

## **AGENDA ITEM NO: 13**

### **WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY/ DISTRICT COUNCILS**

#### **AT A MEETING OF THE SOCIAL SERVICES LIAISON GROUP HELD AT WELLINGTON HOUSE, LEEDS, ON TUESDAY 7 MARCH 2006**

**PRESENT:** Councillor J Jarosz (Chair)

Councillors	R Downes	-	WYPTA
	D Schofield	-	WYPTA
	G Wainwright	-	WYPTA

**Officers in attendance:**

G Smith	-	Bradford MDC
N Holt	-	Metro
D Pearson	-	Metro
R Chaplin	-	WYPTA

#### **8. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Akhtar (PTA), A Harrison (Leeds) and D Hullock (Kirklees).

#### **9. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

#### **10. MINUTES**

Further to minute 5, cars illegally parking and obstructing bus stops. It was noted that the adoption of Decriminalised Parking Enforcement by Calderdale in August/September 2006 would allow the Council to address this problem.

**RESOLVED** - That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 September 2005 be approved.

#### **11. FREE OFF-PEAK CONCESSIONARY TRAVEL**

The Liaison Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the revised concessionary travel arrangements that would be implemented on 1 April 2006.

Members were advised that the new arrangements provided free local bus travel both within the county and on most cross boundary trips. The 35p flat fare would be maintained for local rail travel within West Yorkshire. Promotional and information activities to raise awareness of the new arrangements were being undertaken by Metro.

**RESOLVED** - That the report be noted.

## **12. ACCESSBUS PASSENGER STATISTICS AND TRENDS**

The Liaison Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on usage of the AccessBus service for the six month period August 2005 to January 2006.

It was reported that the number of passenger journeys undertaken in the 12 months period up to 31 January 2006 represented an increase of 1% on the previous period. The total number of customers registered to use the service had increased by 5% from the previous period and it was noted that 30% of the registered users (7,938) had made a journey within the last three months or registered within the last six months.

Members requested that the percentage of taxi use per district be included in future reports. The Group noted that the cost of providing taxis was increasing significantly and such growth was unsustainable. It was however noted that in some areas taxis had to be used as an alternative because the AccessBus vehicles could not negotiate the narrow roads.

**RESOLVED** - That the report be noted.

## **13. ACCESSBUS PROGRESS REPORT**

The Liaison Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive updating members on issues and initiatives affecting the AccessBus service.

### Replacement AccessBus Vehicles

Members noted that 8 new vehicles would enter service between March and May 2006. The vehicles would be low floor ramped access and would accommodate up to 16 passengers, three of which could be in fixed wheelchairs.

### Service Quality Monitoring

It was reported that tracking devices to assist in monitoring the operation of AccessBus services, had been installed on the vehicles providing services in Leeds.

## Department for Transport Study

The Group were advised that a survey was being carried out by the Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) on behalf of the Department for Transport. The survey was part of a large study of small buses in the UK that carry 9 to 22 passengers and TRL would be including AccessBuses in their research. The results of the survey will be reported to a future meeting of the Group.

**RESOLVED** - That the report be noted.

### **14. ACCESSBUS – OPTIONS FOR SERVICE DEVELOPMENT**

The Liaison Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive and were given a presentation setting out options for the future development of the AccessBus service.

Members were advised that a review of AccessBus was being undertaken and would be overseen by the PTA's Bus Working Group. The review would consider managing future demand, increasing revenue to meet the growth in demand and reshaping the service to focus on particular needs. It was noted that there may be the opportunity to secure funding through the Bus Services Operators Grant and concessionary travel reimbursement scheme through registration as a local bus service.

It was reported that the next steps would be the modelling of each option, consulting with agencies whose customers currently use the AccessBus service and carry out customer research. Officers were thanked for their presentation and further information would be provided at the next meeting of the Group.

**RESOLVED** - That the report and presentation be noted.

### **15. TRAVEL TRAINING UPDATE**

The Liaison Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive updating members on the joint approach adopted by Metro and the District Councils to develop and extend a Buddying/Travel Training scheme in West Yorkshire.

The Group noted the work carried out by the Accessible Transport Officers which included their secondment to support Leeds City Council in setting up a Travel Training Unit, working with education providers in Leeds and working with bus and rail operators to assist the development of Disability Awareness within staff training programmes. Members were advised that the Accessible Transport Officers had provided assistance to other authorities who were establishing a similar service. They had also made home visits to people with disabilities who had raised specific issues regarding bus travel and liaised with the bus operators concerned.

It was noted that Metro would also support the development of travel training within Kirklees Social Services and had met with members and officers of each District Council to promote the benefits of training people with disabilities to use public transport.

**RESOLVED** - That the report be noted.