Rail Programme Update

Willenhall, Darlaston & Aldridge

Rail Programme Update

Package 1 – Walsall to Wolverhampton Connectivity

1. The novated deal with Kier Group following BGCL group going into administration was completed earlier in October.

2. The 21 day mobilisation period has been completed with a revised & updated programme received by the project team & being reviewed.

3. Grouting work has started on site & a recent visit by Eddie Hughes, Jane Stephenson MP & WMCA Mayor was held along with senior colleagues from Kier Group & TfWM to show commitment to the scheme.

4. EFG deal has been completed earlier this month.

5. The schedule impact of the administration of BGCL & novation to Kier means that the new stations are likely to be operational in Q1 2026.

6. The CRSTS Rebase approved by the WMCA Board in Sep 23 included the proposal to meet the cost pressure pending DfT approval has given an approved revised budget for the scheme of £69.84m. However, additional cost pressures still remain as a result of novation & prolongation with the anticipated project cost to further increase to a total from £81.27m to £85.27m, £11.43m to £15.43m over and above the pressure notified in June

Rail Programme Update

Aldridge – New Station

1. Proposal for a new 1-platform station at Aldridge, providing a service to Walsall. Goal for entry into service is Spring 2027, funded via CRSTS.

2. Lessons learned from Package 1 stations – the plan is to undertake early intrusive surveys at the site to reduce ground risk.

3. Delivery strategy in development, exploring the option for Network Rail to deliver the station, with WMRE as client. This has the opportunity to further reduce risk by closer management of asset handover and track access.

4. Timetable modelling is currently underway; this will determine the likely service pattern and anticipated passenger numbers.

5. Parking study is also underway, due back in December; this will determine the need for parking, taking into account local residents, travel patterns, and available space.