come under the main network brand for consistency, such as Leeds Park & Ride, or AccessBus.
- Operator brands – will not be featured on any infrastructure or livery to help give our fleet and assets longevity in the franchising landscape. However, they may still be visible where something is of relevance beyond West Yorkshire.
- The West Yorkshire Combined Authority brand – will be the enabler of public transport in the region but will have limited visibility on the network, only a supporting role in passenger-facing communication, where relevant.

Implementation

4.6.50 Through this BSIP, the Combined Authority is seeking to support the design and subsequent implementation of this evolved branding across the network. Key principles used to drive the evolution of the brand will be to:

- Market the product (the bus network) to customers
- Unify all bus services and corridors into one West Yorkshire wide network that is understandable for the passenger.
- Reflect the greater role the West Yorkshire Combined Authority has over the delivery of all local and regional bus services through franchising.
- Better incorporate other forms of public transport and active travel, including walking and cycling.

4.6.51 Following a review, the updated brand will be implemented consistently across customer-facing communications channels and physical assets including:

- Bus stops and in station displays
- On board vehicles.
- On tickets and in apps.
- Websites and social media.
- At travel centres.

4.6.52 This implementation will ensure that the Combined Authority's integrated transport brand is visible at all key customer touchpoints throughout a bus journey in West Yorkshire no matter the service they are travelling on.

Retaining and attracting new passengers

4.6.53 Communications and marketing will be vital to maximising the benefits of this BSIP across key customer touchpoints, supporting the attraction and retention of bus passengers, as well as increasing customer satisfaction and confidence to travel.

4.6.54 We want our marketing and communications to be industry leading. Key to this will be to ensure we are better targeting and effectively engaging customers through a deeper understanding and analysis of the potential passenger base and different travel behaviours across the region. Through this BSIP, the Combined Authority's ambition is 79

to secure funding to bolster the capabilities of our in-house team and the resources available to deliver effective marketing, including paid-for print and digital campaigns.

Joint campaigns and shared key messaging:

- 4.6.55 Until a single point of contact under a single brand is delivered, the Combined Authority will continue to deliver more cross-operator, joint communications and marketing activity to maximise the reach and impact of efforts to promote a cohesive West Yorkshire bus offer and attract new passengers, with the support of the West Yorkshire Bus Alliance.
- 4.6.56 The Combined Authority will also work to a joint communications activity plan to coordinate the delivery of collaborative marketing. It will include a programme of campaigns, such as:
- Walk it. Ride it. – a behaviour change campaign aimed at encouraging people to change their mode of transport from private car to bus and other sustainable modes of transport.
 - Safer travel – a campaign to encourage passengers to share their experiences and help us put measures in place to improve their feelings of safety using buses and promote our zero-tolerance approach to harassment.
 - The Journey Has Started – A campaign focused on the here and now to promote everything we are doing to improve bus services across the region. This campaign activity aims to earn positive public favour ahead of the first franchised services becoming operational, as we know our audiences are more likely to engage with shorter term, smaller scale improvements over long-term ambitions. We will use real people to help tell the story of how our investment has led to improving people's lives.
 - Promotion of fares deal - and other initiatives delivered as part of the BSIP.
- 4.6.57 There will also be agreed, shared key messages that all members of the Alliance can use in any passenger-facing communication – be it a single operator or joint activity - to reinforce the benefits of bus travel in West Yorkshire.

Summary - when will this be delivered?

- 4.6.58 Our ambitions for improved, more inclusive customer service, information and support will be delivered across the following time periods:

Short term (2024/25)

- An updated **Bus Information and Customer Service Strategy**, outlining how we will provide bus passengers with high quality information that helps to make bus an easy, convenient and obvious choice of travel
- **Real-time information screens** will continue to be rolled out across the network
- **On-going delivery of communications, marketing and campaigns**, such as 'Walk it. Ride it.' and 'The Journey Has Started' to promote bus service improvements and encourage more people to use buses
- **Annual review of our Passenger Charter**, ensuring passengers continue to receive consistent standards of customer service, no matter which services they use across the region
- Accurate and up to date **printed information** will continue to be provided so all passengers are able to access the same, consistent information in a format of their choice

Bus Service Improvement Plan 2024

- **Colour coded bus stop maps and flags** across West Yorkshire's core bus network will ensure people are able to find their way around the bus network more easily
- Deployment of **dedicated resource within our Urban Traffic Control room** helping to ensure disruptions are minimised across the network.

Medium term (2025 - 2028)

- Delivery of **new, integrated transport branding** across all modes
- Improved more accessible and more consistently available facilities / services to support passengers while they travel including **audio visual and live disruptions information**.
- A **single point of contact for customer complaints and queries** will be created so that passengers receive a smooth, fast and positive experience
- **Shared training for all passenger facing staff** to improve the quality and consistency of customer service across the network and support passengers, particularly those with accessibility and other needs, including a **mystery shopper programme** which highlights any issues and rewards good customer service
- **Refreshed transport website and journey planner** improvements.
- Introducing **enhancements to the MCard Mobile app**, making it the 'go to' app for planning journeys, tracking the bus and receiving information about disruption.

Long term (2029 onwards)

- A **single West Yorkshire ticketing app** that provides all information needed for passengers.

4.7. Priority for buses on our roads

4.7.1 **Our ambition:** More priority for buses on our roads: so that journeys by bus are quicker, with less time spent stuck in traffic, and are a viable alternative to the private car.

Overview

- 4.7.2 Although the Covid-19 pandemic changed the amount of traffic on our roads, levels are now increasing back to pre-Covid levels. This is contributing towards a network that is not consistently reliable and increasing bus journey times - leading to poor punctuality and reliability and delays for bus passengers.
- 4.7.3 As set out in Section 2, this is evidenced through passenger insight which continually shows that punctuality and reliability are the main reasons for dissatisfaction with bus services with people spending lengthy amounts of time waiting at the stop, as well as customers on-board experiencing long journeys, with too much time spent in traffic. This is also highlighted as a barrier for people not using buses more.
- 4.7.4 There is therefore a great need for more bus priority and other measures to reduce bus delay as well as greater consistency in the standard and design of bus priority measures. Delivery of bus priority will require reallocation of road space where needed, to provide suitable provision to improve bus performance, and enable bus services to avoid the effects of current and future congestion.
- 4.7.5 Bus priority will be delivered through various measures according to location, with bus lanes and traffic light priority on key corridors, bus gates in urban centres or narrow streets where these can be the most effective solution. Alongside physical reallocation of space and redesign of our roads and streets, to provide the space and provision needed to support bus services, we will manage the network to support bus services on key corridors. For the passenger, this will mean that journeys made by bus are smoother, more reliable, and a more attractive alternative to the private car - especially in urban areas.
- 4.7.6 A sub-objective of the West Yorkshire Bus Reform Assessment relating to bus priority cited 'journeying by bus is quicker, and a viable alternative to the private car', with measures identified including:
- Improved service reliability within first three years of implementation.
 - Improved service punctuality within first three years of implementation.
 - Decreased journey time within first three years of implementation
- 4.7.7. We plan to achieve priority for buses on our road and other measures to improve bus performance by:
- **Delivery of our current funded transport investment programmes**, including CRSTS, Transforming Cities, Levelling Up Fund and West Yorkshire-plus Transport Fund which are delivering bus priority and other measures to speed up bus journeys as part of sustainable travel corridor schemes and wider congestion reduction schemes.
 - **Continuing to develop and deliver a pipeline of schemes which will tackle delay to buses** and aim to speed up journeys, through future funding programmes including CRSTS2 funding (expected for 2027-2032). These will deliver bus priority and other measures to reduce delay, aligned with network priorities and targeted where most needed.
 - **Undertaking analysis and review of congestion, bus delay and speeds**, including identification of bus "hotspots" where targeted interventions are needed

- **Adopting a new Local Transport Plan and policy framework**, which is expected to include policy proposals to reallocate roadspace to more sustainable modes of transport where appropriate, including bus priority.

Ambitions, interventions and initiatives

Our approach to bus priority

- 4.7.8. As part of the ongoing delivery of this Bus Service Improvement Plan, we will continue to implement a region-wide approach to bus priority, and other measures to support bus journeys, across all of West Yorkshire's five local authority areas. This will provide better consistency and ensure that measures are matched to the journeys passengers want to make and where the most significant delay is encountered, working across local authority boundaries.
- 4.7.9. Our approach to bus priority will support us to meet our ambitious regional targets for:
- A decrease in journey times by an average of 2% by 2025, and 48% by 2040
 - An improvement in reliability of services to 97% by 2025 and 99.5% by 2040
 - An improvement in punctuality of services to 90% by 2025, and 95% by 2040
- 4.7.10. In this context, our vision for bus priority and other bus journey improvement measures extends beyond just new bus lanes, and includes bus gates, traffic signal priority, improved kerb spaces and access. Where necessary, we will implement schemes that tackle wider traffic congestion, which in some cases may be more beneficial for bus services, including targeted interventions at specific locations where delay is encountered ("bus hotspots").
- 4.7.11. Our approach will also include a review of highway and traffic demand management measures, including a strengthened approach to management of West Yorkshire's Key Route Network. In partnership with our West Yorkshire local authorities, we will examine the evidence and blend of policy options required to reduce car trips and encourage a modal shift to bus, and other forms public transport and active travel - while recognising that ultimate control for parking related measures rests with West Yorkshire local authorities. This will be achieved by:
- Considering measures that reduce parking supply to manage demand for car trips and show how the space can be reallocated to other uses such as car clubs, active and sustainable transport infrastructure, parklets, wider resident and business use, and micro-consolidation.
 - Considering how banded parking charges could be implemented, for example by incorporating both tailpipe and other emissions, safety standard scores, dimensions incorporating weight, height, width, length etc., and on-street / off-street public parking.
 - Considering how travel planning and other measures could be implemented to manage demand for business related travel.
 - Working in partnership with West Yorkshire local authorities as the responsible bodies for the regulation of parking on the development of highways demand management measures.

New Local Transport Plan – a new policy framework supporting bus priority

- 4.7.12. The new LTP, which will include a period of statutory public consultation, is in development but is expected to provide the policy framework needed to deliver on our vision for integrated transport across West Yorkshire and support our BSIP objectives.

- 4.7.13. The current LTP (West Yorkshire Transport Strategy 2040) includes amongst its adopted policies, the requirement to balance the needs of cars with other motorised traffic, including buses, to reflect the function of the road and the needs of different places. The allocation of road space, enabling greater priority for buses on our roads, is expected to be an important part of LTP development, to ensure that journeys by bus are quicker, with less time spent stuck in traffic, and are a viable alternative to the private car.
- 4.7.14. In our Mayor's Big Bus Chat, 77% of bus users agreed that buses should be given more priority or roadspace over cars. The new LTP will need to strengthen existing policies to set out a new position on how we will make best use of limited roadspace and balance competing demands, including the need to reallocate roadspace to prioritise the movement of more sustainable and higher capacity modes, including buses.

Key Route Network (KRN) Powers

- 4.7.15. The West Yorkshire Key Route Network includes over 661km of predominately 'A roads', which are about 7% of all West Yorkshire roads. West Yorkshire has a strength of partnership working with regards to the KRN. The West Yorkshire local authorities, as the Highway Authority, and Combined Authority currently manage this network through collaborative working with neighbouring local highway authorities and National Highways.
- 4.7.16. Through the West Yorkshire Devolution Deal, the Combined Authority secured new powers to set up and co-ordinate a Key Route Network (KRN) alongside our Local Authority partners with Local Highways Authority responsibilities. KRN powers are intended to provide a Mayoral Combined Authority with additional highway network powers to aid the delivery of Local Transport Plans (LTPs).
- 4.7.17. Through our new Local Transport Plan the Combined Authority is committed to working with our district partners to develop a Key Route Network strategy for West Yorkshire and draw down devolved powers from Government as appropriate. A strengthened region wide approach to the KRN has the potential to provide increased capability to co-ordinate a consistent and strategic approach to the policy, management, and operations of the KRN. This includes opportunities to improve traffic flow, reduce congestion and co-ordinate bus priority. The benefits of a strengthened region wide approach to the KRN could also be better realised under the Proposed Franchising Scheme due to Combined Authority control over setting the bus network and therefore ability to increase the efficiency in investment in bus priority across the KRN.

Ongoing delivery of our funded highway and bus priority schemes

- 4.7.18. The City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) is our principal capital delivery programme through which we are creating better infrastructure for bus journeys. This programme is supported by additional funding through Transforming Cities Fund (TCF), the West Yorkshire Levelling Up Bus Enhancement Package, and our West Yorkshire-plus Transport Fund which will deliver further improvements to reduce congestion impacting bus services. Levelling Up Funding (LUF) was provisionally awarded in January 2023, subject to agreement of a business case with Government in order to fully confirm funding, and development of the schemes is currently underway ahead of this agreement.
- 4.7.19. These programmes build on successfully delivered programmes such as the Leeds Public Transport Improvement Programme (LPTIP), which has implemented bus priority on key bus corridors into Leeds city centre and within the city centre itself, with new bus lanes, bus gates, and traffic light priority for buses.

- 4.7.20. **Appendix 7** sets out the schemes included in our combined CRSTS, TCF and LUF programme that will provide improved infrastructure for bus services and passengers, including bus priority and other measures to support bus journeys,

Bus Priority Enforcement and Service Performance

- 4.7.21. To ensure we maximise the benefits of new and existing bus priority measures, improved enforcement needs to be a fundamental element of our plan for bus priority in West Yorkshire. Traditionally the approach to enforcement of bus lanes across our five local authority areas has been varied, which has led to the following risks:
- Inconsistencies, leading to confusion for general road users
 - Delays for buses impeded by unauthorised vehicles
 - Safety of vulnerable road users
 - Inconsistency and confusion for taxi's making cross border movements
- 4.7.22. Work has been undertaken with partner councils to understand the differing approaches and achieve greater consistency of application of bus lane enforcement, but it is acknowledged that this needs to go further to achieve a West Yorkshire wide consensus and provide better journey time benefits for passengers.
- 4.7.23. Measures such as consistently implementing enforcement cameras on new bus priority infrastructure to ensure appropriate use of the provision, could help to achieve this. We will also need to continue enforcement of traffic regulations through civil enforcement officers, and other enforcement activity needed to manage our highways networks.
- 4.7.24. To further support more punctual and reliable services, deployment of bus priority wardens remains an ambition of the Combined Authority, subject to available BSIP funding. Bus priority wardens can be targeted as required across the region to support waiting passengers in town and city centres and assist buses in navigating the network at times of severe congestion. They could therefore play a crucial role in achieving our punctuality targets and sustained network reliability. In addition, they could mollify the impact of traffic disruptions resulting from highway construction.

Developing our bus priority scheme pipeline beyond 2025

- 4.7.25. As part of our first BSIP, we developed an ambitious pipeline of prioritised highways infrastructure schemes to implement bus priority and improve bus journeys across West Yorkshire. It is our objective that this pipeline will be delivered as part of wider multi-year programmes of sustainable transport investment, resulting in a substantial improvement in the provision of bus priority measures across the region, as sought by the National Bus Strategy. The current pipeline of schemes for delivery, which includes funded schemes and scheme options for future funding, is provided in Section 6.
- 4.7.26. The potential bus priority schemes identified in the BSIP pipeline were developed through a process aligned with our wider transport pipeline development approach. Work to develop a Connectivity Infrastructure Plan, published for consultation in January 2021, has provided the foundation for our transport investment pipeline and the CRSTS 2022-2027 programme. The Connectivity Infrastructure Plan set out the connectivity improvements needed across the region based on evidence of detailed studies of 24 areas, which identified connectivity options across all modes, and the schemes needed to deliver on the preferred options, forming a long-term pipeline for delivery up to 2040.
- 4.7.27. The BSIP pipeline drew upon the options identified as part of the long list of investment options, and the work to develop a prioritised CRSTS programme. Consultation with West Yorkshire district partners and local bus operators identified which priorities from the long-term pipeline should be included in the BSIP pipeline, as well as using the

evidence from work to develop the Connectivity Infrastructure Plan. Delivery of the BSIP bus highways infrastructure pipeline has started through our CRSTS funding, and other funding programmes, supported by initial feasibility work carried out on the schemes as part of the 2021 BSIP submission. By 2027, a number of bus infrastructure improvements will have been delivered through CRSTS, on a range of key corridors in all five West Yorkshire districts.

- 4.7.28. We intend to continue to deliver the improvements proposed as part of the pipeline, either as bus priority focused schemes, or as part of a sustainable transport corridor approach, as implemented through our LPTIP and TCF programmes, and as proposed through CRSTS. Future delivery is expected to be funded through capital investment through future CRSTS programmes and other funding opportunities that arise in future years.
- 4.7.29. The new LTP will be delivered through a series of shorter-term Implementation Plans (potentially 5-year plan periods in line with CRSTS funding periods). Development of the pipeline will be an ongoing process, as part of the wider transport pipeline development, and will be updated alongside this BSIP. Schemes within the pipeline will be assessed as part of prioritisation and sequencing to form the first LTP Implementation Plan, which will inform the CRSTS2 programme. BSIP pipeline schemes will continue to be identified, evidenced and refined as we monitor the network and gain a deeper understanding of its existing and emerging needs as it evolves – including key congestion hotspots and areas in need of journey time improvements.
- 4.7.30. Whilst it is recognised that bus priority schemes are vital to enabling improved journey times, punctuality and reliability, the challenge is ensuring that the Combined Authority has sufficient funding in place to deliver against these targets alongside other priorities. CRSTS funding provides a significant foundation for the investment required, but in order to meet our ambitions by 2040, it's likely that the investment required will exceed that which is available, and prioritisation and sequencing will be an ongoing process to fit with funding available.
- 4.7.31. As previously discussed, prioritising measures to support speed, punctuality, and reliability of buses will encourage the uptake of buses and position bus as an attractive alternative to car. This is of particular benefit for many areas across the region where residents do not have access to private vehicles.

Urban Traffic Management Control (UTMC)

- 4.7.32. A Bus Control centre or Urban Traffic Management Control Room is included under the Proposed Franchising Scheme to support improved highways management and partnership working. In addition, the BSIP commits to the deployment of dedicated resource within Urban Traffic Control rooms across the district who would be responsible specifically for liaising with operators regarding any disruption incidents on the bus network, and accurately disseminating the required messaging. This would support improved network operation, helping to keep buses moving, as well as improve the passenger experience by mitigating the impact of delays to their journey.
- 4.7.33. Through the CRSTS Network Management and UTMC programme, essential traffic infrastructure across the Key Route Network has been upgraded, such as traffic signals and the means of controlling them. Improvements to this infrastructure provide the opportunity to enhance travel for all road users, including private cars, bus passengers, cyclists and pedestrians. In addition to upgrading traffic infrastructure, the Joint West Yorkshire UTMC project comprised of 3 distinct parts - joining up of all districts UTC/UTMC computer systems, on-street improvements to UTC equipment at key junctions on the West Yorkshire Key Route Network and the delivery of a central UTMC hub.

- 4.7.34. £450,000 is included within our current BSIP programme to support dedicated UTMC resource and a feasibility study which builds on the Joint West Yorkshire UTMC Project to assess the options for the optimal region-wide approach to UTMC in the context of bus franchising.

Summary - when will this be delivered?

- 4.7.35. Our ambitions for more bus priority on our roads will be delivered across the following time periods:

Short term (2024/25)

- **On-going delivery of current funded infrastructure projects** to support improvements to bus services, including bus lanes, bus gates, traffic signal priority and improved kerb space and access.
- Develop a pipeline of **future highway infrastructure schemes**
- **Develop a region-wide approach** to improving bus journey times and reliability

Medium term and long term (2024 onwards)

- Undertake **analysis and review of congestion, bus delay and speeds**, including identification of bus “hotspots” where targeted interventions are needed
- Improve the **management of our roads and streets** to support bus journeys – including exploration of Key Route Network Powers.
- Deliver **more bus priority** across West Yorkshire that is consistent and enforced effectively to make bus journeys quicker and more reliable
- Explore deployment of **bus priority wardens** to improve the punctuality and reliability of services during times of severe disruption
- **Adopt a new Local Transport Plan and policy framework**, including proposals to reallocate roadspace to more sustainable modes of transport where appropriate, including bus priority
- Review of highway and traffic demand management measures

4.8. Better, greener buses

Overview

- 4.8.1. **Our ambition: More green and better vehicles** – to improve the onboard experience and make bus the sustainable choice for travel in West Yorkshire.
- 4.8.2. Currently the onboard experience is not consistent for bus customers across the region, with varying levels of accessibility and quality of facilities e.g. audio-visual information, Wi-Fi and charging points. Roughly 6% of vehicles operating in the region are zero emission. Further investment in zero emissions buses with improved onboard standards is needed to improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions.
- 4.8.3. The Combined Authority seeks to ensure that the on-board experience is welcoming, simple and consistent. We want every passenger to have a positive experience of traveling on a bus within the region so that they know where they are going, how long it will take and that they can do so in comfort, without the risk of harassment and on a clean modern vehicle.
- 4.8.4. A sub-objective of the West Yorkshire Bus Reform Assessment relating to green and better buses was ‘improving the onboard experience and making bus a sustainable choice for travel in West Yorkshire, with measures identified including an increase in the number of zero emission buses working towards a zero-emission fleet by 2036.
- 4.8.5. We plan to achieve better greener buses by:
- Retaining commitments to all buses being EURO VI or alternative by 2026 and transitioning to a fully zero-emission bus fleet by 2036 (as part of wider ambitions for the region to be a net-zero carbon economy by 2038).
 - Continued delivery of the West Yorkshire Zero Emission Bus Programme – with up to 200 vehicles and supporting infrastructure to be deployed and operational.
 - Replacement of our AccessBus Fleet with high quality, zero emission vehicles.
 - Ensuring an improved on-board experience by procuring vehicles with high accessibility standards, better quality interiors and USB and Wi-Fi provision.
 - Expansion of audio passenger announcements and retrofitting audio-visual information on buses

Ambitions, interventions and initiatives

Delivering a Zero Emission Fleet by 2036

- 4.8.6. A green, zero emission bus system continues to be a core element of the Combined Authority’s long-term vision for buses in West Yorkshire. To support this BSIP, we are retaining our key commitments as part of the West Yorkshire Bus Alliance to all buses being EURO VI or alternative by 2026 and to transition to a fully zero-emission bus fleet by 2036, with significant progress by 2030 (as part of wider organisational ambition for the region to be a net-zero carbon economy by 2038).
- 4.8.7. Beyond the evident environmental and health benefits, the new vehicles that will be required to achieve this will also play an important role in enabling the high standard of onboard facilities and accessibility support that we want to see across the fleet.
- 4.8.8. Currently, 6% of buses operating in West Yorkshire are zero emission. Currently all zero emission buses operating in West Yorkshire are powered by battery electric motors. This means that there are no hydrogen or alternative fuel source vehicles currently in service.
- 4.8.9. We are exploring the best fuel types and technologies for the region to get the best outcomes, which includes electric, hydrogen and other alternative fuels. We welcome any developments in the method of powering vehicles in a green and sustainable way, and

we are open to proposals which might offer differently fuelled zero emission vehicles in the region going forwards.

- 4.8.10. To achieve this, the Combined Authority has an active Zero-Emission Bus Programme which is investing in new buses for the region. This will see the introduction of up to 200 zero emission buses along with supporting infrastructure to West Yorkshire, which will take the proportion of buses that are zero emission in West Yorkshire potentially over 20%.
- 4.8.11. Furthermore, as part of the implementation of Franchising, the Combined Authority has committed to investing in ownership of a fully zero-emission bus fleet over time as well as acquisition/development of depot facilities.
- 4.8.12. This means we will have control over the type of buses that run on our network starting in 2027. This includes:
- Improving consistency across a gradual transition to a fully Combined Authority owned zero emission bus fleet.
 - Being able to set the overall emissions requirements, so we can aim for cleaner, newer vehicles.
 - Control over the internal specifications, allowing us to promote audio visual assistance across all vehicles and setting accessibility requirements for those with varying levels of mobility.
 - Acquisition of depot facilities required to support the transition to ownership of a fully zero-emission bus fleet.
- 4.8.13. Therefore, the Combined Authority's plan to deliver a Zero Emission Fleet by 2036 can be viewed across the following time periods:

Short term (2024/25) - Phase 1 of the current Zero Emission Bus (ZEB) programme

- Progression of Phase 1 of the Combined Authority's existing ZEB programme which involves delivery of a £70m investment to introduce 141 zero emission buses and charging on routes in Bradford, Leeds, and Wakefield districts, partially funded through Department for Transport's Zero Emission Bus Regional Area (ZEBRA) funding, along with private sector investment to be completed in 2024/25.

Medium term (2025-2028) – ZEB Phase 2/3 and transition to franchising

- Planning for additional phases of the ZEB programme using identified funding sources:
 - Phase 2: £4m project to introduce zero emission buses and charging infrastructure in Calderdale and Kirklees, funded via Gainshare.
 - Phase 3: £21m project to introduce zero emission buses and charging (number of vehicles subject to delivery model) during the first franchising period, funded via CRSTS

The Transition Period

- 4.8.14. During the transition period, we intend to procure 124 Zero Emission Buses for operation on the network as we as purchasing 62 buses per year utilising funding sources set out in the franchising assessment.
- 4.8.15. The first 62 buses will be provided for the first round of franchise procurement which covers areas within Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield ('Heavy Woollen', 'Kirklees' and 'Leeds 3' zones within the Commercial Case of the Bus Reform Assessment). Past this

initial procurement, for Rounds 2 and 3, additional funding would be required to purchase the additional buses needed.

Framework for encouraging ZEB uptake

- 4.8.16. As we transition to franchising, the Combined Authority will investigate ways of encouraging movement towards a fully ZEB fleet in the region. We will explore how we can help smaller operators who might not have the capital at their disposal to invest.
- 4.8.17. We will also consider how we manage our contracts for the upcoming rounds to develop a consistent fleet offer, notably in terms of ZEB capacity to meet our requirements. We are currently undertaking market engagement to understand the best way to achieve a full ZEB fleet within the region. This will be a two-way process where we will engage with operators of all sizes to explore the possibilities in this field.

Skills needed for a ZEB fleet

- 4.8.18. Supporting developing the skills in the region for maintaining and running a fully zero emission fleet is a priority for the Combined Authority. Servicing and maintaining ZEB's is different to an internal combustion engine vehicle and therefore we will seek to work with operators to ensure that their mechanics have access to the training needed to acquire the skills for the future.

Long term (2029-2040) – Deployment of a CA owned ZEB fleet across the region

- 4.8.19. The Combined Authority's investment in a zero-emission fleet will build upon our ongoing ZEB work by taking the guiding principles of identifying the bus services which travel through the most polluted areas and expanding them to align with the wider BSIP focus of ensuring that those most in need of enhanced services are prioritised.
- 4.8.20. We will look to allocate funding for new zero emission bus services to those areas that would benefit the most from the environmental improvements. This includes services that not only travel through the most polluted areas (data from air quality management areas and the clean air zone) but also those areas whose residents are most sensitive to the types of air pollution that is caused by roadside emissions, such as:
- Health and education sites
 - The most deprived neighbourhoods
 - The most health deprived neighbourhoods
- 4.8.21. Alongside this work, the Combined Authority will continue to work with bus manufacturers and the Department for Transport to enable more zero emission buses to come to market to meet the needs of West Yorkshire and make them common place across the region.
- 4.8.22. We recognise that as a Combined Authority we are ready and willing to help deliver ZEBs within West Yorkshire, however, the market is still developing in terms of the variety of provision. The issues arising relate to the variety of topography and road types across the region i.e. some rural areas have narrow, winding roads and steep hills which current ZEBs are unsuited to traversing. All avenues will be followed working alongside builders of buses to highlight our regional ambitions and other technology providers. This will be developed further as part of the bus franchising transition.

Better Buses

- 4.8.23. Our ambition for the specification of the fleet in the region can be summarised into the following themes:

Improved onboard information

4.8.24. We will seek to ensure all new buses added to the West Yorkshire fleet will have the relevant features stated below onboard. Where possible we will encourage operators to retrofit their existing fleet to also include these features:

- Audio visual displays
- Next stop and Service information
- Disruption warnings
- Information provision, that also includes other transport service options at the relevant stops e.g. bus/rail integration at bus stops adjacent to railway stations or bus/mobility hub type information and in future Mass Transit.

Better quality buses

4.8.25. For any buses that the Combined Authority procures as a part of the franchising process we will endeavour to ensure that the buses we buy are of the highest quality that is practicable. This includes aiming for the following in accordance with our ambitions for a consistent customer offer):

- High accessibility standards - to help with equity of access including considerations for multiple wheelchair users to be able to access the same bus.
- Reduced onboard noise (especially when sat on the back of the bus).
- Better quality interiors: including better lighting, temperature management and comfortable seating.
- USB and WIFI provision on all services where possible.
- A standardised brand across the network including livery and ticketing.

Faster boarding

4.8.26. To speed up the journey we are aiming to ensure our ticketing and fares strategy enables passengers to be able to board the bus as straightforwardly as possible. This involves reducing the time taken to purchase tickets when doing so on the bus and investigating more innovative means of speeding up boarding, such as:

- Reducing dwell time at stops by ensuring smart ticketing options are rolled out across the whole fleet, speeding up boarding by reducing paying time
- Linking to wider smart ticketing policies to ensure that the most efficient options are being used (Tap on – Tap off and driverless operation of ticket machines)
- Novel ways of boarding- the Combined Authority will seek to investigate if different boarding arrangements can be implemented in the region and where this could be deployed to speed up services.

Reliable Buses

4.8.27. A high level of vehicle reliability across all the bus fleet is imperative to facilitate greater use and interchange as we need passengers to trust that their bus will arrive and take them to their destination. We will encourage the current operators to build resilience to potential problems and for any buses procured by the Combined Authority we will make reliability a key factor in deciding which units to buy.

AccessBus Renewal

4.8.28. The Combined Authority will, as a part of the tendered service review (Section 4.3 Bus Network), evaluate current AccessBus provision. This will include procuring replacement

vehicles for the current aging fleet. Any replacement buses will be of the highest standard practicable, ensuring that they meet the targets of Greener and Better highlighted above.

Summary - when will this be delivered?

4.8.29. Our ambitions for more green and better vehicles will be delivered across the following time periods:

Short term (2024/25)

- **On-going delivery of the ZEBRA programme**, which replaces old buses with new zero emission alternatives
- Continued **exploration of the best fuel types and technologies** for the region
- Develop a **framework for encouraging zero emission bus uptake**
- Continued **rollout of audio-visual technology and other accessible information**

Medium term (2025 - 2028)

- **All buses to be Euro VI standard** or better
- **Delivery of ZEBRA phase 2/3 programme**
- **Replacement of our AccessBus fleet** with high quality, zero emission vehicles
- **Improving the on-board experience** through procurement of vehicles with high accessibility standards, better quality interiors **and USB and Wi-Fi provision**
- Expansion of **audio passenger announcements and retrofitting audio-visual information on buses**
- Investigate **faster bus boarding options**
- **Standardised onboard customer experience, including branding**
- **Acquisition of depots** to support the transition to Franchising

Long term (2029 onwards)

- **All vehicles possessing high accessibility standards, better quality interiors, USB and Wi-Fi provision**
- Working with manufacturers to acquire ZEBs **suitable for all parts of the region**
- A **fully zero emission bus fleet** will be operational
- **Investment in depot infrastructure** required to facilitate the operation of a fully zero emission bus fleet

4.9. Safe, accessible and welcoming stations, stops and public space

Overview

- 4.9.1. **Our ambition:** Safe, accessible and welcoming stations, stops and public spaces – which provide a high-quality, attractive environment for passengers waiting for and interchanging between bus services, through well-maintained infrastructure that has accessibility, safety and environmental considerations at the forefront of their design.
- 4.9.2. Currently, West Yorkshire bus passengers experience varying quality of assets, environment and therefore levels of satisfaction when waiting for a bus. Passenger insight shows existing bus stations, shelters and stops are often perceived as unclean, unsafe and unappealing which can either create, or add to, dissatisfaction with bus travel.
- 4.9.3. Insight also shows anti-social behaviour of other passengers is pushing people to other forms of transport and there is also a large gender gap for confidence in personal safety when using local buses in the dark with only 41% of women feeling confident in their personal safety while using local buses in the dark, compared to 68% of men.³³
- 4.9.4. With this in mind, it remains the Combined Authority's ambition to ensure that bus stops and stations - as well as the bus network in general - provide a safe, user friendly, clean and consistent experience across the region for all passengers, especially women and girls.
- 4.9.5. We plan to achieve safe, accessible and welcoming stations, stops and public spaces by:
- Further bus stop, shelter and station upgrades through our capital programmes (e.g. CRSTS, LUF) to modernise and maintain a high standard of waiting environment so that they make for accessible, safe and attractive places to wait for services.
 - Improved access to on-street waiting infrastructure such as better pedestrian crossing facilities, quality of pavement and siting of stops e.g. away from grass verges.
 - Continuing collaboration with West Yorkshire Police through the Enhanced Safer Travel partnership, ensuring targeted deployment of Police Community Support Officers in bus stations and across the bus network.
 - Multi-agency approach to addressing passenger safety especially for women and girls, through incident reporting tools and better promotion of the existing support available, such as information, to make people feel safer while they travel

Ambitions, interventions and initiatives

Our vision for Bus Stations, Stops and Shelters

- 4.9.6. Passengers use approximately 14,000 bus stops, shelters and stations across the region when waiting for, boarding and alighting their bus services. There are 30 bus stations and smaller bus hubs across the region and of these, 27 of them are owned by the Combined Authority (with the exception of Otley, Wakefield and Wetherby). Leeds and Wakefield bus stations have the highest number of departures per week with the former having 6533 p/w and the latter having 6200 p/w.
- 4.9.7. We want consistently high quality, attractive stations and stops, that provide safe and accessible spaces for passengers to wait for or interchange between services, and offer:
- A variety of travel information
 - Audio announcements

³³ West Yorkshire Combined Authority – Public Perceptions of Travel Survey 2024

- Protection from the weather and other elements
 - Good lighting and other safety features
 - Accessibility features such as: audio/visual announcements (where possible), brail timetables and ensuring poor kerb structure/placement does not present a barrier to those utilising a wheelchair or walking apparatus.
 - Customer service hubs/sources such as travel centres.
- 4.9.8. Recognising the installation and ongoing maintenance costs of some of these features, the provision of the above will be tiered dependent on factors such as usage and location.
- 4.9.9. All improvements and facilities provided, as well as the look and feel, should reflect the quality of the local bus service and be integrated as part of the wider public transport offer, including rail, active travel and mass transit in the future. The planned implementation of bus franchising and an integrated transport brand for West Yorkshire provides the opportunity to improve consistency across our stations, stops and public space with common branding and customer information, which reflects the quality of the overall bus offer in the region.
- 4.9.10. General improvements that could be made to all assets include:
- Expansion of RTI board availability – currently this is provided in areas that have large footfall or are close to amenities and leisure facilities. An aim could be to increase this amount so that they benefit a wider variety of passengers, not just those who happen to live in certain areas.
 - Increasing the environmentally friendly components of some waiting facilities (e.g. green roofs, solar panels, recycling receptacles) to ensure the entire customer journey is as green as possible, acknowledging the increased resources required of local authorities to facilitate this (with regard to waste collection in particular).
 - Further work can be undertaken with the Safety Feedback Tool and the Enhanced Safer Travel Partnership (as well as the integration between them) to build upon the relatively positive scores regarding safety we have seen in the Your Bus Journey results. There may also be space to explore the perception of safety that differs between different bus stops in different areas
- 4.9.11. The existing provision of bus stations, stops and shelters derives from a mix of drivers such as historic demand, bus service offer and funding availability. The Combined Authority’s ambition is to ensure the provision of these assets is more consistent across the network in the future. Table 24 sets out the key principles of where these different facilities will be provided across the network.

Table 24: Suggested Waiting Infrastructure Provision

	Large stations	Small stations	Shelters	Stops
Where this will be provided	At major transport hubs in district and city/town centres	Areas of higher footfall and higher number of services / frequencies / interchange points	Areas of medium footfall and medium frequency (such as on the core bus network)	Areas of low footfall and low frequency

<p>What is offered at these locations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffed travel centre (timetable and general inquiries) • Toilet / changing facilities. • RTI screens • Seating area/s • Waste/recycling receptacles • Safe/quiet space • Refreshment availability • Safety, security and maintenance • Phone charging facilities • Printed timetables • Measures to support interconnectivity with other transport modes e.g. way finding information and service information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toilet facilities. • Point-of-use assistance (physical or audio). • Printed timetables. • Seating /leaning rails. • Waste /recycling receptacles. • Easy access for those arriving by different modes (foot, bicycle, car). • RTI screens • Security and maintenance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enclosed space. • Printed timetables. • Audio assistance • Waste/ recycling receptacle. • Lighting. • Seating /leaning rail. • Raised kerb. • RTI boards (depending on footfall and frequency of service) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Printed timetables • Sign/flag poles. • Raised kerb.
--	--	---	--	--

Maintenance and renewal of the existing offer

- 4.9.12. Currently, the Combined Authority does not have a dedicated process for the maintenance and renewal of waiting infrastructure and is instead largely reactive in quickly addressing any issues that arise. Whilst this has benefits in allowing us to be agile in relation to repairing infrastructure, implementing processes that allow us monitor stations, shelters and stops on an ongoing basis should be also be considered.
- 4.9.13. To support maintenance, the possibility of including maintenance costs as part of projects would increase our ability to be more proactive in this area. The Combined Authority does not currently include maintenance costs as part of capital projects, instead funding them through revenue streams.
- 4.9.14. Overall the minimum standards for infrastructure are that they should function correctly as a space for boarding and alighting services, however, to achieve the vision contained in Table 24 (and beyond), additional resource will need to be allocated for this.
- 4.9.15. Furthermore, the Combined Authority has committed funding to develop an estates and asset management strategy as part of preparations for bus franchising.

Audit of existing assets

- 4.9.16. The Combined Authority aims to allocate resource to audit and create an asset database for all stops, shelters and stations and their facilities which will provide a greater

understanding of the work required to improve differing assets. The audit will include consideration of:

- Accessibility and safety measures
- Age and quality
- Green sustainability

4.9.17. The audit could also commit to identifying opportunities to add further environmental and cultural value to these assets such as space for artwork, community libraries and innovative green concepts like bee-friendly roofs for bus shelters.

New and improved bus stations

4.9.18. Building on the best-practice exemplified by the recently rebuilt Halifax Bus Station (see section 1.4), our ambition is for all bus stations in the region to offer a similar high-quality, safe, accessible space. As such, a number of major bus station upgrades and rebuilds are currently underway as part of our capital delivery programmes.

Dewsbury Bus Station (2024-2026)

4.9.19. The existing bus station has challenges including concerns around personal safety, accessibility, road safety and a lack of quality services. Funded with £14.34m from Transforming Cities Fund, this Dewsbury Bus Station scheme will create a more welcoming, attractive and accessible bus station, where people feel safe and are encouraged to visit the town. This will lead to economic growth in the town centre, by attracting businesses, and making it easier for people to access training and educational opportunities in Dewsbury and the wider region.

4.9.20. The proposed scheme will help reduce reliance on cars and promote buses as a convenient alternative. It also complements wider investment in bus priority, walking and cycling within Dewsbury town centre as well as along key corridors into the town.



Huddersfield Bus Station (2024-2026)

- 4.9.21. Funded with £12.3m from Transforming Cities Fund, this major project is comprised of upgrades to the bus station building, including access improvements to its entry points as well as inside the station, plus enhancements to the attractiveness of public spaces next to the station.
- 4.9.22. Bus user benefits relating to journey time savings and improved passenger experience for new and existing bus users are expected as well as revenue benefits from regenerated retail floorspace in the station and likely generation of additional jobs.



Leeds Bus Station refurbishment – completed in late 2022

- 4.9.23. Funded with £6.248m from the LPTIP programme, a new Travel Centre with two new self-service touchscreens has been provided. New seating, flooring, tactile wayfinding, RTI, head of queue with audio have also been implemented, as well as improvements to core accessibility elements of the bus station, including a new accessible ramp.
- 4.9.24. Accommodation for bus drivers has been created as part of the refurbishment works, providing them with an improved environment for waiting between shifts.
- 4.9.25. Further investment to improve the station’s roof is currently being planned, including £375,000 investment in temporary repairs while this complex scheme is scoped in more detail.

Wider improvements

- 4.9.26. Alongside major station upgrades, a £4.43m programme of smaller scale works is currently being undertaken to upgrade facilities at 16 different bus stations across the region. This work includes RTI/CCTV installation, general refurbishments, and toilet upgrades amongst other improvements.
- 4.9.27. Table 25 below contains high level information on the stations where work is being undertaken and the scope of the improvements.

Table 25: Planned bus station improvements.

Bus Service Improvement Plan 2024

Station	Improvement/s	Cost
Batley	Real-Time Information, CCTV	£78,200
Bradford Interchange*	Real-Time Information, Toilet, Wayfinding, Roof Repair	£2,902,800
*Subject to decision on station next steps (see section 4.9.36-41 below)		
Brighouse	Real-Time Information, Wayfinding, CCTV	£111,400
Castleford	Real-Time Information, Toilet, Quiet Room, Wayfinding, CCTV	£218,000
Cleckheaton	Real-Time Information, CCTV, Drainage Works	£128,200
Hemsworth	Real-Time Information, Tactile Signs, Defibrillator	£21,600
Holmfirth	Real-Time Information	£33,200
Ilkley	Real-Time Information, Tactile Signs, Defibrillator, Refurbishment	£49,200
Keighley	Real-Time Information, Quiet Room, Wayfinding, Pedestrian Crossing, Drainage Works	£326,200
Leeds	Toilet	£50,000
Ossett	Real-Time Information	£72,200
Pontefract	Real-Time Information, Toilet, Quiet Room, Wayfinding, CCTV	£206,300
Pudsey	Real-Time Information, Wayfinding, CCTV	£57,400
South Elmsall	Real-Time Information, Tactile Signs, Pedestrian Crossing, CCTV, Defibrillator, Refurbishment	£56,100
Todmorden	Real-Time Information, Tactile Signs, Pedestrian Crossing, CCTV, Defibrillator, Refurbishment	£87,700
Wetherby	Real-Time Information, Tactile Signs, CCTV, Defibrillator, Refurbishment	£39,500
Total		£4,438,000

Bradford Interchange

4.9.28. At the time of writing this BSIP, the Bradford Interchange is currently closed until at least September 2024 due to unforeseen damage and is undergoing urgent repair work alongside an in-depth survey of its condition. Planned upgrades will not take place until these repairs are finished and subject to the outcomes of survey work.

- 4.9.29. The outcome of the surveys will inform long-term decisions on the stations future and what additional capital allocations will be required to secure a permanent high quality bus passenger facility in the city centre. Officers are currently reviewing the capital programme and will consider Bradford's requirements as part of the process.
- 4.9.30. The Combined Authority recognises the need to continue to invest in Bradford Interchange while a long-term solution is found. This investment sits alongside a wider vision for the future of bus, rail and mass transit for Bradford, including the Interchange, to ensure the best possible experience for rail passengers who continue to use the site. This will also be considered in line with Northern Powerhouse Rail's proposal of the new Bradford rail station. Work on this is accelerating in partnership with the council and the Government.
- 4.9.31. Furthermore, work is underway to identify sites for a possible temporary bus station fit for Bradford as UK City of Culture 2025, to be introduced as quickly as possible should the final survey reports advise on continued closure.

Non-Combined-Authority-owned stations

- 4.9.32. The Combined Authority recognises a number of existing bus stations are owned by operators (specifically Otley, Wakefield and Wetherby) and this arrangement may be impacted by the implementation of a franchised bus system.
- 4.9.33. As part of the transition to franchising, the Combined Authority will look to ensure continued operation of the bus network and that local passengers benefit from access to suitable facilities which match the quality and environment of wider bus stations across the region, including through the possible acquisition of these assets or alternative arrangements.

Upgraded stops and shelters

- 4.9.34. The Combined Authority currently owns approximately 4000 bus shelters and 10,000 stops and is currently in the process of looking at the condition of all of these.
- 4.9.35. Work is being undertaken to upgrade some of this infrastructure as part of the existing LUF/CRSTS programmes, where funding has been made available for up to 200 shelter upgrades and accessibility improvements. As of June 2024, a contractor has been appointed to repair/maintain and create new shelters.

Investing in public space

- 4.9.36. Alongside improvements to bus facilities, the Combined Authority recognises the importance of improvements to the wider public street space around them to maximise the benefits. It will continue to seek opportunities to improve wider public space and integration with other modes, as part of any bus asset development.
- 4.9.37. For example, as part of the package of small-to-medium scale interventions funded through the West Yorkshire+ Transport Fund, the below interventions (phase one) have made improvements to either bus infrastructure or the area around them. Details of these interventions are as follows:
- **A62 Smart Corridor (Kirklees):**
 - Improved bus stop and shelter facilities
 - New trees and planting
 - Improvements to kerbs and laybys
 - Upgrades to cycle routes

- **A58/A672 Corridor (Calderdale)**
 - Improvements to eight bus stops
 - Installation of four RTI screens
 - Pedestrian crossings
 - Wayfinding signage
 - Cycle infrastructure

- **A646/16033 Corridor (Calderdale)**
 - Installation of two RTI screens
 - Pedestrian crossings

4.9.38. In a wider sense, the work around public space aims to remove any barriers or obstacles to passengers accessing the bus network. For example, considering the location and safety of where the waiting infrastructure is built e.g. siting of stops, quality of the pavement and ensuring the infrastructure is better aligned with active travel modes such as walking and cycling.

Enhanced Safer Travel Partnership

- 4.9.39. The Combined Authority has invested over £1m of BSIP funding in our local Enhanced Safer Travel Partnership (ESTP) with the West Yorkshire Police. Further support and integration of this scheme is crucial to our ambitions and proposals for the future.
- 4.9.40. This funding has supported the recruitment of a team of 10 Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) for three years and part-funded a further five who were already deployed to tackle anti-social behaviour and other safety issues across the bus network.
- 4.9.41. The first eight of these PCSOs were deployed between September and November 2023, with the others currently in training and due to be deployed in May 2024 onwards. The team is supported by a Police Sergeant and the Combined Authority's Safer Travel Manager.
- 4.9.42. Once the team is fully up and running, there will be three Safer Travel Officers in each district working full-time patrolling bus stations and bus services across the county. Key aims of the Partnership are to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, increase the safety of women and girls, and reassure and protect more vulnerable travel users.
- 4.9.43. The team meets regularly with bus operators to identify problem locations and PCSOs have been deployed effectively to tackle anti-social behaviour with drivers feeding back that their presence has been welcomed and provided them with more confidence.
- 4.9.44. The ESTP has also achieved other notable milestones such as engaging in information seminars on anti-social behaviour and safety at schools across the county in collaboration with Ahead Partnership and working with the Peoples Parliament group based in Leeds.

Shared transport hubs across the region

- 4.9.45. Shared transport hubs help to enable shorter trips to be made by more sustainable modes and also reduce the need to travel by co-locating community and transport facilities in one space. Facilities that can be provided at these locations include cycle parking, EV charging points, car club bays, passenger information for onward bus/rail travel, parcel lockers, co-working spaces and information about demand responsive transport services.

- 4.9.46. The development of shared transport hubs will contribute towards reducing the need to travel (through the co-location of transport options and community amenities) and help promote sustainable travel options including bike share, cycling and walking (through the provision of better information and cycle parking facilities). Improved levels of cycling and walking will also bring environmental and health benefits.
- 4.9.47. Improving access to public transport and improving integration between transport modes can also help to support wider access to jobs, education, training and services, particularly for first and last mile connectivity.
- 4.9.48. The Combined Authority are currently developing four Shared Transport Hubs, as part of a 'Phase 1' pilot scheme, funded via a combination of BSIP and CRSTS funding. Work is also underway to plan further sites throughout the region for Phase 2.
- 4.9.49. Phase 1 hubs are to be located in the following locations:
- **Otley Walkergate Carpark & Nelson Street (Leeds)** - located directly across from Otley Bus Station, this site is designated for piloting the 'Public Transport Hub' shared transport hub model. Our plans include incorporating Real-Time Information (RTI) within the hub, linking to bus station services and other local stops. This initiative aims to provide the public in Otley with various active travel and shared transport options, enhancing local connectivity to the bus station.
 - **Todmorden College (Calderdale)** - situated within 60 meters of Todmorden Bus Station, this location will see improved RTI and increased connectivity options to the bus station. Additionally, RTI to the train station will be included. The college is a well-frequented site, and the area currently lacks sufficient RTI.
 - **Bramsche Square, Todmorden (Calderdale)** - This site is within 150 meters of Todmorden Bus Station and 40 meters of a bus stop. We plan to enhance RTI and offer additional active travel options to improve transport connectivity.
 - **Hebden Bridge Marketplace Carpark (Calderdale)** - Located 100 meters from a bus stop, this site will feature signposts from the shared transport hub to the bus stop and RTI will be provided at the hub. Active travel offerings will also be improved to enhance transport connectivity.
- 4.9.50. A full business case for Phase 1 is expected to be completed by the end of 2024, with the schemes delivered for the benefit of local bus passengers throughout 2025. The learnings from the pilot schemes will inform the plans for Phase 2 and potential wider rollout of shared transport hubs across the region, subject to future funding availability.

Summary - when will this be delivered?

- 4.9.51. Our ambitions for safe, accessible and welcoming public spaces will be delivered across the following time periods:

Short term (2024/2025)

- Auditing our waiting infrastructure to ensure it provides a consistent standard of provision
- Ongoing delivery of the Enhanced Safer Travel Partnership with the West Yorkshire Police.
- Trialling the implementation of Shared Transport Hubs to understand how this can further improve the customer experience.
- Assessing impacts of the MCard apps Safety Feature Tool and using the results to target interventions at locations experiencing high levels of anti-social behaviour

Medium term (2025 - 2028)

- Completion of Dewsbury and Huddersfield Bus Station upgrades
- Delivering improvements to our bus stops and stations to ensure they are modern, well-maintained and provide consistent, high-quality facilities such as real time information, audio announcements and accessibility features, including:
 - Up to 200 new shelters through our LUF / CRSTS programme
 - Upgrades to 16 bus stations across the region, including real time information and CCTV information and general refurbishment
 - Improved access to on-street waiting infrastructure such as better pedestrian crossing facilities, quality of pavement and siting of stops e.g. away from grass verges

Longer term (2029 onwards)

- Delivery of further high specification waiting infrastructure to match the branding and quality of a franchised bus network.
- Extended application of environmentally friendly and sustainable infrastructure e.g. solar panels, green roofs

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

5.1. The BSIP's KPIs and targets have been developed based upon:

- **What matters to passengers** - the Combined Authority has reviewed and analysed passenger insight / research and targeted KPIs to ensure they are driving forward and measuring the changes that matter to passengers
- **The initiatives contained within the BSIP** – the KPIs have also been selected to meaningfully measure the impact of the initiatives proposed within this BSIP and ensure they are delivering improvements for the passenger
- **Existing policy and strategy targets** - the West Yorkshire Transport Strategy 2040 sets out a mid-point transport target of 25% more trips made by bus by 2027, and is underpinned by a commitment to inclusive growth, the environment, health and wellbeing
- **Transport Focus guidance** - Transport Focus initially produced guidance documents aimed at supporting authorities in drawing up their BSIPs by outlining core principles and practical advice. This includes a guide on Setting Targets in Bus Service Improvement Plans, released June 2021
- **Strategic priorities** – better transport, as well supporting equality, diversity and inclusion are central to the strategic priorities of the Combined Authority (see Section 1 for further details). These key priorities are also reflected through our local Mayoral pledges.³⁴

5.2. Table 26 below identifies our primary Key Performance Indicators and targets, which will be used to measure the success of delivering this BSIP against our ambition. The data has been taken from several sources including Combined Authority internal systems and surveys, local bus operators, Transport Focus and Department for Transport. More detailed breakdowns of some KPIs are included in **Appendix 8**. To achieve these targets, the Combined Authority requires sufficient funding support, from BSIP and other sources, particularly with regards to the delivery of bus priority schemes which will be vital to enable improved journey times, punctuality and reliability.

5.3. Within this BSIP update, the existing KPI's have been reviewed to:

- acknowledge changing methodology which required alternative data sources to be explored and new targets to be developed;
- ensure that monitoring and evaluation was covering all of the BSIP strategic priorities consistently;
- include a post pandemic baseline that more accurately reflects the status of bus service provision.

5.4. Further detail of how the Combined Authority will measure each primary KPI is outlined in **Appendix 12**.

³⁴ West Yorkshire Combined Authority, [West Yorkshire Mayoral Pledges](#)

Bus Service Improvement Plan 2024
Table 26 – Primary KPIs and Targets

Key Theme	Key Performance Indicator	Source	Baseline			Targets			
			Mar 21	Mar 23	Mar 24	2025	2030	2035	2040
All themes	Increased bus patronage	Bus operator Ticker data	4,483,340	10,465,483	10,093,390	+4%	+24%	+44%	+64%
	Increased customer satisfaction with local bus services (score 1 – 10)	WYCA Resident Perceptions of Transport Survey (RPOTS)	7.0	5.9	6.0	7.0	8.0	8.5	9.0
	Mode share moved from car to bus (3 year WY average 2019 - 2021) *Due August of the following year	DfT National Travel Survey	Bus: 5.1% Car: 62.5%	TBC*	TBC*	Bus share: +5%	Bus share: +10%	Bus share: +15%	Bus share: +20%
Safe and Inclusive Bus Network	Improved service provision for those travelling in the early morning and evening	WYCA Combined Services and Assets (CoSA) register	197,800 miles (24% contract)	194,017 miles (22% contract)	194,090 miles (29% contract)	+2.5%	+5%	+7.5%	+10%
	Improved satisfaction with personal safety while using local buses in the day and dark	WYCA RPOTS	68% (both day and dark)	90% (Day) 55% (Dark)	94% (Day) 61% (Dark)	95%(Day)	97%(Day)	99%(Day)	99.5%(Day)
	Improved satisfaction with personal safety at the bus stop for female passengers	WYCA RPOTS	N/A	85%	84%	85%	90%	93%	95%
	Improved satisfaction with the ticket price of your local bus service	WYCA RPOTS	N/A	6.9	7.1	7.5	8	8.5	9
	Satisfaction with the electronic display on the bus	Transport Focus Your Bus Journey survey	N/A	N/A	74%	75%	80%	85%	90%
	Satisfaction with the quality of your nearest bus station in your local area	WYCA RPOTS	6.8	6.5	6.5	7.0	8.0	8.5	9.0
Better Connected	Reduced journey times (mins/miles)	WYCA real-time information	4.36	4.93	4.92	-2%	-10%	-15%	-20%

Communities		(RTI) system and CoSA							
	Improved punctuality	WYCA RTI system	90%	85%	86%	90%	95%	95%	95%
	Improved reliability	Bus operator data	99.0%	95.0%	95.3%	97.0%	99.5%	99.5%	99.5%
	Improved satisfaction with the length of time spent waiting for the bus	Transport Focus Your Bus Journey survey	N/A	N/A	61%	65%	77%	85%	90%
	Improved housing accessibility by bus via the core bus network	WYCA accessibility analysis	75%	62%	55%	56%	60%	65%	75%
	Improved employment accessibility by bus via the core bus network		68%	39%	31%	35%	50%	65%	75%
	Improved medical accessibility by bus via the core bus network		79%	72%	70%	72%	74%	78%	80%
	Improved retail accessibility by bus via the core bus network		78%	78%	77%	78%	79%	80%	80%
	Improved leisure accessibility by bus via the core bus network		70%	40%	33%	35%	50%	65%	75%
Decarbonisation and Integrated Sustainable Travel	Improved environmental performance and reduced carbon emissions of the bus network	Bus operator data	Euro VI: 59% Zero emission: 1%	Euro VI: 81%, Zero Emission: 2%	Euro VI: 78%, Zero Emission: 6%	Euro VI: 100% Zero Emission: 10%	Zero Emission: 50%	Zero Emission: 75%	Zero Emission: 100%
	Reduced average fleet age	Bus operator data (via open data channels)	N/A	10.75 years	11.2 years	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc
	Reduction in estimated tonnes of CO2e from buses	DfT bus statistics, operator data, DfT TAG factors, WYCA analysis	N/A	N/A	5,802 tonnes CO2e	-1%	-14%	-77%	-87%

6. List of tables and figures

Figures

Figure	Description	Pg. No
1	The West Yorkshire region and the Bus Network	5
2	BSIP and its relationship to West Yorkshire's Local Plans and Strategies	7
3	Frequency of bus use by user type	20
4	Composition of West Yorkshire bus market 2020 vs 2024 – Thousand passengers per week	21
5	Composition of West Yorkshire bus market 2020 vs 2024 by percentage	22
6	Map of West Yorkshire Bus Network	29
7	Summary of West Yorkshire Bus Priority Measures	31
8	West Yorkshire Bus Network Types	59

Tables

Table	Description	Pg. No
1	West Yorkshire in numbers	6
2	West Yorkshire BSIP Key Strategic Themes, Objectives and Priorities	14
3	Investment in buses 2022/23 - 2025/26	19
4	Types of Bus User Definitions	20
5	List of existing bus operators in West Yorkshire	22
6	Passenger Charter Key Performance indicators	25
7	Summary of West Yorkshire Strategic Bus Priorities aligned with National Bus Strategy Objectives and Local Challenges for Bus	26
8	Summary of BSIP Revenue Funding until March 2026	38
9	Key BSIP deliverables and milestones in 2024/25	39
10	BSIP programme scheme updates	40
11	West Yorkshire capital delivery programmes	43
12	CRSTS/TCF schemes in delivery in 2024/25	43
13	BSIP programme development funding ask	45
14	Bus Passenger Journey Proposition	47

Bus Service Improvement Plan 2024

15	Our Bus Service Improvement Plan on a Page	49
16	Network Plan Breakdown	61
17	Services protected with BSIP+ funding in 2024/25 (as of March 2024)	62
18	Tranche 1 of Network Enhancements	63
19	Tranche 1.5 of Network Enhancements	64
20	BSIP funded Superbus schemes	65
21	Medium term network objectives – 2025 to 2028	67
22	Network Objectives – 2028 to 2040	68
23	BSIP Bus Network Frequency and Operational hour targets 2024-2035	69
24	Suggested waiting infrastructure provision	95
25	Planned bus station improvements.	98
26	Primary KPIs and Targets	105

7. Appendices

Appendix No.	Name
1	West Yorkshire BSIP 2024 Letters of Support
2	BSIP Strategic Case for Change
3	Draft West Yorkshire Passenger Charter 2024 – 2025
4	West Yorkshire Consultation and Engagement Summary
5	Supported Fixed-Route Network List
6	West Yorkshire Bus Priority Measure Maps
7	Bus Capital Delivery Programme up to 2027
8	West Yorkshire Primary KPI Breakdowns
9	West Yorkshire KPI Methodology