

AGENDA ITEM No: 11

WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

AT A MEETING OF THE CALDERDALE PASSENGER CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE HELD IN THE TOWN HALL, HALIFAX ON TUESDAY 4 APRIL 2006

PRESENT: Councillor G Wainwright (Chair)

PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES

David Bruce	Peter Melling
James Calland	John Sykes
Vic Duke	John Whiteley
Howard Maude	

CALDERDALE MBC

K Watson

Also in attendance:

D Squire	-	Arriva
N Walsh	-	T J Walsh

12. PETITION – HEBDEN BRIDGE BUS SERVICES

Councillor S Brown attended the meeting to present a petition regarding the changes to the Metro Connect Hebden Bridge bus services scheduled to take place in April 2006. Councillor Brown expressed his concern on behalf of the residents and commented that many were elderly and relied upon the services. It was reported that a value for money appraisal had highlighted that passenger usage was very low on services to Eaves, Fairfield and Hardcastle Crag and that although the services did not meet the Authority's criteria of a minimum average of six passengers per trip, a Thursday only market day service would be maintained.

Councillor Wainwright accepted the petition on behalf of the PTA and asked Metro to investigate the concerns and respond to Councillor Brown in due course.

13. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor C Townley and public representatives Lesley Mackay and Peter Stocks.

14. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2006 be approved.

15. 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 24 January 2006.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

16. INFORMATION REPORT

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

Concessionary Travel Arrangements

The new concessionary travel arrangements had been introduced on 1 April 2006 and all men and women over 60, and certain categories of disabled people, were eligible for free travel. Permit holders were also able to travel free on most bus services that crossed the West Yorkshire county boundary.

It was reported that there had been some confusion for passengers travelling on cross boundary services and also that ticket machines had not been reprogrammed to allow for the free travel. Members also reported incidents where on-bus ticket machines were not working and questioned the effect this may have on passenger usage statistics provided to Metro. Mr Squires of Arriva advised the Committee of his company's policies regarding the checking of equipment and asked that any specific incidents be forwarded to him for investigation. Metro agreed to forward the Committee's concerns to other local operators.

Rail Rolling Stock Extra Capacity

Members were advised that Yorkshire Forward had agreed an £8m contribution to provide additional rolling stock. This would provide 12 additional carriages, which would be used to address overcrowding problems on some of the busiest peak services in West Yorkshire including routes on the Caldervale line.

Peak Period Rail Patronage at Leeds

It was reported that a recent survey carried out at Leeds Station showed a significant increase in rail patronage, which emphasised the issues regarding numbers of seats available during the peaks and the level of overcrowding. A

Critical Peak Train Plan had been produced to help Northern prioritise peak strengthening and unit provision and a major re-diagramming and cascade of part of their fleet would be undertaken from the December 2006 timetable.

West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan

It was reported that the second West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan had been submitted to the Government at the end of March 2006 and PCC members were thanked for their involvement in shaping the strategy and programme.

East Coast Mainline

Members expressed their disappointment at the Office of Rail Regulation's (ORR) decision to reject the applications from GNER and Grand Central to run additional rail services in West Yorkshire. Councillor Watson advised the Committee that the ORR had asked GNER to provide further details on five additional paths they had identified where services could run between Leeds and Doncaster.

Rail Shelter Replacement Programme

It was reported that replacement shelters would be provided on both platforms at Mytholmroyd and Walsden stations. They would be larger than the existing shelters to allow for the growth in passenger numbers at the stations.

Ryburn Valley TaxiBus Services

The Committee were updated on the Ryburn Valley TaxiBus service, which had commenced in June 2005 and noted the passenger growth during the first 9 months of operation. It was reported that service 909 had been rerouted to include a new surgery at West Vale and that the Monday-Friday "demand responsive" taxibus had been extended following the withdrawal of service 562.

Brighouse Bus Station

It was reported that following concerns previously expressed by members, Metro had carried out remedial repairs at Brighouse Bus Station. These included repainting works, lighting upgrades, repairs to the roof and refurbishment of the cleaners' hut. However it was reported that children were walking and riding their bikes on the roof causing damage. Metro were working with the Police and utilising their PCSOs in an attempt to resolve the problem.

New Bus Lane Schemes on the A629 Halifax-Huddersfield Corridor

The Committee welcomed the initiatives, which had been approved by Calderdale Council on a number of bus priority proposals for the A629 corridor between Halifax Town Centre and Ainley Top. It was anticipated that

the schemes would be implemented later in the 2006/7 financial year following the advertisement of Traffic Regulation Orders.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

17. CONSULTATION ITEMS -

(a) BRIGHOUSE BUS STATION REDEVELOPMENT

(b) HOW TO MAKE BETTER USE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Brighthouse Bus Station Redevelopment

The Committee were given a short presentation and were shown a concept animation on proposals for a new bus station.

It was noted that there would be further consultation on the design before planning permission was sought. It would then be necessary to complete the Traffic Regulation Orders with the Highways Department before construction could commence. It was anticipated that the bus station would take approximately 10 months to construct and be operational by the end of 2007.

Members made the following suggestions:

- That the two new waiting areas are fully enclosed to both sides of the night stand, in order to help prevent inhalation of diesel fumes
- Metro reconsider the provision of toilet facilities
- Lay over bays –ensure that there is adequate provision and that passengers are not dropped off at them
- Essential that Metro work with the Highways Department to improve passenger safety on Ganny Road
- Consider fitting solar panels to the roof and ensure it is not accessible to children/vandals

It was reported that discussions would be held with operators regarding departures during the construction period and that careful consideration would be given to capacity at stands during that time.

How to Make Better Use of Public Transport

The Committee considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on ways to make better use of public transport.

Following a brief presentation, members were asked to provide feedback and suggestions for future action on ways to make better use of public transport capacity. They were asked to consider how to increase off-peak rail use, evening and Sunday bus use and how commuters could be encouraged to travel at different times in order to reduce over-crowding.

Comment was made that there was a need to invest in more park and ride sites especially at Halifax, Mytholmroyd and Sowerby Bridge stations. It was

suggested that investigations be made into the use of the market site at Sowerby Bridge for additional car parking once it had been vacated.

Members were thanked for their useful contributions and were asked to forward any further suggestions to Metro.

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