

WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

**AT A MEETING OF THE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT GROUP
HELD AT WELLINGTON HOUSE ON
TUESDAY 31 OCTOBER 2006**

PRESENT: Councillor T Swift (Chair)

Councillors R Downes, C Greaves, W S Hyde, J Jarosz and J S King

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting of the Group held on 21 April 2006 be approved.

3. THE PASSENGER TRANSPORT ACADEMY LTD

The Group considered a progress report of the Passenger Transport Executive regarding the development of a Passenger Transport Academy.

Members were given a demonstration on the driver-training module, which had been produced in partnership with Virtual College and launched at the House of Commons in July this year. Metro had established and chaired a group, WYTESA, to oversee the development/implementation of the academy, which also comprised of representatives from the bus industry, unions and education establishments and local government.

It was reported that the project focused on raising the profile of career opportunities within the transport sector and the training of existing employees. In this respect, it was confirmed that two organisations had joined the Founding Members' Group, which had been established by Metro to enable transport organisations to contribute towards the development of future training modules. It was noted that other organisations were interested in becoming members of the Group and that Metro had approached various bus operators with regard to committing to the initiative.

Members welcomed the initiative and discussed the financial risks involved in establishing a joint venture company. In this regard, it was explained to the Group how, following legal advice from the DLA, the establishment of the Passenger Transport Academy Limited company would take forward the development of the internet modules and ensure that any profits arising from

sales of products, etc, would be shared on a 50/50 basis between Metro and Virtual College. It was also suggested that training to combat the problem of anti-social behaviour on buses be incorporated into the modules.

Members were advised that work was currently underway to develop a detailed business plan and an initial budget for the initiative, along with finalisation of the licensing agreements, and that once this work had been completed the results would be circulated to Members.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That details of the business plan and initial budget for the initiative be circulated to Members of the Group when completed.

4. METROPLAN 2006/07 AND INVESTORS IN PEOPLE UPDATE

The Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on organisational achievement levels against targets set in the MetroPlan and progress/preparation for the Investors in People re-assessment.

MetroPlan 2006/07

It was reported that over the past 12 months Metro had enjoyed a number of key achievements, which included recognition as one of the top British employers, Charter Mark re-accreditation, the launch of the Transport Academy and obtainment of Phase III Yellow Bus funding.

The Group was advised that 72% of MetroPlan targets were completed this quarter and that 51% of overall annual targets had been achieved to date. Members welcomed the report, in particular the summarised key performance data contained in Appendix 1, which were linked against the headings of Metro's Vision. Quarterly reports were available at the meeting for Members' information.

Reference was made to the previous meeting's minutes and the concern expressed at the costs involved in producing copies of the Best Value Performance Plan 2006/07. It was reported that positive feedback from stakeholders had been received, following consultation by a questionnaire to ascertain whether they would like to receive a shorter summarised version of the Plan. Members were advised that a significant proportion of the overall cost of producing the documents was associated with the graphic design/preparatory work irrespective of how many copies were printed. However, it was reported that further information relating to this issue would be submitted to a future meeting of the Group.

Investors in People

The Group was advised that Metro had last accredited with the Investors in People standard in December 2004 and that this year's assessment would take place during October and November. It was confirmed that the assessor was on site at present interviewing employees, as this played a major role in the assessment process.

Members were informed that this year there was a revised IIP Standard, which concentrated on the 'culture' of organisations and recognised/valued people's contribution/involvement in the decision-making processes. An IIP benchmarking tool called Profile had also been introduced to the assessment process, which would provide Metro with objective feedback on its strengths and areas in need of further development.

RESOLVED - That the report is noted.

5. ICT STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS REPORT

The Group considered a progress report of the Passenger Transport Executive with regard to the implementation of Metro's ICT Strategy, a summary of which was outlined in Appendix A of the submitted report.

Customer Service Strategy - ICT Phase 1

The Group was advised that capital funding for the project had been approved by the full PTA and that the project was now in a procurement phase. The project consisted of a number of elements, which included a Young Person's Website, Online Sales and Payments systems, Customer Self-Service enhancements, Online Consultation and Improved Web Infrastructure.

Integrated Services System Enhancements

Members noted that the project was now in a procurement stage following full PTA approval and involved the replacement of data capture devices, automatic database update on works order completion, bus station stand utilisation modelling, road side display and GIS enhancements.

YorCard

It was reported that the initial phase of the West/South Yorkshire YorCard project would consist of a pilot scheme to be implemented in Sheffield, which was scheduled to commence in late 2007. If successful, and funding was secured, full roll out would commence at the beginning of 2009.

Website Update

It was reported that the number of documents downloaded from Metro's website was now averaging around 300,000 per month, which was classed as a significant amount. Metro had installed improved software, which

monitored and collected information about the availability of all its sites to users 24 hours a day. Such a facility had enabled IT staff to deal with any problems effectively and immediately. In this respect, figures for September had shown that Metro's website was available 98.9% of the time, although every effort was being made to increase this figure.

Realtime Information

Members were reminded that real time passenger information was available through SMS, WAP and the Internet and that Metro had been receiving 3,000 requests a day from the public. In this respect, it had been classed as one of the most used systems in the UK. On-street displays providing real time information were being piloted in Leeds, with Members being encouraged to visit the display located on The Headrow. Over 900 displays would be rolled out throughout West Yorkshire during 2007. However, the automated voice and traffic light priority systems were still under development.

RESOLVED - That Members noted progress with the implementation of the ICT Strategy.

6. FUTURE MEETINGS

Members agreed to hold a meeting of the Group in January 2007. The Chair would agree an appropriate date, with Members being notified accordingly.