

AGENDA ITEM No: 17

WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

AT A MEETING OF THE KIRKLEES PASSENGER CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE HELD IN THE TOWN HALL, HUDDERSFIELD ON WEDNESDAY 18 JANUARY 2006

PRESENT: Councillor K Iqbal (Chair)

WYPTA

M Bower
P McBride

PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES

John Appleyard	Roger Moore
Richard Fieldhouse	Keith Parry
Sean Flood	Adrian Pygott
Martin Furness	Norma Senior

KIRKLEES MC

S Fallows
D Firth
L Wilkinson

Also in attendance:

F O'Sullivan	-	First
N Winter	-	First
S Ottley	-	Arriva Yorkshire
M Senior	-	Arriva Yorkshire
V Podgorski	-	Kirklees MC
S Heckley	-	Kirklees MC
T Singh	-	Yorkshire Traction
D Haley	-	Northern

7. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor K Hussain and public representative Anne Prince.

8. MINUTES

Further to minute 3(a), Police Enforcement of Bus Lanes, it was reported that Metro had written to the Police requesting the information regarding figures for reported incidents. The Police had acknowledged receipt of the request but the information was still awaited.

Further to minute 5, Christmas/New Year Bus and Train Services Arrangements, it was reported that the additional train services provided on the Penistone Line leading up to the Christmas period had been well supported and a report detailing patronage figures and costs would be prepared by Northern. It was reported that the additional services had been supported by South Yorkshire PTE and public representative, Mr Fieldhouse, urged Metro to consider supporting a similar initiative next Christmas.

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting of this Committee held on 12 October 2005 be approved

9. 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 12 October 2005 and the action taken.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

10. INFORMATION REPORT

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

Service Changes

Members received a copy of the Changing Times leaflet at the meeting which gave details of the bus service changes that would be introduced on 30 January 2006.

Arriva Bus Service Changes

The Committee expressed their concern regarding the extensive bus service changes which Arriva had implemented during 2005. It was noted that although the changes had increased the overall number of buses operating in the area and improved frequencies on some routes, several changes had been controversial. Concern was expressed at the number and frequency of changes to services throughout the year. It was reported that Arriva had made three changes to Service 219 since April 2005, which had not inspired confidence amongst passengers, and several direct services to major cities had been withdrawn. The Committee expressed their dissatisfaction regarding the withdrawal of evening and Sunday services which left some areas without bus services from Saturday teatime to Monday morning. A representative from Arriva attended the meeting and was asked to ensure that the Committee's serious concerns were brought to the attention of their senior management. The Chairman commented that Arriva were not taking account of the public's needs and the level of service changes was not acceptable.

He would be raising the matter with the Passenger Transport Authority for them to consider what action could be taken.

Realtime – YourNextBus

It was noted that feedback from customers using the system had been positive and all PCC members had been invited to attend a demonstration of the Realtime system at Wellington House, Leeds on 2 February 2006.

Free Travel Concessions Update

Members were advised that with effect from April 2006, free travel would be provided for men and women over 60 and certain categories of disabled people. The concessions would apply between 0930 and 2300 hours but would apply to bus journeys only within the area of the authority. It was noted that the PTA would be considering arrangements for rail and cross-boundary journeys as part of its budgeting process for 2006/7.

CCTV On Bus Initiative

It was reported that 333 vehicles in West Yorkshire had been equipped with CCTV and a further 168 buses would be provided with the equipment in the third phase of the initiative.

LTP Settlement

The Committee were advised of the positive feedback received from the DfT on the progress made in delivering the first Plan during 2004/5 and it was reported that the LTP partnership had been awarded a 5% funding bonus for 2006/7 based on a 'good score' for the progress made.

Rail Information at Stations

It was reported that Metro would be contributing to a scheme that would replace the information control systems for the existing long line public address announcements and passenger information screen displays at rail stations. Northern's programme for implementing the new system was due for completion in Spring 2006.

New Rolling Stock – TransPennine Express

It was reported that First TransPennine Express had taken delivery of some of the new Class 185 diesel units which would enter service in Spring. It was anticipated that all the new units would be operational by January 2007 on the TransPennine Express services allowing extra capacity on some peak trains between Huddersfield and Leeds.

Rail Station Accessibility

The Committee were advised of the current position regarding accessibility to rail stations in the Kirklees district.

It was noted that following consultation, the DfT had amended their strategy and were consulting with train operators in order to compile a list of 100 stations, nationally, for implementing step-free access within the next three years. A revised document, with proposals for the first 100 stations was due to be issued in January 2006.

Metro would continue to press for more DfT funding to be made available but in the meantime would consider with Northern on how to prioritise what limited funds were already available in order to deliver improvements at the non 'step-free' stations. It was noted that a number of minor accessibility improvements had been approved by the PTA for stations on the Huddersfield line and these would be delivered within the next few months.

Concern was expressed regarding the accessibility problems at Huddersfield Station and it was reported that Metro and First TransPennine Express had lobbied the DfT regarding the accessibility problems at Huddersfield Station and it was hoped that Huddersfield would be included in the revised document which was expected in the near future.

Comment was made that the Government had brought in the Disability Discrimination Act and accessibility to rail stations was a national problem that should be funded through the Government .

PCC members would be kept informed of further developments.

Cleckheaton and Batley Bus Stations

Public representative, Mrs Senior, raised a number of issues regarding audio/visual aids at various bus and train stations throughout Kirklees. Metro agreed to investigate the comments and report back to a future meeting.

Safety and Security Issues

It was reported that there was a problem with the timing of a pedestrian crossing on Commercial Street and Stocks Lane in Batley and Victoria Podgorski agreed to report the matter to traffic control at Kirklees Council.

PCC members raised security issues at the train and bus stations in Dewsbury. Metro advised that the bus station had a staff presence and actions were taken in response to any incidents. A further update would be provided at the next meeting.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

11. CONSULTATION ITEMS
(a) LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 2
(b) REAL TIME INFORMATION DISPLAYS

The Committee considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the 2nd West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan accessibility planning and locations for real time information displays.

Local Transport Plan 2 – Accessibility Planning

Members were given a short presentation on the Accessibility Strategy which would form part of the Local Transport Plan 2. Consideration was given to the accessibility planning for the Kirklees area and it was noted that an action plan was being developed through consultation with local stakeholders and service providers. The Committee asked that representatives from the disabled and elderly be included in the consultation.

The Accessibility Strategy highlighted a number of issues and actions as priorities for the coming year which included access to health services, employment and education. Comment was made that there were accessibility issues in areas where amenities such as local post offices had been closed down and where there were children's centres. A questionnaire was circulated at the meeting and members' feedback and views were sought.

Real Time Information Displays

The Committee were advised that Metro were to install realtime information displays at 800 bus stops across West Yorkshire and members were shown an example of the larger type of display to be installed at the busiest bus stops. Members were asked to complete the questionnaire circulated at the meeting to provide Metro with any suggestions or comments regarding the locations for the displays.

RESOLVED – That PCC members' comments and views be sought.