

WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

**AT A MEETING OF THE BRADFORD PASSENGER CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
HELD AT CITY HALL, BRADFORD ON
FRIDAY 12 OCTOBER 2007**

PRESENT: Councillor C Greaves (Chair)

WYPTA

J S King
M Slater
A Wallace

PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES

Simon Brown
Lynette Gooderham-Fickés
Jean Hill
Andrew Jewsbury
Jan Niczyperowicz
Graham Peacock

Alex Peel
John Prestage
Keith Renshaw
John Spencer
Chris Walters
Andrew Wowk

BRADFORD MDC

J Dodds
J Watmough

Also in Attendance:

S Ottley	-	Arriva Yorkshire
K Hussain	-	First Bradford
G Lomax	-	Keighley & District Travel
D Haley	-	Northern Rail
P Lodge	-	Observer
R Wilkes	-	Observer

1. WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

The Chair welcomed new members to their first meeting of the Bradford Passenger Consultative Committee.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor M Palmer (Bradford MDC).

3. ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR

RESOLVED - That Mr G Peacock be elected as Deputy Chair of the Committee.

4. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 March 2007 be approved.

5. MEMBER FEEDBACK REPORT

The Committee considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive advising them of the feedback received at the meeting of the Committee held on 23 March 2007. Feedback received and action taken on all consultation items discussed at the Passenger Consultative Committee meetings during the last two years was also outlined to Members and detailed in Appendix A to the submitted report. The Chair commented that Metro staff would stay behind at the end of the meeting to discuss any specific local transport issues.

Members reiterated their support for the use of Council, paypoint and retail outlets. Metro officers advised that these options were still under consideration and that a progress report concerning retailing options would be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

6. INFORMATION REPORT

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

Service Change Dates

In order to encourage network stability and raise awareness amongst passengers of bus service changes, Metro had agreed with operators dates throughout the year when service changes would occur. In this respect, Members were notified of the dates agreed for 2008. It was reported that the dates for timetable only changes were to allow operators to use 'real time' data to make schedule changes that would improve punctuality and reliability. A copy of the October Changing Times leaflet was circulated to Members for their information.

Mybus Update

Members were updated on the Mybus scheme and advised that the start of the Autumn term had witnessed the launch of 12 new Mybuses into service. With the implementation of the main Mybus project almost complete, it was reported that Metro was seeking to secure Mybus standards to some schools tendered services. Although the services would not operate with the same new buses as those used in the Mybus scheme, the same key features of the project would be incorporated into a number of schools tenders.

National Concessionary Travel Scheme 2008

The Committee was updated on the National Concessionary Travel Scheme, which would be introduced from April 2008 and cover England only. Eligible passengers would be able to travel free on off-peak bus journeys between 0930 and 2300 hours Monday to Friday and all day Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays.

Travel for Work Partnership

It was reported that the Travel for Work team had completed the training of Job Centre Plus staff on how to issue free MetroCards to priority job seekers for whom travel was a barrier to getting back to work. Since the scheme had been launched over the summer, 40 MetroCards had been issued and the project was on target to issue all the allocated cards for job seekers this financial year.

Bus Services in the Wharfe Valley Area

The Committee was advised that following Metro's review of tendered bus services in the Ilkley, Otley and Guiseley areas, a number of service changes would be made to the network in these areas in November 2007. The services affected included Service 33A, 97, 962, 966 and 967. An outline of the changes was provided to Members. The introduction of the new services was being delayed to allow the completion of road works on Bradford Road, Menston.

The Chair thanked Metro staff for their work in facilitating the extension of Service 967 to serve Menston village.

Service 500

In response to concerns raised in the Worth Valley that public transport links to Manchester were poor, Metro had reviewed the operation of service 500 and introduced a new enhanced timetable in September 2007. The service, which was operating successfully in partnership with Keighley & District Travel, ran hourly between Keighley and Hebden Bridge rail station seven days a week. The timetable had been planned to co-ordinate with rail services between Hebden Bridge and Manchester Victoria. Members welcomed this service particularly in the Keighley area.

FreeCityBus

Members were informed of discussions between Metro and Bradford Council concerning the possible introduction of a FreeCityBus, similar to those currently operating in Huddersfield, Leeds and Wakefield. It was reported that discussions were at a preliminary stage and that progress reports concerning this issue would be submitted to future meetings of the committee.

December 2007 Rail Timetable

It was reported that the new national timetable would commence on 9 December 2007 and operate until 17 May 2008. It was highlighted to Members

that a change had been made to Northern local services on the Huddersfield line.

Christmas & New Year Bus Services

The Committee was advised of the arrangements for bus service provision during the Christmas and New Year holiday period. In addition, it was reported that Metro was discussing a pilot operation of daytime services on Boxing Day and, possibly, New Year's Day on core routes in Leeds and Huddersfield. Details would be made available to Members once finalised.

The Committee commended the trial and hoped that the initiative would be extended to other districts in the future. Members were advised that this was dependent on the success of the trial scheme, the extent of retail and other activities and whether operators would consider the idea commercially viable.

Christmas & New Year Rail Services

The Committee noted the arrangements for local rail services over the Christmas and New Year holiday period.

The Rail White Paper and High Level Output Specification

It was reported that, following the Department for Transport's development of future investment proposals for the railways between the period 2009 to 2014, 60 to 90 additional rail carriages would be utilised in the Leeds area to combat overcrowding, reliability and punctuality problems affecting certain routes. That investment would be accompanied by a programme of schemes for platform lengthening at some stations and additional depot facilities in order to accommodate the extra units.

The Government's White Paper objective of reducing rail's carbon footprint was welcomed by the Committee. Metro was also seeking to address this issue by the adoption of a new environmental strategy previously reported to the Committee. Operators at the meeting updated Members on their progress to-date in these matters.

New Rail Franchises

Members were informed of the awards of contracts to run the InterCity East Coast, CrossCountry and East Midlands franchises.

Grand Central Railway

It was noted that Grand Central Railway's plan to operate 3 trains a day in each direction between Sunderland and London via the Durham and East Coast routes from September 2007 had been delayed and that a new commencement date for the service was awaited.

Rail - Weekend Engineering Works

Comment was made about the inconvenience caused to passengers due to

weekend engineering works running over schedule resulting in delays to weekday services. Mr D Haley of Northern Rail was sympathetic in this regard and stated that on the occasions when this did occur Network Rail was financially penalised.

New Rail Stations

Members were reminded of the five 'priority' sites for new rail stations that had been approved by the Passenger Transport Authority for delivery during the first Local Transport Plan period. These included Glasshoughton in Wakefield, Low Moor and Apperley Bridge in Bradford and Kirkstall and Horsforth Woodside in Leeds. It was reported that Glasshoughton station had been opened in February 2005 and considerable, detailed design work had been undertaken on the Low Moor proposal. The current status of the four remaining sites was detailed in the submitted report.

Ilkley Rail Station

It was noted that the new pedestrian access to the northern side of Ilkley rail station had been opened to the public. The scheme, which had been jointly funded by Metro and the Department for Transport, also included additional lighting, signage and CCTV to the station. In this respect, Members commended the scheme as the link had improved access from Railway Road. Mr G Peacock also confirmed that repairs to the station's roof had commenced.

Airedale Line Rail Services

The Committee was advised of the timetable changes affecting the Airedale Line for the period 10 September 2007 to 8 December 2007. It was reported that weekend train services had been affected by widespread engineering works at various locations between Leeds, Bradford and Skipton and also on the Settle-Carlisle route. Full details of train/bus arrangements for each weekend would be available through Northern's special timetables, station posters or website. The dates when buses would replace train services during the period were outlined to Members.

It was also reported that throughout the autumn period widespread Sunday engineering works would affect services on the Harrogate, Hallam, Penistone and Huddersfield lines on varying dates.

Local Transport Bill

The Committee was advised that the draft Local Transport Bill had been published in Spring 2007 for consultation. Metro welcomed the provisions in the draft Bill, which sought to improve the quality of local bus services through enhanced partnership working and through making Bus Quality Contracts a more viable option. Metro also welcomed the provisions that would enable the PTA/PTEs and local authorities to determine the governance arrangements that best suited their circumstances. It was expected that a Local Transport Bill would be included in the Queen's speech for the next session of Parliament.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

7. **CONSULTATION ITEMS -**
- (a) **Consultation Strategy**
 - (b) **Feedback on Market Research**
 - (c) **Concessionary Permit Issue for 2008**

Consultation Strategy

The Committee received a presentation on Metro's Consultation Strategy, which was being updated. A feedback form was circulated at the meeting and Members' views were sought on the key approaches and activities included within the strategy.

It was suggested that relevant community groups be contacted/consulted regarding rural bus development and that any surveys undertaken via e-consultation be brief and to the point. In respect of e-consultation, Members commented that many people did not have access to email or mobile phone technology, particularly the elderly, and that this should be taken into consideration when undertaking this type of consultation. It was further suggested that both the statutory and voluntary sectors be consulted, as they could have wider access/knowledge to/of local area activities and views.

Feedback on Market Research

It was reported that regular market research tracker surveys were undertaken by Metro. The information gathered was used to measure customer satisfaction levels with local transport services provided and inform future priorities and marketing activities.

Members received a presentation on the results of the latest market research tracker survey. The survey had highlighted several areas for improvement, which included safety/security at rail stations, the cost, frequency and seating availability on rail, the provision of realtime information at bus stations/stops, bus service frequency/reliability, driving style and weather protection at bus stops. In this respect, a feedback form was circulated at the meeting and Members' views were sought on the results of the market research tracker surveys.

The Committee commented on accessibility at rail stations and how this issue was not fully reflected in the market research results.

Concessionary Permit Issue for 2008

The Committee were advised of the proposed English National Concessionary Permit Scheme, which would become effective on 1 April 2008. Members were given a presentation on the marketing strategy and advised of the numbers of applications processed to date.

Members commented on whether current concessionary travel users could use their existing pass after the introduction date in April should they fail to apply for the new permit. In response, Metro officers stated that it was highly likely that 'old' passes would remain valid for a period of time after introduction of the new

system, although policies/procedures relating to the scheme were still awaited from the Department for Transport.

Councillor Wallace expressed concern about whether the message to apply for a new permit was permeating through to user groups in the Bradford area. In this regard, officers confirmed that a number of elderly/community groups had been targeted to receive information, with a view that this information would 'cascade' to other areas/members of the public. Information was also available at post offices/travel centres, as well as being placed on bus services and within timetable cases. It was recognised that Metro was making every effort to advertise the need to apply for a new pass.

A PCC Member considered that the current 'Time running out' campaign could be misconstrued/confusing to users and, therefore, suggested that the 'bigger' message should be that current passes would not be valid after April 2008.

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