

WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

**AT A MEETING OF THE CALDERDALE PASSENGER CONSULTATIVE
COMMITTEE HELD IN THE TOWN HALL, HALIFAX
ON TUESDAY 9 OCTOBER 2007**

PRESENT: Councillor G Wainwright (Chair)

WYPTA

T Swift

PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES

Hannah Dobson Neal Ricketts
Vic Duke Peter Stocks
Nigel Hull Elizabeth Wood
Peter Melling

CALDERDALE MBC

B Collins
C Townley
K Watson

Also in attendance:

D Squire - Arriva
M Davies - First
N Walsh - Halifax Bus Company
C Drury - Evening Courier

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor R Thornber and public representatives John Sykes and John Whiteley.

2. ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR

RESOLVED – That Mr J Sykes be elected as Deputy Chair of the Committee.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 March 2007 be approved.
- (b) That a letter be sent to previous members of the Committee thanking them for their contributions and hard work during their term of office.

4. MEMBER FEEDBACK

The Committee considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive advising members of the feedback received at the meeting of the Committee held on 27 March 2007. They were also advised of the feedback received on a wide range of consultation items which had been discussed at the PCC meetings over the previous two years. Members were thanked for their invaluable feedback and the main points raised and action taken were attached at Appendix A to the submitted report.

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

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

5. INFORMATION REPORT

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

Service Change Dates

Members noted the dates which Metro and the bus operators had agreed for the implementation of service changes during 2008. It was reported that also included were dates for "timetable only changes" which would allow operators to make scheduled changes to improve punctuality. A copy of the latest 'Changing Times' leaflet was circulated at the meeting.

Mybus Update

It was noted that 12 new Mybuses had been launched at the start of the Autumn term and full details of the services, together with new additional primary linked trip services, were attached at Appendix A to the submitted report. It was reported that the largest schemes were at Calder and Sowerby Bridge High Schools in Calderdale where a total of 9 Mybuses had been introduced. An analysis and review of the scheme would be undertaken and a final report produced at the end of the financial year.

National Concessionary Travel Scheme 2008

It was reported that free bus travel arrangements for seniors and people with disabilities would be extended throughout England from April 2008. Members were advised that the scheme would allow for off-peak bus travel between 0930 and 2300 hours Monday to Friday and all day Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays.

Brighouse Bus Station

It was reported that Metro had been developing proposals to replace the existing facilities at Brighouse with a new 'drive-through' bus station. It was anticipated that work would commence during early 2008 with completion before the end of the year.

December 2007 Rail Timetable

It was reported that the new national timetable would commence on 9 December 2007 and operate until 17 May 2008. Members noted the changes to Northern local services on the Huddersfield line.

Leeds-Hebden Bridge via Brighouse New Rail Service

Members were advised of the new hourly daytime Leeds – Hebden Bridge via Dewsbury and Brighouse service which would be introduced on Mondays to Saturdays from 10 December 2007. Members welcomed the new timetable which would provide an enhanced service for Hebden Bridge, Sowerby Bridge, Mytholmroyd and Brighouse. Metro was asked to ensure that the new service was properly represented in timetables clearly stating where the service called. It was noted that Todmorden and Walsden did not benefit from the new service but it was hoped that this could be addressed in the future when a review of services on the Caldervale line had been completed.

New Rail Franchises

Members were advised of the awards of contracts to run the InterCity East Coast, CrossCountry and East Midlands franchises.

Grand Central Railway

It was noted that Grand Central's plan to operate 3 services a day between Sunderland and London via the Durham and East Coast routes from September had been postponed. Councillor Watson advised the meeting that it was hoped the services would be introduced with the December 2007 timetable.

Halifax Rail Station

The Committee were advised of a working group which had been established to consider improvements at Halifax Rail Station, and identify ways in which they could be progressed. It was noted that in the short term Northern had been addressing the issues of cleanliness, litter disposal and access to toilet facilities on the platform. In the medium term, Network Rail had examined the structural issues relating to repair work to the canopy and in the longer term, the working group was considering how more significant improvements could be made that would provide better passenger facilities and how they might be funded.

Members expressed their concern that there were no immediate plans to refurbish the station. They stressed the need to progress the matter urgently and asked that Northern attend the next meeting of the Committee.

Service 500

It was reported that in response to concerns raised in the Worth Valley that public transport links to Manchester were poor, Metro had reviewed the operation of bus service 500 and introduced a new enhanced timetable which integrated with rail services between Hebden Bridge and Manchester Victoria. The service also provided a regular service for passengers in Hebden Bridge wishing to travel to Keighley and the Worth Valley.

Car Parking at Hebden Bridge Rail Station

It was reported that Northern were investigating the problem of cars causing obstructions to bus services by parking on the approach road to the railway station due to the station car park being full.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That Northern be asked to attend the next meeting.

6. CONSULTATION ITEMS -

- (a) **Service Changes in Brighouse**
- (b) **Consultation Strategy**
- (c) **Feedback on Market Research**
- (d) **Concessionary Permit Issue for 2008**

Service Changes in Brighouse

Members were given an overview on First's proposals for network changes in the Brighouse and Rastrick area. It was reported that First aimed to consolidate services in the area to maintain reliability and Mr Davies advised the Committee that stakeholders and ward members would be consulted prior to changes being implemented in January 2008. Members were asked to forward any comments regarding services and links in the Brighouse and Rastrick area to Matt Davies at First.

Consultation Strategy

The Committee was given a presentation on Metro's Consultation Strategy. It was reported that the strategy, which focussed on the approach to consultation, was being reviewed and gave the opportunity to include new approaches for consultation including the website and by e-mail. Members were asked for their suggestions on what could be included in the review and

were asked for feedback on the key approaches and activities included in the strategy. The following comments and suggestions were made:

- Passenger Consultative Committees should be more involved in the consultation process regarding issues such as passenger developments eg. Halifax Rail Station.
- Public meetings should be held in order to gain feedback from customers and that feedback should be a regular item at the PCC meetings.
- A 'surgery' type arrangement for the public where they can call in and bring their individual public transport issues to operators and Metro
- Investigate the reasons why people do not use public transport eg. where they live, no services, car users etc.
- Use of telephones as a method of consulting.
- Feedback to people who have taken part in consultations.
- Use of employers who have Travel Plans.
- Use focus and community based groups such as the Women's Institute.

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

Feedback on Market Research

It was reported that market research tracker surveys were undertaken on an annual basis. The information gathered was used to measure customer satisfaction with the levels of services provided and to inform priority areas for action on a range of services and products.

The Committee was given a presentation on the results of the latest market research tracker survey which indicated that public transport use and satisfaction levels had increased. However the survey had highlighted several areas for improvement which included:

- safety at rail stations
- the cost, frequency and seating availability on rail
- the provision of realtime (not timetable) information at bus stations
- bus service frequency, reliability and driving style
- weather protection/realtime information at bus stops

Comment was made that it was essential for realtime information to be provided at bus stations and that long line public address systems were reliable. It was reported that there were no announcements at Brighouse Rail Station and Bradford Interchange and Metro would advise Northern of the problem. The Committee considered it important for both bus and rail passengers to be given clear announcements of where services called and it was noted that travelling by bus was difficult for some people who were unsure when to get off. It was suggested that maps should be displayed on timetables and on buses to assist passengers on their journey. It was

suggested that roadside timetable displays should clearly show alternative services available for a journey, especially when there were no Sunday services.

Members were asked to forward any further suggestions to Metro on the questionnaire provided.

Concessionary Permit Issue for 2008

The Committee received a presentation on the marketing strategy used to advise people of the need to apply for new concessionary permits prior to the introduction of the English National Concessionary Permit Scheme on 1 April 2008.

It was reported that 170,000 applications had been received and members were asked for feedback on the marketing approach to date and for any ideas on future promotion of the scheme. It was suggested future promotion would be assisted by further leaflet distribution via the District Councils or Post Offices and advertising in the press and free press.

Members were thanked for their comments and suggestions to all the consultation items and asked to forward any further views to Metro on the questionnaire.

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