

WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

**AT A MEETING OF THE WAKEFIELD PASSENGER CONSULTATIVE
COMMITTEE HELD AT COUNTY HALL, WAKEFIELD
ON THURSDAY 15 JANUARY 2009**

PRESENT: Councillor G Phelps (Chair)

WYPTA

M Walker

PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES

Nigel Ashton
Karen Barkley
Pauline Blackburn
Christine Carter

John Churms
Barbara Darlison
Brenda Fruish
Dennis Pattinson

WAKEFIELD MDC

Councillor R Halliday
Councillor D Hopkins

Also in attendance:-

G Cooper - Arriva Yorkshire
D Haley - Northern

13. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor K Rhodes and public representative Michael Dalton.

14. WELCOME

The Chair welcomed Nigel Ashton to his first meeting as a public representative.

15. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 October 2008 be approved.

16. MEMBER FEEDBACK

The Committee considered a report advising members of the feedback received at the meeting of the Committee held on 9 October 2008 and to report the action taken.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

17. INFORMATION REPORT

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

Passenger Information Enhancements at Rail Stations

It was noted that Metro had been working in partnership with Northern, Network Rail and the Department of Transport to improve the Long Line Public Announcement and Customer Information Systems at a large number of rail stations in West Yorkshire. It was anticipated that new information screens would be installed by March 2009 and a new centralised passenger information control system in operation by Summer 2009.

Members expressed concern regarding incorrect information displayed on monitors on rail station platforms. It was reported that there were occasions when trains were cancelled or platforms changed but the displays did not reflect this and station staff were not always helpful. They asked if it would be possible to display platform change information on the screens as well as making announcements, as these were sometimes inaudible, especially at the more remote platforms of Leeds Station. In response, Mr Haley advised members that announcements would improve once the new system was operating later in the year and he would investigate whether messages regarding platform changes could be displayed on the monitors.

It was reported that at some local stations announcements could not be heard along the platform due to the positioning of the speakers. Comment was also made that on-train announcements were often made once trains had left the station giving passengers no alternative options if they had inadvertently caught the wrong train or if there were problems along the line. In response Mr Haley advised that the long line PA project did not provide for additional speakers at stations. He further advised that on-train announcements should be made both prior to and immediately after train departures and agreed to remind on-board staff of current policy.

Kirkgate Station

The Committee were advised that Metro, along with Northern, Network Rail, Wakefield Council and the Railway Heritage Trust had produced a development proposal for Kirkgate Rail Station. The station had now been included within the National Station Improvement Programme and a proposed scope of works was being developed for the station. The implementation of the proposal would be subject to appropriate approvals and agreement of a funding package by all the stakeholders.

Pontefract Monkhill

It was reported that Metro had been successful in gaining Regional Transport Board approval to develop a range of rail based improvements. Pontefract Monkhill was one of a number of local rail stations that could benefit from the scheme and the proposal was to extend the existing car park and provide

other improvements including safety and security and cycle storage. Further design work would be undertaken to feed in to the Department for Transport's Major Scheme approval process. If successful, it was anticipated that the scheme would be completed by 2010/11. Co-ordination of this scheme with a further proposal from Wakefield Council could also provide for the development of a bus/rail interchange at the station.

Castleford Interchange

Members were advised that the completion date of Autumn 2010 could be delayed due to ongoing land purchase issues. A progress report would be prepared for the next meeting.

Boxing Day Services

The Committee was given an update on the performance of Boxing Day bus services funded by Metro. Services had operated on core routes to and from the centres of Leeds, Huddersfield and several other areas including Castleford and Pontefract, where it was known that a significant number of retailers were opening for business. It was reported that although the passenger usage figures were not yet fully available it was believed that the services had been well used.

Bus Services to Glasshoughton College

It was reported that Arriva had altered the route of service 135 to provide a half hourly link between the new college campus and Castleford Bus Station. There would also be additional departures in the morning peak to address the anticipated demand from students.

Realtime Update

It was noted that over 900 real time display units had been provided in passenger shelters and the project was now complete with positive feedback being received from bus operators and members of the public. Details of the locations in the Wakefield district would be circulated to members of the Committee.

The Committee highlighted the problem of late running, untracked services disappearing from the screens before arrival at a stop. It was acknowledged that there were some issues regarding the displays which were being addressed by ACIS, the supplier of the system.

Local Transport Act

Members noted the key changes to the Authority's responsibilities as a result of the legislation and were advised that from February 2009 the Passenger Transport Authority would change its name to the West Yorkshire Integrated Transport Authority (ITA).

Regional Funding Allocation Review

It was reported that on 23 January 2009, the Regional Transport Board would consider the priorities for funding of major transport schemes for the 10 years to 2018/19. Details of the bids submitted by Metro for Regional Funding Allocation were attached at Appendix A to the report.

Climate Change Committee Report

Members were advised of the Climate Change Committee's report which had been published in December 2008 and had recommended that the UK reduce carbon emissions by at least 34% by 2020. Metro had submitted 2 bids to the Regional Transport Board for funding 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.

The Committee discussed the problem of traffic congestion in Wakefield and commented that the target for reducing carbon emissions by 2020 would be unrealistic until a fully integrated transport system was in place supported by efficient traffic management schemes.

Travel for Work Project Update

Members were updated on progress with the implementation of the travel for work project and were advised that Yorkshire Forward had provided additional funding for a further 1500 tickets for jobseekers across West Yorkshire. The project had saved an estimated 8060 tonnes of travel for work related CO₂ emissions through the Travel Plan Network which provided dedicated workplace travel planning support to employers in West Yorkshire.

Stakeholder Day

Members were invited to attend a Partner Roadshow which was to be held on Wednesday 11 March 2009 in the Kingswood Room at Wakefield Town Hall.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

18. CONSULTATION ITEMS -

- (a) Low Carbon Demonstration Pilot**
- (b) Carbon Reduction Marketing Campaign**
- (c) Economic Climate and the Public Transport Industry**

Low Carbon Demonstration Pilot

It was reported that Metro was seeking funding from the Regional Transport Board to develop a Low Carbon Demonstration Project. The project would focus on the provision of a small fleet of hybrid buses and a package of supporting measures to reinforce Metro's aim to promote change in travel behaviour and lock in the benefits of modal shift.

Members were advised of the European campaign aimed at reducing emissions from bus engines. Over recent years engine design had focussed on the reduction of noxious gases and particulates which had had an adverse effect on consumption resulting in the production of more CO₂. The reduction of CO₂ emissions would be addressed with the introduction of Euro 5 and 6 regulations within the next few years.

Members were given a presentation on the aims, objectives and expected outcomes of the Low Carbon Demonstration project and their views and feedback was sought.

It was reported that following discussions between Wakefield Council, Arriva and Metro, the preferred local route was for services from Wakefield to Pontefract or possibly Wakefield to Ossett. Comment was made that it would be more beneficial to pilot the service on the Wakefield to Ossett route as this was heavily congested with no competing rail service. Once an area and route had been agreed, a detailed cost benefit analysis would be carried out. A package of measures would be developed to monitor the scheme. Metro would investigate the suggestion that the monitoring be carried out by an independent body.

Members were asked to consider any further areas or routes where a pilot scheme could be carried out and were asked to forward any suggestions on the questionnaire provided.

Carbon Reduction Marketing Campaign

The Committee were given a presentation on a proposed carbon reduction marketing campaign to be carried out during 2009 which was aimed at:

- Targeting congestion on various main routes in West Yorkshire
- Informing the public about how carbon footprints could be reduced by using public transport
- Promoting MetroCards for multi modal, multi operator travel
- Working with Travel Plan Network employers to encourage the use of alternative modes of transport to the car for travelling to work.

Members were given the opportunity to provide input and feedback on the proposed campaign.

Comment was made that the incentives/benefits for MetroCard holders could be expanded if consideration was given to extending the zones to allow for some cross boundary travel, eg Wakefield to Barnsley.

Economic Climate and the Public Transport Industry

The Committee discussed the general economic downturn which was having a significant effect in West Yorkshire including increased unemployment. Members were asked for their views on what Metro and the public transport industry could do to support people affected by the current economic climate.

Comment was made regarding the high cost of short bus journeys and the lack of incentive to use public transport when operators continued to increase fares and frequently change or withdraw services. It was noted that historically fares had increased in January each year but operators had deferred this in view of the current economic climate.

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

RESOLVED - That PCC members' feedback and views be noted.