

Introducing the Enhanced Partnership⁺ to the West Yorkshire Bus Reform Programme

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INTRODUCTION

Introducing the Enhanced Partnership+ to the West Yorkshire Bus Reform Programme

A vibrant, bus network is critical to the economic and environmental future of our region. The West Yorkshire Bus Operators (WYO) share WYCA's objectives for "an integrated transport system, which is affordable, convenient, and greener - improving connectivity and getting people where they need to go." To enable this, WYO have developed a first-of-its-kind approach to a partnership with support from colleagues at the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA), which will harness the strengths of both the public sector and private sector for the benefit of the public. This far-reaching plan is named 'the Enhanced Partnership+' (EP+).

This pack contains details of the EP+, which gives real, substantive control on network design to WYCA, alongside a clear and simple bus ticketing structure, and a roadmap to Zero-Emission. Amongst other things, WYO commit to individually collaborate with WYCA on network design, providing open book data sharing on route performance with WYCA, public performance monitoring, a branding strategy designed with WYCA, and a single point of 'frontline' contact to facilitate triaging of customer contact.

This radical partnership constitutes an innovative way of achieving bus reform, and is a partnership that WYO, the Combined Authority and Mayor Brabin can together be proud of and celebrate nationally. The EP+ delivers the level of control sought by the Combined Authority and Mayor Brabin, alongside many other benefits that meet the Bus Reform

Assessment Objectives. It is deliverable faster and more cost effectively than franchising. This is a proposal for "West Yorkshire's bus network, designed for the community we are proud to belong to."

WYO commit to accountability in delivering the EP+ and ask of WYCA to do the same, with KPIs underpinned by a relentless focus on sustainable network growth and customer satisfaction. Under the EP+, WYO, WYCA and the West Yorkshire Districts will work hand-in-hand to meet shared objectives, where feasible securing the required funding to do so.

This proposal is presented in 'good faith' by the West Yorkshire Operators of First Bus, Arriva and Transdev together with smaller and medium sized operators represented by the Confederation of Passenger Transport. The commitments herein are fully supported by parent companies and Letters of Commitment are provided. In the case that WYCA requires a list of all engaged SMOs, this can be requested via CPT.

A great deal of effort has been put into the development of this EP+ proposal by WYO, WYCA and CPT colleagues. WYO extend thanks to WYCA and CPT colleagues for their engagement in this process.

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SECTION 1

Context for this Report

1.1. Upon its launch, the West Yorkshire Bus Reform Programme referred to three models for pursuing bus reform: Franchising, the current Enhanced Partnership (EP) and an Enhanced Partnership Plus (EP+), with the detail underpinning these options having been pulled together by WYCA colleagues. Upon review, there was strong consensus amongst WYO that the EP+ as suggested by WYCA colleagues, whilst a solid base for building upon, didn't go far enough in its pursuit of bus reform. It was agreed that, by collaboration together and with WYCA, a revised, much more ambitious version of the EP+ could be submitted into the Bus Reform Assessment process for consideration alongside franchising.

SECTION 2

Purpose of this Report

2.1. This paper distils the detail of the EP+, which builds substantially on the current EP. The Executive Teams across all major Bus Operators in West Yorkshire (WYO), and across small and medium operators (represented within EP+ development discussions by CPT), have provided a Letter of Commitment (appended) to pledge their support and investment to the EP+ were it to be the chosen path for bus reform in West Yorkshire. This paper contains: An overview of the Commitments within the EP+, detail of how the EP+ aligns with the West Yorkshire Bus Reform Programme objectives and aims, and the supporting WYO Letters of Commitment.

2.2. As is required within a Bus Reform Assessment, per the Bus Services Act 2017, the EP+ is to be assessed objectively in a process of evaluation. WYO understand that the assessment will be finalised in August 2023, prior to audit submission, and thereafter a decision on whether to progress to consultation at end of September 2023. WYO and CPT colleagues remain available to WYCA or other stakeholders for any required further discussions, to support this process through to its close.



SECTION 3

Introducing...

**Enhanced
Partnership⁺**

3.1. This proposal is made in the context of the West Yorkshire Plan's 5 Objectives:

- A prosperous West Yorkshire, built on an inclusive economy with well-paid jobs.
- A happy West Yorkshire, full of great places and healthy communities.
- A well-connected West Yorkshire, held together by a strong transport system.
- A sustainable West Yorkshire, rich with greener lives and communities.
- A safe West Yorkshire, free of the fear of crime so everyone can flourish.

3.1.1. The section of the West Yorkshire Plan entitled “A well-connected West Yorkshire” details objectives to make buses more reliable and affordable, to build a fully integrated mass transit system, and to make active travel the easiest choice for short journeys. This EP+ proposal is aligned with and contributes to all elements of the West Yorkshire Plan, but naturally focusses on the contextual objective regarding transport.

3.2. It is recognised that the current system faces challenges, resulting in opportunity to increase patronage, to standardise customer service, and to lessen reliance on public funding. In response to this, Mayor Brabin pledged to ‘bring buses back under public control, introduce simpler fares, contactless ticketing and greener buses.’ Progress has been made via the West Yorkshire Bus Alliance to address challenges and deliver improvements for passengers, but it is mutually agreed between WYCA and WYO that changes need to go further, faster. The EP+ delivers upon Mayor Brabin’s pledge, introducing a collective requirement for progress that will quickly deliver substantive benefits to customers, but that is low risk to WYCA, and bearing no requirement upon WYCA to raise funding for bus reform through a precept.

3.3. The EP+ is built upon the core principles of:

1. A shared desire for change, with an unwavering customer focus; Processes that enable continuous focus on customer satisfaction, evolution of the service to meet future needs, transparent collaboration to address problems and the reinvestment of benefits back into the network.
2. Achieving West Yorkshire’s Plan, underpinned by the Bus Reform Objectives and making a significant contribution to the aims referenced within the Bus Reform Needs Assessment,

namely responding to climate emergency, supporting ED&I across the region, and ensuring connectivity between areas of economic deprivation and major employment sites. The EP+ also aligns well with and supports the delivery of the recently published Mayoral Pledges.

3. Contributing to the implementation of the WYCA Local Transport Plan, to enable promotion and encouragement of safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport.

4. ‘Achieving Bus Reform differently, quicker, cheaper’ than is being done elsewhere within England. All WYO are aligned with the suggested EP+ interventions per WYCA’s ‘Market Engagement Brief –March 2023,’ however the West Yorkshire Bus Reform Programme outcomes can be achieved with less risk to WYCA, more quickly and whilst constituting better value for money for taxpayers than the alternatives presented within the Bus Reform Assessment.

5. Delivering a bus reform model that works for operators of all sizes, in a way that franchising cannot. The EP+ will ensure that a mix of large and small operators remain viable as employers within West Yorkshire into the future.

3.4. The EP+ delivers upon these principles by:

- Committing support to the delivery of the West Yorkshire Mass Transit 2040 Vision.
- Creating a unified brand for bus in West Yorkshire, supported by improved information provision and enhanced customer services.
- Achieving a 100% zero-emission bus fleet by 2036.
- Giving the West Yorkshire public more control of the bus network, by introducing a Network Management Group overseen by WYCA. This makes WYCA the decision-maker, operating



within a clear framework of design objectives and principles such that positive changes are given appropriate focus, and negative changes are quantified and consulted upon.

- Innovating in the delivery of local bus services, harnessing these for wider economic and social benefit across West Yorkshire.
- Delivering a simpler fares structure, enhanced ticketing solutions, and incentivising and rewarding bus usage.

3.5. The effectiveness of the EP+, were it to be the chosen path for bus reform, will be measured regularly within an agreed and transparent framework, with WYO and WYCA being held to account by the WYCA Transport Committee for delivery. Bus operators are also held to account by the Traffic Commissioner, as WYCA can report any operator which fails to meet its EP commitments to the Traffic Commissioner who can take regulatory action.

3.5.1. Suggested KPIs are: increasing public transport patronage growth, increasing customer satisfaction (NPS), decreasing the number of customer complaints, increasing the response to (and usage of discounts within) promotional campaigns, improving bus network reliability and punctuality (with immediate focus on Bus Priority schemes), reducing bus journey times and thereby improving bus network sustainability (with a reducing reliance on public funding), staying on track to deliver 100% of zero-emission buses by 2036, achieving modal shift from car to bus use, and critically, improving the sentiment and statistics regarding the level of safety, particularly for women and young girls, across the bus network. As part of the formal drafting of the EP, these KPIs would be converted into SMART targets and thereafter measured to a mutually agreed cadence, with reporting on these statistics to the EP Board.



3.6. There is confidence amongst WYO in the successful delivery of these KPIs, with the benefits of working in collaboration as a multi-operator group having been proven, within the West Yorkshire Bus Alliance (which evolved into the West Yorkshire Voluntary Partnership), and the West Yorkshire Ticketing Company Limited (WYTCL).

3.6.1. The West Yorkshire Bus Alliance has delivered several significant outcomes including an all-operator under-19s fare deal (aligning to 3 simple single fares stages and effectively replacing single operator day tickets through a simpler multi-operator offer), improved on-street information, and retro-fitment of low emission exhausts, helping meet Bradford's recent CAZ.

3.6.2. In addition, the Alliance partnership has helped deliver substantial funding allocations including the £70m BSIP over 3 years and has co-funded decarbonisation that will deliver 136 new EVs (total cost of £54m) into West Yorkshire by the end of 2024/ early 2025. This follows on from investment made by WYO as part of the Connecting Leeds programme, which saw extensive fleet renewal and the rollout of Euro 6 emission standard buses as part of the since aborted Leeds Clean Air Zone.

3.6.3. The West Yorkshire Ticketing Company Limited (WYTCL) provides another solid example of successful multi-operator collaboration with WYCA. The WYTCL is a long-established joint venture between bus operators, rail companies and WYCA, which manages the multi operator ticketing scheme "MCard". MCard has evolved as part of the BSIP to

provide the default product for day tickets for adults, following an initial implementation in 2019 for young persons. As part of the EP+, MCard will be the default season ticket product for all. This gives WYCA strong influence over future ticket pricing. The WYTCL also acts, and can continue to act, as a funding conduit for collaborative projects. This mechanism is currently used for operator contributions to Metroliner, bus shelter cleaning, journey planning, and the MCard marketing plans.

3.6.4. Strong WYO collaboration was also evident across the implementation of the 'Mayors Fares' Scheme, and across projects under the pilot EP schemes, such as the A61 Scheme. A joint effort to deliver a driver recruitment portal helped encourage more people into employment and addressed driver shortages. Lastly, WYO successfully collaborate with, and invest in the Ahead Partnership on a wide-reaching programme of engagement with young people through their schools and colleges.

3.7. As the EP+ builds on existing arrangements, it is possible to implement some EP+ commitments immediately upon approval of the Scheme. Table 1 within section 4, below, provides a timeline for each commitment.

3.8. The benefits of bus reform, under any regulatory regime, will only be fully realised with complementary measures to address planning and land use policy, road space allocation and parking policy (in terms of supply, pricing and stay duration). In committing to the EP+, WYO request reciprocal commitment from WYCA to support the delivery of EP+ commitments, but especially within the remit of Bus Priority, where WYO are reliant upon Districts to make sufficiently ambitious the statutory Local Transport Plan and Bus Priority objectives, and then to deliver upon these.

Without such commitment from the local authorities, the benefits of the EP+ will not be fully realised despite the commitments of WYO.

3.9. WYO understand that the EP+ is to be assessed in a process of evaluation from August-October 2023, following which a decision will be taken on whether to pursue the franchising model or the EP+ model. In carrying out that evaluation, WYO believe it is appropriate to highlight that WYO were advised that only measures for which WYO can guarantee their own funding (that is, not including any publicly funded measures – even if these are the same measures that would be delivered under franchising) can be considered in the evaluation of the benefits. Whereas, for franchising, WYO believe that WYCA can commit to levels of public expenditure in the making of a franchising scheme.

3.10. As the largest operator in West Yorkshire, First West Yorkshire recognises the depth of its responsibility in delivering this EP+. Therefore, beyond the far-reaching commitments of this proposal, First Bus has set out additional commitments that would be delivered in a legally binding partnership with WYCA should the decision be made to proceed with a new EP. These commitments are clarified within this proposal and confirmed within the separate Letter of Commitment.



SECTION 4

An overview of the commitments within the Enhanced Partnership+

4.1. WYO, by collaboration together and with WYCA, seek to meet the two overarching objectives (and eight subobjectives) of the WYCA Bus Reform Programme. Achieving these objectives would help to support the bus market in West Yorkshire, allowing for improved customer service and financial stability. It would also strengthen the role played by the bus system in supporting the region's economic growth, decarbonisation and placemaking (in alignment with the aims referenced within the Bus Reform Needs Assessment).

4.2. There is recognition that these policy-led objectives need to be balanced against the need for the bus system to be affordable, deliverable, and to offer good value for money. This has been thoroughly considered throughout the development of the EP+.

4.3. The table below sets out the intervention areas within the EP+, the commitments and initiatives that underpin these intervention areas, and the resulting outcomes for West Yorkshire's bus customers and citizens.

4.4. It is understood by WYO that a decision regarding the preferred bus reform model will be taken in March 2024, with implementation to follow. In the case the decision to proceed with EP+ is made in March 2024, WYO stand ready to implement the new EP. The table therefore reflects this timeline, for example, 'within 3 months of EP+ go live' assumes that if the EP goes live in April 2024, therefore this commitment would be implemented by July 2024. Where 'Spring 2024' is referenced within this document, this assumes a decision to proceed with the EP+ has been made in March 2024.



Intervention Area	Key Commitment and initiatives	Funding	Delivery Timescale	Outcome for customers
A Publicly controlled bus network to deliver a well-connected West Yorkshire.	A WYCA-led Network Management Group (NMG), comprising Officers and operators, that together determine the network changes needed to meet customer requirements, on the basis of shared objectives	Within current resource	Within 3 months of EP+ go live	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An integrated network that enables enhanced connectivity, resulting in reduced car dependency • Improved bus network reliability
	Transparency regarding route performance, patronage levels (and other key KPIs), via proactive data sharing with WYCA			
	Agreed process for network re-investment where benefits (such as saved resources) have been realised from public capital investment	WYO	In place within year 1 of EP+ go live	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An empowered public with a stronger voice and active role in shaping their bus network • A reduced reliance on public funding
	A collaborative approach to strategic development of the public transport network, including urban and rural initiatives, resulting in WYO-funded innovative network developments, delivering 3 innovation projects per annum			
	Commitment to supporting the development of mass transit proposals, and to support WYCA in designing the optimum Scheme			
Simpler Fares & Integrated Ticketing	Effective replacement of ticket options with a streamlined and simple WYO ticket range based on U19 model delivered via WYTCL and marketing support	Within current resource	Complete within year 1 of EP+ go live	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best value with capped fares and flexible ticket options, offering cost-effective choices • Simple 'search, book and travel' processes • Joined up fares & journey planning information • Cheaper travel on targeted routes
	Delivery of multi-operator contactless capping as an early adopter of Project Coral rollout		Complete within year 1 of EP+ go live, subject to Project Coral timescales	
	Introduction of pre-9:30am free travel for ENCTS passholders	WYCA	Within 3 months of EP+ go live	
	Funding of initiatives including a 'Passenger Incentive Programme' and a local fund for Districts. The objectives are to showcase 'value for money' travel, provide loyalty reward and implement targeted fare trials and discount offers	WYO	In place within year 1 of EP+ go live	
	Display multi-operator best value fares within journey planning functionality	Joint – WYO and WYCA	By close of 2025	
Enabling 'Bus Priority,' for faster, more reliable Journeys	Creation of an 'Oversight Group' to identify and prioritise areas of focus	Within current resource	Within 3 months of EP+ go live	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faster journey times • Improved bus network reliability
	Enhanced sharing of data with support for & collaboration with WYCA to build strategic cases for schemes to work towards an agreed target of bus priority measures	WYO	Within 3 months of EP+ go live	
	Provision of resource into Urban Traffic Control Teams in all 5 Districts	WYO	Within 6 months of EP+ go live	
	WYCA to use Key Route Network powers to better manage highways	WYCA	In place within year 1 of EP+ go live	
Better Journeys for West Yorkshire Customers	Unified West Yorkshire brand	Joint – WYO and WYCA	Within 6 months of EP+ go live	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better service quality and standards; Ease when reporting issues and incidents, with streamlined processes for providing feedback and addressing concerns
	Fleet rebrand across all in service buses	WYO	80% within 3 years, 100% completed within operator repaint programme	
	Enhanced, streamlined customer service processes, and information provision	Joint – WYO and WYCA	Within 6 months of EP+ go live	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced safety and security, ensuring a safer travel environment for customers, with a specific focus on the safety of women and young girls
	Establish a new 'Safety Partnership'		Within 3 months of EP+ go live	
	Introduction of Passenger Forums		Within 6 months of EP+ go live	
	Agree standard interior bus specification for all new buses	WYO	Within 6 months of EP+ go live	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards support increased awareness and loyalty
	Enhanced in-service, on-bus cleaning programme			
	Additional customer service training for frontline staff			
Improved digital information on bus through 4G upgrade investment				
A Green Network	100% zero-emission bus fleet by 2036 by maximising partnership funding opportunities	WYO	2036	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved air quality across West Yorkshire • Creation of jobs and supporting skills & training development
	'Green Excellence Transport Hubs' offering charging facilities and local skills development		Within 6 months of EP+ go live	
	'Green Team Taskforce' to support delivery of environmental targets			

SECTION 5

A Publicly Controlled Bus Network, to deliver a well-connected West Yorkshire

5.1. The following initiatives form the commitment set, that will enable to delivery of a publicly controlled bus network, to deliver a well-connected West Yorkshire.

5.2. These commitments will give the significant control of the bus network sought by WYCA and Mayor Brabin. They will deliver real benefit to customers by harnessing the complementary skills and expertise of WYCA and WYO to manage and redesign the bus network. Data sharing and publication is at the heart of this section of the EP+, together with enhanced engagement and consultation.

5.3. A Network Management Group (NMG) will be established under WYCA's leadership, comprising officers and WYO, who will collaborate to recommend network development and changes. The NMG will be formed immediately upon approval of the EP+ in Spring 2024, with Terms of Reference, objectives, etc. prepared in the interim period.

5.3.1. The NMG will be responsible for:

- Proposing plans to expand and integrate the network.
- Enhancing punctuality and reliability.
- Formulating Service Level Agreements (SLAs) for key routes and optimising tendered services – using Qualifying Agreements where necessary to co-ordinate between operators seamlessly.

- Jointly addressing performance issues through route-level financial and operational evaluations.
- Consulting on proposal with customers and stakeholders.

5.3.2. A programme of local network reviews would be undertaken on a programme basis by the NMG. This would identify the optimum network, to be supported by Qualifying Agreements, considering:

- Integration – so that customers can connect to other modes such as rail services, future mass transit services and cycling.
- Convenience – ensuring the majority of West Yorkshire's residents can access a bus within 400m during the day with access to key facilities, either directly or within one change. WYCA engagement with WYO should identify opportunities to deliver complementary service frequencies in the evenings and at weekends.
- Punctuality and reliability – as the key drivers of sustained bus usage.
- Frequency – delivered either as a single route or co-ordination between routes and operators under Qualifying Agreements and with minimal variation.



5.4. Where projects, such as bus priority or a network co-ordination exercise, using Qualifying Agreements, deliver a benefit to WYO as a result of public capital investment, WYO commit to reinvest the benefit (usually via resources) back into the network to improve bus services elsewhere. The NMG would identify priorities and agree how to 'spend' this reinvestment.

5.4.1. Examples of benefits to WYO are: 'saved buses,' i.e., fewer buses are needed to deliver the timetable because it is faster, or because timetables have been co-ordinated between WYO. Benefits could also be due to lower operating costs because buses are faster, or due to significant customer and (resulting) revenue growth, e.g., due to a restraint of other modes.

5.4.2. Examples of how these benefits could be reinvested are:

- Redeploying the saved buses on the same corridor to increase frequency – this is a simple option and may lead to compound benefits.
- Using the saved cost associated with those buses (on the same corridor or others) to extend operating hours, improve evening frequencies, and/or provide night buses – again a straightforward option with compound benefits.
- Investing the saved cost to promote the corridor, e.g., with a special price promotion, or a focused marketing campaign.
- Deploying the value elsewhere, e.g., to increase a tendered service or to provide a new one. This has complexities within it, because this may not be possible within the operating area of the operator involved. In that case, the operator could either:
 - Pay the benefit directly to WYCA's tender budget. this could be done by offsetting monies due from WYCA to the operator.
 - Pay increased departure charges or other facility costs to release the benefit.

- WYCA can use de minimis powers and "resource tendering" where an operator is unable to deploy a value-add resource into its own network. In this scenario, a sum would be paid to the 'giving operator' to add its resource(s) to augment another operator's service(s).

5.4.3. Savings can be determined using an initial modelled output before the scheme, which proves that the same timetable can be achieved with fewer buses, followed by an initial review post implementation which confirms that performance after (for example) 6 months.

5.5. WYO commit to sharing data to encourage increased customer and stakeholder engagement with the management of the bus network, and to facilitate the prioritisation of network enhancements via the NMG. Agreed thresholds, aligned with customer focussed KPIs (such as customers per km, punctuality, or financial performance), would trigger a review of services (as outlined in 5.3.2.).

5.5.1. Table 2 below sets out the data sharing protocols, which are to be implemented within the first month following approval of the EP+.

5.5.2. It should be noted that WYO requested (of WYCA) a list of data items that should be received by either WYCA or made public under the EP+. This list was not received thus the below table summarises the data items that WYO anticipate are required. In the case that further data items are required, WYO ask of WYCA to provide the requested list for review.



Table 2 – Data items to be shared with WYCA and/ or to be published under the EP+

Data Item/ Report	Frequency of information provision from WYO	For WYCA only (i.e., data is confidential between individual operator and WYCA), or for publication	Purpose
Raw passenger boarding data by location and ticket feed from our WYO ticket machines	Daily download	For WYCA only	To track performance; inform bus priority design and monitoring, to assist network design
Route performance analysis	Monthly	For WYCA only	For bilateral discussions between individual operators and WYCA to determine whether routes need attention (change/ improvement)
Audited annual patronage figure for each route, along with its operated kilometres (similar to the model implemented by Transport for London)	Annual	Public	So that customers and stakeholders can measure the performance, growth and development of their local service

5.6. Leaning upon the recommendations of the NMG, WYO commit to funding and delivering a minimum of three ‘network innovation’ projects per annum. These projects will include both urban and rural initiatives, with the objectives of a) increasing connectivity and, b) adapting the network to reflect evolving travel demands. The provision of services to/from healthcare and education facilities will be prioritised. This fund will be made available within the first month following approval of the EP+ and will be funded by WYO.

5.6.1. First West Yorkshire also commits, beyond the scope of the EP+, to the split of First West Yorkshire annual profits beyond 10% EBIT, on a 50/ 50 share basis for a minimum 5-year period beyond EP+ implementation, between First West Yorkshire and WYCA. The NMG will jointly decide the best use of the 50% share received by WYCA.

5.7. The criticality of the West Yorkshire Mass Transit 2040 Vision is at the fore of the EP+. The NMG would conduct local network reviews (as referenced here in section 5) to enable a transition from conventional bus to mass transit, where this is identified as a future target (and even where the mass transit solution is not bus). This will ensure WYO and WYCA can together reshape the network to deliver the Mass Transit Vision. WYO resources can be made available to attend programme meetings and/ or provide requested information immediately upon approval of the EP+.



SECTION 6

Simpler Fares & Integrated Ticketing

6.1. The following initiatives form the commitment set, that will enable to delivery of simpler fares & integrated ticketing.

6.2. These commitments deliver simple ticket options that offer the best value ticket, with minimum effort required by the customer. West Yorkshire already offers a simplified ticketing range that is ahead of many other regions thanks to the close collaboration of WYO through the WYTCL. The EP+ builds upon this further to drive unrivalled simplicity across the search, book & travel processes.

6.3. WYO commit to champion and lobby for West Yorkshire as an area of priority for Project Coral rollout, to begin immediately upon approval of the EP+. The largest operators have already invested in contactless ticketing and Tap Out readers, enabling Tap On, Tap Off ticketing on their own operator products across West Yorkshire. WYO worked with WYCA through the BSIP process to secure funding for tap out readers, including for SMOs, but the minimum requirement is that operators have EMV capable ticketing equipment which most already have via the Ticketer machines. As a result, WYO are in a prime position to deliver Project Coral to enable multi-operator fare capping. This will ensure that customers can achieve a best value capped fare when using their bank card or contactless device, as soon as possible.

6.4. WYO will, during 2024, introduce a streamlined and simplified West Yorkshire ticket range, that will be accepted across all operators. This will include day and weekly tickets, plus longer periods, that are currently available through MCard, but these will be priced so that customers get the best value and therefore will become the default purchase choice. WYOs will standardise ticket definitions including a review of geographic boundaries, ages, term dates, and capping methodology, i.e., day, week, rolling week. Once aligned, all tickets will be available for retail through West Yorkshire Metro and MCard, to ensure both consistency and efficiency.

6.4.1. WYO will align and revise retail marketing in accordance with the new West Yorkshire ticket range (see 6.4.) to ensure customers are aware of best value products.

6.5. Upon approval of the EP+, WYO will make available to Districts an annual fund to be used to develop and implement local multi-operators fares initiatives. WYO will engage with District Councillors regarding 'target' corridors/ geographies/ demographics and propose to the EP+ Board use of the fund for fares trials. The EP+ Board will agree and measure the trials for effectiveness and longevity of offer.

6.6. WYO commit to reviewing adult fares structures in alignment with the principles and delivery mechanism of the existing 'hop, skip, and jump' 3 fare bands available for under 19s. This can be achieved when the existing WYCA subsidised fare cap ends, on a commercial basis. In the event that WYCA funding could be made available to support this initiative, an assessment could be undertaken to extend this commitment across all fares.



6.7. A comprehensive passenger incentive programme will be delivered by the close of 2025, to provide tailor-made, discounted, and free travel offers that drives loyalty towards bus use, encourages a 'return to bus' for straying users, and generates new users. This will be a commercial offering by WYO via WYTCL that rewards customers for loyalty in a similar way to customers who purchase season tickets receive a loyalty discount, or that offers discounted tickets for new users as 'taster tickets'.

6.8. WYO commit to developing journey planning functionality, to instantly display multi-operator best value fares by the close of 2025. Where 'one app' is the chosen route for ticket distribution, WYO are open to discussing with WYCA a contribution to the development of these two projects outside of their individual operator digital platforms.

6.9. As soon as Spring 2024, free concessionary travel before 09:30hrs can be added into the West Yorkshire Concession Scheme provided that WYCA undertake to reimburse operators on the same basis for these new trips as is already the case for ENCTS card holders at other times.

6.10. Ahead of Mass Transit being implemented in West Yorkshire, WYO will work with WYCA to support the design and implementation of simple, multi-modal ticketing that replaces or complements the existing multi-operator customer proposition, to enable seamless end-to-end journey planning.



SECTION 7

Enabling 'Bus Priority', for faster, more reliable Journeys

7.1. The following initiatives form the commitment set, that will enable 'Bus Priority,' for faster, more reliable Journeys.

7.2. These commitments ensure WYO are fully supporting, engaging and driving the approach to infrastructure that maximises bus priority in West Yorkshire, and therefore delivers faster journeys. With significant (yet unused) funding available for infrastructure in the BSIP and CRSTS pots, there is the opportunity for a step change in customer experience on some corridors, and there is potential for further funding to be secured in the future. The Bus Priority commitments are complemented by commitments under section 6 of this EP+ proposal, where it is proposed that benefits from faster journeys are reinvested back into network to give a virtuous circle of improvements to customers. Data sharing protocols, as per 8.5., will be established to set baselines and ensure schemes are well evidenced and monitored.

7.3. Immediately, WYO commit to fully engaging and supporting WYCA's leadership on implementing current outlined Bus Priority schemes and developing new schemes to secure more funding for such measures.

7.4. Upon approval of the EP+, to assist the delivery of the step change required within bus priority across West Yorkshire, a 'Bus Priority Oversight Group' will be established. This will be governed by WYCA, to provide strategic oversights and to keep track of existing schemes and potential funding opportunities. Responsibilities of the Bus Priority Oversight Group will include:

Setting and reporting on:

- Bus frequency standards.
- Emissions standards, with bus priority corridors prioritised in zero-emission bus plans.
- Red Route standards.
- Target bus and non-bus journey times.
- Traffic Light priority rollout.
- Active Travel integration.
- Delay and disruption mitigation.
- Parking offence enforcement.
- Bus priority measure enforcement (or measures designed to be self-enforcing).
- Enhanced roadworks management and coordination protocols, such as local authorities using 'Key Route Network Powers' to better manage highways.



7.5. To recognise the criticality of Bus Priority progress to key corridors across West Yorkshire, WYO commit to increasing resources associated with Bus Priority. For example, from Spring 2024, increased WYO resources will support WYCA with data provision (e.g. bus punctuality and occupancy data at all signalised junctions where these are requested by WYCA), to provide insight for schemes that work towards an agreed target of bus priority benefits across West Yorkshire.

7.5.1. WYO commit to providing control resource into the Urban Traffic Management Control (UTMC) centre across all five Districts to improve bus flows and aid the coordination of major disruption and events. This resource will be made available within the first quarter of the EP+ being approved, funded by WYO.

7.5.2. First West Yorkshire commits to increasing its local Network team to support WYCA with the delivery of Bus Priority measures and the development of Bus Priority schemes for the good of all involved within the Partnership. This resource will be made available within the first quarter of the EP+ being approved. It is suggested that this resource will lean upon support from third parties such as Prospective or City Swift to interrogate and provide to WYCA data on network usage, pinch points, passenger journey delay time & punctuality.

7.6. In Spring 2024 and on an ongoing basis as required, WYO commit to set service and quality level agreements for the affected corridors, to ensure full benefits are realised. Commitments herein are backed up by the provisions in the EP legislation for the Traffic Commissioner to take actions against operators who do not meet their EP commitments.



SECTION 8

Better Journeys for West Yorkshire Customers

8.1. The following initiatives form the commitment set, that will enable the delivery of better journeys for West Yorkshire customers.

8.2. These commitments put customers at the heart of our shared ambition to develop a truly integrated transport system. This approach will create a strong sense of pride in a customer-centric bus network that connects the vibrant Districts of West Yorkshire, by recognising that the satisfaction and wellbeing of customers are pivotal to the success and reputation of a sustained increase in public transport mode share.

8.3. WYO commit to a unified brand for bus in West Yorkshire, and WYO request of WYCA to engage immediately in the preparation for this process. Prominently featured across buses, online platforms and on street, a unified brand is crucial to enhance the overall customer experience for West Yorkshire bus. By having a distinct and recognisable brand, customers will easily identify and trust the services, instilling a sense of pride and place in the local community and fostering a sense of familiarity and reliability.

8.3.1. The branding strategy will be WYCA-led, in consultation with WYO, to ensure that the brand's development brings together expertise from WYO, whilst aligning to the West Yorkshire Plan. This approach will bring coherence and unity to the public transport system, whilst capturing the culture and values to resonate and unite West Yorkshire residents.

8.3.2. WYO commit to jointly developing a brand implementation plan as soon as possible, following engagement by WYCA with WYO in the ongoing brand strategy development. This will create a strategic asset renewal timeline, ensuring that buses and related infrastructure are updated and improved for the benefit of customers.

8.3.3. WYO commit that all new buses will be ordered with West Yorkshire branding, and WYO will rebrand current fleet at a minimum in accordance with their BAU repaint programmes of fleet.

8.3.4. First West Yorkshire will rebrand its full West Yorkshire fleet within three years of the EP+ proposal being approved; Over 200 First buses will reach West Yorkshire roads each year within the new, unified livery, with the first 200 landing before Spring 2025.

8.4. Journey planning is a critical 'hook' into the bus network, and as such journey planning tools must be continuously improved. WYO commit to provide simple and easy-to-use journey planners, coupled with real-time tools displaying the best value fares, empowering customers with essential information for making informed travel decisions.

8.5. Within 6 months of the EP+ being approved, WYO commit to establishing a single initial contact point for customer services, to make it easy for customers to enquire or report a problem. This will vastly simplify the complaint and issue resolution process, resulting in enhanced customer satisfaction.



8.5.1. To support the resolution of queries once the initial contact has been triaged (per 8.5.), Service Level Agreements (SLAs) will exist between WYCA and WYO to ensure adherence to clear standards. This approach will hold each party to account for delivering excellent service. Sharing of performance versus KPIs will be reported regularly via both the EP Board and via public performance communications.

8.6. Within 6 months of the EP+ being approved, WYO commit to enhancing and expanding the Customer Charter, to outline specific rights and benefits that West Yorkshire customers can expect, and to publicise the agreed SLAs (as referenced in 8.5.1.). All contact centre functions will follow processes and utilise policies based upon the revised Customer Charter, to enable a standardised approach.

8.7. Immediately upon approval of the EP+, WYO commit to formalising and where required, expanding, the current 'Husky' protocol to minimise delays and inconvenience to customers in the instance of weather-related disruption.

8.8. To the timeframe that WYCA requires, WYO will support WYCA in the comprehensive rollout of the Network Navigation project across all Districts of West Yorkshire, to improve accessibility and connectivity for all residents.

8.9. Investment will be made within 4G (and where feasible for WYO, smart hub) technology, to substantially enhance the quality of customer information on bus and at bus stops. This investment has started already across major WYO and will continue into 2024 and beyond.

8.9.1. First West Yorkshire commit to rolling out 4G and smart hub technology across, at a minimum, one fifth of its full West Yorkshire fleet per annum from Spring 2024, until the full First West Yorkshire fleet is 4G- and smart hub-enabled.

8.10. Enhanced, standardised customer service will be delivered. The basis for this is a new customer service training module, which will be rolled out to all frontline staff, and which will exceed the current CPC requirements to ensure exceptional service. The customer service training module will be developed within 6 months of the EP+ proposal being approved, and once implemented, will be rolled out to all new drivers within their initial training. Current drivers will be required to complete this training within 3 months of it being implemented, meaning that all drivers will be trained by the close of Spring 2025.

8.11. WYO commit to enhancing their on-bus cleaning programmes, to maintain a high-level of cleanliness throughout the operating day across key corridors, ensuring passenger comfort and improving the perception of bus amongst customers.

8.12. A standardised and inclusive interior specification will be agreed upon by WYO for all new buses, guaranteeing full accessibility for passengers, including those with mobility challenges. The design will incorporate provisions for wheelchairs and pushchairs, along with priority seating, and audio/visual 'next stop' information. This design will be agreed upon within the first year of the EP+ being approved, and thereafter included within all new design specifications for new buses. For clarity (as requested by WYCA), this includes SMO (albeit as do other commitments within this EP, as will be reflected within the 'making of the EP,' were it to be the selected model for reform).





8.13. A safety partnership will be established in conjunction with key external partners and groups, to continuously improve safety measures on public transport incorporating the West Yorkshire Mayors dedicated PCSOs. WYOs will share intelligence of anti-social behaviour on the network, with a particular focus on locations where the safety of women and girls can be improved. WYOs' drivers have visibility across West Yorkshire every day and with CCTV fitted on all vehicles, images can be shared of perpetrators, and WYO will continue to provide vehicles for 'Trojan Bus' activity.

8.13.1. WYO are open to discussing with WYCA the funding of PCSOs to demonstrate WYO commitment to safety across West Yorkshire, in support of Mayoral Pledges.

8.14. Immediately upon approval of the EP+, WYO commit to participation in the 'Behaviour Change Activity' programme.

8.15. WYO asks for WYCA to host regular passenger forums across all Districts of West Yorkshire, with representation from all demographics and accessibility groups. This aims to elevate the customer voice in decision-making and will lead to more customer-centric policies and services. WYO will ensure sufficient representation at each meeting. WYO suggest a similar approach to the prior held District consultation committees, which more recently have stalled. WYCA should advise if new resource if needed to support this commitment.

SECTION 9

A Green Network

9.1. The following initiatives form the commitment set, that will enable to delivery of a green network.

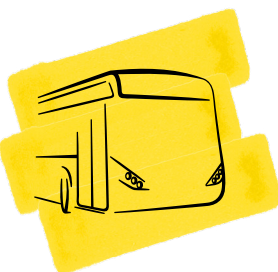
9.2. The collaborative approach outlined herein demonstrates that WYO are working towards reducing emissions and contributing to environmental improvement activity 'beyond bus.' With available funding, WYO will meet the zero-emission buses target, ensuring the fleet operates with an ever-reducing environmental impact and with 100% zero emissions by 2036. WYO also aim to create new green job opportunities, contributing to the growth of sustainable employment across West Yorkshire, and will offer community, customer, and business charging facilities at bus depots, enabling efficient and accessible power for electric vehicles. Through these initiatives, WYO strive to foster a sustainable and environmentally conscious transport system that benefits both the climate and West Yorkshire communities.

9.3. WYO have already demonstrated a successful working partnership with WYCA in bidding for grant funding (e.g., Zebra) for electric vehicles. By 2024 this partnership, together with WYO co-funding, will mean that over 10% of the West Yorkshire bus fleet will be Zero-Emission. This has been achieved in collaboration between WYCA and WYO who have been able to access expert knowledge in procurement and infrastructure, supported by substantial financial backing.

9.3.1. WYO commit to delivering a 100% zero-emission bus fleet by 2036, subject to available funding and leaning upon the expertise within WYO that has already ensured the delivery of the zero-emission buses referenced in 9.3. Based on current variables, meeting the 2036 target would represent a net investment over £350m over 13 years, with additional infrastructure and supply grid costs. To support this target, WYO agree (subject to funding bid requirements, competition law and internal guidance) to work together on funding application bids with WYCA.

9.3.2. First West Yorkshire commits to meet Euro 6 emission standards across its full West Yorkshire fleet by the close of 2024. This will require significant capital investment in seat belted school vehicles.

9.3.3. Further, First West Yorkshire commits to deliver a 100% zero-emission bus fleet across First Leeds depots by the close of 2030, and similarly, to deliver a 100% zero-emission bus fleet across Yorkshire West (Huddersfield, Halifax and Bradford depots) by 2035. Where there are evidenced, consistent air quality issues within Yorkshire West Districts, First will collaborate with WYCA to expedite an earlier delivery of zero-emission buses. Thorough consideration will also be given to the support of Bradford Council's progressing hydrogen programme.

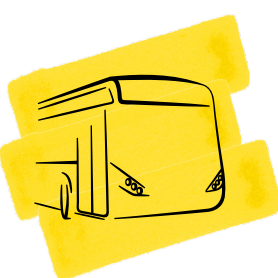


9.4. 'Green Excellence Transport Hubs' will be setup as depots are decarbonised. The first Hub will be established at Bramley Depot, Leeds in April 2024. Hubs will be developed in partnership, offering electric vehicle charging to small and medium bus operators and community service vehicles with opportunities for both business and customer charging, leaning upon the extensive WYO experience of such rollout, e.g., First Bus' rollouts in Leicester and Caledonia. Rollout of the 'Hubs' will be dependent on depot decarbonisation and progress will be reported through the EP Board.

9.4.1. Green Excellence Transport Hubs will work with skills and employment providers for the development and training of green transport jobs and apprenticeships, to specifically support the Mayoral Pledge to create 1,000 well paid, skilled jobs for young people.

9.5. In April 2024, a Green Team Taskforce (GTT) will be formed with WYO & WYCA representatives, with academic support provided by the Institute of Transport Studies in Leeds. The aim of the Taskforce will be to enable the delivery of the zero-emission fleet by 2036, and to support the transition to Net-Zero bus depot operation. The GTT will report to the EP Board with specific actions including (1) analysis of zero-emission fleet performance and fuel technology opportunities, (2) engagement with suppliers, (3) identification and agreement on decarbonisation targets by route/ depot/ bus stations/ infrastructure/ interchanges and delivery, and (4) sharing best practice.

9.6. Common new vehicle standards will be agreed with WYCA, which will be upheld by all WYO for vehicles purchased beyond the EP+ implementation date. Specification for new vehicle deliveries would be determined upon agreement of the EP+ during 2024 and would align with the unified branding guidelines.



SECTION 10

Alignment of the EP+ with WYCA's objectives

10.1. The table below sets out how the commitments within this EP+ proposal align with the WYCA Bus Reform Objectives, and to the Bus Reform Aims Referenced within the Needs Assessment.

Objective of WYCA Bus Reform	Sub-Objective of WYCA Bus Reform	Alignment with the WYCA Bus Reform Objectives, and the Bus Reform Aims Referenced within the Needs Assessment, to deliver a well-connected West Yorkshire
The whole journey, enhancing the contribution of the bus system towards the Combined Authority's Transport Strategy 2040 and wider policies.	Economy: Supporting an integrated transport system which provides reliable and improved connectivity to the places where customers need to travel to for work, education, leisure, and access to services.	The key commitments that support this objective are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An annual fund for innovative network developments, prioritising connectivity to places of education and places of employment, specifically to/ from areas of economic deprivation. - Data sharing protocols between WYO and WYCA, which will ensure the network adapts and responds to economic need.
	Environment: Establishing a transport network that helps to reduce the overall impact of transport on carbon emissions and air quality, and increases our resilience against climate change, including via zero-emission buses.	The key commitments that support this objective are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The delivery of a zero-emission bus fleet by 2036, supported by the Green Team Taskforce. - Green Transport Hubs that will offer EV charging opportunities to local businesses, while providing training to creates new jobs and apprenticeships within green transport for young people
	People and place: Enabling a transport system that increases access in a safe, inclusive way that encourages use of bus as part of a multi-modal network.	The key commitments that support this objective are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A safety partnership incorporating the West Yorkshire Mayor's dedicated PCSOs, increasing safety, and the perception of safety, across West Yorkshire buses. - Ensuring ED&I policy is paramount to decisions taken within each WYO, such as proactively working to reflect the communities we serve in relation to ED&I recruitment. - Improved accessibility via standardised interior bus specifications (including provisions for wheelchairs and pushchairs, along with priority seating, and audio/visual 'next stop' information), and further rollout of the Network Navigation project.
Improved travel experience for citizens, maximising deliverability of the Combined Authority's Bus Service Improvement Plan by 2030.	Network: Taking people where they need to go, when they need to go, and catering to the complexity of modern travel patterns.	The key commitments that support this objective are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WYO individually collaborating with WYCA on network design, overseen by the NMG, within a framework of data sharing that enables sustainable network improvement. - Where required, the use of Qualifying Agreements to implement improvements to the bus network.
	Fares and ticketing: Making paying for bus travel more affordable, easier, convenient, and flexible.	The key commitments that support this objective are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lobbying for West Yorkshire to be next in line for Project Coral rollout, to enable multi-operator fare capping. - Standardisation of ticket product ranges and ticket definitions, and alignment of retail marketing. - An annual fund to deliver fare initiatives within Districts. - Reviewing adult fare structures in alignment with the 'hop, skip, and jump' 3 single fare bands available for under 19s. - Extending the free concessionary travel (to before 09:30hrs). - Developing journey planning functionality to display best value fares. - Delivering a comprehensive passenger incentive programme.
	Green and better vehicles: Improving the onboard experience and making bus a sustainable choice for travel in West Yorkshire.	Commitments that support this objective are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementing enhanced on-bus cleaning programmes to elevate comfort and consistency. - Common vehicle standards, for new entries to the fleet. - Delivery of a zero-emission fleet, the Green Team Taskforce and Green Transport Hubs as referenced above alongside sub-objective 'environment.'

SECTION 11

Alignment of the EP+ with the Mayoral Pledges

11.1. WYO have taken the opportunity to evaluate the EP+ proposals against the Mayor's commitments to the people of West Yorkshire. The EP+ represents a valuable contribution towards to fulfilment of these promises. The table below sets out this alignment.

Table 4 – Alignment of the EP+ Proposal with Mayor Brabin's Mayoral Pledges.

Mayoral Pledge	Alignment of EP+ Proposal to Mayoral Pledge
Create 1,000 well paid, skilled jobs for young people.	As the bus network grows, the EP+ will generate jobs within the remits of driving, engineering, and customer service. For example, from November 2023, First Bus will take its first Apprentice Drivers under a flagship programme to introduce more well paid, skilled jobs for young people within West Yorkshire. Each year from 2024, First West Yorkshire will employ over 150 new Apprentice Drivers. This is alongside the minimum. 5 Engineering Apprentices employed annually.
Prioritise skills and training to ensure everyone in West Yorkshire has the skills they need to secure work.	The EP+ will extend and expand the network, and provide value for money ticketing options, that will help people access these opportunities (as is also the case for the skilled jobs referenced above).
Support local businesses and be a champion for our regional economy.	The EP+ is delivered by local businesses (which may not be the case with franchising) which invest directly in the local economy and support a wide range of other local businesses providing engineering and administrative services. Green Transport Hubs will also offer EV charging opportunities to local businesses.
Lead a Creative New Deal to ensure our creative industries are part of the broader recovery strategy.	Innovation and technological development, particularly with fleet decarbonisation and new ticketing technology, will help drive local industrial innovation.
Appoint an Inclusivity Champion to work to ensure that the region's recovery benefits us all.	ED&I policy is paramount to decisions taken within each WYO, such as proactively working to reflect the communities we serve in relation to ED&I recruitment.
Recruit 750 more frontline police officers and staff to fight crime.	Bus operators in West Yorkshire will continue to provide free transport to police officers in uniform.
Put keeping women and girls safe at the heart of my policing plan.	A safety partnership incorporating the West Yorkshire Mayor's dedicated PCSOs has the aim of increasing safety, and the perception of safety, across West Yorkshire buses.
Bring buses back under public control, introduce simpler fares, contactless ticketing, and greener buses.	The EP+ increases the influence and control available to the public sector in West Yorkshire and delivers simpler, contactless fares and greener buses.
Build 5000 sustainable homes including council houses and affordable homes.	By improving the connectivity via measures outlined within the EP+, new homes can be provided as part of a package of sustainable development that maximises the value of available land (by reducing the need for garages driveways and parking spaces, instead using such land for personal and communal green spaces and leisure facilities to make such new housing developments attractive), particularly in urban areas of West Yorkshire.
Tackle the climate emergency and protect our environment.	The EP+ accelerates the West Yorkshire decarbonisation journey and will be further enhanced if local authority policy makes car use less attractive through appropriate land use, parking and road charging strategies.



SECTION 12

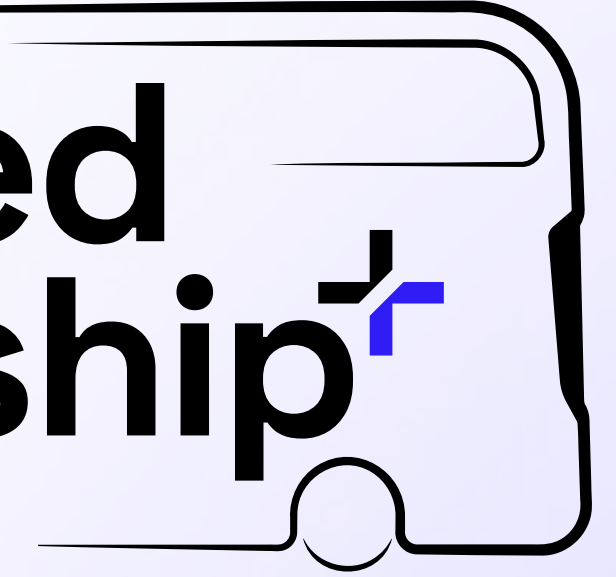
Conclusion

12.1. The above EP+ proposal is designed to align to the third 'mission' within the West Yorkshire Plan; To deliver 'a well-connected West Yorkshire, held together by a strong transport system.' WYO are committed to work proactively with WYCA and CPT, alongside other community partners, using the full scope of legislation to deliver maximum benefit to customers, alongside the greatest level of public control and influence possible. WYO are keen to get started and will do so as soon as a decision is made to proceed.

12.2. As requested, this EP+ proposal has been developed within current resource envelopes, identifying where any external support (funding or otherwise) is required. Increased funding will allow the partnership to supersize and accelerate its plans.

12.3. WYO look forward to the consultation period and will be delighted to work with WYCA colleagues to clarify any points raised.

Enhanced Partnership



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