

WEST YORKSHIRE INTEGRATED TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

DATE: 19 JUNE 2009

AGENDA ITEM NO: **22**

SUBJECT: USE OF WELL BEING POWERS

Report of the Passenger Transport Executive

1. **MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 1.1. The use of Well Being powers to provide financial assistance to support the operation of a Sunday bus service facilitating access to tourist attractions in the Worth Valley.
- 1.2. To use the Well Being powers bestowed upon the Authority under Section 99 Local Transport Act 2008 (the 2008 Act) to provide for similar financial assistance in the future.

2. **INFORMATION**

Bus Service 812

- 2.1. Bus service 812 is a seasonal Sunday service commissioned from Transdev by the Worth Valley Joint Transport Committee to enable visitors access to Bronte themed attractions around the Worth Valley. The timetable is designed to connect with the Worth Valley Railway and other bus services in the area.
- 2.2. Service 812 has been well used previous years and justifies continued support alongside Metro's "Day Tripper" initiatives to promote access to local tourist attractions by public transport. The case for support is strengthened for 2009 as the economic recession is stimulating an increase in "stay at home" tourism.
- 2.3. The West Yorkshire Rural Transport Partnership (administered by Metro) has for several years supported the operation of the service with a small grant.
- 2.4. This funding has come to an end and the Tendered Services Working Group have endorsed a grant of £900 to Worth Valley Joint Transport Committee to secure the operation of service 812 this summer. This sum is consistent with the level of support from the Rural Transport Partnership in previous years.
- 2.5. Section 99 of the 2008 Act allows the Authority to use Well Being powers, including the giving of financial assistance, where it considers that would achieve one or more of the objectives in Section 99(1) of the Act. These are:-

- (a) the promotion or improvement of the economic well-being of the ITA's area;
 - (b) the promotion or improvement of the social well-being of its area;
 - (c) the promotion or improvement of the environmental well-being of its area.
- 2.6. Giving this financial assistance requires the approval of the Authority to exercise its Well Being powers.
- 2.7. The Authority is therefore requested to exercise these powers to provide support for service 812 as this would meet the Authority's policies for tendered services and would:-
- encourage visitors to the Worth Valley, supporting the local economy;
 - facilitate affordable access to the Worth Valley for people without a private car, thereby improving the social well being of residents of West Yorkshire who may otherwise be unable to visit the area;
 - provide an alternative way of accessing the Worth Valley to the private car, thereby reducing traffic congestion and promoting environmental well being.

Future Use of the Well Being Powers in Respect of Bus Services

- 2.8. The Authority has previously exercised its Well Being powers in respect of financial assistance to the Dales and Bowland Community Interest Company for Dales Bus Services this summer.
- 2.9. The use of the Well Being power to provide such financial assistance to third parties procuring local bus services that meet the Authority's criteria supports the Authority's policies relating to:-
- the co-ordination of the development of an accessible and affordable public transport system which caters for the needs of people with limited alternative travel, in particular, disabled people, elderly people, people on low incomes, school children and those living in rural areas;
 - encouraging the use of public transport by promoting its use, in partnership with others, particularly emphasising its role as an environmentally friendly alternative to the car.

- 2.10 The Authority is therefore recommended to approve a general use of the Well Being power for financial support to third parties in relation to local bus services. This general approval would improve efficiency by avoiding the need for full meetings of the Authority to consider specific reports seeking approval to low value grants on a case by case basis.
- 2.11 The use of this approval would be overseen by the Authority's Tendered Services Working Group as part of its responsibilities in relation to the Executive's function of procuring local bus services. It will therefore be necessary to amend the terms of reference of the Tendered Services Working Group, as set out in Appendix 1, to include reference to this overseeing function.
- 2.12 It is recommended that this general use of the Well Being powers should be subject to an annual cap on expenditure of £50,000 and that any one item of expenditure should be limited to a maximum of £5,000.

3. FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1. The financial assistance of £900 to the Worth Valley Joint Transport Committee Company can be funded from the Rural Bus Subsidy Grant (RBSG).
- 3.2. This form of financial assistance requires use by the Authority of the Well Being power conferred under the 2008 Local Transport Act.

4. STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. There are no staffing implications arising from this report.

5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. There are no equal opportunity implications arising from this report.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1. That the Authority exercises its Well Being powers under Section 99 of the Local Transport Act 2008 to provide financial assistance of £900 to the Worth Valley Joint Transport Committee for the operation of service 812 in 2009, as detailed in this report.
- 6.2. That the Authority approve the general use of the Well Being power to provide financial assistance to third parties for the support or provision of bus services, with the implementation being overseen by the Tendered Services Working Group.
- 6.3. That this approval be subject to a cap of maximum total expenditure in any financial year of £50,000 and a maximum single payment of £5,000.

- 6.4. That the terms of reference of the Tendered Services Working Group be amended to include this overseeing role, as set out in this report.

**Director General
West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive**

APPENDIX 1

TENDERED SERVICES WORKING GROUP - CURRENT TERMS OF REFERENCE

To oversee the award of new contracts in accordance with ITA policy and to ensure that they represent value for money.

To report as necessary on these matters to the Authority.

TENDERED SERVICES WORKING GROUP – PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE

To oversee the award of new contracts *and financial assistance* in accordance with ITA policy and to ensure that they represent value for money.

To report as necessary on these matters to the Authority.