

## TfWM Transport Delivery Committee

<b>Date</b>	9 January 2023
<b>Report title</b>	Update on the West Midlands Bus Network Review.
<b>Portfolio Lead</b>	Councillor Mary Locke – Lead Member Putting Passengers First Members Engagement Group
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<b>Report has been considered by</b>	Putting Passengers First – Members Engagement Group

### Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

**The West Midlands Transport Delivery Committee is asked to note the content of this report.**

### Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to provide members of the West Midlands Transport Delivery Committee (TDC) with an update on the review of Bus Services in the West Midlands which launched on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023.
2. The context for this report is provided in the TDC reports of 10<sup>th</sup> October 2022 and 14<sup>th</sup> November 2022 which provide the details for why the review was required and the likely implications.

### Background

1. As detailed in previous reports local bus services across the country are suffering from reduced passengers and revenues, significantly increasing costs and driver shortages. Whilst services in the West Midlands have seen passenger levels recover better than most other parts of the country this has resulted in a number of bus services being no longer viable to operate without public sector support and also a significant increase in the costs of providing the subsidised network. Taken collectively this has resulted in an £6m pressure to maintain a network equivalent to 90% of mileage operated prior to the pandemic.

### **Network Review**

2. As a result of these pressures and as was a requirement of the DfT a comprehensive operator led network review was undertaken during the Autumn. The key outcome of the review was for operators to implement a network they believe is sustainable in the longer term and for TfWM to then assess the implications of those commercial changes and seek to mitigate the impact as far as possible within the policy framework and budget available to the Authority.
3. Following the review of the commercial networks and the impact on the subsidised services TfWM identified 39 services that were potentially 'at risk' against the access standards policy framework and the forecast outcome of the competitive tendering exercise.
4. The outcome is detailed below and the associated appendices.

### **Retained Services**

5. Following the review of services of the 39 which were identified as being at risk 8 have been retained with no changes. Details of these services are available in Appendix A. Further details are available at the following link.

<https://www.tfwm.org.uk/plan-your-journey/ways-to-travel/buses-in-the-west-midlands/upcoming-bus-changes/bus-service-changes-from-1-january-2023/>

### **Retained with Changes**

6. The services listed in Appendix B have been retained with changes to the current provision. The reasons for the changes can be for a number of reasons including.
  - Changes to the commercial viability, route or times of commercial services.
  - Amendment to existing contracts to bring them within the value for money criteria of the access standards. Such changes could include reductions in frequency or overall hours of operation.
  - Service enhancements due to transformation change aligned with the West Midlands Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP)
7. Further details on these service changes are available at the following web link.

<https://www.tfwm.org.uk/plan-your-journey/ways-to-travel/buses-in-the-west-midlands/upcoming-bus-changes/bus-service-changes-from-1-january-2023/>

### **Withdrawn Services**

8. Following a competitive tendering exercise, several services did not meet the revised value for money criteria specified within the TfWM access standards framework. These services will be withdrawn from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023.
9. TfWM have been working with passengers and stakeholders to inform them of their next nearest alternative service including Ring & Ride and Demand Responsive Services, where available.
10. Appendix C provides a list of these services. Further details including alternative services available for passengers is available at.
11. <https://www.tfwm.org.uk/plan-your-journey/ways-to-travel/buses-in-the-west-midlands/upcoming-bus-changes/bus-service-changes-from-1-january-2023/>

### **School Services**

12. As part of the network review process National Express had proposed to deregister 21 dedicated school bus services. Transport for West Midlands and stakeholders were clear that they were not supportive of any change to dedicated school services and particularly at the mid-point of the academic year.
13. National Express have subsequently reviewed this proposal and are retaining services or proposing alternatives as described in Appendix D.
14. Where services have changed TfWM have challenged National Express to ensure that sufficient and target engagement has been undertaken to ensure every parent, pupil and school knows what their revised arrangements from January.

### **BSIP Transformational Service Enhancements**

15. As part of the West Midlands Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) several transformation objectives for the Bus Network were proposed. The network review provided an opportunity to meet some of these objectives whilst also seeking to mitigate the impact of the commercial changes on the network. The section below provides further details of these changes which are also summarised in the tables above.

### **South Birmingham**

#### **Service 46 - Queen Elizabeth Hospital – Northfield – Kings Heath**

16. Introduction of a new service in South Birmingham which links the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Weoley Castle, Northfield, Hawkesley and Kings Heath. The service will provide new links for passengers and communities across south Birmingham. In addition the service will provide some excellent opportunities for passengers to connect with the extensive network of bus services in south Birmingham.

17. The service has been introduced to replace sections of existing commercial services 46 and 48 which are being withdrawn but designed to transform the bus service provision in the area.
18. The service will be comprehensive and operate regularly during the daytime period and have a full evening and Sunday provision.

#### **Service 69 – Kings Heath – Solihull – Shirley**

19. A new service which provides a improved replacement for existing subsidised service 69. The service will now operate between Kings Heath and Shirley Sainsbury's via Solihull town centre on Monday to Saturday daytimes.
20. Longer hours of operation are introduced, a more robust and reliable timetable and a new terminus in Kings Heath will enable onward connection to the wider network. This includes connecting with service 46 (Kings Heath to Queen Elizabeth Hospital). Both services will terminate at the same bus stop in Kings Heath and the timetables have been co-ordinated to enable passengers to easily transfer between services.

#### **North Birmingham**

##### **Service 54 – Perry Barr to Hamstead**

21. Provision of a full evening and Sunday daytime service on service 54.
22. The service reliability of service 54 had been adversely impacted during the past few years due to the highway works around Perry Barr in preparation for the Commonwealth Games. Since the completion of these highway works the service has operated consistently and this has allowed the daytime frequency of the service to be restored to every 30 minutes. This improvement with the opening of the new Perry Barr Interchange has led to a growth in passengers in recent months.
23. Now is seen as the ideal time to enhance the Sunday and evening service to provide more journeys which will enable more people to use the service as part of their day-to-day activities.

##### **Service 61 – Aston – Perry Barr – West Bromwich**

24. A new service which provides an improved replacement for existing subsidised service 61.
25. The service reliability of service 61 had been adversely impacted during the past few years due to the highway works around Perry Barr in preparation for the Commonwealth Games. Since the completion of these highway works running times have been consistent and combined with the opening of the new Perry Barr Interchange has led to a growth in passengers in recent months.
26. To continue the improvements with this service the route is changed in West Bromwich, with Halfords Lane introduced, which meets a long-standing request from the community

in this area for a re-instatement of a bus service and provides a direct connection with the Midland Metro.

27. The service is also extended beyond Perry Barr to provide new links to Great Barr, Scott Arms, partially replacing service 46.
28. With improvements to the Perry Barr district centre now in place following the Commonwealth Games now is seen as the ideal time to enhance the service to provide a more journeys opportunities to enable more people to use the service as part of their day-to-day activities.

### **Service 96 – Kingstanding / Erdington to Birmingham Airport**

29. Provision of a full evening and Sunday daytime service on service 96. This additionally includes early morning journeys on Monday to Friday's which will operate ahead of the first journeys on the existing timetable.
30. In comparison to the Monday to Saturday daytime service these journeys will additionally extend beyond Chelmsley Wood Interchange and onwards towards Birmingham International Airport. This will provide requested links to Birmingham Airport and the direct and indirect employment opportunities around the site when the existing network of services is less frequent.
31. Service 96 is a largely unique service which serves many unique sections of routes and several local centres in the north and east Birmingham area. Based upon the usage levels and current growth being realised on the Monday to Saturday daytime service TfWM see a comprehensive evening and Sunday service will enhance the bus network and complement the existing provision. The new contract meets requested journey opportunities throughout the route and to Birmingham Airport.

### **Solihull**

#### **Service A9 Kingshurst to Solihull and Blythe Valley**

32. To enhance and complement the existing Solihull network of services service A9 is introduced to provide new cross Solihull links. Operating between Kingshurst and Blythe Valley the service will provide a long-requested link between areas of North Solihull and South Solihull. This will provide improved connectivity in the district, opening up new transport links and the associated employment, education and leisure opportunities for passengers.
33. The service is an improved replacement for withdrawn commercial service 58 with new links provided to the employment and residential area of Blythe Valley.
34. The service will be comprehensive and operate regularly during the daytime period and also have a full evening and Sunday provision.

### **Service A15 Shirley Station to Lyndon**

35. To enhance and complement the existing Solihull network of services service A15 is introduced in Solihull operating from Shirley to Lyndon via Acocks Green.
36. The service is an improved replacement for service 32 and offers a simplified network of services in the Lyndon area. This includes links with services A9 and A16 maintaining existing key links whilst improving co-ordination of services in the area. The service will be comprehensive and operate regularly during the daytime period.

### **Service A16 Yardley Swan – Lyndon – Acocks Green**

37. To enhance and complement the existing Solihull network of services service A16 is introduced in Solihull and East Birmingham operating between Acocks Green and Yardley, Swan Shopping Centre via Lyndon.
38. The service is an improved replacement for service S16 and is part of a simplified network of services in the Lyndon area. This includes links with services A9 and A15, maintaining existing key links whilst improving co-ordination of services in the area. The service will be comprehensive and operate regularly during the daytime period, this enhances the existing span of operation enabling more passengers to use the service.

## **Dudley**

### **Service 25 – Dudley – Merry Hill – Stourbridge**

39. A new service which provides new links for Stourbridge. The service is an improved replacement for existing subsidised service 250/251 and a section of withdrawn commercial service 11/11A.
40. The new service has been designed to enhance and complement the existing network of services in the Stourbridge, Netherton and Dudley areas and provides journey opportunities to the key leisure and retail destination of Merry Hill.
41. With a strong base of existing passengers, the new links across the borough of Dudley and a reliable timetable it is anticipated the service will be able to grow and develop into a strong service in the area.

### **Service 142 / 142A Halesowen – Stourbridge – Merry Hill**

42. A new service 142/142A which provides an improved timetable with more journeys and new links to key destinations in the Dudley borough. The service maintains the key route between Halesowen and Stourbridge whilst extending northwards onto Merry Hill.

43. The service has been introduced to replace sections of services 28 and 298/299 with new cross Stourbridge journey opportunities provided.
44. The service will be comprehensive and operate regularly during the daytime period with an enhanced 30 minute frequency on the core sections of route and provide passengers with improved connectivity in the area.

### **Partnership Services**

45. As part of the Network Review TfWM have worked with and facilitated discussions between commercial bus operators to improve the bus service provision on routes where there is commercial competition.
46. Work has been carried out on the services where existing partnership services are in place and also on routes where there is not an existing partnership operation. This has resulted in improved co-ordination or new co-ordination on some services.
47. The existing partnerships routes continue to have joint ticketing acceptance and a co-ordinated timetable. The new partnership routes do not have a joint ticketing agreement in place, however journeys are logically co-ordinated and/or evenly spaced so passengers can easily determine which operator is operating a journey.
48. An overview of the changes to existing partnership routes and the new partnerships routes are listed below;

#### **Service 31/32 Walsall – Bloxwich – Mossley/Lower Farm (Diamond Bus and NXWM)**

- *Existing Partnership Route.* Revised timetable introduced from 27 November 2022

#### **Service 40 Wednesbury – West Bromwich (Diamond Bus and NXWM)**

- *Existing Partnership Route.* Revised timetable introduced from 27 November 2022

#### **Service 42/43 – West Bromwich – Great Bridge – Tipton/Bilston (Diamond Bus and NXWM)**

- *Existing Partnership Route.* Revised timetable and route. Service 42 journeys no longer serve Dudley with service 229 providing alternative journeys between Tipton and Dudley. Introduced from 01 January 2023

#### **Service 16/16W – Birmingham – Hampstead – West Bromwich/Great Barr (Diamond Bus and NXWM)**

- *New Partnership Route.* Revised timetable and route. Timetables of service 16/16W journeys are co-ordinated with the new provision replacing existing service 46.

#### **Service 45/401E – Walsall – Stone Cross – West Bromwich (Diamond Bus and NXWM)**

- *Diamond Bus to operate all journeys.* A revised service 45 timetable is introduced replacing 401E journeys. Introduced from 01 January 2023.

**Service 110, X3/X4/X5 – Birmingham – Sutton Coldfield – Tamworth (Arriva Bus and NXWM)**

- *Improved timetable co-ordination between services.*

**Services Requiring Further Review**

49. A small number of services have had temporary provision put in place for the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023 to 15<sup>th</sup> April 2023. These services require further review early in the new year as a matter of priority. They remain at risk at this stage and any provision beyond 15<sup>th</sup> April 2023 will be dependent upon passenger usage, travel patterns and financial performance, alongside TfWM's access standards. Further detail on the routes concerned is presented in paragraphs 50 to 56.
50. TfWM presently has deminimis contractual arrangements with National Express West Midlands for the services detailed in Coventry. At the beginning of the service review process, NXWM had not identified that they would be unable to continue to resource these services. Notification of this was provided to TfWM at very short notice, which did not allow for a detailed review of data and any tender process. In the circumstances, TfWM arranged for temporary provision, as it was felt that customers being left without a service that had not previously been identified as "at risk" was unacceptable. It is noted that all of the Coventry services concerned provide for staff, patients and visitors travelling to/from University Hospital.
51. **20C Coventry to University Hospital via Arena Retail Park & Lentons Lane.** The 20C shares a common section of route with other services along Foleshill Road. Beyond Arena Retail Park, the 20C serves a number of roads for which it is the only bus service, including: Aldermans Green Road, Lentons Lane, Shilton Lane, Narberth Way and Boswell Drive. TfWM had already awarded a contract to Stagecoach Midlands for a new service 51 Coventry City Centre to Arena Retail Park. This service will now temporarily extend on an hourly frequency beyond Arena Retail Park to University Hospital via the 20C route between these points.
52. **20A Coventry to University Hospital.** National Express' commercial service for this route only provides journeys until 2015. Currently a late evening service operates beyond this time. Stagecoach Midlands have been awarded a temporary contract to provide an additional three journeys in each direction, on an hourly frequency to extend the service to circa 2300.
53. **Coventry Route 3 between Warwickshire Shopping Park & University Hospital.** National Express have taken the decision that this service will now terminate at Warwickshire Shopping Park and not continue to University Hospital. TfWM currently have a contracted route 60 Warwick University to Arena Retail Park via University Hospital. Agreement has been reached with Stagecoach Midlands to re-route this service on a temporary basis, so that it calls at Warwickshire Shopping Park then via Skipworth Road and Dorchester Way that would be otherwise without a service.



- 54.25 Erdington (Six Ways) to Ward End (Fox & Goose).** This service was at risk due to relatively low passenger numbers. However, a bid was received to operate this service within the cost per passenger threshold (CPP). Regrettably when the contract was offered to the successful bidder, they declined to accept it. The next available bid was substantially higher and meant that the CPP threshold would have been significantly exceeded. In conjunction with service 600 below, a solution was identified with Diamond Bus that allowed one vehicle to be used to provide a simplified service on both routes until April 2023. The revised 25 will operate between Erdington and Bromford Bridge, albeit some roads will no longer be served. Alternative services have been recommended to passengers.
- 55.600 Brookvale Park to Erdington (Six Ways).** Due to low passenger numbers, it was not possible to continue to extend the contract for this service. Diamond Bus agreed to a temporary contract to continue to provide a service 600 until April 2023. Following on from a bidder declining to accept service 25, Diamond Bus agreed a simplified timetable/route for both the 25 and 600 services, allowing a single vehicle to operate both services, ensuring some continuing provision for residents.
- 56.78 Queslett to Sutton Coldfield via Streetly** During the early part of the review process, this service was identified “at risk” and subsequently recommended for withdrawal. Following receipt of an unusually high volume of correspondence, further investigations into the 78 service were conducted. An anomaly in the data collection arrangements for this service was discovered that meant not all passenger data had been visible to TfWM. On correcting this, it was found that retention of the service based on a recalculated CPP should be considered. The current operator of this service, Diamond Bus, have agreed to a temporary contract to continue the service unchanged until April 2023.

### ***Stakeholder Engagement***

57. To manage the impact to customers and ensure residents are supplied with the relevant information regarding their travel options from January, a number of stakeholder letters were issued, and briefing sessions held with Councillors and MPs from across the region.
58. On 11<sup>th</sup> October, a letter was sent from Anne Shaw, Executive Director of TfWM, to every leader, councillor, and MP in the West Midlands, outlining the reasoning for the network review, the steps that were being taken to mitigate any loss of service and a list of the services that were ‘at risk’ following the commercial operators review. This was followed by an offer of briefing sessions, by met area, where the team talked through in detail what was being done and the potential impacts to each area.
59. Following the outcome of the first round of tenders, another letter was issued to the same recipient group on 5<sup>th</sup> December with an update of work that had been undertaken and the outcome these tenders.
60. In addition to the above, the team have been in communication with a number of councillors and have answered any queries that have been directly sent.

### ***Passenger Information***

61. The scale of the review has resulted in significant change to the majority of passenger information displays across the bus network. This will include over 9,000 printed timetable displays, 1,500 bus stop flags and 1,630 RTI electronic information displays. This is across the network at stops, interchanges, and bus stations.
62. Unfortunately, due to the scale of the review and the significantly condensed timescales, it has not been possible to update all of the information prior to the changes on the 1<sup>st</sup> January. However, we have displayed over 5,000 posters across the network informing passengers of the up coming changes and providing links to digital up to date information. The same information has also been provided to local libraries and other community hubs, for whom we have contact information, requesting that the poster be displayed in a prominent area.
63. Passengers without access to digital information can access the same information and timetables by calling the TfWM customer contact centre and also by speaking to the passenger support team at TfWMs Bus Stations.
64. We have worked with Bus Operators to provide information on buses and particularly where operators are changing, or services are no longer being operated.

### ***Future Operator Support***

65. The DfT have confirmed that further funding will be available for bus operators and local transport authorities for the period January to March 2023. This will enable operators to continue to commit to the 90% network implemented on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023. However, National Express have indicated that without further support it is unlikely that this network will be sustainable. TfWM in conjunction with the other city regions continue to liaise with the DfT to communicate this significant risk and seek longer term funding for local bus services.
66. National Express have informed us that a further 10% of the network could be at risk from June 2023 without additional funding or revenue. Our ability to mitigate the impact of further commercial de-registrations is significantly diminished given we have fully committed the budget for subsidised bus service for 2023 / 2024 as part of this network review process.
67. Proposals within the West Midlands Bus Service Improvement Plan will also deliver passenger growth and therefore revenues for bus operators and efficiency savings for reinvestment back into the bus network. Operators have already committed to a fares freeze to 2025, reform of fares and ticketing will commence from early Spring 2023 followed by a £multi-million ticketing incentive programme and an unprecedented programme of bus priority measures. These initiatives will be subject to separate reports to TDC.
68. TfWM are working through the Trail Blazing Devolution Deal including the devolution of Bus Service Operators Grant, which is currently paid to operators direct by the DfT to reimburse for fuel duty and other initiatives. Devolving this locally would enable the

funding to be targeted to delivering aspects of the network important for the region. DfT have been suggesting reform of BSOG, we don't yet know whether Government intent to maintain the existing level of funding and seek to do more with operators for the money or reduce the pot overall. TfWM believe that any reduction in funding will lead directly to a reduction in local services.

69. TfWM have committed to continue to pay operators for acceptance of travel under the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) at pre-Covid patronage estimates until the end of December 2022. At the time of writing the rate for future payments of ENCTS is undecided.

### **Network Performance**

70. At the time of writing the performance of the network remains challenging for passengers. In week commencing 10<sup>th</sup> December 4% of all mileage was not operated largely due to driver shortages although an increase in congestion due to increased shopping and leisure traffic exasperated by the rail strikes has also contributed.
71. It is anticipated by National Express that the changes to the Network in January will have a positive impact on performance and positively the month of November saw the number of new drivers entering National Express exceed those leaving.
72. From January future funding for West Midlands bus operators will be directly linked to their performance in delivering the network. It is hoped this will further improve performance across the network.

### **3. Financial Implications**

73. All but three De Minimis contracts for the Network Review have now been reviewed, with contracts awarded accordingly. The cost of all of the renewals and extensions to date will be £30.6m across the life of the contracts with £3.84m falling in 2022/23 and £12.74m falling in 2023/24. This includes £9.93m worth of contracts which will be funded by BSIP between 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025. The contracts which have been awarded are affordable within the annual budget allocation.

### **4. Legal Implications**

74. There are no new legal implications for WMCA as a result of this report.

### **5. Impact on Delivery of Strategic Transport Plan**

75. The retraction of the West Midlands local bus network resulting from this review will have significant impacts on the achievement of West Midlands Local Transport Plan 5 (WM LTP 5) and affect progress across a range of socio-economic outcomes. The draft Local Transport Plan Core Strategy sets out the key challenges where changing transport can help us deliver inclusive growth and address the impacts of transport on people, places and the environment. These are framed in the 5 Motives for Change:

- Sustaining economic success
- Creating a fairer society
- Supporting local communities and places
- Becoming more active
- Tackling the climate emergency

76. The Core Strategy sets out that significant behaviour change is required to our travel behaviours to make positive progress on the Motives for Change. To do this we need to be aiming to deliver three key transport system impacts:

- Reduce overall levels of traffic
- Improve accessibility
- Electrify the transport system

77. The bus is the primary mode of public transport in the West Midlands accounting for approximately 80% of all public transport trips in the region. The network provides an essential transport choice for 25% of West Midlands residents who do not own or have access to a car. People with cars can access more than those without and West Midlands residents could access more than double the job opportunities within 45 minutes of where they live with a car than without a car and these reductions to the West Midlands bus network will exacerbate this issue.

78. The level of travel behaviour changes to help the West Midlands and the UK reach net zero is significant. It is estimated that to meet national carbon targets (net zero by 2050) would require car mileage to be 10% lower in 2031 than what it is predicted to be, and for local WM2041 targets (net zero 2041) it would need to be 35% lower. Shifting trips away from private car onto sustainable modes is central to this. As set out in the West Midlands Bus Service Improvement Plan, the bus must play a pivotal part in creating an integrated transport network where everyone can thrive without a driving licence and the need to own an expensive vehicle.

79. There is a worry that the changes proposed in the Bus Network Review may jeopardise these wider policy changes proposed in the WM LTP 5, where an effective high quality bus network is available to people, to support those 25% of households without a car to access vital opportunities in the region and to reach net zero targets which include a significant reduction in car usage.

## **6. Equalities Implication**

80. The changes outlined in this report will have a negative equality impact on communities in the region. Some protected characteristics are especially likely to be impacted.

81. Levels of deprivation impact the likelihood of being able to purchase a car. People on the lowest income are much less likely to own a car and some of the most deprived wards have under 50% household car ownership. Groups much more likely to be reliant on

public transport are: Single parents (primarily women); young and older people; black and minority ethnic people (minority ethnic people twice more likely to live in a household with no car ownership); people on low incomes; part-time workers; unemployed people (3/4 of jobseekers do not own a car); disabled people (only 38% of people with mobility difficulties are main drivers or have household access to a vehicle).

82. Most bus and foot travel are made by individuals from the lowest income groups whereas train, metro and bicycle trips are mainly made by those who fall within the highest income groups. A significant percentage of West Midlands residents rely on public transport, primarily buses, to get around. White British people are more likely to live in a household with access to a car or van than any other ethnic group. Black people are more than twice as likely as white people to live in a household with no access to a car or van. There has been a marked drop in car ownership amongst young people. Even though car ownership can pose an advantage to many, 67% of car-owning households in the lower income groups report experiencing car related economic stress as running costs can be prohibitive. People who depend more on bus for work tend to be lower paid, live in more deprived areas and are more likely to turn down jobs due to transport issues, than those on higher incomes, who tend to use cars and trains more often. Research has shown that there is a marked relationship between job accessibility by bus and employment outcomes. Issues with transport have been linked to low participation in post-16 education and college dropouts – which mostly impacts low-income households.
83. The reduction and changes to the subsidised network are also likely to especially impact women who are more likely to complete multi-purpose trips in contrast to direct commuting patterns. Finally, disabled people or/and older people or/and people with mobility difficulties are also likely to be especially impacted as walking distances to bus stops will increase, making public transport inaccessible to many.
84. To better understand impact a Health and Equity impact assessment was undertaken the key findings of which were as follows:
- The services identified as higher risk, at the outset of the review, showcase low patronage figures. High risk services range between 39 to 400 passengers per week, averaging 0-7 passengers per journey.
  - Nearly 40% of users of the services noted as higher risk are concessionary pass holders.
  - Alternative services have been identified for high-risk services to mitigate as much as possible, any negative impact on customers.
  - Recommended mitigations highlighted within the report include communicating the changes to customers as soon as possible in a variety of ways, such as on bus shelters and stops, talking newspapers and key community groups. Communications need to include alternative options.
85. Overall, whilst a negative impact is anticipated, it is expected to be low/ medium due to the low levels of patronage and the fact that alternative services have been identified. The impact assessment took into account the initial 21 services identified as being at

higher risk of withdrawal. By making the decision to retain some of these services, it's now been decided that only 12 services will be removed, it substantially mitigates any negative equality impact. However, it is important to acknowledge that for a low number of customers, they may be severely impacted should the alternative provision not be suitable and/or convenient. It is also important to take into account the fact that savings obtained through the removal of these services will be reinvested into improving the transport provision for the region, which will have a longer-term positive impact for all.

## **7. Inclusive Growth Implications**

86. There are no specific inclusive growth implications arising from the noting of this update however, buses are the most important part of the public transport system to the majority of people in the West Midlands, and is therefore crucial that people are informed, can access bus services in a way which is safe, convenient and affordable. Buses will also be an important component of the region's transition to net zero. As such, bus patronage will be a key indicator of how clean and inclusive the region's economy is and should be watched closely.

## **8. Geographical Area of Report's Implications**

87. This report covers the constituent area of the Combined Authority but due to the importance of cross boundary services – into and out of the constituent area – partnership working with non-constituent and shire authorities is crucial in delivering the activities referred to in this report.

**Appendix A – Retained Services with No Changes.**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Route</b>	<b>Comment</b>
9	Leasowes Ave to Coventry Rail Station	Evenings and Sundays - Retained
30	West Bromwich to Stone Cross	Monday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday - Retained
35/35A	Aldridge / Leighswood to Walsall	Monday to Saturday daytime - Retained
66	Stone Cross to West Bromwich	Monday to Saturday daytime - Retained
74A	Dudley to West Bromwich	Monday to Saturday daytime - Retained
78	Sutton Coldfield to Streetly	Monday to Saturday daytime – Retained to April 2023
226	Dudley to Merry Hill	Evenings and Sundays - Retained
229	Dudley to Bilston	Evenings and Sundays - Retained

## Appendix B – Retained services with changes

Service	Route	Comment
7	Coventry to Brownhill Green	From 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2023 Stagecoach will operate this service from 6pm and on Sundays. National Express will continue to operate this service to 6pm.
10	Birmingham to Woodgate Valley North	From 1 <sup>st</sup> January this service will be operated by Kev's Coaches and have a new route, timetable and service number.
10A / 10C	Stourbridge (Circular)	From 1 <sup>st</sup> January this service, operated by Kev's Coaches, will be replaced by service 88 (Stourbridge to Norton)
10S	Ridgacre to Selly Oak	From 1 <sup>st</sup> January this service will be renumbered service 55 and will extend to Longbridge with a new timetable. Kev's Coaches will provide this service.
11/11A	Merry Hill to Dudley	From 1 <sup>st</sup> January this service will be renumbered service 25 and will extend to Stourbridge with a new timetable. Diamond Bus will provide this service.
25	Erdington to Ward End	From 3 <sup>rd</sup> January 2023 this service will have an updated route and timetable. The change of route means that some roads will be unserved. Passengers have been informed of their nearest alternative services. All areas remain within the distance criteria within the access standards.
26A	Wolverhampton to Stowlawn	Service will be renumbered service 26.
38	Northfield to Selly Oak	From 1 <sup>st</sup> January this service will be renumbered service 55 and will extend to Ridgacre and Harborne
41	Walsall to Willenhall	Sunday evening services to be operated by National Express
42	Hollymoor Way to West Heath	From 1 <sup>st</sup> January this service will be renumbered service 55 and will extend to Ridgacre and Harborne
54	Hamstead Village to Perry Barr	This service will have an enhanced timetable to include additional Monday to Saturday evening journeys and a comprehensive Sunday service.
61	Perry Barr to West Bromwich	New Route and Timetable
65	Woods Estate to Darlaston	Service will be operated by Walsall Community Transport
69	Solihull to Brandwood Park	Stagecoach will provide this service across the revised service 46 (QE Hospital to Kings Heath) and 69 (Kings Heath to Shirley via Solihull).
71	Sutton Coldfield to Chelmsley Wood	Sundays will be operated by Stagecoach.
96	Chelmsley Wood to Kingstanding	Provided by Diamond Bus with a new and improved timetable including journeys extending to Birmingham Airport. Kingstanding to Erdington section served after 6pm and on Sundays and some early morning services.
250/251	Stourbridge to Merry Hill (Circular)	Replaced by service 25 (Dudley to Stourbridge via Merry Hill & Brockmoor). This service will be provide by Diamond Bus with frequency enhancements from a bus every hour to every 30mins.





298/299	Stourbridge to Pedmore Fields (Circular)	Replaced by 142A (Merry Hill to Halesowen) This service will be provided by Diamond Bus.
600	Erdington to Brookvale Park Circular	This service will operate an amended route and timetable which means that some roads will no longer be directly served. Passengers have been informed of the amended route and available alternatives.



## Appendix C – Withdrawn Services

Service	Route	Comment
22	Tipton to Wednesbury	Complete service withdrawn
26	Walsall to Blackenhall	Complete service withdrawn
30	Darlaston to Bilston	Complete service withdrawn
34	Kings Heath to Birmingham	Complete service withdrawn
36	Walsall to Alumwell (Circular)	Service will not operate after 6pm and on Sundays
42	Brownhill Green to Coventry	Complete service withdrawn
50	Wednesfield to Wolverhampton	Complete service withdrawn
68A / 68C	Perry Barr to Aston Six Ways (Circular	Complete service withdrawn
89	Queslett to Erdington	Complete service withdrawn
89	Solihull to Coventry	Complete service withdrawn
93	Smiths Wood to Small Heath	Complete service withdrawn
424	Queslett to Perry Barr	Complete service withdrawn

## Appendix D – School Services

<b>Service</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Area Served</b>	<b>Status</b>
15	King Edwards High School	Acocks Green / Solihull	Retained
58S	Lode Heath School	Yardley	TfWM contract withdrawn – revised contract A9 to provide alternative - operated by Stagecoach.
714	Compton Park School	Upper Penn	Retained
751	Smestow School	Upper Penn	Retained
784	The King's School	Pendeford	Retained
788	Barr Beacon School	Walsall	Retained
794	Compton Park School	Bushbury	Revised to operate with two buses to speed up journey times.
815	John Willmott / Fairfax Schools	Sutton / Erdington	Retained
822	King Edwards Five Ways	Birmingham	Revised – terminate at Harborne
823	Hillcrest School	Birmingham	Withdrawn – passengers are suggested to use service 23
829	St Pauls Girl School (am/pm)	Birmingham	Revised to operate with just one bus in the afternoon.
829A	St Pauls Girl School (pm)	Birmingham	
855	Bishop Walsh School	Sutton Coldfield	Retained
863	Light Hall School	Yardley	Retained
869	Plantsbrook School	Perry Common	Withdrawn – passengers are suggested to use service 66.
C53	West Coventry Academy	Spon End, Coventry	Retained
C54	West Coventry Academy	Coventry	Retained
C55	West Coventry Academy	Allesley Park, Coventry	Retained
838/A	John Willmott School	Stockland Green	Timetable amended and renumbered 813
839	John Willmott School	Pype Hayes	Timetable amended and renumbered 814