
Report to
Scrutiny Board 3

23 November 2009

Report of
Director of City Services and Development

Title
PrimeLines – Report on Outcomes

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to show evidence of the success of the PrimeLines project by providing details of the outcomes and benefits that have been achieved during its life. Scrutiny Board 3 also asked for information of the reallocation of road space towards buses. In addition the Scrutiny Board members also raised specific points concerning the project.
- 1.2 The four PrimeLines corridors were implemented in the following Wards: Foleshill, Longford, St Michaels, Lower Stoke, Upper Stoke, Wyken, Henley, Cheylesmore, Binley & Willenhall, Earlsdon, Whoberley, Westwood and Wainbody.

2 Recommendations

The Scrutiny Board 3 is asked to:

- 2.1 Note the contents of the report.
- 2.2 Welcome the significant increase in bus user satisfaction following the delivery of PrimeLines and the delivery of the key outcomes envisaged by the scheme.
- 2.3 Note the principles under which the reallocation of road space has been undertaken and that the balance achieved between the needs of different road users is appropriate.
- 2.4 Note the responses to the queries raised by SB3

3 Information/Background

- 3.1 The origin of PrimeLines from its inception in 2001 to approval at Full Council in March 2003 is explained in Appendix A.

- 3.2 At that meeting the Full Council endorsed the new Local Transport Plan (2003) together with a 'major scheme' bid for the Coventry Quality Bus network. In the Department for Transport's settlement letter of December 2003 it was announced that the City had been successful in securing an allocation of £28.48m towards the cost of the scheme. The Government made it clear that delivery of the project on time and meeting its objectives was paramount
- 3.3 In March 2004 Cabinet approved the implementation programme for the PrimeLines project. It was acknowledged that this project was only going to be delivered successfully with the full collaboration of Centro and National Express Coventry. To that end a Concordat was signed by the three parties, which set out the aspirations of the partnership.
- 3.4 The initial scheme is now complete. However, further extensions also called 'PrimeLines' are being built as the result of successful bids for additional funding from the West Midlands Joint Initiative budget.

4 Outputs and Outcomes

Question: - *How many of the original outcomes and outputs, proposed as part of the PrimeLines project, have been achieved?*

- 4.1 The list of outputs can be found in Appendix A. The following table outlines the identified outcomes to the Department for Transport and the current measured benefit:-

Predicted Outcome	Measured Outcome
Bus usage would increase by 25% on each corridor	increase of usage of bus stops up by over 49.5% on the PrimeLines bus stop.
Bus usage across the network would increase by 10% by 2011	6.6% Against a national decline outside London during project period
Public transport modal split to the City Centre would increase to 30% across the day	26.8%
There would be a significant increase in satisfaction levels of bus passenger users by 2011.	Increased from 53% in 2003 to 67% in 2007
Reduce personal security incidents associated with bus travel by 10%	Latest position to be reported verbally at meeting, currently 70% satisfaction

- 4.2 One of the National Key Performance Indicators which the Council is required to monitor is one that deals with satisfaction with local bus provision. The data is showing that the percentage of those satisfied with local bus services has risen from 55% in 2006 to 63% in 2008. This should be compared to the West Midlands and England value for 2008 of 55%. This is one of the few Coventry National Indicators that is significantly better than national average performance.

Question: - *Which areas of the project have not been completed?*

- 4.3 At the outset a number of outputs were expected to be needed to deliver the basic scheme outcome of a better quality, more reliable service. Of the 10 identified outputs only two have not be completed. These are the CCTV cameras and validation of the Bus Traffic Light Priority. These items are dependant on the completion of other elements of the UTMC and WAN such as the back office and completion of

Question: - *Will there be any penalties involved if we have not completed the project as we said we would when we received government funding?*

- 4.4 The Department for Transport (DfT) is more focussed on the outcomes of the project i.e. how the bus service has improved as a result of the project rather than what has been built. The DfT could however seek to claw back the funding should we decide to remove any measures and the service deteriorate as a result.

Question: - *We know that bus usage has increased, but do we have an indication as to how much of this is due to an increase in fee-paying passengers as opposed to the free bus pass now available to the over 60s?*

- 4.5 Throughout the life of the scheme the metropolitan authorities have provided free public transport for senior citizens and other groups. Hence the introduction of the national scheme has had very little impact in Coventry. Concessions make up around 25% of the patronage with the majority of the remainder from non-concessions and school travel. Although the opportunity for free travel for "over 60's" will have contributed to an increase in bus patronage these have only been available since April 2008. The data does show that the rise in patronage began in 2003/2004 which is prior to the introduction of the national free travel scheme.
- 4.6 Comparing the patronage figures from the Coventry Cordon Counts undertaken in 2003 and 2007 demonstrates that the inbound patronage has increased by 8.6% on the four PrimeLines corridors as compared to the other eleven corridors of 4.1%. Again this increase has occurred prior to the introduction of the national over 60's bus pass scheme in 2008.
- 4.7 Nearly 45% of bus passengers travel using the PrimeLines corridors.
- 4.8 In conclusion the project has delivered the majority of the proposed outputs, but more importantly the outputs that have been completed are contributing to the delivery of the agreed outcomes. Overall the impact of the scheme has been beneficial to the bus users on these key corridors. It should be borne in mind that removal of all or some of the features could be detrimental to delivering the outcomes, which could result in the DfT scrutinising the scheme and ultimately imposing a penalty

5 Bus Lanes

Question:- Is it necessary for the bus lanes to be active 24 hours a day, 7 days a week?

- 5.1 The current advice from the DfT recommends that bus lanes should be active for twenty four hours for seven days a week. The idea is to create some standards in operation to avoid confusion and ease enforcement. However, it recognises that where other activity e.g. loading/unloading or limited parking is necessary 24 hour bus lanes may not be appropriate.
- 5.2 The 'at all times' operation is popular with bus operators as it protects the bus lanes at all times, they are easily understood, tend to be more self enforcing and make a clear

- 5.3 **Local Transport Note 1/97 (DETR)** (Department of the Environment Transport & Region) **Keeping Buses Moving** actually recommends that with flow bus lanes **should be provided all day** unless other requirements, e.g. loading, preclude it. It goes on to say that all-day bus lanes are **easier for motorists to understand and so are less likely to be violated.**
- 5.4 The high level of compliance with the current scheme as implemented suggests that it is a well designed scheme that responds to local circumstances.
- 5.5 Bus Lanes that operate outside of the peak times also ensures that reliability is retained throughout the day to provide reliable bus services relevant to their passengers' needs. Commercial bus services have to follow a set route and timetable. Bus lanes and other bus priority measures go some way towards enabling buses to have predictable journey times. Other vehicles have the advantage that the driver can choose different routes at different times when confronted by congestion.
- 5.6 There is clear evidence that reliability is a key priority for bus users and that bus priority measures are critical to providing day long reliability.

6 Enforcement

Question: - *We planned to have camera enforcement of bus lanes, however this is not yet in place. Is this detrimental to the scheme?*

- 6.1 In general compliance of the bus lanes is very good, although there is a specific problem at Tile Hill Lane which could be resolved by the introduction of the CCTV camera. The base has been constructed and is currently awaiting the communication link to be installed prior to the pole and camera being installed.
- 6.2 The CCTV cameras are being delivered as part of the UTMC project and the communication link by the WAN project. However, the high level of compliance resulting from the detailed implementation of the scheme means we do not need the number of cameras originally envisaged. (An additional benefit is the reduction in ongoing maintenance costs.) We are exploring the potential to use a mix of fixed and mobile cameras to provide an appropriate level of enforcement.

7 Funding

Question: - *Has there been, at any stage of the project, the need to borrow additional funds? If so, how was this money spent?*

- 7.1 No money was borrowed to carry out works on the scheme. Additional funding has been secured to extend the original scheme.

8 Next Steps

Question: - *How should we allocate road space in future?*

- 8.1 Of the 29 km of initial PrimeLines major scheme corridors, 13 km of road has had substantial improvements carried out. Of this only 0.7km has been reallocated from general traffic. These are located on Herald Avenue/ A45/ Tile Hill Lane junction and Foleshill Road/ Old Church Road (the outbound section).
- 8.2 Every care has been taken to ensure that only that road space that is necessary and that provides benefit to the bus without seriously impacting on overall congestion is utilised. A significant effort has been put in to providing appropriate bus priority measures without the need to re-allocate road space.

Question: - *What could we do differently, or better, in the future?.*

- 8.3 It is recognised that there are significant additional benefits that could be achieved by formally integrating bus priority measures with other activities to reduce congestion and enhance safety as well as delivering local environmental benefits. For this reason the concept of 'Smarter Routes' is being developed in partnership with other authorities. In future it is anticipated that West Midlands funding approvals will reflect this approach.

8.4 Programme

PrimeLines was a four year, four route programme with agreed objectives to meet national targets. It is suggested that an indicative three year programme of future bus related schemes to allow a co-ordination of other highways schemes to be developed. It may also be appropriate to include local objectives as part of the target for delivery.

8.5 Consultation

With PrimeLines we were working with the proposals as set out to the DfT, which was agreed firstly at Council as part of the LTP and confirmed at Cabinet later. It is apparent that the weakness with the initial process was the lack of early engagement with the Cabinet Member and Ward Councillors. Members were however kept fully informed of proposals through consultation events and newsletters.

The consultation/information process has continually been reviewed by the Transport Delivery Unit and has evolved during the life of the programme. To overcome this weakness the later stages of PrimeLines did engage with the Cabinet Member and Ward Councillors at a much earlier stage in the development process. However most of the scheme was by this time being delivered.

This process is currently being developed as part of the delivery of the City Centre-Holbrooks Bus Showcase Scheme. In this case the ITA representatives have also been briefed about the scheme.

This early involvement with the Cabinet Member and Ward Councillors will help in communicating and develop the objectives of schemes, this will enable them to be better equipped to deal with queries from the public. In addition it will provide a means

to discuss some of the 'local issues' prior to public consultation. Additional briefing sessions would be carried out as necessary at key stages in developing the scheme.

8.6 Road Space Allocation

In deciding any reallocation of road space the scheme will continue to ensure that an appropriate balance is made in supporting public transport and minimise any possible disbenefit to general traffic.

The earliest involvement of the Ward Councillors, ITA members and the Cabinet Member at various stages of the design will enable issues around the allocation of road space to be decided early on in the process prior to public consultation.

8.7 Marketing

One of the main failings of the PrimeLines process has been the marketing of the scheme to show what the benefits will be and the benefits that have been achieved. To that end the current PrimeLines Programme was put forward and succeeded in winning an award presented by the ICE (West Midlands) for Partnership working. In addition PrimeLines has been successful in attracting some very positive media attention, including Coventry Evening Telegraph, Midlands Today as well as more public transport orientated journals within the industry.

To promote the schemes there will be further Personalised Travel Planning (PTP) schemes such as that carried out in Earlsdon in 2008 and currently underway around Walsgrave. This is already built into the future City Centre-Holbrooks Bus Showcase Scheme (delivery 2010/11).

9 **Question for Partners**

Travel Coventry - Having invested in showcase routes, why were routes then changed?

- 9.1 No routes have been changed on the four PrimeLines Corridors. On three of the corridors the frequency of the service has increased on either weekdays or weekends giving passengers enhanced services.
- 9.2 The question seems to refer to the service 34 changes that happened in 2006 following the Coventry network refresh and the re-opening of Pool Meadow Station.
- 9.3 Travel Coventry, Centro and Coventry City Council had commissioned a study into the bus network to ensure the services met the changing demands created by the regeneration occurring in the north and north east of the city, especially the new Hospital and Ricoh Arena/Retail Park sites.
- 9.4 The residents of Stoke Aldermoor had asked for a more direct link to the new University Hospital which was much appreciated. However following the changes a number of residents in Stoke Aldermoor and Ernesford Grange were disappointed that their bus service no longer ran to Morrisons at Binley. In 2007, in response to these comments the bus services on the corridor were reviewed and bus routes were introduced that maintained the link between Stoke Aldermoor and the University Hospital, as well as Morrisons at Binley. The review also enabled the Service 34 to return to Binley Road.

- 9.5 The number of buses (all operators) using Binley Road Bus Lane has increased from 10 to 12 per peak hour since it was introduced.

Centro - How much progress has been made in relationship to developing Bus Quality Partnerships?

- 9.6 PrimeLines was delivered through the Coventry Quality Bus Network. This was a voluntary Quality Partnership between Travel Coventry, Coventry City Council and Centro. The other bus operators in the City also signed a concordat, containing similar aspirations set out in the CQBN.
- 9.7 In addition Stagecoach, Coventry City Council and Centro also signed up to the MATRIX Quality Bus Partnership in 2008.

10 Other specific implications

10.1

	Implications (See below)	No Implications
Best Value	✓	✓
Children and Young People		✓
Climate Change & Sustainable Development	✓	
Comparable Benchmark Data		✓
Corporate Parenting		✓
Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy	✓	
Crime and Disorder		✓
Equal Opportunities		✓
Finance		✓
Health and Safety		✓
Human Resources		✓
Human Rights Act		✓
Impact on Partner Organisations	✓	
Information and Communications Technology		✓
Legal Implications		✓
Neighbourhood Management		✓
Property Implications		✓
Race Equality Scheme		✓
Risk Management		✓
Trade Union Consultation		✓
Voluntary Sector – The Coventry Compact		✓

11 Best Value

In preparing the bid to Government a detailed economic, financial and environmental assessment of the scheme had to be undertaken. Government subjected these assessments to detailed audit before the funding was released.

The assessments identified a general improvement in environmental conditions as increased bus usage reduced vehicle emissions. Accident savings amounted to a reduction of 120 accidents over the 30-year period of the assessment. Whilst it is not possible to isolate the safety benefits of PrimeLines from other works it has without doubt positively contributed to Coventry's excellent record of reducing injuries from accidents.

12 Climate Change & Sustainable Development

The Bus Showcase/PrimeLines Bus project seeks to improve public transport to key destinations in a manner, which reduces congestion and provides better accessibility for all people. The proposal will improve the quality and reliability of the existing bus routes, thereby helping to make public transport more attractive. Improvements to public transport will therefore provide a sustainable alternative to the private car.

13 Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy

The project impacts on: -

7. Transport

7a Long-term outcomes

- The quality of Coventry's local public transport services will have further improved and people will be more likely to travel in ways that are less damaging to the environment.

7b Short-term priorities

- Reduce car use and encourage people to travel by public transport, on foot and by bicycle, particularly during peak periods
- Improve perceptions about the safety of travelling by public transport, by bicycle or on foot and maintain the city's low rates of road traffic accidents.

14 Impact on Partner Organisations

The project was delivered through close collaboration with the main bus operators, Centro and Coventry City Council. This has been facilitated by a voluntary partnership, The Coventry Public Transport Concordat. Further work is being undertaken within the partnership to establish whether a Statutory Quality Partnership would be beneficial. This could establish common standards for all bus operators in Coventry.

The bus operators and the passengers have benefitted from the introduction of these measures.

15 Monitoring

The scheme will continue to be monitored as part of the usual processes already in place.

16 Timescale and expected outcomes

None

	Yes	No
Key Decision		√
Scrutiny Consideration (if yes, which Scrutiny meeting and date)	√ Scrutiny Board 3 18 October 2009	
Council Consideration (if yes, date of Council meeting)		√

List of background papers

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Papers open to Public Inspection

Description of paper

Location

PRIMELINES OUTPUTS

	<u>Projected</u>	<u>Implemented</u>
Bus Lanes/ Red Route	11,380	10,266
Parking Bays	279	507
Pedestrian Crossing (new & Improved)	45	44
Bus bypasses	19	13
RTI - 3 Line Displays	37	70
Bus Flag RTI Displays	170	19
SMS Virtual Stop Information	500	500
SVD (Bus Traffic Light Priority)	60	80
CCTV – Enforcement & Security Cameras	40	0
Traffic Signals/Roundabouts	2	5