

WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

**AT A MEETING OF THE WAKEFIELD PASSENGER CONSULTATIVE
COMMITTEE HELD AT COUNTY HALL, WAKEFIELD ON
THURSDAY 29 MARCH 2007**

PRESENT: Councillor G Phelps (Chair)

WYPTA

J S King
K Rhodes
M Walker

PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES

Catherine Bairstow	Derek Farren
John Churms	Brenda Fruish
Barbara Darlison	Keith Watson
Michael Dalton	

WAKEFIELD MDC

R Halliday
L Harrison
D Hopkins
B Smith

Also In Attendance:

P Adcock	-	Arriva Yorkshire
S Anquige	-	Arriva Yorkshire
G Bickerdike	-	Arriva Yorkshire
G Cooper	-	Arriva Yorkshire
M Lowrey	-	Arriva Yorkshire

17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from GNER and Stagecoach.

18. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2007 be approved.

19. FEEDBACK

The Committee considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive advising them of the feedback received at the meeting of the Committee on 18 January 2007.

Members were thanked for their contribution regarding Metro's process for handling feedback on bus/rail service complaints and compliments. It was reported that the suggestions made by Members would be considered in the development of revised procedures currently being pursued.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

20. INFORMATION REPORT

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

Concessionary Travel

The Committee was updated on the National Concessionary Fares scheme for England, which would come into effect on 1 April 2008. It was noted that concessionary permits would need to be reissued, which would predominantly be carried out during the summer. Metro had also been lobbying for the introduction of Smartcards. Members were advised of the outcome of the First Appeal to the Secretary of State for Transport against the West Yorkshire Concessionary Travel Scheme's reimbursement arrangements and it was noted that this would have consequences on Metro's budget in the future. After a question raised by Councillor Hopkins, the Committee was given a briefing on how the adjudicator had reached his decision.

'Putting Passengers First'

It was reported that the Government had delayed publishing the draft Bill, which was now expected in May 2007.

Comment was also made that the Deputy Chairs of the PCC's had been invited to attend a Department for Transport seminar to discuss issues of local bus services and governance.

Real Time Information Update

The Committee was advised that the real time system had received over 1 million texts since its introduction in September 2005 and was now delivering approximately 3,500 text messages each day. It was noted that 40 on-street displays had been installed to date and the YourNextBus service was the most used real time bus information system in the UK. Real time displays were currently being introduced in Bradford and a detailed works programme was being developed for Wakefield, which was scheduled to start in May/June 2007.

Rail Timetable - May to December 2007

The Committee was advised that the summer time table would commence on 20 May 2007 and run until 8 December 2007. Members welcomed GNER's decision to enhance the service between Leeds and Kings Cross providing a half hour frequency on weekdays. It was also brought to the Committee's attention that Northern Rail had announced that 30 additional Class 158 units

would be introduced onto the local rail network although the exact deployment details were not known at the present time.

April Bus Service Changes

The Committee were advised of the extensive changes to Arriva and Stagecoach services planned for April and May. Officers from Metro and Arriva were available at the meeting to answer any enquiries on specific timetable issues.

In the absence of a Stagecoach representative Members were advised that any issue raised would be passed onto the operator for their response.

Mybus Update

Members noted the details of the schools served by Phases 2 and 3 of the project, which were detailed in the report. It was commented that the implementation of the Phase 3 bus would be completed by the end of the year and a final project monitoring report would be produced to evaluate the success of the project and to provide feedback to the Department for Transport.

Wakefield FreeCityBus

The Committee was given a presentation on the FreeCityBus, which was being launched on 23 April 2007 for a 6 month trial period. The new service would run every 10 minutes linking the bus and railway stations, city centre and retail parks. Members welcomed the new service but stressed the need for extensive promotion and publicity to ensure its success and continuation after the 6 month period.

Castleford Interchange Proposals

It was reported that planning consent had been granted for the interchange and that Metro was now working with Wakefield MDC on land acquisitions and compulsory Purchase Order procedures.

Wakefield Westgate Redevelopment

Members were informed that the scheme had been included in the current allocation for Regional Transport Funding and that the DfT had also asked that the original funding bid be resubmitted to meet updated guidance requirements together with additional information, which was being prepared. This would be submitted by the end of March to enable bid evaluation.

The proposal included the provision of 2 new platforms and would support other developments in the vicinity of the station, including redevelopment of the existing car park and dairy site, to provide a multi-storey station car park and construction of new station buildings and foot bridge.

Wakefield Kirkgate Station

It was reported that the working group, which was set up last year, had now prepared a draft brief for the redevelopment of the station. A number of issues had now been identified, which would be addressed prior to production of the final design brief at which time PCC members would be consulted.

Members expressed concern that no works had been carried out to Kirkgate bridge, which in their opinion was an eyesore, since the last meeting despite representations made to Northern. Comment was made that the bridge acted as a 'gateway' to Wakefield city centre. Metro advised that they would take up the matter with Northern.

Travellers' Site - Heath Common

Concern was raised regarding buses, which were failing to stop outside the travellers' site at Heath Common. Metro advised that they would take this matter up with Arriva and report back.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

21. CONSULTATION ITEMS:

- (a) Access To Hospitals**
- (b) Metro Messenger**
- (c) Feedback from PCC Members on Improvement PCCs**

Access to Hospitals

Members received a presentation on work being carried out in order to meet the requirements of the Accessibility Strategy, which had been produced in association with the second Local Transport Plan.

The Strategy aimed to ensure that barriers to accessibility were identified and access to hospitals and health services had been targeted as a key priority.

Members reiterated their concern at the withdrawal of cross boundary services to South Yorkshire at a time when people were being given a wider choice for their hospital appointments particularly when many residents in South East Wakefield used Barnsley Hospital.

Metro had sought the health sector's co-operation to arrange appointments after the 9.30 am threshold for concessionary permit holders. Whilst this initiative was welcomed, the lengthy journey times could mean that patients would still need to travel before the threshold even for later appointments. Members considered that it was essential to provide services for patients, visitors and staff and welcomed the initiative for health providers to include details of public transport when making appointments. It was recommended that information regarding ticketing options should also be provided at that time.

A questionnaire was circulated at the meeting and members were asked to provide feedback as soon as possible.

Metro Messenger

It was reported that Metro would be launching a new, free e-mail update service during April 2007. The service would provide details of the latest travel news, services changes, special offers, key events, discount vouchers and competitions.

Members questioned that whilst the service was completely free of charge, the word 'subscription' was misleading and should be replaced by 'registration' as it better reflected the service being free.

Members were given the opportunity to register for the service and asked to provide feedback in advance of the wider public launch.

Feedback from PCC Members on Improving PCCs

It was noted that this was the last meeting for the current membership of the Committee and members were thanked for their attendance over the last two years. The recruitment process for the next two year term would commence in the near future and application forms would be sent to the existing members should they wish to reapply for a position on the Committee.

Members were given a short presentation on the consultation topics which had been discussed during their term of office. They were thanked for their valued contributions and asked to provide Metro with feedback on how the PCCs could be improved.

Several members commented that they felt they did not have sufficient opportunity to contribute to the development of strategic initiatives and felt some frustration because of their lack of power to improve public transport through the PCC format. They appreciated that this not a criticism of Metro but was a reflection of the limitations imposed by inadequate national transport funding.

Members were asked to forward any further comments and views to Metro on the questionnaire provided at the meeting.

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