

**CARDIFF'S BUS STRATEGY: PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY**

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**Purpose of the Report**

1. To give Members background information to aid scrutiny of the draft report to Cabinet seeking approval for public consultation and engagement to develop a bus strategy for Cardiff, prior to its consideration by Cabinet at their meeting on 15 July 2021.

**Scope of Scrutiny**

2. At their meeting on 15 July 2021, the Cabinet will consider a report that sets out the need for public consultation and engagement to inform the development of the bus strategy for Cardiff. The report sets out the strategic actions, called 'Big Moves', required to transform bus services and seeks cabinet approval to base the consultation on these and the results of an Equality Impact Assessment.
3. During this scrutiny, Members have the opportunity to explore:
  - The proposals for public consultation and engagement to inform the bus strategy, including:
    - i. The proposed methods;
    - ii. The proposed consultees;
    - iii. The proposed timelines;
    - iv. The proposed themes – the 'Big Moves';
    - v. The findings from the Equality Impact Assessment.
  - The timeline and next steps for developing Cardiff's Bus Strategy, including funding routes; and
  - The recommendations to Cabinet.

## Background

4. Whilst a Bus Strategy is not a statutory requirement, it is a supporting document for the Transport White Paper, One Planet Cardiff, the Local Development Plan, the Local Transport Plan and the Capital Ambition Recovery and Renewal Plan.
5. The Transport White Paper, approved by Cabinet in January 2020, includes a commitment to low-carbon transport and contains a target to double the numbers travelling by bus between 2018 and 2030, from 10% commuters to 20% of commuters. The One Planet Cardiff Strategy sets a target for 100% low emission taxis and buses by 2027.
6. Until the Covid pandemic, bus ridership in Cardiff had remained relatively stable, primarily due to population growth. The pandemic led to public transport numbers falling to approximately 10% in April 2020; they have since risen to approximately 60% pre-Covid levels. Bus service frequency has returned to 100% pre-Covid levels but social distancing requirements limit passenger carrying capacity and, in some locations at peak times, some passengers are unable to get onto buses because of this.
7. In response to the pandemic, the Welsh Government and local authorities have provided financial assistance via the Bus Emergency Scheme (BES). The Welsh Government has also established working groups via Transport for Wales to identify improvements in the bus network.
8. The draft report to Cabinet entitled '*Cardiff's Bus Strategy*' is attached at **Appendix 1** and has **one** appendix:
  - **Appendix A** - Bus Strategy Technical Report, June 2021.

## Issues identified in the Cabinet Report

9. The report to Cabinet highlights that it is timely to review bus services, given the work resulting from the Bus Emergency Scheme and to support the delivery of the Transport White Paper and One Planet Cardiff and other key Council policies.

10. The Bus Strategy Technical Report, attached as **Appendix A** of the report to Cabinet, includes analysis of demographics, demand and service frequency. It identifies gaps in provisions and sets out bus service planning principles. **Point 18** of the report to Cabinet lists its key findings.

11. Using the Bus Strategy Technical Report, the Council has identified a number of strategic actions, calling these 'Big Moves', to enable fundamental transformation of bus services. These are:

- **Big Move 1: Complete the Bus Interchange**
- **Big Move 2: Create New Priority Bus 'Smart' Corridors**
- **Big Move 3: City Centre Package**
- **Big Move 4: Metro Integration, Integrated Ticketing and Information Package**
- **Big Move 5: Fares**
- **Big Move 6: Review of Bus Network Governance arrangements for the medium and long term**
- **Big Move 7: Creating a Better Customer Experience**
- **Big Move 8: A Low Emission/Zero Carbon Bus Fleet**
- **Big Move 9: Integration of Schools Transport**

12. **Points 22-30** provide a summary of each of the above. At **point 20**, the report to Cabinet states that:

*'Although the Council has direct or indirect control over a number of these actions, the agreement and support of key partners such as Welsh Government, TfW, and the bus operators themselves will be essential to effective delivery.'*

13. **Point 31** sets out that delivery of the Big Moves will involve successfully achieving the following:

- Capital Funding: WG Grant, City Deal, s106, LA capital match funding
- Revenue Funding: BES 2, WG Network Review, s106, Charging/Traffic Demand Management, LA revenue supported services funding
- Service Quality Improvements through BES2
- Integration of fares/tickets/operators/modes and Information
- Cheaper Fares
- South East Wales Transport Commission Recommendations.

### **Proposed Consultation**

14. The report to Cabinet sets out that public consultation will take place in August/September 2021 via a published consultation pack inviting written responses, including an online feedback form. The pack will present the 'Big Moves' and seek

feedback on these. It will also invite views on matters identified in the Equality Impact Assessment.

15. The report to Cabinet states that the consultation will seek to engage with hard to reach groups to get representative feedback. There will also be engagement with Welsh Government, Transport for Wales, Local Authorities in the Cardiff City Region, Passenger Transport User Groups and Bus Operators.
16. The results of the consultation will be reported to Cabinet in October/November 2021 and will be used as a draft framework for preparing the Bus Strategy. There will be specific scheme consultation with Local Members, early on in their development.
17. **Point 37** sets out the Financial Implications, including that existing resources will be used to fund the costs of undertaking the consultation.
18. **Points 38 – 48** set out the Legal Implications, including that consultation gives rise to the legitimate expectation that the outcome of the consultation will be duly considered when subsequent decisions are made. They also set out that the decision taker must take into account the Council's duties under the Equalities Act, Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and the Welsh Language Measure and Standards, as well as a general duty to accord with the financial and budgetary policy.

### **Proposed Recommendations to Cabinet**

19. The report to Cabinet contains the following recommendations:
  - *'To approve undertaking public consultation and engagement to develop a Bus Strategy for Cardiff.'*
  - *'Delegate authority to the Director of Planning, Transport and Environment, subject to consultation with the Cabinet Member Strategic Planning and Transport, Cabinet Member Finance, Modernisation & Performance, s.151 Officer and Director Governance and Legal Services to determine and approve the final form and content of the public consultation and engagement on*

*Cardiff Council's behalf and to deal with all ancillary matters relating thereto in preparing the Bus Strategy.'*

- *'To ask that Cabinet notes that there will be a further report on the draft Bus Strategy for approval.'*

## **Way Forward**

20. Councillor Caro Wild (Cabinet Member – Strategic Planning & Transport) will be invited to make a statement and answer questions. Andrew Gregory (Director of Planning, Transport and Environment) and Jason Dixon (Operational Manager – Transport Development and Network Management) will also attend to answer Members' questions.

## **Legal Implications**

21. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters, there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

## **Financial Implications**

22. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters, there are no direct financial

implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Committee is recommended to:

- i) Consider the information in this report, its appendices and the information presented at the meeting;
- ii) Determine whether they would like to make any comments, observations or recommendations to the Cabinet on this matter in time for its meeting on 15 July 2021; and
- iii) Decide the way forward for any future scrutiny of the issues discussed.

**DAVINA FIORE**

**Director of Governance & Legal Services**

**30 June 2021**