

WEST YORKSHIRE INTEGRATED TRANSPORT AUTHORITY
AT A MEETING OF THE TENDERED SERVICES WORKING GROUP
HELD AT WELLINGTON HOUSE, LEEDS ON
THURSDAY 6 AUGUST 2009

PRESENT: Councillor E Firth (Chair)

Councillors J Jarosz, D Robinson, A Wallace and K Watson

10. CHAIR

Councillor E Firth was elected to chair the meeting.

11. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor G Phelps and A Pinnock.

12. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no personal or prejudicial interests declared by members.

13. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2009 be approved.

14. MISCELLANEOUS TENDERED BUS SERVICE ISSUES

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on a number of miscellaneous tendered bus service issues.

Norwood Green

It was reported that following the deregistration of Arriva services, a trial 'use it or lose it' service had been provided. The service had continued to meet Metro's criteria averaging 8.75 passengers per trip. The Working Group commented that the service offered a cost effective means of meeting the needs of the village. It was therefore proposed that the existing arrangements be extended until October 2011 to enable the service to be included in a batch of tendered service contracts due to be renewed in the Halifax and Brighouse areas at that time.

Sowerby Bridge Minibus Service

It was reported that Service 586 operated on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays providing an off-peak journey into Sowerby Bridge from the village of Norland and other communities south of the town.

Comment was made that whilst only an average of 4 passengers per trip used the service, the subsidy of 85pence per passenger made it a very cost effective way of serving the communities concerned. It was therefore proposed that the service be retained in its current form for a further 2 years.

Planning Application – ASDA Superstore, Bradford Road, Keighley

It was reported that one of the conditions attached to the planning consent for the shopping development was the extension of an existing bus service to link the new store with the town centre.

Metro had now been asked by Bradford Council to progress arrangements for the introduction of the service. Discussions had been held with Transdev on extending the operation of Service 719 Bracken Bank - Keighley Bus Station beyond the town centre to ASDA every 12 minutes during the day.

Members were advised that the costs incurred by Metro to commission the service would be recovered when agreement had been reached between Bradford Council and the developers on the indexation and payment of the Section 106 funds. Those, unusually, were for an extended period of 10 years.

Wakefield Area Bus Services to Further Education

It was reported that the withdrawal of Service 163 between Castleford, Glasshoughton and Pontefract in 2007 had resulted in the loss of a direct link to the Airedale and Pontefract New College. A de minimis contract which had subsequently been awarded to M Travel to run a morning service to the college had been well used. It was therefore proposed to keep the same arrangement for the forthcoming year.

It was reported that the new Skills Exchange at Glasshoughton had approached Metro and local bus operators seeking a direct service from Wakefield to the college.

It was reported that since the relocation of the new college from the old Whitwood Campus, students travelling from Wakefield had to change services in Castleford. Arriva were not prepared to operate a direct service to the site. However, M Travel had approached Metro proposing a Kickstart bid to operate their Service 183 during peak times and thereby provide the requested link.

Whilst the proposed bid did not meet the DfT's criteria, it was proposed that the service be provided on a trial basis to establish if there was a demand by students to support the service commercially in the future.

RESOLVED -

- (i) That the extension of the current contracts to First for the operation of Service 226 to Norwood Green, as detailed in the submitted report, be noted as being consistent with the Authority's policy for local bus services.
- (ii) That the award of a de minimis contract to DK Minibuses for the operation of Service 586, Sowerby Bridge minibus service, as detailed in the submitted report, be noted as being consistent with the Authority's policy for local bus services.
- (iii) That the award of a de minimis contract for the extension of bus services to the new Asda store in Keighley to Transdev on completion of negotiations with Transdev and City of Bradford Council be noted.
- (iv) That the award of a de minimis contract to M Travel for the provision of a morning peak service between Airedale and Pontefract New College until the end of July 2010, as detailed in the submitted report, be noted as being consistent with the Authority's policy for local bus services.
- (v) That the award of a de minimis contract to M Travel for the trial operation of peak services between Wakefield and the Skills Exchange, Glasshoughton until December 2009, as detailed in the submitted report, be noted as being consistent with the Authority's policy for the local bus services.

15. KIRKLEES RURAL SERVICES

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive giving an update on a number of rural bus services introduced on a "use it or lose it" basis in rural Kirklees.

Holme Valley – Service H8

The Working Group were advised that passenger usage continued to be very disappointing. The service had been registered for withdrawal on 21 July 2009, but following representations from local Ward Councillors and local residents, Kirklees Council had agreed to continue funding until August 2009 to enable the local Parish Council and other interested parties to secure alternative funding sources. The service would be withdrawn if further funding could not be secured.

Denby Dale – Service 95

It was reported that whilst the service had been well received with some market day trips carrying over 40 passengers from West Yorkshire, average use was only 3 passengers per trip, well below Metro's criteria for tendered services. The service had therefore been withdrawn on 20 July 2009.

Members were advised that following a request from Kirklees Council it had been agreed to provide a market day service on Wednesdays and Saturdays. This would be wholly funded by Kirklees Council on a trial basis until January 2010.

Colne Valley – MetroLocal Service ML15

It was reported that in April 2009, Metro and Kirklees Council launched a new MetroLocal service (ML15) to maintain essential links around the Colne Valley.

Members were advised that the initial contract was to trial the service until the end of the summer term. However, both Metro and Kirklees Council considered that the service had not been given sufficient period of time for it to become established. It was therefore proposed to extend the de minimis contract until 10 October 2009.

RESOLVED -

- (i) That the award of a de minimis contract for Services 85/85A to Centrebus t/a Huddersfield Bus Company, as detailed in the submitted report, be noted as being consistent with the Authority's policy for local bus services.
- (ii) That the extension of a de minimis contract to Mount Taxis for a trial MetroLocal service until 26 October 2009, as detailed in the submitted report, be noted as being consistent with the Authority's policy for local bus services.
- (iii) That a further report be brought to the Working Group on the long term proposals for the services described in the submitted report.

16. DEWSBURY FREE TOWN BUS

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the provision of a Dewsbury Free Town Bus.

It was reported that Metro had been approached by Kirklees Council seeking support to enter into a partnership arrangement for the operation of a new Free Dewsbury Town Bus service.

The Working Group welcomed the proposals and indicated that the service would provide:

- connectivity between the bus and rail stations
- access to leisure/health facilities/Dewsbury market

They also stressed that such a service was crucial to the wider strategy for the economic regeneration of Dewsbury Town Centre and North Kirklees.

Members were advised that Kirklees Council had agreed to fund the vehicles and would meet the full operating costs for the initial trial 6 month period. If successful, the revenue costs of the service would be shared between the Council and Metro on a 50:50 basis.

RESOLVED -

- (i) That the invitation to tender for the operation of the free Dewsbury Town Bus service, as detailed in the submitted report, be approved.
- (ii) That a further report be presented to the Group detailing the partnership arrangements with Kirklees Council, service evaluation criteria and the award of contracts to operate the service.

17. BOXING DAY SERVICES 2009

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the approach to be taken for bus service provision on Boxing Day.

It was reported that in 2008 the service had attracted 57,879 passengers which had clearly demonstrated a demand for Boxing Day services. Members were advised that it was proposed to adopt the same pattern of services in 2009 which had previously been endorsed by the ITA that provided a half hourly frequency on each of the core high frequency routes into the centres of Leeds and Huddersfield between 0900 and 1800 hours. The network would also enable journeys to the major hospitals in Leeds, Dewsbury and Huddersfield and to Birstall and White Rose Shopping Centres, Junction 31 Outlet.

It was also reported that following a request from some Kirklees Councillors discussions would be held with Centrebus regarding the possibility of extending the network to South East Kirklees (Skelmanthorpe and Denby Dale).

Members were advised that the flat all day fare would be increased to £3 for an adult and one accompanying child and that any unaccompanied children would be charged £1. To promote family travel it was proposed to introduce a new £5 family ticket for 2 adults and up to 3 children to travel.

In welcoming the success of the Boxing Day services, members were mindful of the need for as many services as possible to be registered commercially, thereby allowing monies in the future to be transferred to provide additional services to other parts of West Yorkshire.

Comment was also made that the ITA had taken a decision to focus on travel to and from the centres of Leeds and Huddersfield where retail activity appeared the strongest on Boxing Day. It was therefore agreed to investigate the extent to which other West Yorkshire towns and cities planned to promote

Boxing Day retail activity. If significant local demand was forecasted then options for future service development would be considered.

RESOLVED -

- (i) That the proposed arrangements to secure the operation of Boxing Day services in 2009 be approved.
- (ii) That a report be prepared for a future meeting setting out the planned services together with the costs and contractual arrangements.

18. BATCH 475 SCHOOLS TAXI AND MINIBUS TENDERS - WAKEFIELD DISTRICT 2009/10

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the results of tenders received in Batch 475 for the provision of school taxi and minibus services administered by Metro on behalf of Wakefield LEA as part of the Education Transport Agency Agreement.

It was noted that proposed awards were within budget forecast.

RESOLVED - That the award of tenders, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the submitted report, be noted as being consistent with the Authority's policy for education transport facilities.

19. BATCH 476 SCHOOLS TAXI AND MINIBUS TENDERS - LEEDS DISTRICT 2009/10

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the results of tenders received in Batch 476 for the provision of school taxi and minibus services administered by Metro on behalf of Leeds LEA as part of the Education Transport Agency Agreement.

RESOLVED - That the award of tenders, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the submitted report, be noted as being consistent with the Authority's policy for education transport facilities.

20. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Working Group considered a recommendation to exclude the press and public from Agenda Items 11, 12 and 13, which contained exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)).

It was recommended that because disclosure of the reports might prejudice future negotiations due to the commercial confidentiality of tender prices, the

public interest would be better served by maintaining the exemption and, therefore, that the press and public should be excluded.

RESOLVED - That, as disclosure could prejudice future negotiations, the press and public be now excluded from Agenda Items 11, 12 and 13.

21. CALDERDALE TENDERED BUS SERVICES

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on proposed changes to tendered bus services in the Calderdale District.

It was reported that following First's decision to withdraw a number of commercial bus services in the rural southern area of Calderdale, Metro had undertaken a comprehensive review of the bus network in the area. A new tendered network had been developed which sought to maintain the current level of passenger services and to contain any cost increases by improving the efficiency of timetables and schedules. The approach also sought to restructure the batch into small operationally self-contained packages which it was hoped would attract competitive bids from other operators.

The Working Group were advised that the revised network had been designed to ensure that all communities still had a bus service, although some areas would have a reduced service frequency.

The Working Group were informed of the key impacts of the changes proposed.

Members commented that it was vital to carry out an extensive consultation exercise across those areas affected in order that any outstanding issues could be investigated and addressed prior to the January 2010 implementation date. Consultation arrangements would be agreed with the District Spokesperson.

RESOLVED -

- (i)** That the expiry dates of existing tendered service contracts be adjusted to facilitate the tender programme, as detailed in the submitted report.
- (ii)** That, in parallel with the tendering process, local members be consulted on the proposals.
- (iii)** That tenders be sought, as detailed in the submitted report, as being consistent with the Authority's policy for local bus services.

22. TENDERED SCHOOL SERVICES BATCH 478 – WAKEFIELD DISTRICT WITHIN-SCHOOL-HOURS TRANSPORT

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the results of tenders received in Batch 478 for the provision of within-school-hours services in the Wakefield District administered by Metro on behalf of Wakefield LEA as part of the Education Transport Agency Agreement.

RESOLVED - That the decision to withdraw Batch 478 and to secure within-school-hours services in the Wakefield District on a private hire basis with CT Plus utilising MyBus vehicles be noted.

23. MYBUS VEHICLE OWNERSHIP

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on Mybus vehicle ownership.

It was reported that the Local Transport Bill 2008 now made it legally possible for Metro to own vehicles.

Members were advised that the contracts covering the initial 30 Mybuses were due to be awarded shortly. Options to renew all contracts at the end of 2009 with phased implementation up to 2012 were currently being evaluated. At the point of renewal of any contracts ownership of the vehicles could, under the present contracts, be directed by Metro to pass to whichever operator has won the tender for the vehicles.

Metro had sought advice from their legal advisers who had confirmed that it was now possible to transfer ownership of the vehicles to Metro.

In this respect Members were advised of the initial transfer which would take place in Phase 1 of that process.

RESOLVED - That the strategy of transferring ownership of Mybus vehicles to Metro, as detailed in the submitted report, be endorsed.