

WEST YORKSHIRE INTEGRATED TRANSPORT AUTHORITY
AT A MEETING OF THE CALDERDALE PASSENGER CONSULTATIVE
COMMITTEE HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, HALIFAX ON
TUESDAY 6 OCTOBER 2009

PRESENT: Councillor K Watson (Chair)

PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES

Peter Melling	John Sykes
Peter Stocks	John Whiteley

CALDERDALE MC

G Carter
B Collins
R Goldthorpe
R Thornber (to minute 12)

Also in attendance:

R Tomys	-	First
D Haley	-	Northern Rail
J Shute	-	Halifax Courier

8. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from public representatives J Calland, V Duke, N Hull and J Sheppard.

9. MINUTES

Further to Minute 6 - Bus Services - Mr Whiteley further raised the issue of the timing of Services 682 and 508 from Shelf to Halifax via Bradford, which ran 15 minutes past the hour and on the hour resulting in a 45 minute wait for passengers at both Halifax and Bradford bus stations. He also advised that 3 buses an hour ran between Brighouse and Halifax (evenings and Sundays) and that they too ran within minutes of each other again resulting in a 45 minute wait for passengers.

In response, Metro officers confirmed that these issues had previously been raised with the operator, First, to determine whether the services could be better co-ordinated. First had not provided any response. It was agreed that Metro officers again contact First to emphasise the need for improved co-

ordination, with a view to reporting the outcome to the next meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2009 be approved.
- (b) That First be contacted regarding the better co-ordination of services between Shelf and Halifax via Bradford and Brighouse and Halifax and the outcome reported to the next meeting of the Committee.

10. MEMBER FEEDBACK

The Committee considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive advising them of the feedback received at the meeting of the Committee held on 14 July 2009 and to report the action taken.

Sustainable Travel Cities

It was reported that the Sustainable Travel Cities bid for Leeds had not been successful. Metro was, however, continuing to identify ways of taking forward some of the ideas generated during the development of the bid, which included feedback provided by PCC members.

Rural Shelter Programme

The Committee was advised that work was being undertaken to develop a rural passenger shelter using sustainable materials and alternative power supply, such as solar or wind power. It was hoped a prototype would be ready for trialling in 2010.

Northern Rail Timetable Development

Comment was made that the Blackpool train service did not stop at Sowerby Bridge, therefore, local passengers had to travel to either Hebden Bridge or Halifax to catch the service. In response, Mr Haley advised that every effort was made to ensure that long distance services stopped at large conurbations. Additional stops would extend the journey times for passengers and, therefore, Northern would not at present implement Blackpool service stops at Sowerby Bridge.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted

11. INFORMATION REPORT

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

Boxing Day Services

Members were advised that following the success of last year's pilot to operate bus services on Boxing Day into Leeds and Huddersfield it was planned to operate the same services in 2009.

FreeTown and City Buses

The Committee noted the key findings of surveys, which had been undertaken on the FreeTown and City buses operating in West Yorkshire. The feasibility of delivering the suggestions outlined in the report would be investigated and the outcome reported to a future meeting.

Discussions ensued regarding the lack of a FreeTownBus service in Halifax. Members queried whether Metro had contacted Calderdale Council to put forward the scheme. In response, it was confirmed that despite previous proposals from Metro no response had been received from the council to take the scheme forward. Members were concerned that public transport users in Calderdale were 'missing out' on the benefits such an initiative would bring. The Group agreed that a letter be sent on behalf of the Committee to both the Leader and Chief Executive of Calderdale Council in support of a FreeTownBus service in Halifax.

Timetable Case Project

The Committee was advised that Phase 1 of the project had secured the installation of 1,000 additional timetable cases. As a result of the positive feedback received a further 3,000 timetable cases would be installed during 2009/10.

MetroActive

It was reported that positive feedback had been received from the MetroActive campaign held during August. In order to evaluate its effectiveness, Metro was analysing its own survey data and seeking further passenger and financial information from operators. Metro was grateful to the operators for participating in the campaign and, subject to their agreement, it was hoped that the scheme could be repeated in future years.

Realtime at Bus Stations

It was confirmed that realtime information screens had been installed at Leeds, Keighley, Huddersfield, Dewsbury and Halifax bus stations and were fully operational. It was also confirmed that realtime screens at Brighouse bus stations were due to become 'live' soon.

Members noted that further realtime information screens would be installed in Bradford, Pontefract and Wakefield bus stations over the next few months.

December 2009 Rail Timetable

Members were informed that the next timetable was being finalised and that it would operate from 13 December 2009 to 15 May 2010. No significant changes to local Northern services in West Yorkshire were expected, details of which were available as Appendix A to the submitted report.

Discussions ensued regarding a lack of rail service from Calderdale area to Manchester on Boxing Day to enable passengers to access retail opportunities and assist those who had to work over the Bank Holiday. Mr Haley from Northern explained that the Bank Holiday period allowed for engineering works to be undertaken and that to operate services would involve significant staffing and cost implications. In this respect, it was also suggested that for the future First give consideration to operating a bus service from the area to Manchester in order to compensate for the lack of rail service.

Additional comment was made regarding the lack of bus services operating in the area on New Year's Day whilst Northern operated a 'normal weekday' rail service.

Additional Rail Carriages

It was reported that the Department for Transport was not planning to procure any new diesel vehicles and would proceed with a first phase of cascading trains from elsewhere in the UK to Northern. It was expected that this phase would provide less than half of the 182 additional vehicles previously committed. Further work was being undertaken on the overall proposed rolling stock strategy and Metro was working closely with Northern, the DfT and other PTEs. It was expected that the first phase would be delivered during 2010, however, no definite details were yet known.

East Coast Main Line Service Proposals

It was reported that National Express were to relinquish the East Coast Main Line franchise and the DfT had established a company, which would take over the operation of the franchise until it was re-let. Metro was seeking assurances from the DfT that the proposed enhancements to services to London would be delivered.

Councillor Carter requested information regarding the East Coast Main Line Company Ltd. In particular who the company consisted of and how staff would be affected by the transfer in ownership.

Withdrawal of Oldham Loop Line Rail Service

The Committee was advised that passengers would no longer be able to travel by train from Rochdale to Milnrow, Shaw and Oldham from 4 October 2009. The Rochdale - Oldham - Manchester Victoria Northern service would cease to operate in order to enable the line to be converted to tramway operation. The Oldham loop was expected to reopen through to Rochdale as

a tramway by Spring 2012, electrified, realigned, refurbished and with additional stations.

It was reported that frequent rail replacement bus services would be provided whilst the line was closed and members were further advised of the First services that would also be available.

Councillor Carter made comment regarding the lack of bus service from Halifax to Oldham and requested that consideration be given to providing a service for people, particularly from the West side of the borough, to travel to Oldham. Mr Tomys from First noted Councillor Carter's comments and assured her that they would be investigated.

Halifax Rail Station Update

Members were advised that the second phase of work to the station would commence in January 2010 and would provide improved passenger waiting facilities, refurbished toilets at platform level and a new waiting room at the upper concourse level. It was reported that the retail unit on the upper concourse would also be re-let. The work would be funded by Northern Rail, Metro and the National Station Improvement Programme (NSIP).

Mr Haley agreed to look into issues of pedestrian safety egressing from the station raised by the Committee. He was, however, concerned that opportunities for improvement were limited in view of the lists status of the area.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That a letter be sent on behalf of Calderdale PCC members to both the Leader and Chief Executive of Calderdale Council in support of a FreeTownBus service in Halifax.

12. CONSULTATION ITEMS -

- (a) **2009 Market Research Results**
- (b) **Personal Travel Planning**
- (c) **Stakeholder Communications**
- (d) **South Calderdale Rural Tendered Services**

2009 Market Research Results

It was reported that the latest market research tracker survey had been carried out during the summer and members were given a presentation on the findings. It was noted that overall satisfaction for rail and bus stations and services was higher than the previous year, with 85% of respondents satisfied with public transport information overall. Members were advised that the information gathered would be used to measure satisfaction levels, inform

marketing decisions and track awareness levels of a range of services and products.

Metro agreed to provide Councillor Carter with details of realtime units installed within shelters in the Calderdale area. Members supported the provision of more realtime information in rural areas.

Members queried whether it would be possible to analyse the survey results in order to gain a comparison between the views from rural and urban respondents. In this respect, the Chair requested that this information be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee if available.

Personal Travel Planning

It was noted that PTP was being used elsewhere to encourage people to make more sustainable travel choices by foot, bike, bus, train or in shared cars. This was achieved through the provision of information and incentives and members were given a presentation which demonstrated alternative ways of delivering PTP. Members' views were sought on how this area of work could be taken forward.

Mr Melling expressed concern that the presentation had not included PTP for disabled people. Metro officers apologised and confirmed that this aspect would be addressed through the community approach and that Mr Melling's comments would be reflected within the final report/findings.

Councillor Goldthorpe queried the 'carbon footprint' of the initiative. In response, officers confirmed that this would be measured in the final report.

Councillor Carter requested 'figures' relating to the Peterborough and Darlington personal travel planning schemes and was particularly interested to receive information regarding the Darlington PTP pilot.

Stakeholder Communications

The Committee was given a presentation, which outlined the development of a proposal to improve communications with a range of stakeholders using the Metro Messenger system.

Metro Messenger was a subscription based service with a general public audience. However, there was the opportunity to promote information on Metro's services and public transport developments. This could include locality representatives, members, key local authority officers, partnership members, voluntary and community sector organisations.

Comment was made that not everyone had access to or owned a computer and that information should also be distributed on bus services and in local newspapers. It was commented that if information was sent to charity and voluntary based organisations it could become prohibitively expensive for them to distribute the information. In response, officers confirmed that Metro

Messenger would not be the only means available and future information delivery would utilise a range of outlets and media.

Members suggested that information be sent out via literature/magazines provided by local community groups, such as elderly and visually impaired organisations.

South Calderdale Rural Tendered Services

Members received a presentation regarding the implementation of tendered services in rural South Calderdale, as a result of service cuts executed by First in January 2009. It was noted that the network of services to be provided had been devised by Metro and that officers had aimed to ensure that most settlements with an hourly bus service retained their local bus service. Routes would be finalised in November with a view to operations commencing in January 2010.

Comment was made that it was essential that the performance of these services be monitored after a 3 month period in order to determine effectiveness and, if possible, implement improvements.

Members commended officers for their hard work and dedication in providing a service network with the limited financial resources available.

Members were thanked for their suggestions to all the consultation items and asked to forward any further ideas or comments on the questionnaire provided at the meeting or by email to erica.ward@wypte.gov.uk.

RESOLVED - That PCC members' feedback and views be noted.