

CURRENT STATUS

20.1 The West Yorkshire Authorities have already attained Centre of Excellence status for their work in developing integrated public transport. We now wish to apply for Centre of Excellence status in Transport Planning to cover the development of a fully integrated transportation system.

KEY AREAS OF EXCELLENCE

20.2 Whilst we believe the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan meets all the criteria set out in the Guidance as necessary for a good quality Plan, there are certain areas in which we believe we excel. These core areas, all of which have received praise from the Government, are summarised below demonstrating how each area is being addressed. The Local Transport Plan and supporting strategy documents provide further information on the individual targets and proposals that being progressed in each of these areas.

Performance Indicators/Targets and Monitoring

20.3 West Yorkshire has a long standing monitoring strategy that has received praise from the Government for its comprehensive approach to monitoring. Selective detailed monitoring of schemes is used to assist in identifying best practice and ensure the schemes are meeting their objectives. The other key area is the monitoring of trends to ensure targets are being met or to enable further action to be taken as necessary.

Establish a Bus Strategy

20.4 As the dominant mode of public transport, buses are central to objective of creating a high quality integrated public transport system. The Bus Strategy is

central to the Plan strategy. This has been developed in partnership with the operators, including securing private finance for initiatives where possible. The Strategy encompasses both more traditional methods of encouraging bus usage and interchange such as comprehensive bus priorities and passenger information through to more innovative schemes such as Guided Busways. It also covers the possible development of Quality Contracts.

Take Account of the Contribution of Passenger Rail

20.5 This is the second most used form of public transport. A comprehensive plan to improve rail travel has been developed for each line and includes proposals to expand the network by developing new stations and securing new rolling stock to meet immediate and forecast passenger demand.

Public Transport Interchange

20.6 Encouraging interchange between modes and indeed encouraging modal shift from private transport is at the heart of the bus and rail strategy. This is being achieved by reviewing service patterns and promoting specific connecting services, improving the quality and availability of information and providing secure car and cycle parking at stations. Extensive surveys have been undertaken to assess existing interchange facilities and long and short-term improvements are proposed countywide utilising partnerships with bus and rail operators.

Establish a Public Transport Information Strategy

20.7 West Yorkshire has taken a strategic approach to providing information covering all modes of public transport and involving all operators. A full range of media is used to make comprehensive information accessible and easy to use. Transport information is an important element of other areas of the Plan such as travel plans.

Establish an Integrated Strategy for Reducing Car Use and Improving Child Safety on the Journey to School

20.8 School journeys have a significant impact on the levels of peak traffic and School Travel Plans are being developed to promote alternatives to the car, building on the work already done in developing "Safer Routes to School". The strategy to address this issue has been developed in partnership with the education departments, schools, the police and with public transport operators.

Measures to Encourage the Voluntary Adoption of Travel Plans by Major Employers

20.9 The West Yorkshire Authorities are committed to sustainable travel initiatives. Through the regional TravelWise group, as part of the EU Target project, we are developing a series of projects to test and demonstrate the effectiveness of the measures. In addition a CD-ROM/Internet based 'Toolbox' is being produced to provide an electronic guide to developing a business travel plan. In order to target resources on travel plans most effectively we rely on focused initiatives and target those who are motivated to produce a plan offering practical guidance and support networks. In the longer term it is possible that a dedicated group will be set

up to act as a focus for information and support on Travel Plans.

Disability Issues

20.10 Disability issues are a key aspect of many of the Plan strategies and impact on many areas. A public transport access strategy has been adopted by all the operators and District Councils. Bus and rail stations continue to be improved using existing guidance and consultation with affected groups. Access to roads and footways are also crucial as the whole of the journey must be made accessible if disability issues are to be addressed effectively. One inaccessible link makes the whole journey impossible. Disability issues are being addressed through the use of accessibility checklists in the design process and by ensuring accessible crossings and footways are an integral part of all highway improvements.

Measures to Promote Social Inclusion

20.11 Our aim is to ensure that no individuals or groups are excluded from West Yorkshire's transport system. As well as disability issues mentioned above, there are also policies in place to ensure people are not excluded by poverty or discrimination. Key ways in which these issues are being tackled are by improving safety and security on all modes, improving accessibility, offering cheaper travel and concessionary fares, community involvement, development of rural transport services and in land use planning.

Sustainable Distribution

20.12 The Local Transport Plan endeavours to reduce the impact of road freight on the environment and local communities and to encourage the transfer of freight from road to rail and waterway. The lorry is well established as the principal method for moving freight. However, increasing congestion on the motorway and principal road networks is causing increasing delay with a clear time and cost penalty, and therefore other modes are becoming more desirable. It is also essential that better use is made of existing infrastructure and that new infrastructure provided where necessary. Deliveries in urban centres will also be improved through Freight Quality Partnerships.

DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION

20.13 If good practice is to spread between authorities it is vital that those accepted for Centre of Excellence status effectively disseminate information on best practice and all their initiatives. The West Yorkshire Authorities intend to set up a website, which will be regularly updated, reporting progress on all their key strategies in particular featuring the more innovative proposals such as the development of the Travel Plan CD ROM and extension of guided buses.

We would also endeavour to hold a joint conference with South Yorkshire providing a forum for further developing proposals on integrated and sustainable transport initiatives.

BUS SERVICE RELIABILITY AND PUNCTUALITY

20.14 The Local Transport Plan Guidance requires the inclusion of an indicator for bus service reliability and punctuality. These are included in the Bus Strategy that has been developed for West Yorkshire.

20.15 Our target for reliability is that at least 99.5% of all services will run. Our targets for punctuality are:

- that at least 95% of bus services will run on time or not more than 6 minutes late;
- no more than 4.5% of services will run more than 6 minutes late;
- no services will run early.

We believe that reliable and punctual bus services are essential to delivering our Plan objectives and will work in partnership with operators through our Bus Strategy to deliver this.

