

AGENDA ITEM No: 12.

WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

AT A MEETING OF THE WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY HELD IN WELLINGTON HOUSE ON FRIDAY 21 APRIL 2006

PRESENT: Councillor K Hussain (Chair)

Councillors D Blackburn, R Downes, C Greaves, K Iqbal,
S King, J Lewis, P McBride, G Phelps, J Prestage, K Rhodes,
D Schofield, C Townley, P Wadsworth, G Wainwright and M Walker

128. COUNCILLOR J PRESTAGE

The Chair paid tribute to Councillor Prestage and commented on his tireless dedication and commitment to public transport in West Yorkshire not only during his 5 years as a Member of the Authority but also during his time as a public representative of the Bradford Passenger Consultative Committee from 1987 to 1998. Councillors Phelps, King, Rhodes and Greaves also highly praised Councillor Prestage's work as a Councillor and PTA Member and wished him well in his retirement.

129. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Bower, J Jarosz, S Khan, M Lyons and A Wallace.

130. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

131. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE AUTHORITY HELD ON 17 MARCH 2006

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2006 be approved and signed by the Chair.

132. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD ON 22 MARCH 2006

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 22 March 2006 be noted.

133. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STAFFING WORKING GROUP HELD ON 24 MARCH 2006

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting of the Staffing Working Group held on 24 March 2006 be noted.

134. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TENDERED SERVICES WORKING GROUP HELD ON 29 MARCH 2006

The Authority expressed concern at the number of commercial bus services which had been withdrawn by bus operators causing gaps in the core service network and leaving many rural areas without bus services, particularly evenings and Sundays. Comment was made that the withdrawal and reduction of services had led to pressure from the affected areas to provide a subsidised replacement service placing more pressure on the Authority's budget for tendered services which was already very stretched. Members referred to the number of instances, particularly North Kirklees, North Wakefield and parts of Keighley, where bus operators had gone ahead and withdrawn services, in total disregard to the wishes of Councils, Councillors and the general public.

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting of the Tendered Services Working Group held on 29 March 2006 be noted.

135. PASSENGER CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES

With regard to the minutes of the Kirklees Passenger Consultative Committee, the Authority welcomed Kirklees Council's proposals to introduce decriminalised parking enforcement from July 2006 and hoped that this initiative would be extended to other Districts.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the minutes of the meeting of the Wakefield Passenger Consultative Committee held on 30 March 2006 be noted.
- (b) That the minutes of the meeting of the Bradford Passenger Consultative Committee held on 31 March 2006 be noted.
- (c) That the minutes of the meeting of the Leeds Passenger Consultative Committee held on 3 April 2006 be noted.
- (d) That the minutes of the meeting of the Calderdale Passenger Consultative Committee held on 4 April 2006 be noted.
- (e) That the minutes of the meeting of the Kirklees Passenger Consultative Committee held on 5 April 2006 be noted.

136. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT WORKING GROUP HELD ON 6 APRIL 2006

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting of the Development and Environment Working Group held on 6 April 2006 be noted.

137. CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The Authority considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on matters relating to the 2005/06 and 2006/07 Capital Programmes and seeking approval for expenditure for the following schemes which would contribute to the delivery of the 2006/07 Local Transport Plan Capital Programme.

Brighouse Bus Station
Platform Extensions to facilitate additional rolling stock
Class 158/9 Passenger Enhancements

RESOLVED - That the expenditure as outlined in paragraph 2 of the submitted report be approved.

138. REGIONAL ISSUES

The Authority considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive updating Members on a number of key regional, pan-regional and sub-regional issues including:

Northern Way
City Region
Regional Spatial Strategy
Regional Transport Board
Yorkshire and the Humber Assembly Review of Governance

The Authority welcomed that the Passenger Transport Authorities/Executives would be represented on the Regional Transport Board, whose remit was to provide advice on priorities for regional funding allocations up until 2016. However, they considered that the position should be held by a PTA Member with a PTE Advisor in attendance. With regard to the Planning Board it was suggested that the PTA should be represented as an observer supported by a PTE officer.

Concern was expressed regarding representation of smaller authorities in the Assembly's governance arrangements. In response the Director General commented that a report would be brought to the PTA Annual Meeting recommending that the representative on the Transport Board should be a PTA Member and that other comments made by the Authority would be passed to the Assembly in the response to the review of governance. It was also agreed that PTA Members should forward any additional comments in writing to the Clerk.

In response to the question raised regarding timescales for the implementation of schemes outlined in Appendix B of the submitted report, it was reported that schemes had different indicative timescales for their introduction and that the list of timescales would be provided to Members. In this respect comment was made that the business case for Wakefield Westgate Station was well advanced and that the Department for Transport had asked for detailed modelling. A decision on the scheme was expected in the Autumn and if the go ahead was given the development would then be considered in conjunction with other regeneration projects for the area.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That the issues set out in paragraph 2.17 of the submitted report be used as the basis for Metro's response to the Yorkshire and Humber Assembly's consultation on their review of Governance.

139. FREE CONCESSIONARY TRAVEL

The Authority considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive which noted the initial results following the introduction of the free concessionary travel scheme and to seek approval to serve Participation Notices on operators if required.

It was reported that there was a legal requirement on all bus operators to provide free off-peak travel for senior citizens and disabled people on local bus services operating in West Yorkshire. Whilst operators could appeal to the Secretary of State for Transport against reimbursement arrangements they could not withdraw from the requirement. Comment was made that the Authority had the discretionary powers which it used to provide a more comprehensive scheme than the statutory minimum requirement covering concessions for children and cross boundary bus services. Operators participated in discretionary elements of the scheme on a voluntary basis and had the right to withdraw by giving notice to the Authority. The Authority could compel operators to participate by issuing a Notice. To date no operator had given notice from the discretionary elements of the scheme. However it was explained that to ensure that all operators remain within the scheme, Metro was seeking approval to issue a Participation Notice if the need arose.

RESOLVED - That, if required, the issue of Participation Notices under Section 97(2) of the Transport Act 1985 be approved.

140. CHAIR'S REMARKS

The Chair referred to the fact that it was the last meeting before the Authority's Annual Meeting and that with the forthcoming local elections and District Council's Annual Meetings, it might be the last meeting to be attended by some Members. He thanked Members for the support they had given him during the year and for their work on behalf of the Authority.

141. COUNCILLOR K HUSSAIN

Councillor King reported that it would be the Chairman's last meeting before the Annual Meeting. On behalf of the Authority, he thanked him for his hard work over the last 11 months and the manner in which he had chaired the meetings.