

AGENDA ITEM No: 7.

WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

AT A MEETING OF THE WAKEFIELD PASSENGER CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE HELD IN COUNTY HALL, WAKEFIELD ON THURSDAY 6 JULY 2006

PRESENT: Councillor J Churms (Deputy Chair)

WYPTA

K Rhodes
M Walker

PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES

Michael Dalton
Derek Farren

Brenda Fruish
Keith Watson

WAKEFIELD MDC

R Halliday

Also in attendance:

| | | |
|----------|---|------------------|
| G Cooper | - | Arriva Yorkshire |
| M Lowery | - | Arriva Yorkshire |
| G North | - | GNER |

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from public representatives Mrs B Darlison, Mrs C Bairstow and Councillors G Phelps (WYPTA), D Hopkins and B Smith (WMDC) and Mr C Barraclough of Stagecoach.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 March 2006 be approved.

3. MEMBER FEEDBACK REPORT

The Committee considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive advising them of the feedback received at the meeting of the Committee held on 30 March 2006.

It was reported that Metro were liaising closely with Wakefield MDC to ensure the provision of sufficient bus stops on the south side of the Chantry Bridge development. Developer contributions for the provision of a bus shelter were being sought.

Members were reminded that individual detailed matters could be raised with Metro officers at the close of the meeting.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

4. INFORMATION REPORT

The Committee considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on information regarding current developments and issues affecting the Wakefield District.

PTA Membership 2006/7

It was reported that at its Annual Meeting held on 23 June 2006, the PTA had elected Councillor Stanley King as Chairman and Councillor Ryk Downes as Deputy Chairman. The District Council Spokesperson for the Wakefield area would be Councillor Graham Phelps.

A PTA Year Book incorporating details of its members and useful contact numbers would be distributed to all PCC members in the near future.

July Bus Service Changes

It was reported that the next major timetable change would occur on 22 July 2006 and copies of Metro's Changing Times leaflet were available at the meeting.

The Committee were informed that the major change affecting the Wakefield area was the withdrawal of Service 84 which had been withdrawn due to low passenger usage.

Day Tripper Services

Members were advised of the seasonal day tripper services which would be subsidised by Metro and run from 24 July to 2 September 2006. The services would provide the opportunity for days out at popular West Yorkshire tourist attractions including Temple Newsam, Lotherton Hall, Fairburn Ings, the National Coal Mining Museum, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Cannon Hall, Bagshaw Museum, Red House Museum and Oakwell Park.

Concessionary Fares Scheme

It was reported that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had announced that free bus travel arrangements for seniors and people with disabilities would be extended nationally from 2008. Further details of the scheme would be reported to a future meeting of the Committee.

Yorcard Update

It was reported that a funding decision was awaited from the Department for Transport on the pilot scheme in South Yorkshire.

Rail Station Access

Members were advised of the launch of the Department for Transport's 'Railways for All' initiative, which was aimed at improving the accessibility of rail stations over a period of 10 years. Funding of £370 million had been allocated to the initiative and was to be spent as follows; £35 million per year for improving access at the busiest stations and £7 million per year, the majority of which would be available for 'Small Schemes' funding.

In addition to the above, a 3 year programme aimed at providing accessible routes at stations had been announced.

It was noted that the second phase of minor accessibility works, funded by Metro, had been completed and this incorporated stations on the Wakefield line.

Real Time Update

The Committee were given an update on the YourNextBus real time information system which had been launched in West Yorkshire in September 2005. Members were informed that the system continued to be the most used bus real time system in the UK and that use of the system had continued to rise following the successful bus poster advertising campaign - "Nxt Bus, Txt Us".

It was reported that over the course of the summer, 6 electronic real time information displays would be installed at shelters in West Yorkshire as part of a trial to assess their technical performance. The experience gained would be used to assist the roll out of 1,000 electronic real time displays across the county.

LTP Major Scheme Funding

Metro and West Yorkshire LTP partners were still awaiting feedback from the DfT on a number of major scheme funding bids. Further analysis had been requested by the DfT on the scheme to increase station capacity at Wakefield Westgate.

Yellow Bus

The committee were informed that the second phase of the MyBus project was close to completion and that the DfT had agreed funding to cover Phase 3 which would enable the implementation of the final 60 buses.

It was also reported that in May the Yellow Bus initiative had received a 'Working Together' award at the national Public Servants of the Year Awards held in London.

Castleford Bus/Rail Interchange

It was reported that having been given provisional approval for a bus/rail interchange at Castleford, Metro and Wakefield MDC were now developing detailed plans for the new transport facility which would support a number of other projects aimed at regenerating Castleford town centre.

Metro's architects were currently working on detailed proposals for the development with a view to submitting a detailed planning application during the summer. Subject to obtaining planning approvals, acquisition of land and satisfying the DfT's funding conditions, the anticipated programme would be for construction to start early in 2008 with an opening at the end of 2009.

Details of the proposals would be reported to the PCC at its meeting on the 12th of October.

Wakefield Kirkgate Rail Station

It was reported that a working party involving Metro, Wakefield MDC, Northern Rail and Network Rail had been set up to look at improving the facilities at Wakefield Kirkgate Station. The working party had already held their first meeting.

A progress report would be submitted to the committee in due course.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

5. CONSULTATION ITEMS -

- (a) Bus Timetable Leaflets**
- (b) Departure Stand Information at Bus Stations**
- (c) Visual Environment at Rail Stations**

Members views were sought on the format of Metro produced bus timetables, the possible replacement of departure stand information at bus stations and improving the visual environment at rail stations. A questionnaire was circulated at the meeting and members were asked to forward their suggestions to Metro.

Bus Timetable Leaflets

Members were given a presentation on Metro's production of timetable leaflets. It was noted that Metro's Information Strategy stated that there should be a printed timetable leaflet for all bus services although some operators, such as Arriva and Keighley & District Travel, produced their own.

However, Metro produced leaflets for all services to ensure that comprehensive information was available to customers.

It was reported that Metro currently produced 3 million printed timetables each year (available from 800 outlets) and there had been a further 3 million timetables downloaded from the Internet. The format of the timetable leaflets was being reviewed and members' views were sought on their legibility, content, format and cost implications.

Members commented that the inclusion of maps in all timetables would be beneficial and suggested that consideration should be given to selling advertising space within timetables to generate income for Metro.

Departure Stand Information at Bus Stations

It was reported that Metro was considering options for the provision of departure stand information at bus stations. Members were advised that currently the information was in the form of illuminated signs and fixed signage with service numbers above the departure stands. The use of electronic signs was being considered as an alternative to the existing arrangements.

Members were shown examples of the types of displays that could be provided and they welcomed the proposal to install them at departure stands. It was intended that the new displays would have the capacity to provide realtime information in the future although further work was needed in developing suitable software before this could be achieved. Members expressed their support for the proposals.

Visual Environment at Rail Stations

Members were informed that the National Audit Office had recently published a report which had highlighted the poor standard of facilities and visual appearance of rail stations across the country.

It was reported that Metro had set out a programme of improvements at rail stations in the Local Transport Plan 2 and RailPlan 6 documents, but members' views were sought on any West Yorkshire stations that would benefit from a more immediate 'face lift' to address issues of poor or run-down appearance.

It was noted that minor improvements could include the pruning of vegetation, new signage, lighting and repainting and members were asked to forward any suggestions they may have to Metro.

RESOLVED - That PCC members' comments and views be noted.