



# Bus Information Strategy 2012 -2017



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### **Appendices**

- 1 Satisfaction Survey results**
- 2 Performance standards for all information providers**
- 3 Roadside display recharges**
- 4 TransXchange –data requirements**

## 1 VISION

- 1.1 This Bus Information Strategy has been developed in the context of a wider vision for travel information, as set out below:

*“Customers should be able to access the travel information they need, wherever they are, by whatever channel they choose in order to make journeys by the most convenient, suitable and sustainable mode”.*

## 2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Bus Information Strategy forms part of the third West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan (2011-2026), and covers the period of the first two Implementation Plans 2011-2017 (with an interim review at the end of the first Plan period in 2014).

- 2.2 Metro’s Bus Information Strategy builds upon current provision and sets out how information from different sources should be drawn together into common databases and made available to the public in order to encourage and facilitate the use of public transport and other sustainable travel modes.

- 2.3 The objectives of the Strategy are to be cost effective and efficient in:

- making accurate and up-to-date public transport information easy to access, easy to use and easy to understand;
- promoting and increase the use of public transport through the provision of accurate, comprehensive, impartial, easy-to use information appropriate to the customers’ needs;
- ensuring that customers are fully aware of the whole West Yorkshire public transport network and range of services and products;
- ensuring that a lack of information is not a barrier to the use of public transport;

- 2.4 Customer needs and wishes are central to the third Local Transport Plan. Information is in turn central to integrated transport and enabling customers to access the transport network in its widest sense. The impact of the Bus Information Strategy will therefore be measured through surveys of user satisfaction, feedback from user representatives, analysis of formal and informal customer feedback, Mystery Shopping programmes, and other structured and ad hoc surveys.

- 2.10 This Bus Information Strategy fulfils the requirements of the Transport Act 2000 in determining what bus information should be made available to the public and the way in which it should be made available. The Strategy also acknowledges the importance of the Transport Act 2008 in establishing Metro as an Integrated Transport Authority having responsibility for transport as a whole.

- 2.11 In due course, the Bus Information Strategy will be subsumed within a broader transport information strategy concerned with how all-modes travel information should be managed and delivered.

### 3 CONTEXT

#### Local Transport Plan 3 and WYITA policies

3.1 The third West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan (LTP 3) covers the period 2011-2026 and has three key objectives:

- To improve connectivity to support economic activity and growth in West Yorkshire and the Leeds City Region;
- To make substantial progress towards a low carbon, sustainable transport system for West Yorkshire, while recognising transport's contribution to national carbon reduction plans;
- To enhance the quality of life of people living in, working in and visiting West Yorkshire.

3.2 The third West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan sets out six 'big ideas' which have the potential to transform the way people travel. One of these relates to the role of information, stating that:

*Enhanced travel information drawing on new technologies (e.g. mobile applications and websites) to provide customers with real-time choices customised to their needs together with real-time updates during their journey. The aspiration is that this information will cover all major forms of transport (walking, cycling, bus, rail and car and freight*

3.3 The third Local Transport Plan programme is out through four Strategic Approaches:

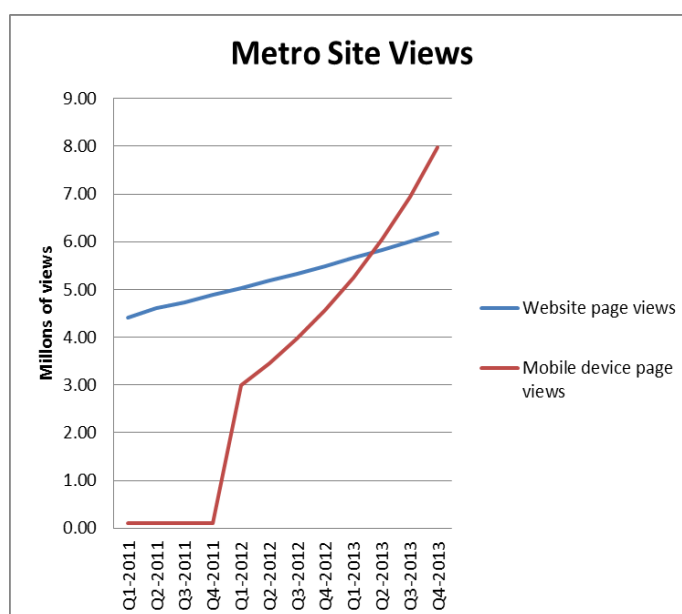
- Effective management of **Transport Assets** is vital to ensure maximum value for money and to meet the Plan's objectives. This will be delivered by embracing new technology and management practices, and focusing on investing in more preventative maintenance prioritised according to use and condition.
- **Connectivity** focuses on delivering an integrated, financially sustainable, reliable transport system that enables people and goods to move around as efficiently and safely as possible. It aims to maintain and improve the links into and around urban centres and other employment areas, while at the same time not compromising local people's needs and quality of life.
- **Enhancements** to the transport system get the most out of the existing transport network and infrastructure, particularly where there is potential for it to perform better. Investment will be made to support strategic economic objectives and ensure that the main centres are better connected (thereby increasing productivity), focused where it can have the greatest impact in supporting local economic, employment and housing priorities and Local Development Frameworks.
- Informing **Travel Choices** Strategy by supporting customers in making their choices more sustainable. Where possible, the approach is to reduce the frequency and length of trips. Where people do travel, the focus is to better understand the needs of all customers and to make changes where possible to meet these needs. This includes better targeted information covering all modes of transport, to enable customers to make informed travel choices.

3.4 The Travel Choices strategy contains a proposal to:

*Develop and provide tailored, interactive, readily available information and support that encourages and incentivises more sustainable travel choices on a regular basis.*

#### 4 MEETING CURRENT AND FUTURE EXPECTATIONS

- 4.1 The aim of the 2006-2011 Bus Information Strategy aim was to improve the offering to customers, to increase satisfaction and availability of public transport information including more real time data. This approach has been successful, with increased year on year satisfaction as measured through the annual 'tracker survey'. Information about changes to customer satisfaction during the course of the first Bus Information Strategy is set out in Appendix 1.
- 4.2 The growth in internet services was one of the key trends during this period. Metro's website ([www.wymetro.com](http://www.wymetro.com)) now has around 1.3 million page views per month, which can increase by a factor of ten on disruption days. This usage includes around 100,000 bus timetable downloads per month.
- 4.3 In addition, over 10,000 younextbus (realtime information) messages are requested every day – a fivefold increase since 2006.
- 4.4 It is important that this new strategy recognises social, demographic, economic and other changes that impact on both people's expectations and aspirations, and the ability of partners to meet these. The rapid rise of smart phones with internet access has been one of the most significant changes in information provision over recent years. Analysts predict that by the end of 2013, the majority of internet access will be by phone rather than the 'traditional' pc.
- 4.5 There is also evidence to suggest that users are switching to accessing RTI via mobile web pages, in line with forecast trends for means of accessing the internet.
- 4.6 The predicted future demand for delivering web pages to smart is shown below.



- 4.7 The use of social media has also increased significantly especially at times of service disruption, and subscribers to the Metro Messenger email alerts service has also expanded. By December 2011, Metro's Twitter and Facebook accounts had over 6000 followers combined, with nearly 260,000 Facebook views and 7,000 tweets. Metro Messenger and Travel Plan Network e-newsletters have over 9000 followers with high rates of opening and passing on messages.
- 4.8 A survey of Metro's Twitter and Facebook followers revealed that those surveyed used the Internet daily: 79% used a phone, 74.5% used a desktop PC and 68% a laptop at different times of the day. The Internet and its various social media networking sites are thus a good place to reach users and non-users alike.
- 4.9 Almost 45% of respondents visited one of Metro's social media sites every day. Of these, 46% used them for the journey to and from work, 24% for social reasons and 20% for passing information on to other groups or individuals - so many followers themselves became disseminators of Metro's messages.
- 4.10 There are also pressures to both increase availability of up to date, accurate and real time information and to reduce costs. Technology can assist with achieving these goals
- 4.11 The strategy involves facilitating, encouraging and incentivising self-service options as the ways of addressing increased aspirations for the availability of information and the pressures for cost reduction. The customer decides when the information is required and uses their own means to access this (e.g. pc, smart phone, tablet, real time display) using means that are much less expensive per transaction (e.g. relative to call centre or face to face interaction). The priority is therefore managing data so that it is delivered quickly and efficiently to customers at the point of need.
- 4.12 Important to this is the requirement for collaboration with partners who will support delivery of the above more cost effectively and in a manner that meets partner objectives.

## **5 CONSULTATION FEEDBACK**

- 5.1 This Bus Information Strategy has been developed through consultation with customers and potential customers, with bus operators, with the Traffic Commissioner and with other stakeholders. This process has included:
- structured and longitudinal programmes of market research;
  - 'one-off' consultations including those undertaken to inform the third Local Transport Plan;
  - review of quantitative data around the use of different information channels over recent years including web, printed information, call centres, real time and retail outlets such as Travel Centres;
  - quantitative and qualitative review of the use of social media channels;

- targeted consultation with Passenger Consultative Committee members and with other members of the general public about strategy content;
- consultations with bus operators, with the Traffic Commissioner and with other stakeholders;
- analysis of 'day to day' customer feedback.

5.2 Some key findings are summarised below.

#### Satisfaction levels

5.3 Metro's annual surveys of both users and non-users indicate a high level of satisfaction with public transport information. All information sources scored at least eight on a ten point scale with highest ratings for real time information (electronic displays and the yournextbus SMS service). Satisfaction surveys undertaken by Passenger Focus show Metro to be the best performing Local Transport Authority for bus information. Detail is shown in Appendix 1.

5.4 Metro's surveys shows that 'non-users' rate provision slightly lower than users suggesting that more work could be done to raise the profile of the range of information sources for infrequent public transport users. Most 'non-users' state that the internet would be the first place they would look for such information, whilst users rely more heavily on more traditional source such as bus stop timetable displays.

#### Current and future preferences

5.5 Consultation with Passenger Consultative Committees and with the general public indicates that the Metro website and bus stop displays are the most used means of accessing information. Users still state that printed timetables and maps are the most reliable source of pre-journey information, and a significant number would ask their bus driver for in-journey updates, if required, rather than seek electronic sources.

5.6 There are three areas that come up consistently in consultation as priorities for information providers:

- Printed information at every stop
- An increase in real time displays at bus stops
- Fares information

5.7 Consultees also expressed a strong desire for further improving disruption information. There was support for the use of social media, such as Twitter and Facebook, with responses included the following statements:

- "Very. I like how they re-tweet other providers."
- "Very relevant - I travel to and from work via train everyday, so the travel updates via twitter are especially useful on my iPhone."
- "Very, I don't currently commute on public transport at the moment but whenever I travel on public transport it's invaluable. Also helps avoid trouble areas when out by car."

- 5.8 It is, however, important to note that whilst electronic delivery of information is a priority for many customers, and will ultimately save costs, there is still a large section of the public transport market that has limited access to mobile internet and social media. This is likely to be the case for some time.

### **Conclusions**

- 5.9 To conclude from Sections 4 and 5, bus information must:
- ensure bus information is available via a range of channels
  - in particular, ensure that it is available via mobile web pages
  - exploit social media to disseminate information especially real time disruption information
  - build on the success of real time information
  - encourage and support customer self-service
  - ensure that there is still availability of printed information and phone-based support

## **6 STRATEGIC APPROACH TO INFORMATION PROVISION**

### Principles

- 6.1 Metro's strategic approach to the provision of bus information is based upon:
- ensuring the overall range of information products meets customer needs, delivering the whole range of mobility options
  - data management processes and systems that ensure data integrity, collected and collated from a variety of sources
  - information being made available to the customer in a format appropriate to their needs
  - utilising information technology to reduce costs and improve services to the customer, especially self-service
  - encouraging transport network and service stability
  - cost sharing arrangements that reflect the role and value of information in encouraging the use of public transport, and hence revenues to operators,
  - recognition of Metro's role in promoting public transport use and active travel modes as part of wider policies with economic, social and environmental objectives;
  - recognition and development of Metro's role in co-ordinating information and promoting integrated transport networks ;
  - supporting and developing the role of the Yorkshire Regional Information Partnership;
  - supporting and complementing national initiatives such as Traveline, TransXchange and Transport Direct.

### Data Sources / Inputs

- 6.2 Accurate data and data management is at the heart of the information strategy, which seeks to exploit a wide range of bus information data sources, including:
- Scheduled bus route and timetable information supplied by operators;
  - Metro's database of bus stops, bus stations and rail stations, as held in the national NapTAN dataset;
  - 'Running board data' (the planned daily operation of each bus) supplied by operators for use in the South and West Yorkshire real time information system (supplied by VIX);
  - Information about scheduled operations on 'special days', such as Bank Holidays;
  - Day to day information on disruptions from bus operators.

### Data management and manipulation

- 6.3 Scheduled information about all bus services is held in Metro's database system (CoSA), which links routes and timetables to on-street bus stops and bus stations. This database system underpins the generation of printed information (timetable booklets and bus stop and bus station printed information) as well providing exports (in the national TransXchange format) to the Journey Planner, VIX real time information system (yournextbus) and to electronic bus station displays. The information in Metro's database is currently also used for planning passenger surveys and the re-imburement of Metro pre-paid tickets and concessionary travel.
- 6.4 Metro is working through the National Traveline Partnership to seek means by which a national dataset for stops and services can be created and maintained to enable effective information about UK-wide journeys to be made available, as encouraged via the national open data initiative.

### Outputs to the public

- 6.5 The Information Strategy involves the provision of information to customers in a variety of formats appropriate to their needs at different stages of the journey. The aim is to make the information as accurate and accessible as possible and as closely tailored to customer needs as possible.
- 6.6 The strategy aims to provide accurate, accessible and timely information at each stage of a journey. Current provision, and proposed enhancements, are shown below.

Current Provision	Enhancements (priorities in bold)
<b>Pre-Journey (planning the journey)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Printed information, including timetable booklets, bus stop displays, bus and train station displays, area maps and local guides</li> <li>• MetroLine / Traveline contact centres</li> <li>• Website (wymetro.com) including timetable downloads</li> <li>• Journey Planner</li> <li>• Travel Centre service</li> <li>• Range of other information outlets stocking timetables, maps and leaflets</li> <li>• Bus station information</li> <li>• Service change dates information</li> <li>• Promotional information</li> <li>• Metro Messenger email alerts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Facilitate simple self-service access to information</b></li> <li>• <b>Web development to include mobile web pages and apps where useful</b></li> <li>• <b>Provide fares information through MetroLine and Journey Planner</b></li> <li>• <b>Online mapping facility to enable interactivity in journey planning</b></li> <li>• Tailored, personalised information delivery</li> <li>• Infokiosk/internet access points at more locations</li> <li>• Improved printed information including end dates</li> <li>• Options for travel by a range of modes including time and cost comparisons</li> <li>• Linking journey plan to ability to purchase ticket / booking online</li> </ul>
<b>Starting the Journey</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bus stop/shelter labelling and roadside displays</li> <li>• Real time information by text, wap and internet</li> <li>• Real time displays in some shelters</li> <li>• Voice real time service accessed via MetroLine number</li> <li>• Rail departure information on screens and via web</li> <li>• Use of real time screens and SMS for significant service disruption</li> <li>• Real time information</li> <li>• Travel Centres at some bus stations</li> <li>• Electronic information displays at bus stations</li> <li>• Printed information</li> <li>• Location information</li> <li>• Use of real time screens and SMS for significant service disruption</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mobile web pages and in due course apps where useful</b></li> <li>• <b>Bus stop information to be expanded to all stops (due to be complete by 2012)</b></li> <li>• <b>Improved ease of use of Roadside Displays including content, design and layout review, and QR codes</b></li> <li>• <b>Up to date disruption information including alternative ways to travel and/or accurate waiting times</b></li> <li>• Wider use of voice real time service</li> <li>• Expand access to real time information and expand usage for disruption</li> <li>• Enhanced real time information at all bus stations</li> <li>• Provision for when Travel Centres closed including kiosks</li> </ul>
<b>During the Journey</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Web updates available via smart phone</li> <li>• Twitter, Facebook updates and interaction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Widely available disruption information including both planned disruptions (e.g. events, planned roadworks) and unpredicted issues (e.g. RTAs, poor weather disruption)</b></li> <li>• <b>Effective interchange at 'hubs' including travel options and real time information</b></li> <li>• <b>Integration of social media within service offering</b></li> <li>• Next stop information</li> <li>• Route information</li> <li>• Destination information</li> </ul>

## 7 PERFORMANCE STANDARDS, TARGETS AND MONITORING

7.1 Metro's information strategy includes performance standards for all West Yorkshire providers relating to:

- MetroLine and Traveline
- Bus station and Travel Centres
- Printed timetable booklets and maps
- Bus stop information
- The range of information outlets
- Accessibility
- Interchange information
- Special days of operation
- Products
- Real Time Information
- Web based information and Journey planner

7.2 The strategy's performance standards are detailed in Appendix B. The Strategy's targets, reflecting the need to raise awareness, the potential to exploit web-based information provision and the need for addressing the needs of a range of customers, are also set out below

	2011 position	2012 target	2013 target	2014 target	2017 target
<b><i>Awareness (% of population)</i></b>					
Metro website	61.6%	65	70	72	75
MetroLine	50.0%	52	55	60	65
RTI Internet	25.4%	27	30	40	50
RTI smart phone	13.5%	20	25	35	50
<b><i>Usage - frequent or occasional (% of population)</i></b>					
Metro/operator websites	34.6%	37	40	43	50
MetroLine	13.7%	14	16	18	20
Pocket timetables	32.0%	31	29	27	20
RTI smart phone	12.1%	13	15	16	20
<b><i>Performance (on 1 – 10 scale)</i></b>					
Bus station displays	7.8	8.0	8.1	8.2	8.2
MetroLine	7.7	7.8	7.9	8.0	8.2
Travel centres	6.8	7.0	7.2	7.5	8.0
Displays at bus stops	8.1	8.1	8.2	8.3	8.5
RTI smart phone	4.4	5.0	5.5	6.5	7.5

7.3 An aggregate indicator of customer satisfaction with information, shown below, is proposed as part of the high level targets associated with the third West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan. This indicator would also contribute to an aggregate measure of customer satisfaction with transport provision as a whole

	<b>2011 position</b>	<b>2012 target</b>	<b>2013 target</b>	<b>2014 target</b>	<b>2017 target</b>
<b><i>Aggregate customer satisfaction with information indicator</i></b>	7.8	7.8	7.9	8.0	8.2

## **8 RESOURCING THE STRATEGY**

### Call Centre, Real Time System and Journey Planner Cost

- 8.1 Metro commits funding and staff resources to provide passenger information. Bus and train operators provide financial contributions and complementary activities which support the strategy, in recognition of the commercial benefits they gain from the provision of comprehensive, accurate and accessible information,.
- 8.2 To date, Metro has managed this joint approach via the Information Management Group. This was established with representatives of bus companies operating within West Yorkshire, as a means of delivering the Information Strategy, overseeing service delivery and standards, and of developing cost sharing mechanisms for information provision. In future, this role will be reported via the Bus Partnership Board.
- 8.3 The Bus Information Strategy requires bus companies to contribute towards the MetroLine/Traveline service (extended hours provision) and to the revenue costs of the regional Journey Planner. The strategy requires operators to continue to make these contributions, with indexation to reflect the impact of inflation on the costs of producing and disseminating information.
- 8.4 Bus operators have also agreed, individually, to fund a proportion of the revenue costs of the South and West Yorkshire Real Time Information system. The level of contribution will be reconsidered as part of a future process to maintain the provision of realtime bus information after the 'end date' of the current contract with Vix.
- 8.5 Train operators also contribute to the MetroLine/Traveline service in recognition of its role as a multi-modal public transport information service. Metro will be seeking to include such contributions as part of any future franchising process.

### Bus Stop Information

- 8.6 The provision of basic printed departure information at bus stops is a key priority for customers. Metro and operators have already agreed a cost sharing approach to extending the provision of roadside information, using Local Transport Plan funding to purchase and install additional timetable cases, with operators funding Metro's additional revenue costs through a data processing fee for each service change.
- 8.7 By the end of 2012, 97-98% of all bus stops will be fitted with cases to display information specific to that stop. From January 2012 a fee will be charged on the basis of the number of roadside displays that require to be changed whenever a service change is registered. This fee would be halved for operators providing

data in an acceptable electronic format in a timely manner and doubled for late changes or for changes outside agreed service change dates. An appeal process has been established to ensure that operators are not unduly penalised for responding to customer needs. Further detail is contained in Appendix B.

#### Data Processing

- 8.8 In order to advance the provision of accurate electronic information on a regional basis and to manage and reduce the costs of provision to Metro and operators, Metro will offer the services of its Data Team as a Business Unit, supporting operators and neighbouring authorities as a cost effective means of assisting them to undertake electronic data transfer.

#### Hours of Service Provision

- 8.9 Customer requirements for round-the-clock information are placing additional demands on staff. In particular, there is a need to ensure that social media disruption and other updates are available as a minimum with the same coverage as phone-based enquiries (seven days over week 0700-2200). There is therefore an evolving need to deploy staff more flexibly and train them to cover a broader range of customer needs.

#### Revenue Costs of Bus Information

- 8.10 The current (2011/12) revenue budgets for the provision of public transport information are set out below. .

<b>Element</b>	<b>Service</b>	<b>Cost in 2011/12 (£000)</b>
Staffing *	MetroLine	600
	Travel Centres	235
	Passenger Information team	125
Printing	Bus timetables	160
	Other printed information	230
	Roadside display marginal production costs	160
Electronic information	Net Yournextbus operational costs	550
	Journey Planner costs	130
<b>Total</b>		<b>2,190</b>
<b>Operator contributions **</b>		<b>595</b>
<b>Net Metro Expenditure</b>		<b>1,595</b>

#### *Notes*

\* Includes all MetroLine costs, half of Travel Centre costs (i.e. indicative time spent on information queries); all Passenger Information team but does not include data team or real time team)

\*\* Includes new contribution for roadside displays

It is not meaningful to, for example, allocate Metroline or journey planner

costs to bus and rail modes

### Capital Programme

8.11 Metro has allocated Local Transport Plan funding to support the Bus Information Strategy through the SCIP (Smart Card and Information programme), which includes the following work packages:

(1) Smart Transactions

Introduction of smart-enabled ticketing products.

(2) Transport Data Management

Effective data management systems.

(3) Customer Database Development

Developing customer databases so that front line staff and customers have a single view of their service transactions.

(4) Web Development and Mobile Information

Ensuring web information is available on the move and improving navigation and other functionality online.

(5) Disruption Information

Ensuring that customers can access disruption information and alternative ways to travel.

(6) Multi-modal and hubs information

Bringing together information about a range of mode choices, particularly those available via key interchange points.

(7) Change Management and Communications

Ensuring that customers and staff are well informed about the changes and enabled to adapt to and make best use of any changes.

8.12 The indicative capital programme for the period 2011 – 2014 is set out below

Component (including project management and contingency)	Allocation (£000)
Smart Transactions	2,100
Transport data management (back office systems)	440
Customer database development	390
Web development	410
Disruption information	220
Multi-modal and hubs information	1,170
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,630</b>

8.13 Individual projects within this capital programme will be subject to specific approval by the West Yorkshire Local Transport Authority.