

WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY
AT A MEETING OF THE CALDERDALE PASSENGER CONSULTATIVE
COMMITTEE HELD IN THE TOWN HALL, HALIFAX
ON TUESDAY 27 MARCH 2007

PRESENT: John Sykes (Vice Chair)

WYPTA

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PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES

James Calland
Vic Duke
Lesley Mackay
Howard Maude

Peter Melling
Peter Stocks
John Whiteley

Also in attendance:

D Squire	-	Arriva
D Haley	-	Northern
C Goulthorpe	-	First
N Walsh	-	Halifax Bus Company

16. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors G Wainwright and R Thornber.

17. MR D BRUCE

The Chair reported the sad death of Mr David Bruce, a long serving public representative, and those present stood for a minute's silence in his memory.

18. MINUTES

Further to minute 14 comment was made that although First had previously given assurances that they had advertised the withdrawal of off peak fares on bus services, no evidence of notices on local buses had been observed by members. Mr Goulthorpe apologised for the lack of publicity which had arisen due to production problems during the Christmas period. He also advised that the differing policy between First Calderline and Bradford had led to anomalies in their fares and these were being investigated.

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2007 be approved.

19. 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 16 January 2007.

It was noted that the PA systems at Brighouse and Halifax Rail Stations had been repaired. In response to concerns regarding the help point at Brighouse Station, Mr Haley advised members that the system, in common with many others, was unsatisfactory and Northern, in partnership with Metro, was seeking to implement a new system at all West Yorkshire stations.

Members were thanked for their suggestions regarding Metro's Environment Strategy and were reminded that individual detailed matters could be raised with Metro officers at the end of the meeting.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

20. INFORMATION REPORT

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

Concessionary Travel

The Committee were updated on the national concessionary travel scheme arrangements that would come into effect on 1 April 2008. It was reported that this would require the reissue of concessionary permits which may be on smartcards. Members were also advised of the outcome of First Group's appeal to the Secretary of State for Transport against the West Yorkshire Concessionary Travel Scheme's reimbursement arrangements. It was noted that this would have consequences on Metro's budget which was currently under detailed consideration with the objective that service levels were not adversely affected.

"Putting Passenger's First"

It was reported that the Vice Chairs of the PCCs had attended a Department for Transport seminar to discuss issues of local bus services and governance.

Real Time Information Update

Members were advised that the real time system had received over one million texts since its introduction in September 2005 and was now delivering over 3500 text messages each day. It was noted that 40 on-street displays had been installed to date and the Yournextbus service was the most used real time bus information system in the UK. Comment was made that in some instances timetabled rather than realtime information was being sent. This

problem arose when buses were not tracked by the system and was in part caused by problems with the aerials on some buses being broken by overhanging trees. This issue was being addressed and system performance was improving. It was noted that at the present time, approximately 80% of vehicles were being tracked with some operators achieving over 90%.

Service Changes

Members noted the changes to services with effect from 22 April 2007. Copies of Metro's Changing Times leaflet would be sent to all members in the near future.

Rail Timetable – May to December 2007

The Committee were advised that the new summer timetable would commence on 20 May 2007 until 8 December 2007. It was noted that GNER were to enhance the service between Leeds and London Kings Cross, providing a half hour frequency on Mondays to Fridays.

MyBus Update

Members noted that the implementation of all Phase 3 buses would be completed by the end of the year and a final project monitoring report would be produced to evaluate the success of the project and to provide feedback to the Department for Transport.

Members welcomed the success of the scheme which had achieved significant modal change from car to bus. In this respect members considered that the provision of feeder services from the bus and rail stations to large employment areas would achieve similar transport benefits. Regretfully members were advised that pilot schemes had failed to realise these benefits. However Metro continued to work closely with employers to encourage travel to work by public transport and formulate transport plans.

Halifax Rail Station

It was reported that following complaints regarding the standard of maintenance and cleaning at Halifax Rail Station, a campaign had been launched for improved facilities. Opportunities to develop partnerships were being investigated and Metro had liaised with Northern and requested that they bring forward their painting programme. Metro had also asked Network Rail to carry out essential repairs as soon as possible. Other work being considered included car park markings, signage and improvements to information facilities at the station.

The Committee expressed their concern that the station was not being considered for major capital investment as part of the regeneration of Halifax and requested that this be considered. Members asked to be advised and consulted on any future proposals for the station.

Brighouse Bus Station

Members expressed their disappointment at the delay in the building of the new Brighouse Bus Station. They commented that the current station was subject to repeated vandalism. It was reported that the Brighouse road safety group and a local shop owner had raised a number of issues regarding loading and access arrangements on Ganny Road and these were being resolved with assistance from Calderdale Highways Department. Subject to their satisfactory resolution, it was anticipated that construction would commence later this year with the new facilities becoming operational during Summer 2008.

Norwood Green Bus Service

Members were advised that following Arriva's withdrawal of Service 226 and subsequent local representations, a contract had been awarded to First to run 4 journeys, 3 days a week between Norwood Green and Halifax. Residents had welcomed the service which was on a 6 month 'use it or lose it' trial basis.

Bus Services to Illingworth

It was reported that following First's withdrawal of Service 520, the Halifax Bus Company had extended their commercial Service 700 to retain a link between the Heathmoor area of Illingworth and Halifax.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

21. CONSULTATION ITEMS -

- (a) Access to Hospitals**
- (b) Metro Messenger**
- (c) Feedback from PCC Members on Improving PCCs**

Access to Hospitals

Members were given a presentation on work being carried out in order to meet the requirements of the Accessibility Strategy, which had been produced in association with the second Local Transport Plan.

The Strategy aimed to ensure that barriers to accessibility were identified and access to hospitals and health services had been targeted as a key priority.

It was noted that although there were several bus services from Halifax to the hospital, the vehicles were not always wheelchair accessible. Comment was also made that consideration should be given to the safety aspects of pedestrian access from bus stops to the hospital entrance. Members discussed the numbers of people who accessed hospitals each day - staff, visitors and patients. It was noted that an Accessibility Partnership had been established which included representatives from the health sector to look at transport issues. The importance of timetabling bespoke services to allow

sufficient visiting time was requested. The initiative to seek appointments after the 9.30 am threshold for concessionary permit holders was welcomed.

A questionnaire was circulated at the meeting and members were asked to forward their views and comments as soon as possible.

Metro Messenger

It was reported that Metro would be launching a new, free e-mail update service during April 2007. The service would provide details of the latest travel news, services changes, special offers, key events, discount vouchers and competitions.

Members were given the opportunity to register for the service and asked to provide feedback in advance of the wider public launch.

Feedback from PCC Members on Improving PCCs

It was noted that this was the last meeting for the current membership of the Committee and members were thanked for their attendance over the last two years. The recruitment process for the next two year term would commence in the near future and application forms would be sent to the existing members should they wish to reapply for a position on the Committee.

Members were given a short presentation on the consultation topics which had been discussed during their term of office. They were thanked for their valued contributions and asked to provide Metro with feedback on how the PCCs could be improved.

Several members commented that they did not have an opportunity to contribute to the development of strategic initiatives and felt frustrated because of their lack of power to improve public transport through the PCC format. They appreciated that this not a criticism of Metro but was a reflection of the limitations imposed by inadequate national transport funding.

Members were asked to forward any further comments and views to Metro on the questionnaire provided at the meeting.

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