

# WEST YORKSHIRE INTEGRATED TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

DATE: 19 MARCH 2010

AGENDA ITEM NO: 13

**SUBJECT: GOVERNANCE, URBAN CHALLENGE FUND AND FORERUNNER PILOT**

## Report of the Passenger Transport Executive

### 1. MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION

- 1.1. To provide an update on the latest developments on governance, the new Urban Challenge Fund and progress on the city region forerunner pilot programme.

### 2. INFORMATION

#### Governance

- 2.1. At earlier meetings the ITA has noted the Atkins recommendations agreed by the Leeds City Region Leaders Board for:
  - a Stronger West Yorkshire ITA, and
  - Strengthened partnership arrangements for the City Region
- 2.2. For **West Yorkshire**, Atkins proposed that the new, more focussed, ITA will develop, coordinate, and allocate funding for the implementation of the Local Transport Plan 3, providing a single voice for transport. Schemes will be implemented through the existing District delivery arrangements with all traffic, highway and street powers remaining with the Districts. A Power of Direction will be available to the ITA to ensure agreed LTP priorities are delivered effectively.
- 2.3. For the wider **City Region partnership**, Atkins proposed that the reforms include a politically strengthened Transport Panel with Members from all authorities, and some decision making powers devolved to it from the Leaders Board. The Transport Panel will be responsible for delivering the City Region Transport Strategy and Forerunner Pilot Programme (see below).
- 2.4. Progress is being made on both the West Yorkshire and City Region workstream packages and Metro is participating in both.
- 2.5. For West Yorkshire, the ITA has implemented its new interim arrangements for an ITA Executive Board to meet monthly and work is

currently underway to review the ITA's Standing Orders. Further development of these interim arrangements is ongoing with a view to presenting proposals to the next AGM scheduled for 25 June 2010.

- 2.6. For the city region, work is currently underway to explore the strengthening of powers in a new city region Transport Panel as a legally constituted Joint Committee. The Transport Panel would be responsible for delivering the City Region Transport Strategy and taking advantage of the opportunities presented by the new Urban Challenge Fund described below, for example.
- 2.7. These strengthened governance arrangements will underpin greater devolution of funding and decision making from Central Government that can be secured through the Forerunner Pilot programme described later in this report. Further updates will be provided at future meetings.

#### Urban Challenge Fund

- 2.8. The Department for Transport announced on 2 March, their intention to create an 'Urban Challenge Fund' (UCF) to replace the Transport Innovation Fund (TIF), Sustainable Cities Fund and potentially the Urban Congestion Fund. They have produced a discussion paper to seek comments on their proposals for the UCF. There is no detail on the scale of funding available but it is intended that this will be announced after the next Comprehensive Spending Review. Unlike TIF, access to the new fund would not be conditioned on introducing, strong demand management such as road pricing.
- 2.9. In summary, the UCF is aimed at delivering the priorities set out in a recent Prime Ministers Strategy Unit report on the future of urban transport. That report called for investment in urban transport to be done in such a way that could simultaneously tackle economic, health and environmental improvements - what is referred to as 'triple wins'. To be eligible, authorities would need to offer clear strategies that incorporate ambitious targets for a wider range of outcomes than just congestion, together with the local leadership and strong governance to make this a reality. The underlying aim of UCF is to deliver benefits in terms of:
  - enhanced mobility and wider choices for journeys;
  - reduced congestion and increased journey time reliability;
  - better health and much greater levels of walking and cycling;
  - streets and public spaces which are enjoyable places to be;
  - reduced level of carbon emissions from transport.
- 2.10. The UCF will highlight the importance of strong decision making and delivery arrangements across boundaries, and measures are expected to include:
  - sustainable travel;
  - encouraging modal shift;
  - demand management; and

- traffic management
- 2.11. It is anticipated that Metro would make a joint response to the discussion paper (by June 4) on behalf of City Region Partners and, when appropriate, co-ordinate the submission of a bid. Like previous DfT 'challenge' initiatives, access to the UCF will be competitive with other authorities, so a strong, well evidenced bid, developed in close consultation with DfT will be essential. Lessons learnt from the Transport for Leeds project could be usefully applied in developing a strong bid.

#### City Region Forerunner Pilot

- 2.12. At earlier meetings, the ITA has noted that the Leeds City Region had been awarded pilot city region status to take forward new freedoms and flexibilities in the areas of housing, innovation, skills and transport along with devolved funding and decision making.
- 2.13. The City Region has now reached agreement with the Government on the pilot commitments. The full programme is available at <http://www.leedscityregion.gov.uk/news> or from the ITA office. The transport commitments are being led by Metro in partnership with city region partners.
- 2.14. The transport commitments include:-
- **Road and Rail Protocols for the Strategic Network** – a new set of working practises is being developed for agreement with the Highways Agency and Network Rail respectively to better align priorities and working arrangements.
  - **City Region Transport Strategy** – Formal DfT recognition of the strategy completed and launched in November 2009.
  - **Long term consolidated funding streams** – work is ongoing with GOYH and Yorkshire Forward to develop an approach to establish a City Region Transport Fund that consolidates existing funding streams, flexible arrangements between different funding streams (e.g. housing and transport), along with innovative approaches for new funding streams. The ITA Executive Board has discussed options for developing a West Yorkshire fund as a first step and proposals will be considered at a future meeting of the Authority.
  - **Scheme Appraisal** – for major schemes under £25m, work is ongoing to develop the required processes with DfT which will allow the City Region to internally appraise/approve its own schemes (similar to Transport for London) rather than requiring DfT approvals.
- 2.15. Further updates will be provided at future meetings.

**3. FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.1. None as a result of this report.

**4. STAFFING IMPLICATIONS**

4.1. None as a result of this report.

**5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IMPLICATIONS**

5.1. None as a result of this report.

**6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

6.1. That the report is noted.

6.2. That Metro develops a response to the Urban Challenge Fund discussion paper.

Director General  
West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive