

# Item 6b

## Report to Sheffield City Region Overview and Scrutiny Committee

<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> October 2019
<b>Subject:</b>	SCR Bus Review/Transport
<b>Purpose of the Report:</b>	To provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An update on the bus review including progress of the consultation process;</li><li>• An update on activity being undertaken to improve bus services and connectivity in Barnsley;</li><li>• An overview of SCR Transport Investment and performance measures;</li><li>• An overview of activities to support alternatives to the car around schools</li></ul>
<b>The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:</b>	Receive the update on the Bus Review and consider the responses to the questions raised by Barnsley MBC Scrutiny Committee.
<b>Category of Report:</b>	Open

### Summary:

This report provides an overview of a number of transport related topics to support the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. It specifically seeks to address the following:

- 1) An update on the Bus Review including the outcome of the consultation, the consultation process and how the findings will be utilised

At the OSC meeting on 18th July 2019, the Chair of the SCR OSC received a referral from the scrutiny committee at Barnsley MBC focused on transport in Barnsley and SCR transport funding. This report therefore provides information to respond to specific questions raised by Barnsley MBC Scrutiny Committee, these are:

- 2) An update on activity to improve public transport services to and from Barnsley generally and specifically to improve the bus services in Barnsley in relation to key performance metrics
- 3) An overview of SCR Transport investment and performance measures
- 4) An overview of activities to support alternatives to the car around schools.

### 1. Introduction/Context

As part of his manifesto and *Vision for Transport*, Mayor Dan Jarvis has asked Clive Betts MP to chair an independent commission reviewing the provision of bus services across South Yorkshire with a view to bringing forward evidenced, practical, ambitious recommendations for improvements to encourage patronage, improve viability and ensure the bus system is fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This report updates on progress made by the Commission to date. Additional information is provided on transport in response to the referral from the Barnsley MBC OSC.

### 2. Matters for Consideration

#### Bus Review

As reported to the April Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Mayor Dan Jarvis asked Clive Betts MP to chair an independent commission reviewing the provision of bus services across South Yorkshire.

The Mayor recognises that the decline in bus patronage has a number of causes, including wider societal changes over which the SCR has little influence, but that if this trend continues there is a real risk that the service as we know it today will be simply unsustainable. The independent commission Panel is examining if and how regulatory powers would improve bus services. In setting aspirations and expectations for a future SCR bus service additional capital and revenue investment will be required. The Mayor does not however have the major public subsidies available to him that the Mayor of London has or indeed the more modest ones available in other fully established Mayoral Combined Authorities.

The expert panel of commissioners is gathering evidence in a number of ways:

- Key stakeholders (including local authorities, SYPTE and the bus operators) have been invited to submit written evidence ahead of oral public evidence sessions starting 11<sup>th</sup> October where stakeholders will be questioned in more detail.
- The review includes a public call for evidence whereby existing and non-bus users and community groups have been invited to submit their views about existing bus service provision and/or improvements that they would like to be made. A survey, which was published online in May and will close at the end of September has received over 5,500 responses from individuals and representative groups.
- Public focus groups have been held by councillors, local authorities and the Chambers of Commerce; with a focus on eliciting the views of those people who don't currently use bus transport. The Review Secretariat is working with local authorities to make use of existing public consultation mechanisms so as not to duplicate efforts, to help to ensure geographic coverage and make it easier for the public to get involved.
- The Panel has undertaken field trips and examined best practice including in Reading, Bristol, Brighton and Manchester.

The consultation process is utilising multiple channels for engagement – written submissions, online engagement and meetings to help to ensure that all communities can contribute. The role of Community Transport is also in the scope of the Review. The SCR Youth Combined Authority has considered the topic.

The analysis of findings from the consultation will take place in October and November with interim findings reported to the Mayor in December. The Panel is taking a strategic overview of the whole system and is not looking at operational matters concerning specific services. It may however bring forward recommendations on operational matters in the round.

The Final report with recommendations will be presented to the Mayor in early 2020. The Mayor will publish a Mass Transit Implementation Plan in early 2020 which will reflect the recommendations which the Mayor wants to see taken forward. Progress in delivering the implementation plan will be reported to the SCR Transport Board.

## **Transport in Barnsley**

The SCR Transport Strategy sets out commitments to improve transport within boroughs, across the region and to other regions. These commitments will be translated into actions set out in implementation plans, the first of which focused on rail was published in Summer 2019. Implementation Plans for roads, active travel and mass transit are currently being developed.

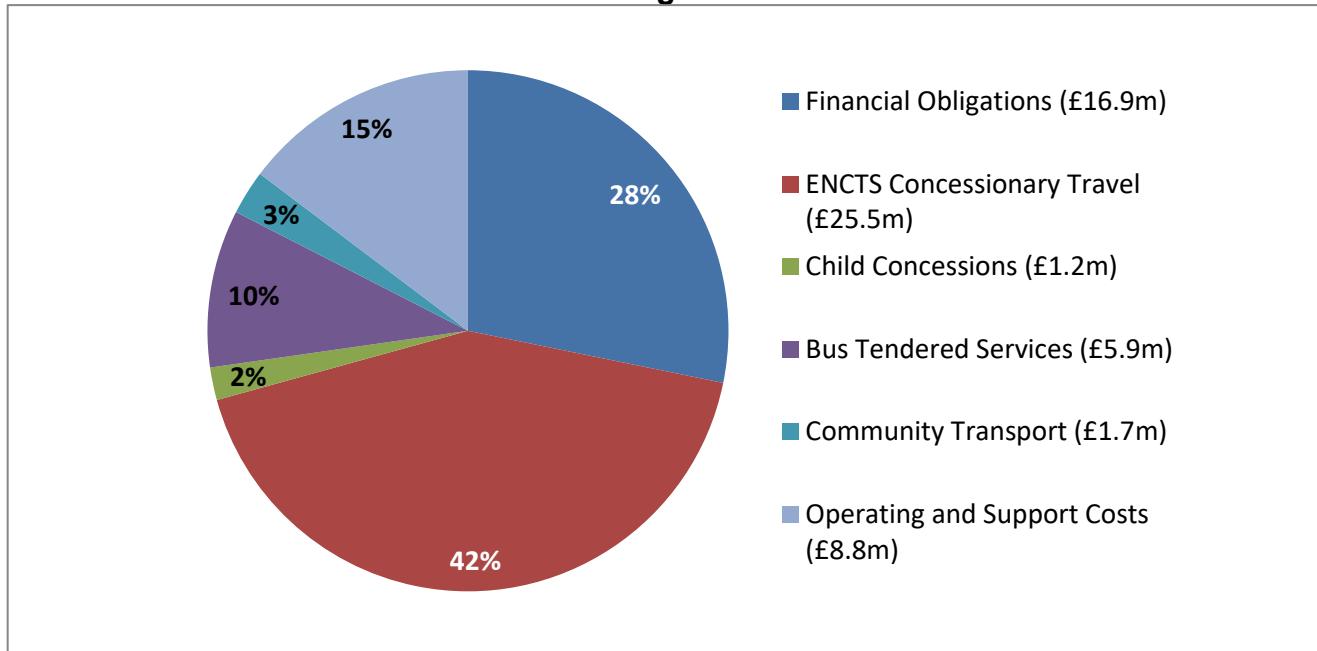
Key current activities to improve transport in Barnsley are included in Annex A for information. Appendix B includes information on how SYPTE ensures services are value for money in Barnsley compared to neighbouring areas.

## **Spending on Transport by SCR**

The principal funding source for the South Yorkshire Transport Revenue Budget, comprising the net expenditure of SYPTE and the transport related costs managed directly by the Mayoral Combined Authority, is the annually agreed Transport Levy on the four South Yorkshire Local Authorities. Over 70% of SYPTE's expenditure relates to mandatory and financial obligations including the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS), which provides concessionary travel for

people of state pension age and eligible disabled persons. The rules of the scheme are set nationally, but the cost is inevitably driven by demand. The 2019/20 Revenue Budget has total SYPTE expenditure is £59.736m illustrated below:

**SYPTE Budget 2019/20**



As partner budgets have come under increasing pressure, the Levy has been reduced. Since April 2010, the annual Levy has fallen by £38.9m (41%) from £94.7m in financial year 2010/11 to £55.8m for financial year 2018/19.

### **What subsidies are provided from government for concessionary fares and how are these spent?**

Concessionary fares are funded exclusively through the transport levy, there are no government subsidies provided.

Appendix B contains information on the performance measures adopted by SYPTE to ensure value for money and to ensure the needs of diverse populations are being met.

### **SCR Local Growth Fund**

The Local Growth Fund (LGF) is government funding award to Local Enterprise Partnerships for projects that support the local area and economy. To date £23.96m has been invested in transport. Appendix B contains information on the SCR appraisal process.

### **Alternatives to cars near schools**

Although it is tempting to see the school journey in isolation, for many parents and carers it is part of a complex morning and evening routine. For primary schools there are now very few children who travel to school independently, so they are almost always accompanied by an adult. However, walking is still the most used mode for the school journey.

The government has dispersed grant funding for sustainable travel through the Department for Transport Access Fund. Currently a proportion of this is used to fund the Modeshift STARS programme in schools with staff working in each of the South Yorkshire Authorities. 39% (195) of schools are involved in the programme with 86 holding a bronze, silver or gold accreditation. National Modeshift statistics show that schools that have achieved STARS accreditation have collectively achieved a reduction in car use of 27% between 2012/13 and 2017/18. The Mayor and Active Travel Commissioner are leading on investing in active travel infrastructure and initiatives.

**a. Financial**

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. It should be noted that the draft 2020/21 South Yorkshire Transport Revenue Budget & Capital Programme will be considered at the next Transport Executive Board and Transport Board in advance of the MCA in November.

**b. Legal**

There are no specific legal implications arising from this report. It should be noted for context that in 2017, the Government introduced the Bus Services Act giving Mayoral Combined Authorities the choice to access bus devolution powers, enter into Enhanced Partnerships or upgrade existing statutory quality partnerships to advanced quality partnerships.

**c. Risk Management**

There are no specific risk management implications arising from this report.

**d. Environmental**

There are no specific environmental implications arising from this report.

**e. Equality Impact Assessment**

There are no specific Equality Impact Assessment implications arising from this report. The report covers the performance measures used to identify services are meeting the needs of diverse populations.

**f. Performance Management/Measuring Outcomes**

SYSTE performance measures with respect to value for money and meeting the needs of the population are provided in the report.

**3. Consideration of alternative approaches**

This section is not applicable for this update paper.

**4. Issues the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may wish to consider ...**

Scrutiny Committee might wish to identify specific areas to examine in more detail.

**5. Recommendations**

It is recommended that the OSC consider the findings and recommendations of the Bus Review in early 2020.

**6. Appendices/Annexes**

Appendix A – Transport in Barnsley

Appendix B – Performance Measures

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**Background papers used in the preparation of this report are available for inspection at:**

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**Other sources and references:**