

WEST YORKSHIRE INTEGRATED TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

**AT A MEETING OF THE WAKEFIELD DISTRICT LIAISON COMMITTEE HELD AT
COUNTY HALL, WAKEFIELD ON THURSDAY 7 OCTOBER 2010**

PRESENT: Councillor Y Crewe (Chair)

Councillors	M Walker	-	WYITA
	D Hopkins	-	Wakefield MDC
	B Smith	-	Wakefield MDC

Officers in Attendance:

	D Hoggarth	-	Metro
	N Holt	-	Metro
	A Shearon	-	WYITA

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor D Jeffery.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no personal or prejudicial interests declared by members.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the joint meeting held on 17 September 2010 be noted.

4. DEVELOPMENT OF THE LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 3

The Liaison Committee considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive regarding the development work in the preparation of the draft West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan for 2011 – 2026.

It was noted that the Local Transport Plan Committee, which consisted of members and officers from the ITA, Metro and the five West Yorkshire District Councils, would oversee and guide the process for preparing and managing the development and implementation of LTP3. Members were advised of the approach which had been taken to define the objectives, targets, strategic elements and priorities for the Plan and noted the targets which were outlined in the submitted report.

The final Plan would be published by 1 April 2011 and it was proposed that a draft document be prepared for public consultation between late October and mid December 2010. Presentations were being arranged with the Passenger Consultative Committees and each of the District Council's Scrutiny and Overview Committees during November/December and members were asked to advise Metro of any additional district groups or meetings where it would be appropriate to include an LTP consultation.

It was reported that work would also be carried out on 3 year implementation plans which would set out the interventions proposed to support the LTP strategy. The development of the plans would involve close working between the ITA and the districts and progress would be reported to the next meeting.

Comment was made that the consultation document should be written in a language which could be easily understood and that the consultation should be widely advertised

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the approach as set out in the submitted report be noted.
- (b) That the District Liaison Committee provide further input to the development of the Plan and consultation arrangements.

5. BUS QUALITY CONTRACT SCHEME

The Liaison Committee considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the development of a Bus Quality Contract Scheme.

It was reported that the Local Transport Act 2008 had introduced opportunities for Local Transport Authorities to deliver a high quality integrated transport system to meet local needs. These included changes which made Bus Quality Contract Schemes a more viable option and it was considered that the introduction of a scheme would achieve high levels of customer service and transport integration in line with Metro's Vision for Transport and secure better value for money for West Yorkshire. The ITA had agreed to the development of a scheme and this approach had been endorsed by the Leaders of the five West Yorkshire District Councils in December 2009.

The process involved in promoting, making and implementing a scheme was set out in Appendix 1 of the submitted report. Discussions had been held with West Yorkshire bus operators and, whilst the operators had made some concessions, they had not yet agreed to a fully integrated ticketing scheme or to collaborate on joint network planning. A period of public consultation would take place at the same time as the LTP3 consultation.

The Liaison Committee welcomed the proposal and it was noted that the ITA would consider early in 2011 whether to proceed to initiating the next step in the process for developing a Quality Contract Scheme.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That the WYITA proposal for a Bus Quality Scheme be noted and supported.
- (b) That the role of Wakefield Metropolitan District Council, as highway and planning authority, in supporting the proposed Bus Quality Contract Scheme be noted.

6. STRATEGIC TRANSPORT UPDATE

The Liaison Committee considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive which provided an update on strategic transport issues including Castleford Interchange, Wakefield Kirkgate Station and the North Wakefield Gateway Scheme.

Castleford Interchange

It was reported that the scheme to combine the existing bus and rail stations was subject to a review by the Department for Transport (DfT) as part of the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review.

Members were advised that tenders had been returned for the construction of the interchange which potentially could commence as soon as the funding position was known. The DfT had stated that it would be unlikely there would be any headroom for schemes to commence in the current financial year and minimal in 2011/12. The importance of the scheme to the economic regeneration of the area had been stressed to the DfT and an alternative delivery timescale suggested that would spread the DfT's funding contribution between two financial years. If this were to be approved, the new interchange would be completed in 2013 rather than 2012.

Wakefield Kirkgate Station

The Liaison Committee was advised of the 'Masterplan' that had been developed with Metro, the local train operator and Network Rail for the long term improvement of the station. It was noted that some improvements had already been carried out. Metro continued to pursue opportunities to improve the station further with Wakefield MDC, rail industry partners and others to enable the delivery of more significant improvements, including a new station canopy, removing the spine wall, installing a modern Customer Information System and bringing the station building back into use. Removal of the spine wall would, however, require listed building consent from Wakefield MDC.

North Wakefield Gateway Scheme

It was reported that Wakefield MDC had approved a revised scheme, subject to appropriate Traffic Regulation Orders being confirmed. Members noted the key features of the scheme and specific measures for public transport which were outlined in the submitted report.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

7. POTENTIAL IMPACT OF EXPENDITURE CUTS

The Liaison Committee considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive, which outlined the potential impact of expenditure cuts on public transport.

It was reported that work was currently underway to prepare for the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review as reductions in funding would lead to difficult policy decisions that would have a significant impact on the vital services provided by Metro.

Members discussed how Metro services such as tendered services, child concessionary fares, AccessBus and MyBus/MetroLocal services could be affected if funding via the levy was significantly reduced.

It was explained that expenditure on senior concessionary bus travel could not be reduced as this was a legal requirement. It was also likely that the £9m special grant currently paid to Metro in respect of concessionary fares would, in future, be paid directly to the District Councils. To recover this back from the Districts as part of the levy would require a 10% increase in the Authority's levy.

It was stressed that comparisons with other PTEs had confirmed that Metro's staffing and overhead costs were considerably lower than other Passenger Transport Executives and that Metro had the lowest levy per capita. Reductions in staffing costs had already been made and Metro would continue to focus on how further efficiencies could be made including greater partnership working with District Councils and other partners. In this respect, as the funding position became clearer the options available to the Authority would need to be considered in more detail.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.