

## **AGENDA ITEM NO: 7**

### **WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY**

#### **AT A MEETING OF THE TENDERED SERVICES WORKING GROUP HELD IN WELLINGTON HOUSE ON WEDNESDAY 29 MARCH 2006**

**PRESENT:** Councillor R Downes (Chair)

Councillors G Phelps and G Wainwright

#### **136. APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor K Iqbal.

#### **137. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

#### **138. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** - That the minutes of the meeting held on 8 February 2006 be approved.

#### **139. RENEWAL OF TENDERS – BATCH 406**

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the renewal of tenders in Batch 406, which comprised of the following journeys:

Service 770 - Evening and Sunday journeys - Leeds - Seacroft - Thorner - Bramham - Boston Spa - Wetherby - Harrogate

Service 760 - Keighley to Leeds

Service 662 - Keighley to Bradford

**RESOLVED** - That tenders be sought as detailed in the submitted report, as being consistent with the Authority's policy for the provision of local bus services.

#### **140. AMENDMENT TO CONTRACT – TENDERED BUS SERVICES 341**

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on an amendment to the contract of Service 341, which operates between Huddersfield, Thurstonland and Stocksmoor in South Kirklees.

It was reported that following representations from the Working Group, which involved Parish Councillors and passengers, a revised timetable had been developed with First to improve reliability. This would now operate direct from Farnley Tyas to Thurstonland and Stocksmoor and no longer operated via Storthes Hall and Highburton. The timetable provided an earlier morning trip to Huddersfield and an additional lunchtime trip to maintain the service frequency.

**RESOLVED** - That the amendment to the contract of Service 341 to facilitate the new timetable developed in consultation with local passengers and Parish Councillors be noted, as being consistent with local bus services.

#### **141. TENDERED BUS SERVICES – KEIGHLEY AREA**

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on amendments/withdrawals to tendered services contracts arising from service changes proposed by Keighley and District Travel.

It was reported that Keighley and District Travel had indicated their intention to withdraw a number of services where passenger usage had failed to meet commercial criteria.

Service 703 Keighley - Braithwaite - Keighley - Evening services  
Service 708 Keighley - Riddlesden - Keighley - Commercial trips  
Service 717 Keighley - Oakworth - Early morning Sunday trip  
Service 719 Keighley - Ingrow - Keighley - Evening services  
Service 720 Keighley - Ingrow - Oakworth - One early morning

Due to the commercial changes made by the operator, it was necessary to restore some links on the network. This had placed pressure on the Authority's budget and as a consequence a number of poorly performing tendered journeys had been withdrawn.

The Working Group expressed their disappointment at the growing number of commercial services, which were being withdrawn by operators. They were encouraged that solutions had been identified to mitigate the impact of these proposals.

Whilst recognising the business position faced by bus operators, the Working Group were also very concerned that Metro had been forced to withdraw tendered journeys on Service 713 due to the 250% increase in the tender price.

Although Service 903 would now provide links from the Waterside area of Silsden to Steeton Rail Station, no through links to Keighley would be available. Users in the Upper Utley area would also be unserved.

**RESOLVED** - That the Working Group reluctantly notes the amendments of contracts as a result of Keighley and District Travel's intention to deregister a number of their commercial services.

## **142. CROSS BOUNDARY TENDERED SERVICES**

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on a number of issues affecting tendered services jointly funded by neighbouring local authorities.

### **North Yorkshire County Council**

It was reported that North Yorkshire County Council had carried out a review of tendered bus services and as a consequence they had now given formal notice to withdraw their financial contribution to the following services subject to approval by their elected members:

- Service 904 - Otley to Harrogate - Evenings and Sundays
- Service X84 - Ilkley to Skipton - Evenings and Sundays
- Service 490/491 - Castleford to Sherburn in Elmet - Daytime
- Service 495 - Fairburn to Micklefield Station - Daytime
- Service 497 - Castleford to Fairburn - Daytime
- Service 780 - Wetherby to Tadcaster - Daytime

Comment was made that in most instances the withdrawal of services would cause only minimal disruption to passengers, as there were other alternative options available. However the withdrawal of Service 904 would have a major impact leaving the residents of Pool without evening and Sunday services to Otley.

Discussions were still ongoing with Pegasus Travel and it was hoped that the link could be maintained by making an adjustment to other services operated by the company.

### **Lancashire County Council**

It was reported that a similar review had been undertaken by Lancashire County Council affecting the following services between Todmorden and Bacup.

- Service 49 - Monday to Saturday hourly service – serving the village of Clough Foot, west of Todmorden, would be continued
- Service 50 – Sundays operating along route of Service 49 extended to Rawtenstall would be withdrawn.

Comment was made that passenger use of Service 50 was poor and no action was proposed on this matter.

**RESOLVED** - That the implications for cross boundary services arising from the reviews undertaken by North Yorkshire and Lancashire County Councils be noted.

#### **143. SCHOOL TENDER TIMETABLE 2006**

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the proposed timetable for the tendering of school services for the 2006/07 academic year.

It was reported that in addition to the annual tendering programme which involved the issue of contracts for big bus home to school, within school hours transport and schools taxi services, it would be necessary to issue and award contracts for the 60 Yellowbus vehicles included within Phase III of the MyBus scheme.

**RESOLVED** - That the Tender Programme be noted.

#### **144. EDUCATION TRANSPORT DEMINIMIS/EMERGENCY AWARDS AND CONTRACT VARIATIONS – AUTUMN 2005**

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the award of deminimis/emergency contracts and variations to ongoing contracts for the period 1 September 2005 to 23 December 2005. These changes had been accommodated with the forecast budget.

**RESOLVED** - That the awards as detailed within the submitted report be noted as being consistent with the Authority's policy for the provision of Education Transport facilities.

#### **145. MYBUS - UPDATE**

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the results of ongoing marketing initiatives to increase use of the linked primary trips and the proposed termination of 3 services due to low usage.

Members were informed that a strategy for dealing with low usage had been approved by the Bus Working Group, which identified the need to ensure all steps had been taken to maximise use prior to withdrawal of services which would then be phased to ensure adequate notice to all partners.

It was reported that although patronage on most services was good, data had identified a number of schools where, despite a number of marketing

Initiatives, patronage remained low. It was therefore proposed to withdraw services at St Benedicts Leeds, Westgate Otley and South Hiendley Wakefield, and that 8 other services would continue to be monitored.

**RESOLVED** - That the termination of contracts as detailed in paragraph 2.2 of the submitted report be noted.

#### **146. CONVERSION OF SERVICES TO MYBUS OPERATION**

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the award of contracts for the extension of the MyBus project to other mainstream schools in West Yorkshire.

It was reported that the Bus Working Group had previously agreed to replace the 30, Phase I high floor buses with low floor vehicles to develop a fully low floor My Bus fleet in order to provide consistency and the highest standards of accessibility, Members recognised that cascading some of the high floor vehicles into the wider West Yorkshire schools network would enhance the quality of non MyBus services. In this respect it was noted that First Yorkshire West had identified 10 services to which the vehicles could be deployed without impinging on future plans to roll out the MyBus project.

**RESOLVED** - That the award of contract to First Yorkshire West be noted as being consistent with the Authority's policy for the provision of Education Transport facilities.

#### **147. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED** - That the press and public now be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that if they were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information defined in Part 1 (Paragraphs 7 and 9) of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972.

#### **148. UPDATE ON ARRIVA SERVICE CHANGES**

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the following matters:

- Issues arising from the service change which took place in January 2006 in the Wakefield area.
- Award of a deminimis contract for the provision of an off peak service to Bottomboat.
- Planned changes in the Heavy Woollen area of North Kirklees.

### **Wakefield Area**

The Working Group were informed that since the Arriva service changes were last reported in December 2005 Arriva had presented their proposals to Wakefield Council.

The Council had expressed concern at the level of service cuts and requested the continued provision of services to Bottomboat. Arriva had agreed to provide two off peak return journeys per day Monday to Friday on a commercial basis for a trial period. Regrettably, the services had failed to generate sufficient revenue and Arriva had indicated that they were not prepared to operate the service beyond July 2006 without financial support. It was reported that as the current service did meet Metro's criteria for tendered support it was, therefore, proposed to issue a deminimis contract for one year to secure the continuation of the service to Bottomboat.

### **Kirklees Area**

The Working Group were informed that Arriva had indicated their intention to make further changes to services in the North Kirklees area.

It was reported that reliability and punctuality still remained a serious issue even though Arriva had promised improvements when the service changes were introduced in April 2005. This had resulted in passenger uncertainty. Following difficult discussions the company had agreed to defer their plans at the present time, although they emphasised that they were still committed to pursuing wider network changes shortly. However, the financial position had necessitated some immediate action, which would involve the reduction in frequency on a number of services.

The Working Group expressed their disappointment at Arriva's decision to make further changes in the future and stressed that it was vital that passengers should be consulted to ensure that the needs of local communities were met prior to introducing further changes.

### **RESOLVED -**

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That the award of a deminimis contract to Arriva for the operation of an off peak service between Wakefield and Bottomboat be noted as being consistent with local bus services.