

WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

LEEDS PASSENGER CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

DATE: 12 JANUARY 2009

AGENDA ITEM NO: 4

SUBJECT: INFORMATION REPORT

Report of the Passenger Transport Executive

1. MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION

- 1.1. Matters of information relating to the Leeds district.

2. INFORMATION

Passenger Information Enhancements at rail stations

- 2.1. Metro has been working in partnership with Northern, Network Rail and the Department of Transport to improve the Long Line Public Announcement (LLPA) and Customer Information Systems (CIS) at a large number of rail stations in the West Yorkshire area.
- 2.2. A new centralised passenger information control system controlling 53 stations will also be installed in the Leeds Information Control Centre.
- 2.3. Stations that are currently equipped with the old Cathode Ray Tube (CRT) information screens will get new LCD or LED screens that are DDA compliant. A number of stations including Bradford Forster Square, Bradford Interchange (bus station side), Frizinghall, Keighley and Brighouse will be receiving additional screens.
- 2.4. All the new information screens are expected to be installed by March 2009 with the centralised system in full operation by summer 2009. The quality and reliability of the passenger information will be significantly improved upon the completion of the scheme.

New Rail Stations

- 2.5. Metro has carried out an initial review on all the potential new rail station sites identified in the previous rail strategy document (Rail Plan 5). It is considered that further works on timetabling, technical feasibility and demand forecasting may be required in order to identify specific station proposals for further investment.
- 2.6. Whilst the priority station sites have yet to be identified, Metro has submitted a bid for Regional Transport Allocation monies and highlighted the requirements to improve accessibility to the local rail network through the implementation of new rail stations in post 2014

period. It is anticipated that the Regional Transport Board will make their decision in January 2009. Further works will be required to identify the priority station sites and the specific transport solution.

Ticket Barriers at Leeds Station

- 2.7. The ticket barriers at Leeds station have been in operation since 26 October 2008. The provision of gates brings improved station security, a reduction in ticketless travel and improved passenger throughput.
- 2.8. There are a total of 25 gates, including 22 standard gates and 3 wide gates. The standard gate is capable of handling up to 33 passengers per minute per gate. Wide gates are fully compliant with the latest DDA standards.
- 2.9. A proportion of the gates are also permanently staffed to allow the manual checking of non-magnetic tickets. Metro is working closely with the rail industry to improve the handling of non-magnetic tickets in the short term. Smart card technology remains the preferred long term option.

Boxing Day Services

- 2.10. For the second year running, Metro funded bus services on 26 December 2008. The services operated on core routes to and from the centres of Leeds and Huddersfield and the larger out of town centres where it was known that a significant number of retailers were planning to open for business. Several additional services were introduced in 2008 connecting Cleckheaton, Shipley, Castleford and Pontefract. A verbal update on the performance of the services will be provided at the meeting.

Service Changes

- 2.11. The next major bus timetable change of the year occurs on the weekend of the 31 January/1 February 2009. Details of the changes will be set out in a copy of Metro's Changing Times leaflet. The impact of the changes can be summarised as follows:
 - **Bradford** – minor changes
 - **Calderdale** – minor changes
 - **Kirklees** – minor timing changes to Huddersfield Bus Company services 261/262/263
 - **Leeds** – extensive changes to many First services (see below)
 - **Wakefield** –alteration of service 135 to operate via Glasshoughton and Asda, the extension of service 194 through to Barnsley all day.

Service Changes in Leeds

- 2.12. First are planning several bus service changes at the end of January and the details will be set out in the Changing Times leaflet.
- 2.13. The following summarises the changes:
- First have reviewed “orbital” services (those that don’t serve the City Centre) to enhance service frequencies where these can be justified commercially. The review has recommended enhancements to Services 61 and 91 providing stronger links to St James’ Hospital and the combination of service 86 and 61. There are minor route and service number changes to other services.
 - Changes in the Middleton area will provide a service along Manor Farm Way and also into the New Forest housing development
- 2.14. The review has also sought to address some services which they consider to be no longer commercially viable. First have been in discussions with Metro regarding the following services:
- Service 63 – usage of this hourly service between Drighlington and Leeds has declined as the frequency of other services on Whitehall Road has increased. First now plan to withdraw the service.
 - Service 76 – First introduced an additional hourly service when the John Charles Stadium swimming centre opened last year. Unfortunately, usage of this service has been poor and it will be withdrawn.

MC1/Aire Valley

- 2.15. The Metro Connect MC1 service was set up in 2003 with Department for Transport Urban Bus Challenge funding to link people from South Leeds to employment in the Aire Valley area. Following the expiry of the initial funding, Metro has reviewed the usage of the service.
- 2.16. The passenger use of the service was low and did not meet Metro’s criteria for continued funding of the service. However to ensure links between South Leeds and Cross Green are retained, Metro has secured a peak time extension of service 61. This service will operate from the City Centre increasing the overall peak frequency to the employment area.
- 2.17. A further growth in employment is anticipated in the Aire Valley area following the opening of the East Leeds Link road. Metro is exploring the availability of European Union (ERDF) funding to strengthen bus links into the area.

X86 New Buses

- 2.18. First have advised that they are making an investment of over £10m in 73 new buses for Leeds. Service X84 will receive new buses with the higher specification of leather seats to considerably upgrade this service. Service 56 and service 96 will also see new vehicles with

many other services also benefiting from new buses or the redeployment of low floor vehicles purchased in recent years. This follows a £3m investment in 22 vehicles for services using the Scott Hall Road route earlier in 2008.

NGT Update

- 2.19. Metro and Leeds City Council are continuing to develop proposals for a top of the range rapid bus system for Leeds known as NGT (New Generation Transport). The NGT project is seeking to provide a brand-new, high quality transport system that will help support the ongoing growth of Leeds' economy and improve our local environment by helping to combat congestion.
- 2.20. As previously reported, three NGT routes are initially being developed serving the north, south and east of the city with park and ride sites at Bodington in the north (adjacent to the A660) and Stourton in the south (at junction 7 of the M621).
- 2.21. In addition a range of different vehicle types are under consideration ranging from high quality diesel buses to modern electric trolleybuses which would be powered by overhead electric wires.
- 2.22. Currently work is continuing on the development of a Business Case required for the bid for DfT funding, with the aim to submit this to the Department for Transport in summer 2009.
- 2.23. A series of public exhibitions providing information about the NGT proposals was held between 12-15 November 2008 at Victoria Gardens in Leeds city centre. The purpose of these exhibitions was to raise awareness of the emerging NGT proposals and to seek feedback from the public on certain key attributes of the scheme through a questionnaire. The exhibitions were extremely well attended with over 1,000 visitors over the four day period.
- 2.24. In addition an NGT website was launched in November, to provide general information about the project and to provide an online facility for people to complete the NGT questionnaire. The website can be found at www.ngtmetro.com.

Performance Improvement Partnerships (PIPs)

- 2.25. Performance Improvement Partnerships (PIPs) are agreements between Metro, District Councils and bus operators to work together to improve the punctuality and reliability of bus services. Currently there are four PIPS agreements in place - in Bradford, Calderdale, Huddersfield, Leeds with Firstgroup and Transdev Blazefield.

- 2.26. These agreements have been successful in focussing all concerned on measures to improve performance and there is strong evidence that where they are in force, there have been measurable improvements. In Huddersfield for instance, comparing 2007 with 2008, there was a 2% improvement in punctuality at start times of journeys and a 5% improvement in punctuality en route.
- 2.27. Metro is working with Arriva and District Councils to implement similar agreements for North Kirklees and Wakefield. Metro is also pursuing a generic PIP with smaller operators across West Yorkshire. These agreements are planned to come into force this year.

AccessBus

- 2.28. The AccessBus service continues to provide 550,000 passenger journeys a year for people who are unable to use regular public transport services. As reported at a previous meeting, Metro will be making a major investment in 19 new vehicles for the service, together with a new booking system
- 2.29. It is planned that AccessBus will operate as a registered public bus service from late 2009 in order to reduce the operating costs by making the service eligible for Bus Service Operators Grant. This will not affect passengers who currently use the service on a regular basis, although it will necessitate the introduction of fares. Almost all of the current passengers using the service are eligible for concessionary fares and will continue to travel free of charge, although they will need to obtain a concessionary permit if they have not already done so. A campaign to ensure regular passengers have a permit will be undertaken in 2009.

Realtime Update

- 2.30. The project for the installation of Real Time units within passenger shelters is now complete.
- 2.31. Over 900 units have been provided within all districts of West Yorkshire. Metro has received positive feedback from bus operators and members of the public regarding the quality of information provided.
- 2.32. There are some minor issues with aspects of some displays and Metro is working closely with Acis to rectify these.

Timetable Cases

- 2.33. The first phase of the project to provide new timetable cases to freestanding bus stops will commence in January 2009. The initial installation will see 1,000 cases provided within West Yorkshire (an increase of 22%). Subsequent phases of the project will be informed by experience and customer reaction to phase one.

UK Bus Awards

- 2.34. Metro were runners up in the Accessibility award category at this year's UK Bus Awards ceremony in London. The award was for the new innovative MetroLocal service currently running in the Kirklees area.
- 2.35. This service which is jointly funded by Kirklees Council and Metro provides morning and afternoon home to school transport for special educational needs children, and between these times offers locality based "hopper" bus services to enable those with a mobility impairment to access local facilities. The service was launched last year and initial performance has been encouraging. It is hoped that the model can be rolled out elsewhere in the county to provide for basic travel needs as operators increasingly concentrate their resources on key high frequency corridors making access for many people more difficult.
- 2.36. Keighley and District Travel were also awarded the prize for the best city operator.

First Restructure

- 2.37. First are re-organising their Yorkshire operations in to one operating unit with a single Board, that will be responsible for current First operations in Bradford, Huddersfield, Leeds and York.
- 2.38. There will be a new Managing Director, Dave Alexander, who has joined First from Transdev. He will be supported by four other directors including Commercial Director Richard Harris (currently Commercial Director at First Leeds), and Operations Director Ian Humphrey (currently Managing Director of First Bradford).

Local Transport Act

- 2.39. The Local Transport Bill was given Royal Assent in November 2008 and is now an Act. The Act makes the following changes:
- Metro is given potential greater control over fares, frequencies and networks through Quality Partnership Schemes
 - Quality Contracts (franchising of bus services) are made a more realistic option and subject to local determination
 - Community Transport is given greater flexibility so that it can play a fuller role in public transport provision
 - Local Authorities are enabled to look at their governance arrangements so that they can better provide public transport
 - Traffic Commissioners have greater flexibility in how they deal with operators who are not achieving standards
- 2.40. Sections of the Act cannot be progressed until "Commencement Orders" start. These are likely to be throughout 2009. Metro will be exploring with operators and District Councils how best to exploit the opportunities in The Act.

- 2.41. PCC members have been involved in work to date on the governance review.

BSOG Update

- 2.42. Bus Services Operator Grant (BSOG) is a subsidy paid to bus operators that reduces the amount they pay for fuel. It is based on the number of miles they run and how much fuel they use. A subsidy to bus operators that pays them more for using more fuel is not compatible with the climate change agenda and targets to reduce carbon emissions.
- 2.43. In 2008, DfT went out to consultation on changes to BSOG to more closely align the subsidy to other targets. In the pre-budget statement in November 2008, the DfT said that “reforms to the grant will introduce incentives for low-carbon buses, smartcard ticketing and global positioning systems (GPS)” and that “DfT is also challenging the industry to improve its fuel efficiency and will announce further measures shortly.”
- 2.44. At this stage, the measures have not been published in detail; PCC members will be informed of progress in this area at future PCC meetings.

Regional Funding Allocation Review

- 2.45. The Regional Transport Board will decide the priorities for funding major transport schemes from the Regional Funding Allocation (RFA) for the 10 years to 2018/19 at its meeting on 23 January 2009. Metro has submitted bids in the following categories:
- Updated information on 8 schemes already approved, with a combined cost of £250m.
 - Pre 2013/14: Eight new bids with a combined cost of £600m
 - Post 2013/14 to 2018/19: Ten new bids (cost to be determined)
- 2.46. Details of the schemes are attached at Appendix A.

Strategy for Young People

- 2.47. Metro has developed a Strategy for Young People. The strategy arose out of Metro’s Vision for Schools Transport, as the Mybus project had involved a great deal of feedback from young people on their experiences of public transport.
- 2.48. The aspirations and actions contained within the strategy are based on significant consultation with young people and with Children’s Services representatives in each district, operators and other agencies.

- 2.49. The key issues identified are:
- Cost
 - Opportunities to widen access to leisure, education and training
 - Safety and security
 - Customer service and driver behaviour
 - Awareness of information and marketing
 - Child protection issues
 - Vehicle quality and other service quality issues
- 2.50. The strategy contains long term aspirational goals and short term 'quick wins', focusing on:
- Consultation and involvement of young people, including establishing a Youth Forum with a formal role in service development
 - Investigate where gaps are in school/college transport provision, and improving access to key services and activities
 - High standards of customer service
 - Simplified fares structure
 - Free travel for under 16s and above in full time education
 - Better communications with young people
- 2.51. Metro is currently studying the costs, benefits and funding opportunities of providing a 'free travel' solution for young people and considering other options that could make young people's ticketing products simpler and more affordable.

Environmental Strategy (Update & Activities)

- 2.52. Metro's Environment Strategy is currently undergoing a fundamental review as Metro works towards its target of achieving certification to ISO14001 for its environmental management system.
- 2.53. Achievements to date include an 12% reduction in energy consumption and 8% reduction in paper during the last year.

Climate Change Committee Report

- 2.54. The Climate Change Committee's first report, published on 1 December 2008 recommended that the UK reduce carbon emissions by at least 34% by 2020.
- 2.55. The report highlights that the transport sector currently accounts for around a quarter of total CO₂ emissions, over 130 MtCO₂, in the UK. Without further policy action, emissions from transport could rise to 140 MtCO₂ or 30% of UK emissions by 2022. The report concludes that feasible emissions savings from transport could be 25 MtCO₂.

- 2.56. The report recognises that most transport emissions are generated by the private road vehicles sector (cars, vans and HGVs) and therefore key actions tend to focus on this sector. Expected actions include cuts in emissions from traditional petrol engines, introduction of electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles from 2020 and training to use less fuel by driving more smoothly.
- 2.57. It is however recognised, that modal shift would reduce total transport emissions so it is important to influence the level and modal balance of demand.
- 2.58. Metro has submitted two Regional Funding Allocation bids to implement a programme of low carbon initiatives and to reduce the reliance on fossil fuels for road transport by the development of infrastructure for electric vehicles.

TIF (Transport Innovation Fund) Update

- 2.59. Metro and Leeds City Council, with funding support from the Department for Transport and Yorkshire Forward, have now commenced on the 'Transport for Leeds' research project. The research will look at the causes of congestion in Leeds, assess the economic, environmental and social impacts of that congestion, and develop options to overcome it in future.
- 2.60. Metro and Leeds City Council are seeking further discussions with DfT on how to progress this important study in light of the outcome of the recent referendum in Manchester, which was substantially against road pricing.

Travel for Work Project Update

- 2.61. To date, the project has assisted over 1900 jobseekers with an individualised journey plan and free monthly MetroCard for commuting to work. As a result of the success of this part of the project, Yorkshire Forward has recently provided additional funding to provide another 1500 tickets for jobseekers across West Yorkshire.
- 2.62. The project has also saved an estimated 8060 tonnes of travel for work related CO2 emissions (2007/08) through the West Yorkshire Travel Plan Network, which provides dedicated workplace travel planning support to employers in West Yorkshire.

Stakeholder Day

- 2.63. Metro is holding a Partner Roadshow on Friday 20 March 2009 at Wellington House, Leeds between 11.00 and 14.30. This will be an opportunity for members to meet Metro staff and find out in more detail about areas of work such as the Travel Plan Network, accessibility mapping and real time information. A buffet lunch will be provided.

3. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1. That the report is noted.

Director General
West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive

Appendix A

Regional Funding Allocation Review

Updated information on 8 schemes already approved, with a combined cost of £250m:

- MyBus
- Castleford Interchange
- Wakefield Westgate
- NGT Phase 1
- East Leeds Parkway
- Leeds Station Southern Entrance
- Leeds Rail Growth Package
- Yorcard

Pre 2013/14: Eight new bids with a combined cost of £600m:

- NGT Phase 2
- Low Moor Rail Station
- Electrification of York and Selby Rail Lines
- Tram Train
- Rail Station CCTV
- Traffic Light Priority
- Low Carbon Demonstration Project
- Horsforth Woodside Rail Station

Post 2013/14 to 2018/19: Ten new bids (cost to be determined):

- Bradford to Leeds Corridor
- Metro Express - a new bus product range
- New Rail Stations
- Connecting Leeds and Sheffield City Regions
- Strategic urban bus priority improvements
- Infrastructure for Bus Quality Contracts
- MyBus
- Rail Based Park and Ride
- Intelligent Network Management & Information System
- Low Carbon Transport (Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure)