

AGENDA ITEM No: 4

WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

AT A MEETING OF THE WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY HELD IN WELLINGTON HOUSE ON FRIDAY 17 MARCH 2006

PRESENT: Councillor K Hussain (Chair)

Councillors M Bower, R Downes, C Greaves, K Iqbal, J Jarosz,
S Khan, S King, J Lewis, M Lyons, G Phelps, K Rhodes, D Schofield,
C Townley, P Wadsworth and M Walker

108. MRS MARLENE LYONS

The Chair reported the very sad death of Marlene who was a member of the Authority from 1996 - 2004. During her time on the Authority she held many important posts including District Spokesperson for Leeds and Chair of the Best Value Working Group, which received national recognition for excellence.

Councillors King and Phelps spoke at length about her time on the Authority and paid tribute to Mrs Lyon's hard work and enthusiasm to improve public transport in West Yorkshire.

RESOLVED - That the Authority's deepest regret and sincere condolences be extended to Councillor Lyons and his family following their sad loss.

109. KIERAN PRESTON OBE

On behalf of the Authority, Councillor Lyons congratulated Mr Preston on his award of the Order of the British Empire in the recent New Year's Honours list and paid tribute to his dedication and hard work for public transport in West Yorkshire.

110. ARRANGEMENTS FOR CALLING MEETINGS OF THE AUTHORITY

Councillor Lyons sought clarification as to the process for calling non-scheduled meetings of the Authority. The Clerk advised that the Chair of the Authority in consultation with the Clerk has the ability to call such a meeting.

111. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Akhtar, D Blackburn, P McBride, J Prestage, G Wainwright and A Wallace.

112. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no personal or prejudicial interests declared by members at the meeting.

113. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE AUTHORITY HELD ON 10 FEBRUARY 2006

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2006 be approved and signed by the Chair.

114. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TENDERED SERVICES WORKING GROUP HELD ON 8 FEBRUARY 2006

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting of the Tendered Services Working Group held on 8 February 2006 be noted.

115. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT GROUP HELD ON 10 FEBRUARY 2006

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting of the Business Improvement Group held on 10 February 2006 be noted.

116. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RAIL WORKING GROUP HELD ON 14 FEBRUARY 2006

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting of the Rail Working Group held on 14 February 2006 be noted.

117. MINUTES OF THE JOINT MEETING OF THE BUS WORKING GROUP AND TENDERED SERVICES WORKING GROUP HELD ON 16 FEBRUARY 2006

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the joint meeting of the Bus Working Group and Tendered Services Working Group held on 16 February 2006 be noted.

118. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUS WORKING GROUP HELD ON 16 FEBRUARY 2006

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting of the Bus Working Group held on 16 February 2006 be noted.

119. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EDUCATION LIAISON GROUP HELD ON 27 FEBRUARY 2006

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting of the Education Liaison Group held on 27 February 2006 be noted.

120. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT PLANNING LIAISON GROUP HELD ON 28 FEBRUARY 2006

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting of the Highways and Transport Planning Liaison Group held on 28 February 2006 be noted.

121. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TAXI LIAISON GROUP HELD ON 6 MARCH 2006

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting of the Taxi Liaison Group held on 6 March 2006 be noted.

122. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SOCIAL SERVICES LIAISON GROUP HELD ON 7 MARCH 2006

The Authority expressed concern that attendance continued to be low amongst District Councillors and Officers particularly when important issues such as the future of the AccessBus was being discussed at the meeting.

In response it was commented that it was an ongoing problem and despite repeated letters being sent to the Districts, attendance was still very disappointing.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the minutes of the meeting of the Social Services Liaison Group held on 7 March 2006 be noted.
- (b) That a letter be sent to the Chief Executives of the five Districts expressing the Authority's concern at the lack of District representation.

123. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FACILITIES WORKING GROUP HELD ON 9 MARCH 2006

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting of the Facilities Working Group held on 9 March 2006 be noted.

124. MEMBERS ALLOWANCES

The Authority considered a report of the Clerk and Chief Financial Officer on the proposed Members' Allowances Scheme for 2006/07.

It was reported that under the Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, all Members' Allowances Schemes must be approved before the start of the next financial year.

Comment was made that Clause 11(1) of the existing scheme required that allowances should be increased from the date of the annual meeting by the

amount of any percentage increases, which had been approved for staff in the previous year. The nationally agreed percentage increase granted to Executive staff on 1 April 2005 was 2.95% and therefore all basic and special responsibility allowances, including those for all independent representatives had been increased accordingly.

Members were also informed that travelling and subsistence changes for staff had not been announced and that any changes would be sent to Members and would operate from April 2006.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That the Members' Allowance Scheme be approved from 1 April 2006.
- (b) That the Scheme be amended from 1 April 2006 for any revised travelling and subsistence expenses rates subsequently issued for Executive staff.

125. ADDITIONAL ROLLING STOCK

The Authority considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive giving an update on the scheme to provide additional rolling stock on peak rail services in West Yorkshire.

It was reported that a scheme had been successfully developed in partnership with Yorkshire Forward and Northern Rail to address the current overcrowding problem on peak rail services. Twelve extra carriages in the form of six-2 car Class 158 units would be introduced to the network for the remainder of the Northern franchise as a result of the package which had received £8.7m backing from Yorkshire Forward. A number of busy routes including the Harrogate, Caldervale, Huddersfield and Pontefract lines would benefit from the extra capacity along with the recently introduced Leeds to Sheffield fast service. The first additional units would be available from April 2006 and all units would be fully deployed by December 2006.

Members were informed that the total cost of the scheme over the franchise period was likely to be £20m and that, as reported at previous meetings, the difference after funding from Yorkshire Forward would be made up from additional fares revenue through increases of an expected 3% above RPI.

On behalf of the Labour Group, Councillor Lyons commented that although they supported the procurement of additional stock, they were opposed to any increase in rail fares, especially 3% over the inflation rate.

In response, the Director General indicated that the MetroTrain network had been a major success with investment by Metro leading to passenger numbers doubling over the last few years. To address the problem of overcrowding, and the fact that the Department for Transport's Northern Rail Franchise contained no provision for growth, Metro had to seek other innovative ways to buy additional capacity for the network to reduce overcrowding. Whilst he explained the reasons for the fares increase, he

stressed that the Department for Transport had the powers to increase fares in West Yorkshire and that there was always a risk that this could happen and that the extra money would go straight back to the Treasury. Mr Preston added that by agreeing to Metro's proposal, the additional revenue resulting from the higher rail fare increases would be channelled back into the network to the benefit of the passengers.

It was also reported that similar modest fares increases had been introduced in the past to fund improvements in the network and also that rail fares increases had fallen behind bus fares increases in recent years.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That progress on the scheme for additional rolling stock be noted.
- (b) That proposals to vary the regulatory cap on the fares basket in West Yorkshire as outlined in paragraph 2 of the submitted report be approved.

126. LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 2006 - 2011

The Authority considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the 2nd Local Transport Plan.

It was reported that approval was sought to the final version of the Plan together with the Bus Strategy, Rail Plan and Information Strategy, which would form part of the overall LTP submission to the Government Office for Yorkshire and Humber and the Department for Transport.

A number of changes were highlighted from the provisional plan, which was submitted in July 2005 which included:

- Incorporation of the work carried out by the Leeds Transport Strategy Review Group to reflect the cancellation of the Leeds Supertram Scheme.
- A stronger approach to demand management.
- A revised approach to performance management including new Partnership arrangements designed to assist delivery of the shared priorities including congestion.

Members were also given a presentation on LTP2 and the supporting strategies and on the progress on the development of the long term vision for Transport in the City Region.

RESOLVED - That the 2nd West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan 2006 - 2011 including the Bus Strategy, Rail Plan 6 and Information Strategy be approved and submitted to the Government Office for Yorkshire and Humber and the Department for Transport for consideration.

127. WEST YORKSHIRE TRANSPORT EDUCATION AND SKILLS ALLIANCE

Members were given a presentation on the WYTESA Project which was an Alliance which had been formed involving a range of partners including bus and rail operators, Leeds and Bradford Airport, Transport Institutes, West Yorkshire Employers Coalition and Trade Unions.

It was explained to Members that the initiative had been primarily established to:

- (i) Attract people into the transport sector now and in the future
- (ii) Improve the image and profile of the transport sector
- (iii) Development of a Transport Academy for West Yorkshire.

The presentation demonstrated the first module that had been developed as part of the Transport Academy, which dealt with driver knowledge of the transport industry.

The Authority was also informed that Barry Sheerman MP had indicated a willingness to host the launch of the module at the House of Commons in late Spring 2006.

RESOLVED - That Mrs Pickersgill be thanked for her presentation.