

WEST YORKSHIRE INTEGRATED TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

**AT A MEETING OF THE RAIL WORKING GROUP
HELD AT WELLINGTON HOUSE ON
TUESDAY 30 MARCH 2010**

PRESENT: Councillor C Campbell (Chair)

Councillors K Rhodes and D Robinson

In Attendance: Mr J McCormack - Northern Rail (Minute 25 only)
Mr W Tymms (Observer)

21. CHAIR

RESOLVED - That Councillor C Campbell be elected to chair the meeting in the absence of Councillor A Carter.

22. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor A Carter.

23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no personal or prejudicial interests declared by members at the meeting.

24. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2010 be approved.

25. NORTHERN FRANCHISE PERFORMANCE UPDATE

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the operating performance of local rail services provided by Northern Rail within the West and North Yorkshire Performance Monitoring Unit (PMU). The meeting was attended by Mr John McCormack from Northern Rail who gave a presentation detailing the steps that had been taken to improve performance on the Caldervale line as one of its 'Focus Routes'.

Members considered the performance results for period 10 (13 December 2009 - 9 January 2010) and period 11 (10 January 2010 - 6 February 2010). It was noted that the dramatic fall in performance in period 10 was due to the extreme weather conditions and fleet mechanical/technical faults during

December and January. However, despite experiencing a performance dip in both periods, Northern Rail was achieving an MAA (moving annual average) level above the franchise target. Appendix 1 provided performance details for each period over the year to date. Members, in this respect, commended Northern Rail's performance levels during the inclement weather.

A breakdown of responsibility for cancellations and delays for periods 10 and 11 was attached at Appendix 2 and a summary of causes and delays was set out in the submitted report.

Members had previously expressed their disappointment at the poor performance of the Caldervale Line and they were given a presentation by Northern Rail advising them of the actions being taken to address their concerns. It was reported that work undertaken to-date had included removal of temporary speed restrictions, vegetation clearance, cable theft and bridge strike prevention initiatives, flooding mitigation, moving of signal post telephone(s) to reduce delay reporting and the encouragement of delay reporting by staff. As a result, the MAA had steadily increased on the York/Leeds to Blackpool North route over a 2 year period from 75% to 86%. The MAA on the Leeds to Manchester Victoria route had also improved to 92.6% at the current period.

Members were concerned about the legislation governing the categorisation of cable thefts in West Yorkshire. Northern Rail confirmed that legally the classification had remained unchanged. However, the company had undertaken work to compile an Impact Statement, which could be utilised in the sentencing of offenders. Meetings were held regularly with Network Rail to reinforce this issue and to try and alleviate the problem. In view of the above, it was agreed that Metro officers undertake investigations to determine whether the Working Group could assist or influence the re-categorisation of cable theft and that findings be reported to the next meeting of the Group.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That Northern Rail be thanked for their attendance and presentation.
- (c) That investigations be undertaken to determine whether the Working Group could assist or influence the re-categorisation of cable theft and report findings to the next meeting of the Group.

26. INTER CITY EAST COAST FRANCHISE

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive which provided an update on the current Inter City East Coast (ICEC) franchise. Members were asked to consider the formal update on the 'Eureka' timetable change and also Metro's draft response to the Department for Transport on the ICEC franchise specification consultation.

Current Franchise Update and Timetable Change

Members had previously discussed the introduction of the May 2011 ICEC timetable and were updated on the service proposals which were detailed in the submitted report.

It was reported that the concerns expressed at the last meeting regarding any negative effect on local service frequency had been formally passed to East Coast. Metro was working with Northern Rail to understand the potential impact on local services and also to try and protect the good train frequency intervals which were currently in place.

Councillor Campbell made reference to the recent Leeds PCC meeting where it had been raised that the revised timetable would result in fewer trains stopping at Peterborough, Newark and Retford from Leeds and vice versa from London Kings Cross. This would obviously impact on passengers travelling to and from these stations. Councillor Campbell requested that the matter be investigated further by Metro officers to determine how many passengers using the stations in question would be affected.

The Next ICEC Franchise

The Working Group was advised of a consultation exercise being undertaken by the Department for Transport on the next ICEC franchise. The consultation gave all stakeholders the opportunity to comment on the base specification for the next franchise and all responses were to be submitted to the DfT by April 2010. It was noted that a Leeds City Region consultation response was being co-ordinated by Metro and a draft was attached at Appendix A to the submitted report. The draft incorporated some of the issues raised at the last meeting and members were asked to review the response and approve it for submission to the DfT.

Members welcomed the proposals for longer franchise agreements and stated that links to performance targets also be incorporated within the agreements. It was further stated that it should be stipulated within the terms of the franchise agreement that franchisees could not easily relinquish their responsibilities without incurring severe penalties. With regard to the section that related to train catering, members stated that passengers should have the option of both a buffet and a trolley on all trains.

Councillor Robinson strongly endorsed the opportunity to provide Bradford with a better London service by serving either Forster Square or Interchange stations. In relation to paragraph 1.2 of the Appendix, Councillor Rhodes requested that Wakefield's passenger journey figures be depicted separately and not incorporated within Leeds' figures.

Members referred to the suggestion of the provision of a direct coach service from Barnsley to Wakefield Westgate rail station to improve connectivity between the two areas. Members requested that this option be discussed further with Barnsley Council, as links were already in place that could provide

the connection. They referred to the direct rail service between Barnsley and Wakefield Kirkgate rail station and the operation of the FreeCityBus service from Kirkgate station to Wakefield Westgate rail station.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That the current Inter City East Coast (ICEC) franchise issues be noted.
- (b) That, subject to the comments made at the meeting, Metro's proposed response to the ICEC franchise consultation be approved for submission to the Department for Transport.

27. RAILPLAN UPDATE

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive, which provided an update on schemes and projects under development that related to the delivery of Metro's RailPlan 6.

Leeds City Region Rail Growth Package

Members noted that Metro was awaiting a decision from the Department for Transport (DfT) on Programme Entry approval for the scheme to provide new stations and car park extensions at existing stations. Subject to the DfT approval the new stations at Apperley Bridge and Kirkstall Forge should be operational in 2012.

Low Moor New Station

The Working Group was updated on the current position regarding the development of the station. It was noted that subject to further rail industry approvals and design work, the new station should be opened during the December 2012 timetable.

Elland New Station

It was reported that Metro and Calderdale MBC were working on an approach to assess the feasibility of a new station at Elland. Further work would be undertaken on demand forecasting and Metro would continue to liaise with Calderdale MBC to progress the work.

Leeds Station Southern Entrance

Members noted that planning permission had been secured and the DfT had recently announced Programme Entry status.

Wakefield Kirkgate Station

It was reported that the work to the subway and lobby area was due to be completed by the end of April 2010. Metro had also commissioned Northern

Rail to carry out a feasibility and costing study to assess the possibility of removing the spine wall and replacing the station canopy and it was expected that the study would be completed by May 2010.

Whilst acknowledging the work Metro had played in recent improvements, members expressed their disappointment at the fact that it had taken the intervention of Lord Adonis MP (Secretary of State for Transport) to speed up delivery of some of the improvements.

It was also reported that the DfT had recently announced it would be unable to fund Metro's bid for Access for All funding to support the roll out of real time train information at nine sites across West Yorkshire (including Pontefract Monkhill and Wakefield Kirkgate). The Working Group suggested that a letter be sent from the Chair of the ITA to Lord Adonis to put forward the concerns of members and to consider whether there was any other way of matching Metro's proposed investment in these schemes. Councillor Campbell also asked that this issue be reflected in Metro's next RailPlan.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That a letter be sent to Lord Adonis MP to put forward members' concerns regarding the DfT's recent announcement that it would be unable to fund Metro's bid for Access for All funding.

28. STRATEGIC RAIL UPDATE

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive which provided an update on strategic issues affecting the region including the new Bradford-London Rail Service, Additional Rail Carriages, Northern Route Utilisation Strategy, Manchester Rail Hub/Northern Hub, High Speed Rail and the Transport Select Committee Priorities for Rail Investment.

Additional Rail Carriages

It was noted that work continued with the DfT, Northern Rail and the other PTEs to secure as much additional rolling stock as possible. It was hoped that an announcement would be made in the near future on part of phase 1, although there was concern that no clear proposals for the delivery of phase 2 had been developed. It was reported that new demand forecasting work had confirmed that growth rates in the north's City Regions were much higher than previously assumed. This should assist in the case for investment in the City Region's train and track capacity.

In this respect, it was confirmed to members that an announcement had been made by the DfT on a first phase of introducing additional carriages. It was advised that 18 carriages would be allocated to Northern Rail for utilisation in their franchise area, primarily in the North West. The DfT envisaged further

announcements after the General Election on further phases of additional rolling stock for Northern Rail that would benefit West Yorkshire.

Manchester Rail Hub/Northern Hub

Members were advised that the two phase study had been completed and identified rail engineering solutions that would improve connectivity and capacity across the north of England (now known as the Northern Hub). The proposals offered improved journey times and frequencies and could provide direct journeys from Bradford, Halifax and the Calder Valley to Manchester airport. Details of the scheme were outlined in the submitted report and would be included in Network Rail's investment plan proposals seeking Government funding from 2014 onwards.

High Speed Rail

It was reported that the DfT had published their 'Command Paper' on High Speed Rail and the detailed reports had also been published by the HS2 company. A map extract from the Command Paper which provided journey time details to/from London was circulated at the meeting. It was noted that the DfT would conduct a formal and extensive consultation exercise on the proposal for a line to Leeds and HS2 would be commissioned to carry out detailed route planning following by consultation on route options in 2011.

Councillor Keith Rhodes

The Chair advised members that this was Councillor Rhodes' last meeting of the Working Group, as he was standing down at the General/Local Elections in May. Members paid tribute to his valued service and commitment whilst serving on the Working Group and wished him well in his retirement.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.