

The West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan

Topic

Sustainable Urban Transport Plan

Summary

Leeds City Council works in partnership with four other local authorities that cover the county of West Yorkshire (Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees and Wakefield) and the West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (Metro) to produce the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan.

We have just produced our second Local Transport Plan (LTP2) which will cover the period 2006-2011. The first LTP covered the period 2001-2006.

Case Study

Introduction

The West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan is a five year strategy for the development of local, integrated transport, supported by a programme of transport improvements. The Plan covers new investment in public transport, in highways, in cycling and walking facilities, as well as the maintenance of highways and associated structures, such as bridges and retaining walls. The Plan has been developed in accordance with guidance from central Government and has been influenced by wide-ranging consultation.

The Plan is structured to contain: contextual information and objectives; an outline of key issues and strategies; funding information and an indicative five year action plan; and mandatory and local targets.

A Strategic Environmental Assessment was carried out as part of the development of the Plan to assess the environmental impacts of the proposed strategy. The Plan has been prepared in accordance with detailed guidance from the Department for Transport (DfT).

The overall objective for the Plan is to develop and maintain an integrated transport system that supports economic growth in a safe and sustainable way and enhances the overall quality of life for the people of West Yorkshire.

LTP2 is therefore structured around the following shared priorities which have the following concrete objectives:

- **Delivering Accessibility:** To improve access to jobs, education and other key services for everyone.
- **Tackling Congestion:** To reduce delays to the movement of people and goods.
- **Safer Roads:** To improve safety for all highway users.
- **Better Air Quality:** To limit transport emissions of air pollutants, greenhouse gases and noise.
- **Effective Asset Management:** To improve the condition of the transport infrastructure.

Basic facts

The Plan has been developed through the analysis of transport issues in West Yorkshire. A wide range of information sources were used to update our understanding of local transport issues. Sources included:

- Experiences of the types of measures that have proved to be most successful at achieving specific outcomes;
- The use of forecasts of future housing development and economic growth;
- Metro's market research programme;
- The use of working groups with representatives from the Partnership to consider particular issues;
- Data on casualty statistics, road safety audits, air quality monitoring information, market research data, speed data from IT IS Holdings plc, National Census data, and data from the Civil Aviation Authority;
- Outputs obtained from Metro's Bus Model (SimBus), Metro's Public Transport Accessibility Model (PTAM), and Accession (the DfT's accessibility model);
- The Strategic Environmental Assessment;
- The 2005 Strategic Economic Assessment; and
- Cross-boundary issues identified with adjoining local authorities.

Users and stakeholders

The county of West Yorkshire (Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees and Wakefield) and the West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (Metro) produced the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan.

Consultation for LTP2 included the public, local strategic partnerships (public/private/voluntary sector partnerships), the West Yorkshire Economic Partnership (WYEP), interest and user groups, children, a sample of businesses, passenger and area committees. Around 4,000 responses were received from the public alone. Each issue or policy preference was quantified, enabling the Partnership to rank these in order of preference.

Implementation set-up

The Plan was prepared through a partnership of the West Yorkshire local authorities and Metro with the oversight of a Joint Member Steering Group comprising Member representatives from each authority and the Passenger Transport Authority (Metro). A 'core team' was established to produce the Plan which consisted of a representative from each local authority and Metro. An 'overview group' of senior officers from each local authority and Metro took key decisions, and reported to the Steering Group.

Members of the core team worked virtually on a full time basis on the development of the Plan for around 18 months prior to submission of the document to the Department for Transport. The 'overview group' met on a monthly basis and the Steering Group quarterly. Task groups of expert officers from across the authorities were established to provide input to specific areas of the Plan e.g. a group was established to provide specific input on air quality. An external consultant was also employed on a full time basis for around 9 months to guide and oversee the development of the Plan.

The West Yorkshire Strategic Transport Model (STM) was used to forecast the outcomes arising from number potential core scenarios. The STM takes into account forecast future changes in population, car ownership, employment, fuel prices and growth in households. These factors were applied globally or zonally where appropriate. Each scenario represented a different combination of capital schemes and policy approaches potentially deliverable through LTP2. The available outputs from the STM were used as 'proxies' to enable an assessment of performance against the preferred choices identified in consultation.

The Plan has been aligned with national transport policies, the Regional Spatial Strategy/Regional Transport Strategy, Regional Economic Strategy, Regional Housing Strategy and local community strategies across West Yorkshire. The consultation process has helped to ensure consistency with the authorities' wider agendas and service functions (e.g. planning and economic development).

The consultation exercise for the LTP2 included:

- Workshops with the five local strategic partnerships, user and interest groups, the WYEP and other key partners including transport and infrastructure operators;
- Internal consultation within authorities including Area Committees and services covering land use planning, economic development, environment and education;
- A questionnaire mail-out and internet based questionnaire to engage the general public; and
- Consultations with public transport passengers.

Results

Successes across the West Yorkshire district achieved during period of LTP1 (2001-2006) include:

- A substantial programme of investment in bus and rail stations (including Park and Ride) delivering higher standards of passenger comfort, security and information;
- Good progress on delivering a step change in bus facilities on core bus routes (including accessibility improvements and new bus lanes) through the Yorkshire Bus Initiative;
- A successful and well targeted road safety programme with casualty reductions exceeding national and local targets, leading to the lowest ever casualty figures for West Yorkshire;
- Accommodating increased economic activity in the main urban centres whilst restraining the growth in car traffic (surveys show a reduction in morning peak car travel from 64% in 1998 to 57% in 2005) across the Leeds central cordon);
- Improvements to accessibility through the launch of new MetroConnect services for example the provision of a bus service to two employment areas from socially excluded communities;
- Good progress on school travel including school travel plans, Safe Routes to School and MyBus (a 'yellow' school bus initiative);
- Launch of the largest real time passenger information system in the country covering South and West Yorkshire;
- Improved safety and security including the provision of CCTV at new bus stations and in a proportion of the West Yorkshire bus fleet;
- Delivery of successful off-road cycle routes;
- Completion of the national pilot 'home zone' in the Methley area of Leeds;

- Significant improvements to the public realm, including enhanced pedestrian facilities for example the refurbishment of Leeds City Square;
- Good progress in highway network maintenance with programmes that have established the condition of carriageways; and
- Substantial reductions in the backlog of bridges and structures maintenance and strengthening

Author contact details

Louise Holliday, Transport Planner (Policy), Development Department, Leeds City Council

louise.holliday@leeds.gov.uk

Telephone: +44 (0)113 3950428

City or region

West Yorkshire

Country

UK

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