

**WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY**

**AT A MEETING OF THE KIRKLEES PASSENGER CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE  
HELD IN THE TOWN HALL, HUDDERSFIELD  
ON WEDNESDAY 16 JANUARY 2008**

**PRESENT:** Councillor K Hussain (Chair)

**WYPTA**

T Brice  
P McBride  
D Sheard

**PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES**

John Appleyard	David Hargreaves
Mark Denton	Shaun Jordan
Sharon Fallows	Keith Parry
Richard Fieldhouse	Christopher Taylor

**KIRKLEES MC**

D Firth  
A Pinnock  
L Wilkinson

**Also in attendance:**

C Newbury	-	Arriva Yorkshire
S Ottley	-	Arriva Yorkshire
D Haley	-	Northern
D Mallender	-	TransPennine Express
M Fenwick	-	First
V Podgorski	-	Kirklees MC
B Gibson	-	Huddersfield Examiner

**7. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from public representatives D Burslam, C Fennell and S Flood and T Singh, Stagecoach.

**8. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** - That the minutes of the meeting of this Committee held on 10 October 2007 be approved.

**9. 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 10 October 2007 and to report the action taken.

**RESOLVED** - That the report be noted

## **10. INFORMATION REPORT**

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

### **Bus Services Changes**

It was noted that the next major timetable change would take place on the weekend of 26/27 January 2008 and copies of Metro's Changing Times leaflet had been sent to all PCC members. Additional copies were available at the meeting.

Members were advised that in addition to the changes detailed in the report there were further changes to Stagecoach services to improve reliability and punctuality and to First services in the Holme Valley to restore bus links to Sheffield Road between Jackson Bridge and New Mill.

Members expressed concern about the frequent changes made to Services to long journeys, and in particular to Services 219 and 229. In response Arriva commented that they aimed to review services on an annual basis although when intermediate changes did occur they were often due to passenger demand.

### **Boxing Day Bus Services**

It was reported that Metro had funded the pilot operation of daytime bus services on core routes into Leeds and Huddersfield on Boxing Day. The focus of the services was to provide access to shops in the two busiest retail areas and links to local hospitals. Initial indications were that the services had proved to be well used carrying approximately 35,000 passengers. It was reported that the Authority would consider the possibility of repeating the services for Boxing Day 2008 and also investigate further expansion to other areas. With regard to funding, it was noted that opportunities for partnership funding from the retail companies would be sought.

It was reported that the patronage figures for the operation of the FreeTownBus on Boxing Day had been disappointing and it was therefore unlikely that the service would operate on Boxing Day 2008.

### **Concessionary Permit Issue**

It was reported that over 290,000 application forms for the English National Concessionary Scheme (ENCS) pass had been received prior to the introduction of the new national scheme in April 2008. It was noted that there were no plans for West Yorkshire to extend free travel to rail services or to extend the concessionary fare to cross boundary rail trips.

## **Real Time Information Update**

It was reported that over 2 million text requests had been received to date, with approximately 4,500 text messages being sent each day giving information about departures from West Yorkshire bus stops. It was also noted that following vandalism to electronic displays, a protective cover had been developed and it was hoped that the roll out of displays would resume during February 2008. The problems previously reported regarding damage to bus aerials was being addressed by a comprehensive tree cutting programme. Designs for a more resilient aerial would be examined in the future when planned changes to radio band width were introduced in 2012.

Comment was made that there was some confusion regarding the displays because some were showing realtime and some timetabled information. Members were advised that this was because not all buses were tracked although there had been a 6% increase in the number of tracked journeys over the last six months. It was reported that the information displays at the new Batley and Cleckheaton bus stations displayed real time information and these would be installed at other bus stations in the future.

## **MetroLocal**

Members were advised the MetroLocal services had commenced in December 2007 and were jointly funded by Metro and Kirklees MC. The services provided links to local services such as health and community centres, libraries, Post Offices and local shops. Discussions were ongoing regarding the introduction of MetroLocal services in Batley, Dewsbury, Mirfield and Birstall/Birkenshaw areas.

It was reported that there had been considerable positive feedback following the introduction of the services although the Committee expressed their disappointment and concern that Arriva had withdrawn a service as a result of their introduction. Members stressed that the MetroLocal service had been introduced to enhance and fill gaps in the service provided by operators and the changes made by Arriva had resulted in the loss of service to the hospital. Arriva agreed to investigate the matter and report back to the Committee.

## **Holme Valley Bus Services**

It was reported that a revised bus network had been introduced in December 2007 which provided a 15 minute frequency between Holmfirth and Huddersfield with an additional half hourly limited stop service at peak times. However, considerable concern had been expressed regarding the changes in the Hepworth, Jackson Bridge and New Mill areas and Metro had therefore funded an additional service, H8/H9, on a trial 'use it or lose it' basis to address some of the concerns. Significant improvements had also been secured to the operation of the Holme Valley minibus network with the introduction of new low floor, fully DDA compliant, Optare Solo buses.

**RESOLVED** - That the report be noted

11. **CONSULTATION ITEMS -**
- (a) **Bus Passenger Representation**
  - (b) **Promotion of Public Transport to Non-Users**
  - (c) **Information at Bus Stops**
  - (d) **Consultation on Bus Service Changes**

### **Bus Passenger Representation**

The Committee were given a short presentation on the Department for Transport's proposals to introduce a bus passenger watch dog to represent bus passengers' interests at a national level. The DfT had issued a consultation paper which was available on their website. The consultation would run until 17 March 2008 and members' views were sought on the proposals.

Members discussed the proposals and suggested that it would be beneficial to have a national and local group (possibly enhance the role of the Passenger Consultative Committees) to ensure that local issues, especially bus services, were considered. Comment was made that a national group should include all modes of transport including air and coach travel.

It was noted that Metro's response would be influenced by the comments received at all the Passenger Consultative Committees and further details would be reported to the next meeting.

### **Promotion of Public Transport to Non-Users**

It was reported that Metro's programme of market research had indicated that the level of satisfaction with public transport information was much higher amongst public transport users than amongst non-users. Members were advised of the work currently being undertaken to promote public transport which included the travel plan scheme, residential MetroCards for new housing developments and new media opportunities, eg website, Metro Messenger, realtime displays, electronic maps etc. Members were asked for any ideas or suggestions on how Metro could raise awareness and target information to non-users.

With regard to the Travel to Work scheme, members suggested that District Councils, universities, colleges and health authorities be encouraged to introduce travel plans and that job applicants be asked how they intended to travel to work.

It was suggested that young people who were not old enough to drive should be targeted and consideration given to advertising local bus services in pubs and other leisure attractions.

The Committee considered that many people were uncertain of how to use public transport and had a fear of getting on the wrong service. There was also the issue of peak time capacity, especially on rail services, and it was recognised that the quality of service provided was crucial. Comment was made that operators should also be promoting their services.

### **Information at Bus Stops**

The Committee were given a short presentation on the provision of information at bus stops and members views were sought on how this could be improved.

It was reported that Metro was to provide additional timetable displays at bus stops which would include improved information and maps. Members were advised of the trial in Leeds of displaying service numbers on some shelters and of the proposals to add the 'H' symbol where hospitals were served. Councillor King commended Metro on the work they had already done and welcomed the clarification of services going to the same destinations.

### **Consultation on Bus Service Changes**

It was reported that passengers had asked for more advance notice of changes to bus services. It was noted that Metro currently published new timetable leaflets, amended the bus stop displays and provided information through Metroline and the website shortly before any changes were made. Members were asked for any ideas or suggestions on how to improve passenger awareness of forthcoming bus service changes.

The Committee were advised that earlier notification and publicity was dependent on the co-operation of the operators and Metro was keen to pursue the development of a consultation protocol prior to the registration of service changes.

It was noted that Metro sent Councillors service and bus stop alteration information approximately 5-6 weeks before a service change. It was requested that operators consult the local ward members at the earliest opportunity so that they could make their constituents aware of any changes. It was suggested that the information in the Changing Times leaflet could be simplified and consideration be given to putting information on the buses themselves. It was recognised that not all people had the access to the Internet and it was suggested that consideration be given to using the media, ie, local television stations and teletext to advertise service changes.

Members were thanked for their suggestions to all the consultation items and asked to forward any further ideas or comments on the questionnaire provided at the meeting.

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