

**Meeting of the Cabinet – 12<sup>th</sup> September 2018**

**Report of the Strategic Director Place (Deputy Chief Executive)**

**Dudley Bus Network Development Plan: 2019 - 2026**

**Purpose**

1. To inform Cabinet with regard to the Dudley Bus Network Development Plan (NDP) 2019 – 2026 developed by Transport for West Midlands (TfWM).
2. To seek Cabinet's approval of the Dudley Bus Network Development Plan for the period 2019 to 2026.

**Recommendations**

3. It is recommended that Cabinet:-
  - Note the contents of this report, and that the Dudley Bus NDP will be used to inform the development and delivery of local improvements to the bus network through joint working with West Midlands Bus Alliance partners.
  - Approve the Dudley Bus NDP, as appended to this report at Appendix 1, covering the period 2019 -2026, in line with the objectives of the West Midlands Bus Alliance.
  - Supports an annual review of the Dudley Bus NDP.

**Background**

4. The West Midlands Bus Alliance, the first of its kind in the UK, brings together bus operators, the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), the seven WMCA constituent authorities, West Midlands Police, Department for Transport and other partners to drive forward investment in our bus network.
5. The focus of the West Midlands Bus Alliance is to make bus travel in the West Midlands cleaner, greener, safer and faster. This includes delivery against eight objectives:
  - Tackle congestion and make bus journeys quicker
  - Improve bus emission standards
  - Make bus travel more attractive for young people
  - Make bus journeys better value
  - Make it easier to buy a ticket
  - Make it easier to catch the bus

- Shape the bus network to deliver economic growth
  - Make it more pleasant to travel by bus
6. The West Midlands Bus Alliance is committed to delivering bus Network Development Plans for the region, in order to ensure that the bus network continues to meet local needs and is able to adapt to future economic growth opportunities and challenges.
  7. Eight area-based NDPs will be developed across the region by the end of 2018/19. The Dudley NDP is the first in this programme to be completed. The Dudley NDP is informed and supported by a comprehensive evidence and data-led technical baseline assessment covering:
    - the strategic fit with local and regional transport and air quality policies and plans including identification of local pro-bus policies and measures;
    - identification and alignment with local growth and development;
    - analysis of existing bus services, infrastructure, interchanges, fares and information;
    - assessment of the current highway performance and understanding of existing and future travel demands; and
    - a delivery plan covering local bus improvements to transform bus travel.
  8. The Dudley NDP includes a delivery plan that sets out the local bus improvements to be delivered at specified timeframes, reviewed annually and aligned to (or identifying the need for) investment across the Bus Alliance objectives up to 2026.
  9. The Dudley NDP will support the council's planning and transport policy, to further guide investment in the local bus network by the council and other partners.
  10. The creation of the Dudley NDP has not involved passenger or wider public consultation. Where significant service changes are to be implemented or schemes delivered on the ground, they will be subject to full public consultation exercises at the appropriate time.
  11. The content of the Dudley NDP has been developed and agreed with the local bus operators. It has been approved by the West Midlands Bus Alliance Board.
  12. Once the Dudley NDP is adopted by the council, the delivery plan will be monitored, delivered and reviewed annually through the West Midlands Bus Alliance, led by Transport for West Midlands with representation from the council, local bus operators and other partners. It is important that there is regular monitoring and an annual review of the delivery plan in the NDP.

## **Finance**

13. All on-going related TfWM activities will be funded within existing TfWM budgets. However, any future proposed enhancements in relation to the delivery plan where additional input/support is required from Bus Alliance partners will need to be considered and evaluated so any one-off and on-going financial implications can be quantified to inform proposals.
14. The Council will contribute to the cost of highway infrastructure improvements through the Council's annual Integrated Transport Block capital allocation.

## **Law**

15. Section III of the Local Government Act 1972 empowers the Council to do anything which is calculated to facilitate or is conducive to or incidental to the discharge of its functions.
16. The Council is empowered to improve Highways under Section 62 of the Highways Act 1980.

## **Equality Impact**

17. The Dudley Bus NDP has been prepared in accordance with the Council's policy on Equality and Diversity, ensuring that it provides benefits for adults, children and young people alike, promoting equal opportunities for all.

## **Human Resources/Transformation**

18. This report does not have any implications for human resources or service transformation across the Council.



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**Alan Lunt**  
**Strategic Director Place (Deputy Chief Executive)**

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## **List of Background Papers**

Appendix 1 – Dudley Bus Network Development Plan: 2019 – 2026