

WEST YORKSHIRE INTEGRATED TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

**AT A MEETING OF THE RAIL WORKING GROUP
HELD AT WELLINGTON HOUSE ON
WEDNESDAY 3 JUNE 2009**

PRESENT: Councillor A Carter (Chair)
Councillors C Campbell, C Greaves (to minute 41), J Jarosz and
D Robinson

In attendance: Angela Hern, Northern (to minute 39 only)

35. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor K Rhodes.

36. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

37. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 March 2009 be approved.

38. NORTHERN FRANCHISE UPDATE

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the operating performance of local rail services provided by Northern Rail within the West and North Yorkshire Performance Monitoring Unit (PMU).

Members considered the performance results for period 12 (1 - 28 February 2009), period 13 (1 - 31 March 2009) and Period 1 (1 April - 2 May 2009). It was noted that Northern's performance over the last two periods had been well above the franchise target and members welcomed the improvements. It was noted that a large proportion of the performance incidents still occurring were due to external factors including vandalism.

A breakdown of responsibility for cancellations and delays for periods 10 and 11 was attached at Appendix 2 and a summary of causes and delays was set out in the submitted report.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

39. NORTHERN RAIL STATION QUALITY

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive which provided a summary of the breakdown of faults for Northern rail stations.

It was noted that members had previously expressed concern about the number of faults being recorded and they had requested further information, including a breakdown of each type of fault.

Members noted that station faults were prioritised into three categories of importance to reflect their severity and examples of each were outlined in the submitted report. Angela Hern, Northern's Head of Stations attended the meeting and assured members that ongoing station quality monitoring had shown that their contractor had improved its performance and reduced the number of outstanding faults.

The Working Group was advised that 98% of Station Help Points were now working and it was suggested that Northern should publicise this following the recent adverse media attention.

With regard to the ticket barriers at Leeds Station, it was reported that the barriers were generally working well, but that several acts of vandalism had been captured on CCTV and legal proceedings were being taken.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

40. LOW MOOR RAIL STATION

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive which provided an update on the current position regarding the station proposal for Low Moor.

Members welcomed the inclusion of Low Moor station in the West Yorkshire Strategic Programme of Schemes for 2009/10 – 2011/12 following approval by the AWYA Leaders at their recent meeting. It was requested that an update on schemes be prepared for the next City Region Transport Panel meeting to ensure that the priorities were endorsed at every level

Members were advised that the Department for Transport (DfT) would need to endorse the design review, timetabling work and business case approvals and discussions had recommenced with Bradford Council and third parties regarding the additional land required. Whilst a full detailed project

programme was awaited from Network Rail, members stressed the necessity for all new station schemes to move forward at the earliest opportunity and would expect Low Moor station to be delivered by 2012. Progress reports would be prepared for future meetings of the Working Group.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

41. RAILPLAN UPDATE

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive which provided an update on schemes and projects under development that related to the delivery of Metro's RailPlan.

Hebden Bridge Station Travel Plan

The Working Group was updated on the development of the proposed Station Travel Plan for Hebden Bridge. The Plan had been developed by Metro in partnership with Northern, Network Rail, Calderdale Council and Hebden Royd Town Council and aimed to promote sustainable modes of access to the station. It also recommended minor improvements to the station and along the walking and cycling routes and the possibility of attracting third party funding through a bid to the DfT's Access for All Small Schemes would be explored.

Halifax Station

The Working Group was advised that no services were calling at Halifax Station on Saturdays and Sundays whilst the renovation work on the canopy and footbridge was being carried out. It was expected that services would be restored by 13 July 2009. Members commented that they would not wish to see the station's original features lost during the renovation works. Once the refurbishment work was complete, it was hoped that further improvements would be implemented by Network Rail, funded by the DfT's National Station Improvement Plan initiative.

Car Park Extensions – Leeds Rail Growth Package

It was reported that outline feasibility studies and design work on the proposed car park extensions at Crossflatts, Mirfield, Pontefract Monkhill, Sowerby Bridge and Todmorden rail stations were being carried out by Northern. Issues that might prevent the small scheme at Sandal & Agbrigg proceeding were noted. Comment was made it would be possible to extend the car park at Pudsey because land was available although there had previously been highways issues which had prevented the work being carried out. It was requested that Metro revisit the scheme and liaise with Leeds City Council regarding the highways issues.

Apperley Bridge and Kirkstall Forge New Rail Stations - Leeds Rail Growth Package

The Working Group was updated on the recent public consultation for the proposed new station at Apperley Bridge. It was reported that the majority of people had supported the scheme although a small number of local residents within the immediate vicinity of the proposed car park and access road had raised some issues. It was therefore proposed to review the design elements, where practical, prior to submitting a planning application. Comment was made that as the station was close to the Leeds/Bradford boundary, it was essential that liaison took place between both Districts. A similar exercise for the proposed station at Kirkstall Forge would be held on 5/6 June 2009.

The Major Scheme Business Case for the Leeds Rail Growth Package would be submitted during the Summer 2009.

New Rail Station Prioritisation

Members were given a short presentation on the new rail station study. The work would inform the development of the next Local Transport Plan and the strategy included progressing work on the business cases for East Leeds Parkway, Apperley Bridge, Kirkstall Forge, Low Moor and Horsforth Woodside. It was acknowledged that it had become increasingly difficult to implement new rail stations and that the strategy would need to be kept under review to take account of possible changes in demand such as housing growth areas etc.

Keighley & Worth Valley Railway

Members were advised that the Worth Valley Joint Transport Committee (WVJTC) had contacted Metro about the possibility of the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway (a privately run, preserved railway), becoming involved in the operation of a service between Keighley and the upper Worth Valley.

A small feasibility study, jointly funded by Metro and WVJTC, had been carried out but further work was required by the railway to refine some of the operational and financial issues identified. In the meantime Metro and Bradford Council would also be considering a wider range of potential solutions (including bus options) to the overall transport issues in Keighley and the Worth Valley.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

42. STRATEGIC UPDATE

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive which provided an update on the proposed additional services from Yorkshire to London, the Yorkshire & Humber Route Utilisation Strategy, the

Department for Transport's High Level Output Statement and national initiatives for rail electrification and new high speed routes.

East Coast Main Line Service Proposals

Members had previously been advised that National Express East Coast (NEXC) had been granted rights to run additional return journeys to and from London and also contingent rights for the possible extension of some services beyond Leeds to Bradford and Harrogate.

At a recent meeting of the City Region Transport Panel, concern had been expressed that in the current economic climate, NEXC may not be in a position to operate the new London services. Letters had therefore been sent to both the Department for Transport (DfT) and the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) asking that steps be taken to safeguard the proposed improvements for the region's London services.

The Yorkshire and Humber Rail Utilisation Strategy

It was reported that Network Rail was carrying out detailed analysis on the implications relating to the possible rerouting of some Cross Country train services through Leeds. It was possible that any additional Cross Country service between Leeds and York would have to replace an existing Northern service and the importance of local train capacity requirements being met was stressed.

High Level Output Statement (HLOS)

The Working Group was updated on the current position regarding the additional rail rolling stock and it was noted that Metro and other relevant PTEs had been working with the DfT and Northern on the baseline data and future growth forecasts. It was reported that discussions were ongoing with the DfT and a special briefing for lead members was likely to be required in the next few weeks in order to inform a formal response to the DfT.

Once the DfT had completed its commercial negotiations with Northern later in the year, it would seek formal approval from the ITAs/PTEs to formally amend the franchise.

Rail Electrification and High Speed Rail

Members were advised that Metro (working with Leeds and Sheffield City Regions) had commissioned consultants to carry out work to identify the value of the economic benefits that could be delivered by a new high speed rail link from London that might serve the Leeds City Region. Metro had registered as a stakeholder to HS2, the company set up by Government to examine the technical issues relating to High Speed rail proposals. Letters had been sent from the ITA and Leeds City Region to Lord Adonis, the Minister of State for Transport, to express support for a new high speed rail link between London

and the north and a copy of his response to the ITA was circulated at the meeting.

Councillor Carter advised the Group that he had recently attended a meeting with Lord Adonis and leaders of other northern cities. A further meeting would be held in the near future and members would be kept informed of developments.

Network Rail had published its draft Route Utilisation Strategy consultation for railway electrification and Metro would submit a formal response once the outcome of the consultant's study was known. The closing date for responses was 14 July 2009.

RESOLVED - That Metro's work in influencing strategic rail initiatives be noted.