



West
Yorkshire
Combined
Authority

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The West Yorkshire Combined Authority Q4 and 2023-2024 Annual Report

CRSTS Programme

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Summary progress to date

Overall, there has been good progress through the first two years of the five-year programme.

Key achievements:

Programme governance was established in the first year of the programme. The second year of the programme has ensured the established processes and procedures are embedded across the programme. This has meant ensuring a wide portfolio of sub-programmes and projects are aware of and using the Governance arrangements, including utilising processes such as the management of change, endorsing business cases and approval requests.

The 2023-24 Financial Year (FY 23-24) saw several projects progress in their development across the West Yorkshire Combined Authority's CRSTS programme. In total, 24 CRSTS business cases were approved and progressed through the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (now referred to as the Combined Authority throughout) assurance process, demonstrating significant progress to date.

One additional project, (44G) the Combined Services and Assets System (CoSa) replacement, started on site. This brings the total number of projects on site to 28 (20 are maintenance sub-programmes). The Leeds City Square pedestrianisation project has completed on site.

The financial spend for year 2 FY 23-24 across the Programme totalled £96.3m, £6.7m (6.5%) less than the £103m baseline.

The main programme challenge is the deliverability of projects by the March 2027 deadline.

Explanation of Variances:

The programme was re-based in February, so any reporting is against the approved February 2024 baseline.

In January 2024, as a key programme measure of value for money, the Combined Authority commissioned a review of the programme benefits-cost-ratio (BCR) based on the updated programme put forward in the re-baselining activity. This produced an updated programme BCR of 2.32, lowering slightly from the previous programme BCR of 2.36 but remaining high value for money.

The slight reduction is due to a small number of projects being pipelined which will slightly impact on the overall programme benefits.

Actual spend for FY 23-24 was almost as per forecast. The slight 6.5% underspend was due to a small number of sub-programme areas underspending against their forecast. The programme is still expected to spend in full by March 2027.

There will be two spend forecasts provided going forward, one on actual spend of the DfT grant, the second against the higher overprogramming total. The amount of actual forecast spend to be claimed against the DfT £820m CRSTS programme in 24-25 is forecast to be £166m. The Combined Authority spend of the DfT capital grant is therefore £44m lower than the £210m baseline figure, as the baseline includes overprogramming. The more useful forecast to track is the one for actual spend against the DfT grant, not overprogramming.

At the end of year two, there are 6 CRSTS projects and 10 TCF projects with a start on site or end on site more than 6 months later than the baseline. However, all forecast to complete by the March 2027 deadline.

A Portfolio Review is currently underway to capture any further forecast changes for the rest of the programme against spend or milestones. The outcome of this review will be reported through the usual quarterly and annual progress reporting process.

Financial Update

The financial summary for the second year of the programme, FY 23-24, shows a spend of £96.3m. This is £6.7m (6.5%) less than the £103m baseline in the delivery plan.

The reasons for the slightly reduced actual spend are set out below.

1. The programme is running with a circa 9% level of overprogramming, for a total across the five-year overprogramming of £921m. The 23-24 forecast set out in the baseline delivery plan was against this overprogramming figure – this means actual spend would never match the forecast overprogramming totals.
2. There have also been some programme areas which have underspent against their baseline. Table 1 below shows the programme areas which underspent against their forecast, including an explanation for the variance.

Table 1: Underspend variances including explanation.

Programme area	Reason
Integration Package - Mobility Hubs	Difficulty in meeting tight programme, additional support has been added and a new programme re-forecast based on contractor input. Still expecting to deliver within CRSTS timescales.
Better Places – A660 Lawnswood Roundabout	Corridor Improvement Programme funding, another funding source, has now been fully used. Scheme will now draw from CRSTS. Small delay to the start on site also contributed to underspend.
Mass Transit Development & Delivery Programme	Legal partner and district partners claimed less than anticipated in this financial year.
Highways Asset Management and Enhancement	Small underspend in percentage terms.
CRSTS Comms, Consultation and Engagement.	Communication, Consultation, and Engagement is underspent by approx. £1m as fewer schemes have progressed through consultation than expected. Comms, C&E, looking to make funding available to districts and will utilise in future years.
CRSTS Programme Management	Programme management costs were lower than expected in 23-24 due to less resources (staff) than forecast. Future forecasts have been adjusted based on the revised lower programme resource levels going forward. The funding released has been included in the risk pot to support all schemes.
(46) Steeton and Silsden cycling and walking improvements.	Change request submitted in March-24; this will revise spend forecasts.
(56) Bradford Interchange Resurfacing Works Project	Project was on hold from 15-01-24 due to the closure of Bradford Interchange. Work has now recommenced and is due to finish in 2025

Forecasts for future financial years are set out below.

Starting with 24--25 (year 3 of CRSTS), two forecasts will now be provided, an overprogramming forecast, currently £921m across all 5 years and a second forecast against the actual 5-year DfT grant allocation of £830m.

For 24-25 the forecast spend including overprogramming is £189m versus the baseline overprogramming spend forecast for 24-25 of £210m. The reduction in the overprogrammed forecast is due to the TCF programme spend profile being re-forecast and utilising other TCF grants before CRSTS. A reduced forecast 24-25 TCF spend means £21m payment towards TCF is now forecast for 25-26.

For 24-25 the forecast spend excluding overprogramming is £166m. This is the first time a figure excluding overprogramming has been provided and is against the 5-year budget of £830m.

Table 2 sets out a summary of CRSTS finances, actual and forecast spend.

Table 2: Summary of CRSTS finances, actual and forecast spend.

Year	22-23	23-24	24-25	26-27	27-28
Programme year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Actual/ forecast	Actual	Actual	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
Inc Overprogramming (£921m)	£63m	£96.3m	£189m	£278m	£296m
Budget (£830m)	£63m	£96.3m	£166m	£236m	£269.5m

Overall, good progress has been made in being very close to achieving forecast spend in Year 2, 23-24 of the programme. Including two forecasts going forward, including and excluding overprogramming will help provide further monitoring of spend.

CRSTS Programme

Summary & Key Achievements

Mass Transit

Achievements for the last budget year include:

- Designed and implemented Portfolio organisational changes including standing up revised governance arrangements;
- Procured and stood up new Design Development Partner;
- Working with Stakeholder Management Partner;
- Procured and stood up Programme Delivery Partner;
- Completed RIBA2 Design for Phase 1 routes;
- Sifted Phase 1 routes from 26 to 6 for SOC submission
- Completed a £2M data collection exercise to inform the West Yorkshire variable demand traffic base model build.
- Defined first phase of Mass Transit roll out between in Leeds and Bradford (Phase 1);
- Baselined Phase 1 Master Schedules;
- Developed Portfolio risk management process and baselined Portfolio risks;
- Completed Phase 1 SOC and submitted to DfT;
- Commenced preparation for Mass Transit consultation due to commence in June 2024
- Procured and Stood up Mass Transit CRM system;
- Commenced statutory, political and high-level stakeholder engagement;
- Commenced MT communications awareness raising campaign;
- Showcased Mass Transit at regional and national transport events.

Maintenance

There have been three SOCs developed and approved which released financial years FY23-24 and FY24-25 funding for Asset Management-Public Rights of Way (PROW), and Network Management, and FY23-24 funding for Safer Roads.

GFAs were completed with all partners allowing grants to be claimed for the above.

Delivery progress was very good on the whole, with only a couple of instances of significant underspend in some districts and sub-programmes. The underspend is expected to be addressed though the next financial year (24-25).

A more robust approach to reporting outputs was developed and agreed in partnership with districts and is now active.

Transforming Cities Fund

Since the last report the following progress has been made across the TCF programme:

Two projects are now operationally complete and delivering benefits to users (Halifax Bus Station and Leeds City Bikes) with a further two partially complete with some elements available for use (Network Navigation and Leeds City Centre Cycling)

Four schemes have completed FBC and moved into the delivery phase.

Three schemes have completed OBC and moved into FBC and a further four have completed OBC activity and approval is expected within the next month.

Only two schemes are yet to complete OBC activity. (One of these will pause at this point to be considered for future funding).

Currently 11 of the TCF Projects are in the deliver stage, 8 are completing Full Business Case Activity, four are moving towards OBC approval (with Committee approvals expected in June and July) and one is

expected to gain Business Justification Case approval in June which is a single stage approval to move into Delivery.

Behaviour Change

Significant progress has been made within Behaviour Change:

- Three Community Active Travel Hubs have been created which are welcoming “one-stop-shops” that cater for people's walking, cycling, scooting and wheeling (using a wheelchair or mobility aid) needs. A further eleven were created through other funding streams.
- 22 small grants have been given to grassroots community organisations to deliver projects which provide local solutions to local barriers stopping people from walking, cycling or wheeling.
- Cycle training has been delivered to 2,263 adults across West Yorkshire from July 2022 - March 2024.
- Eight new cycle instructors received training to increase the capacity for the adult cycle training programmes.
- Cycle storage containers and fleets of bikes have been provided at three locations to support the local demand for cycle training.
- A successful application process for development of further active travel hubs and small community grants was undertaken. The application period closed by end of March. In total there were 35 hubs applications and 68 grants applications that are now in the process of being scored and funding allocated.
- Competed a procurement exercise to appoint suppliers to deliver seven workstreams as part of the CRSTS behaviour change programme.

Business Cases & SOS/EOS

In total, 23 CRSTS business cases were approved by the Combined Authority, these are outlined below.

Business Case Stage	#	Projects
Strategic Assessment	6	(43) Kirklees district wide speed limit review (52) Leeds Station - Platform 13/17 extension - allowing longer trains and better rail services to the Five Towns/Wakefield district (42) Regional Decarbonisation Pilot- Kirklees Innovative EV Programme (47) West Yorkshire EV Charging and Local Place/Neighbourhood Package (33) Calderdale Bus Hotspots and Enforcement (87) BCPC – Bradford Bus Hotspots
Strategic Outline Case	11	(41a) Small Scale Station Improvements (44 D) Mobility Hubs Ph2 BCPC - LCC Bus Priority Active Travel Cycle Loops (37b) (45) Highways Safer Roads programme (54) Highways Asset Management and Enhancement

		<p>(55) Highways Network Management and Enhancement</p> <p>(84) BCPC - Woodhouse Lane Gateway</p> <p>(31) Sustainable Transport - Leeds Healthier Streets</p> <p>(52) Leeds Station - Platform 13/17 extension - allowing longer trains and better rail services to the Five Towns/Wakefield district</p> <p>(42) Regional Decarbonisation Pilot- Kirklees Innovative EV Programme</p> <p>(82) Kings Road (Bradford) sustainable travel corridor improvements</p>
Outline Business Case	2	<p>(88) A6110 Elland Road Churwell Hill</p> <p>(50) Better Places - A660 Lawnswood Roundabout</p>
Full Business Case	0	-
Business Justification Case	4	<p>(44 G) CoSa Replacement</p> <p>CRSTS Capacity Fund West Yorkshire</p> <p>(44 E) Integrated ticketing and payment</p> <p>(43) Kirklees district wide speed limit review</p>
Start on site	1	<p>(44G) CoSa</p> <p>The following projects began delivery pre-FY 23-24 are in still in delivery:</p> <p>(37a) Leeds City Centre Bus Priority (All works complete except final surfacing and signalling installation)</p> <p>(45) Highways Safer Roads programme (constant delivery through the programme lifespan)</p> <p>(54) Highways Asset Management and Enhancement (constant delivery through the programme lifespan)</p> <p>(55) Highways Network Management and Enhancement (constant delivery through the programme lifespan)</p> <p>(56) Bradford Interchange Resurfacing Works Project --</p> <p>(61) Off Highway walking and cycling routes (constant delivery through the programme lifespan)</p>
End on site	0	

Challenges across the programme

The main programme challenge is the deliverability of projects by the March 2027 deadline.

To address this the programme is undertaking a portfolio review followed by ongoing deliverability reviews. A number of projects have already reported a slip in their start on site or finish on site dates versus the recent re-baselining review.

A Portfolio Review is currently underway to establish deliverability of projects by the deadline, it is expected this will be manageable due to the level of overprogramming. However, the challenge is if too many projects begin forecasting post March 2027 completion. Currently is expected that there are enough projects within the existing overprogramming that can continue to complete the overall outputs and outcomes.

A deliverability review process is being established which will identify key checkpoints for schemes allowing improved resource allocation and assurance that outputs are delivered. The deliverability review will be ongoing now for the life of the programme to ensure programme outputs and outcomes are met.

Another key challenge is reduced output and outcomes if there are fewer projects. This is again being managed through the deliverability review process to ensure those going ahead maximise contributions to the overall outputs, outcomes, and objectives. Identified options to ensure outcomes are met include resource re-allocation and scaling up of key schemes.

It is noted that as other schemes and programmes reach completion, there will be an increase in available resource to deliver the schemes and outputs of CRSTS by the programme deadline.

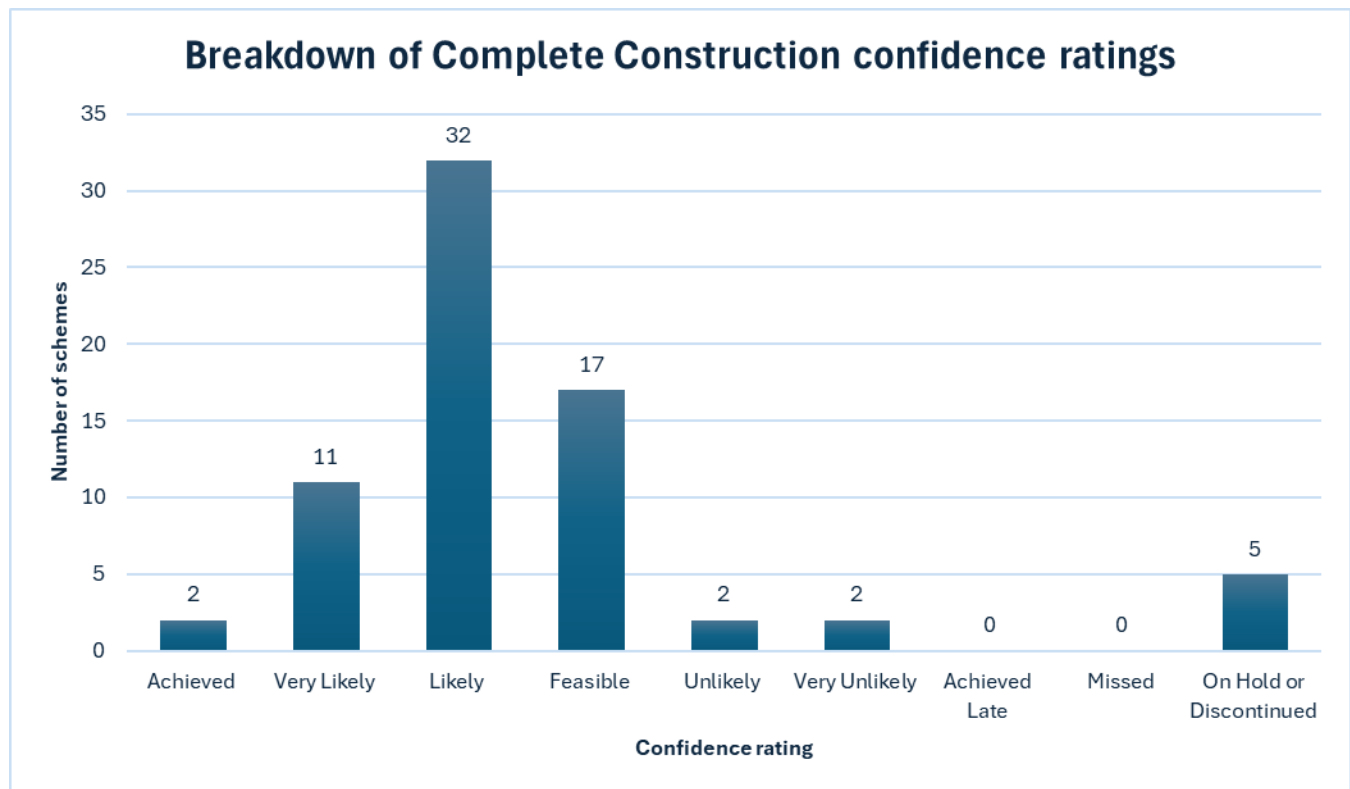
-- It is interesting to note that Inflation is reducing as a programme challenge. Whilst not yet fully manifested as many projects are not at the procurement stage, the overall inflation rate has now dropped. The programme expects increased costs from two years of high inflation; however, this is much more manageable knowing it is for a specific two year timeframe from our risk - inflation - contingency funding area of the programme. If project costs increase, this will be mitigated through fewer projects being delivered to ensure the programme spends within its funding envelope.

Delivery Confidence

In the CRSTS programme, the Start Development of three schemes have been given a confidence rating of nine. The (38) A639 Park Road and (89) Thirsk Row schemes are being taken forward through LUF2, the (83) A61 N Scott Hall Road scheme has been pipelined for future development.

All other schemes have started development with fifteen schemes having achieved End Development.

Forecasting to the end of the programme, 87% of schemes (62 out of 71) have a confidence rating between 1 (achieved) and 4 (feasible) for Complete Construction within the programme deadline.



The schemes listed below are those with a Complete Construction rating of five or higher.

Schemes with 5+ Delivery Confidence rating		
Project	Rating	Reason/Explanation
(35) A62 – A644 Bus priority corridors- Huddersfield – Cooper Bridge – Ravensthorpe – Dewsbury	5 - Unlikely	Risk it may not be possible to meet project & programme objectives. It will be reviewed after SOC submission.
(48) Dalton Deighton Active Travel Route		Development and delivery of option two would require purchase of the Deighton Viaduct structure, as confirmed by National Highways Projects outside milestone tolerance.
(2) Bradford Interchange Station Access	6 – Very Unlikely	Bradford Interchange was closed in January 2024. Following remedial works, the interchange re-opened in January 2025.
(56) Bradford Interchange Resurfacing Works Project		
(30) North Halifax Streets for People enhancements (Illingworth/Ovenden)	9 – On Hold or Discontinued	Project will be paused after SOC approval.
(38) A639 Park Road, Pontefract – on and off highways improvements		Taken forward through LUF2

(49) Wakefield City – extension to LCWIP1 (Local Cycling and Walking Improvement Plan)		Project paused during 2023 re-baseline review.
(83) A61 (N) multi modal corridor improvements - Scott Hall Road bus lane		Scheme pipelined for future development.
(89) Thirsk Row/King Street-bus gate/access road		Taken forward through LUF2

The following schemes have slipped since the baseline date review:

Within TCF (10) and CRSTS (6) a combined total of sixteen schemes have slipped End Construction by 6 months or more since the re-baseline in 2023. The change in months is highlighted for those schemes in the table below, for end of development, start on site, and end on site.

Scheme	Slippage from milestone in months		
	End of Development	SOS	EOS
(6) West Halifax Improved Streets for People	14	14	15
(7) North Halifax Improved Streets for People	11	11	13
(8) Elland Rail Station Walking and Cycling Access	16	15	9
(10) Heckmondwike Bus Hub	1	1	10
(12) Dewsbury - Batley - Chidswell Bus, cycling and walking corridor	13	11	11
(13) Dewsbury Town Centre Walking & Cycling Improvements	10	8	9
(18) Leeds City Centre Cycle Improvements	n/a	3	12
(20) Wakefield City Centre Bus, Cycle and Walking Improvements	12	11	9
(23) Halifax Bus Station	n/a	n/a	6
(24) White Rose Station	n/a	n/a	8
Mass transit development and delivery	12	Brought forward	14
(41a) West Yorkshire Rail Accessibility Package - Small Scale Station Improvements	14	15	15
(44A) Car club network electrification	11	11	16

(60) Community Transport Vehicle renewal and upgrade to electric vehicles	15	17	8
(88) A6110 Elland Road Churwell Hill	0	6	8

Scheme	ZEBs ordered	ZEBs delivered	ZEBs enter service
(51) Zero Emission Buses	26	33	34

Currently all schemes are forecasted to complete construction by the March 2027 Programme end date.

Alignment with CRSTS objectives

The CRSTS programme remains aligned with the national priorities and contributes to each of the three focus areas through:

Growth and Productivity:

The CRSTS programme of interventions will link key places with easy to use and reliable services; through a mass transit network, bus priority, and a safe, attractive environment for cycling and walking which will enable a step change in the quality of life along the corridors and in the communities that surround them, enabling more people to benefit from investment.

This will enable the Combined Authority to meet the demands of a growing population by increasing transport capacity to better connect communities with job and educational opportunities, facilitate regeneration in town and cities through investment in transport infrastructure that values the importance of place and maximises the benefits of linking planned national transport investment to the local network.

Levelling up and Inclusivity:

The CRSTS programme of interventions will improve access to new housing and employment sites, particularly through sustainable travel which provides a low-cost travel choice for residents and deprived communities to access opportunities. An inclusive bus network and accessibility improvements to public transport facilities will open the network to a wider range of customers and enable more journeys. This drives inclusive growth and targets those most disadvantaged by a currently car dominated transport system. This will also bring new connectivity and enable new journeys to work, school, and retail for all, levelling up West Yorkshire's public transport system. Sustainable transport will be reliable and an attractive option to get people where they want to go on time, every time, driving the regional economy.

Decarbonisation:

The CRSTS programme will play a key role in helping the Combined Authority and the wider region achieve its net zero target by 2038. The support for greener buses through the CRSTS programme will directly contribute to transitioning people out of private cars onto more sustainable modes of transport. Improvements in bus and active travel infrastructure, rail station improvements and the development of a mass transit system for West Yorkshire will make sustainable modes of transport more attractive, reducing reliance on private cars. Working in partnership with the bus operators to deliver zero emission bus vehicles, providing EV charging infrastructure for private vehicles will also drive down vehicle emissions, contributing to decarbonisation.

Monitoring & Evaluation

A monthly Monitoring & Evaluation group has been set up to oversee all M&E activity across the programme.

We have developed an evaluation framework to ensure consistency, have worked with promoters to embed M&E guidance and have begun systematically collecting scheme output data from across the programme. We have also been making investments using CRSTS budget into relevant M&E data at a programme level.

Highlights of this work include:

- Finalising West Yorkshire-wide programme objectives and metrics with a commitment to monitor annually.
- Baseline active mode user surveys and bus passenger surveys, due to go on site soon.
- continuous traffic and active mode counts using viva city sensor network at locations across West Yorkshire.
- Investment in new analysis software to analyse bus journey time and reliability data more effectively.
- Agreement in principle from bus operators to unlock patronage data sharing for the purposes of M&E, with work ongoing on a Data Sharing Agreement.
- Pre-scheme photographs of all schemes.
- Producing maps of the locations of all schemes and keeping these locations up to date.

This data will allow us to complete output and outcome information requested through DfT returns and feed into our own programme-level baseline and subsequent programme evaluations.

Work is being carried out to collect highways maintenance output data, this will enable interim evaluation reports throughout the programme.

Social value

A social value approach has been established, which sets a target level of social value contribution for each development and delivery contract let through the programme at 20% of contract value. This is based on evidence from recently delivered schemes, drawing particularly on experience from the Transforming Cities Fund.

In conjunction, a Local Needs Analysis has been undertaken to identify which areas of West Yorkshire face the greatest need, using IMD deprivation data and other sources. In alignment with the national Themes, Outputs, and Measures (TOMs) the report identifies priority areas of focus for social value investment in each of the five districts. This report is now available to all consultants and contractors who bid on any scheme let within the programme, who are encouraged to respond to social value tender questions in reference to this evidence.

A co-ordinated approach to social value reporting has been agreed with the district partners to improve the capacity for social value reporting across the programme collectively.

Quality Panel

In 2023, the Quality Panel established by the Combined Authority to review designs for TCF projects was expanded to include projects within CRSTS and other programmes.

Since then, two schemes have had their FBC designs reviewed through the Quality Panel process, with another two schemes having been reviewed at OBC stage, with a further review due on updated designs or outstanding issues at FBC. All eligible CRSTS schemes are planned to progress through the Quality Panel once designs are at an appropriate stage.

The Quality Panel checks against three main criteria:

- LTN 1-20
- Bus Back Better

- Streets For People

The Quality Panel has been developed with input from Active Travel England (ATE) and offers ATE engagement with CRSTS scheme designs at an early stage.

Examples of CRSTS schemes that have progressed through the Combined Authority's Quality Panel over the last year are:

- BCPC – LCC Bus Priority Active Travel Cycle Loops – through the quality panel process the number of critical issues raised by the Combined Authority were reduced from 5 to 0. ATE found no critical issues with the design.
- Better Places – A660 Bus Priority and Cycle Corridor – After the initial review there were seven serious concerns, but through engagement with the Combined Authority & ATE 4 of these were addressed through quality panel process. There are 3 critical issues outstanding on this scheme but the Combined Authority and ATE have agreed to accept these as the guidance was introduced when the scheme was already well developed, and the promoter has highlighted ambition for future schemes that would address these outstanding issues.
- Steeton and Silsden Cycling and Walking Improvements – both the bridge option and at grade crossing option have been reviewed at the OBC development point. The scheme originally had twenty-nine critical issues raised by the Combined Authority but through engagement with the quality panel this was reduced to five. The scheme promoter has agreed to address these outstanding issues at detailed design during FBC development where they will be reviewed again through the quality panel process.

VfM and BCRs

In January 2024, the Combined Authority commissioned a review of the programme Benefits-Cost-Ratio based on the updated programme put forward in the 2023 re-baselining activity.

This produced an updated programme BCR of 2.32, lowering slightly from the previous programme BCR of 2.36 but remaining high value for money. This was reported in the FY 23-24 Q3 monitoring return.

The reason for the slight change in the BCR is due to a number of factors, with one of the main contributors has been inflationary impacts and business case development. This has resulted in the lowering of BCRs for multiple projects as they have become more defined, resulting in higher costs for the same outputs/benefits. Some degree of change is expected given estimates were used when forecasting the programme BCR during the programme bid.

The Combined Authority plan to commission an annual review of the programme BCR to coincide with the Q3/Annual monitoring return going forward. This will be updated based on individual project development resulting in more accurate BCRs. Project specific BCRs will be updated in quarterly reporting following business case submissions (OBC, FBC or BJC).

Programme Governance

Programme governance was established in the first year of the programme. The second year of the programme has ensured the established processes and procedures are embedded across the programme. This has meant ensuring a wide portfolio of sub-programmes and projects are aware of and using the Governance arrangements.

The programme board has been a critical tool in embedding governance compliance with the established processes and procedures. This has included governance such as ensuring the board is sighted on and endorses business cases and change requests across the programme, is a point of escalation, a decision-making body such as on requests for change, risk and issue management and is seen and known as the central point of the programme. Programme Monitoring and Evaluation has been established with baseline data collection currently underway, along with being part of the DfT's Monitoring and Evaluation experimental working group.

Over the last 12 months the programme board has endorsed twenty-three business cases/change requests and overseen one project start on site.

There have been no significant changes to governance arrangements over the last 12 months with the year being very much about strengthening what already exists. Governance is working well and embedded across the programme. This has ensured the programme is effectively managed and run and reports on progress in the quarterly and annual returns in a timely and accurate manner.

Risk, Issues & Lessons Learnt

Risks

The top five CRSTS programme risks are listed below. The risk register is a live document, with regular reviews such as monthly at CRSTS Operational Programme Board meetings along with quarterly “deep dive” reviews.

1. The programme may underspend due to a combination of deliverability and resource issues affecting some schemes.
2. Some CRSTS projects (excluding mass transit, the TCF schemes, and maintenance schemes) are at risk of not completing construction by Mar-27 deadline. Risk that outcomes such as bus improvement outputs are de-scoped or paused/cancelled.
3. Unable to meet third party funding in full as set out in the bid.
4. (recruitment in the districts) Lack of availability of suitably qualified and experienced applicants. Internal moves that are not being backfilled. A competitive pay field is attracting applicants over districts.
5. -- Risk of staff allocated to CRSTS moving to other high profile- priority programmes e.g. bus reform-mass transit.

Each of these risks are being actively mitigated. The monthly “deep dive” process allows multiple programme stakeholders to engage with these risks and continually update the required mitigations. This process has also identified risk themes which has allowed improved monitoring of risk.

Issues

A number of issues have been addressed and closed in the past financial year. The top five CRSTS programme issues are listed below.

1. Recruitment of resources (Districts)
2. Overprogramming
3. Identifying key programme milestones
4. Impact of election periods on ability of the Combined Authority to approve business cases at committee.
5. Districts unable to spend at risk.

Lessons Learnt

In Spring 2023 an exercise was undertaken to gather lessons learnt from the CRSTS programme bid. This was conducted with input from a wide range of stakeholders including officers from partner councils who contributed to the Combined Authority’s CRSTS bid. Some themes taken away from the exercise include:

Communication with district-based stakeholders

- Some stakeholders provided feedback that they could have had more updates on the progress of the CRSTS bid
- . There were instances of different messaging that varied from stakeholder to stakeholder

- Unclear if a team member is not continually involved in bid development what the most up to date position was making it difficult to keep colleagues up to date.
- The outcome of the bid took longer than anticipated, so left Local Authorities awaiting information on next steps
- Meetings during bid development were sometimes difficult to fully understand for those not in the main bid writing team.

Short deadlines for contributions

- Another piece of feedback raised by multiple stakeholders was the short timelines provided for contributing to elements of the CRSTS bid.
- Communication to contribute to all stages of CRSTS was always with very short timescales for completion. It often felt repetitive and was submitted as efficiently as possible but often with intense strain on resources.

Legal and procurement

Grant Funding Agreements

A challenge across the programme has been signing off GFAs to release funding to partner council-delivered projects. Several process improvements have been put in place over the last year, including:

- Improved tracking of outstanding GFAs
- Streamlining the GFA request process
- Focussed targeting of GFA backlogs to resolve payment issues.
- Attaching the Combined Authority CRSTS MoU to GFAs to make districts more aware of accountabilities.
- Work on these improvements will further continue into 2024-25 to continuously develop an improved process for getting GFAs & DoVs in place promptly to ensure partner councils can be paid efficiently.

SDP3 Framework

To support promoters working on CRSTS projects, a pre-existing consultant procurement framework (Strategic Development Partner Framework) was made available to CRSTS promoters. The framework has three appointed suppliers and has so far been used to assist promoters in procuring consultancy support for 3 CRSTS projects to support with business case development, with another procurement currently in progress.

While not mandatory, there are multiple benefits to using the framework:

- The framework provides a complaint procurement route.
- The framework will provide a pre-qualified selection of bidders.
- The framework rates have been established on the basis of a large opportunity.
- The use of the framework will support collaborative working.
- Potential to increase savings and value for money through further competition.

Comms and engagement

Over the last year, there has been a lot of progress and activity within the Combined Authority's Comms & Engagement area.

Consultation

Consultation was undertaken on five CRSTS schemes in West Yorkshire in 2023, they were:

- Leeds City Links
- Otley Shared Transport Hub (Mobility Hubs Phase 2)
- Woodhouse Lane Gateway

- Castleford Growth Corridor and Wheldon Road Bridge
- Kirklees Innovative Electric Vehicle Programme

Consultation across these 5 CRSTS projects recorded over 3500 responses. A CRSTS hub has been created on our [Your Voice webpage](#) listing all current and present project consultations for public viewing, with a section for frequently asked questions about the schemes.

A consultation toolkit has also been developed to support partner councils with their consultation activities. This details out the levels of support that the Combined Authority can provide partner councils and the requirements of CRSTS funded projects.

We currently have six engagements planned from May through to Autumn 2024:

- Otley Shared Transport Hub
- Kirklees Speed Limit Review
- Beckett Street Bus Priority Scheme
- BSSHIP: Bus Station Improvements Programme & Bus Stops and Shelter Improvements Programme
- Leeds Creating Healthier Street, Spaces and Communities
- King's Road Corridor Improvements

Comms

Development and maintenance of public facing web pages has continued - [City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlement \(CRSTS\) and Levelling Up Fund - West Yorkshire Combined Authority \(westyorks-ca.gov.uk\)](#)

The Combined Authority comms team have played a proactive role in briefing leaders and maintaining relationships with district delivery partners communications teams. This has ensured all communications assets deliver key messaging demonstrating how CRSTS funded programmes are delivering on the five missions of the [West Yorkshire Plan](#): A Prosperous, Happy, Connected, Sustainable and Safe West Yorkshire.

This has included the development of publicity guidelines and establishment of ways of working. The publicity guidelines ensure CRSTS funded projects are presented with the correct branding and acknowledgement of funders.

Walk it Ride it was hugely impactful engagement and behaviour change campaign which saw 11.8m impressions on social media, 3.1m ears on radio, 15m eyes through advertising and 93,000 postcodes reached with direct mail. Of these surveyed after seeing the campaign there was improved awareness of cycle and walking routes, increased likelihood to use the bus, train or park and ride, increased likelihood of using MCard and an increased desire to change travel habits to save money and benefit the environment.

Looking ahead, in addition to supporting the consultation and engagement team with future consultations the Combined Authority comms team will delivering general promotion of the Combined Authority's consultation platform [YourVoice](#), looking to boost registrations by 600 people including focusing on underrepresented demographics such as under 24s, women and people from minority backgrounds.

