

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

**AT A MEETING OF THE CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE LIAISON GROUP  
HELD AT WELLINGTON HOUSE ON  
TUESDAY 23 SEPTEMBER 2008**

**PRESENT:** Councillor G Hyde (Chair)

Councillors T Brice	-	WYPTA
S Khan	-	WYPTA
P Wadsworth	-	WYPTA
Z Ali	-	Bradford MC
A Denham	-	Kirklees MC
S Bentley	-	Leeds CC
S Balfour	-	Wakefield MDC

**Officers in Attendance:**

N Parker	-	Education Bradford
P Oldroyd	-	Calderdale MBC
J Killey	-	Calderdale MBC
A Hudson	-	Education Leeds
D Atkins	-	Wakefield MDC
N Holt	-	Metro
A Pilling	-	Metro
R Chaplin	-	WYPTA

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors H Blagborough (Calderdale), A Carter (WYPTA) and J Jarosz (WYPTA).

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

**3. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** - That the minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2008 be approved.

**4. YOUNG PEOPLE'S STRATEGY**

The Liaison Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the final draft of Metro's Young People's Strategy.

It was noted that the strategy was designed to enable all young people to have full access to leisure, work and educational opportunities. It would take into account the requirements of children with special needs, young people not in employment, education, training and other excluded groups.

Members had been circulated with a final draft of the strategy and were given the opportunity to comment in advance of its final publication.

The Liaison Group discussed the level of consultation undertaken in developing the strategy. It was reported that there was an aspiration to establish a representative group for young people to provide a mechanism for their views to be considered by the Authority. It was reported that Leeds Young People's Scrutiny Forum had completed a review of bus services in Leeds and produced a final report which would be sent to all members.

Members commented on areas which could deter young people from using public transport. These included the frequency of evening bus services and overcrowding on rail services and it was suggested that the Rail Working Group should also consider the draft strategy. The Group's comments would be incorporated into the draft strategy and a final version sent to members in due course. It was noted that the Liaison Group would monitor and review the strategy and a progress report would be prepared for the next meeting.

**RESOLVED** - That the Group be invited to comment on the strategy in advance of its final publication.

## **5. MYBUS FINAL REPORT**

The Liaison Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the findings of the Mybus yellow bus major scheme

It was reported that 206 high quality home-to-school Mybus services had been implemented between November 2004 and January 2008 and carried over 9000 children daily. Members were advised of the structured monitoring of the impacts of the scheme which had been carried out throughout the project and a copy of the Executive Summary was attached at Appendix A to the submitted report. It was noted that the full report was being finalised and would be made available to interested parties.

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

## **6. SCHOOL BUS ISSUES**

The Liaison Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive which reported on the following issues:-

- School bus tender results

- Requests for changes to the timings of the school day
- SchoolCard Pricing
- Policy and procedure for pupil allocation
- Education and Inspections Act – update
- Agency Agreements – update

### **School Bus Tender Results**

It was reported that bids received for Batches 449 & 450, for the renewal of home-to-school and within-school-hours services in Bradford Districts had included options to convert services to Mybus operation. Although all parties were supportive of this approach, Bradford Council was not in a position to meet the additional costs. Further discussions were held with the operators concerned and revised arrangements agreed within the available budget spend. The revised awards would still result in a significant improvement in the quality of schools transport services in Bradford, including the introduction of a further 18 Mybus schemes. A summary of the quality improvements was attached at Appendix 1 to the submitted report.

### **Changes to Timing of the School Day**

It was noted that although early notification of changes to the timing of the school day was better understood, difficulties had been encountered in relation to requests received from Otley Prince Henry Grammar and Morley High School. Despite failure to consult, Metro had been able to reach agreement with operators and changes were implemented at no additional cost to Metro or Education Leeds. However late changes which had been requested at 3 schools in the Bradford District had resulted in a marginal increase in costs which would be met by Education Bradford.

### **SchoolCard Pricing**

It was reported that following negotiations, the operators had agreed to an increase in the price of SchoolCard of 9.63%. The price would therefore increase by £39 to £444.

### **Allocation of Places on School Bus Services**

Members were advised that the popularity of the Mybus scheme had resulted in there being more applications than the number of seats available. It was noted that in order to implement its policy objectives and meet its obligations under the Agency Agreements, Metro prioritised the allocation of places. The criteria used for allocation of places were highlighted in the submitted report together with details of an appeal process which had been implemented to allow parents the right to appeal when a decision had been taken not to allocate a place on the service for their child.

## **Agency Agreements Update**

The Liaison Group were updated on the discussions which were ongoing with each of the four Agency LEAs regarding revised Agreements. The revised Agreements were more comprehensive and covered child protection, confidentiality and data protection agreements. It was reported that significant progress had been made and it was hoped that signed agreements would be in place by the end of November 2008.

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

## **7. EDUCATION TRANSPORT MONITORING – PROGRESS REPORT**

The Liaison Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive which provided an update on progress made in relation to the monitoring of schools bus, Mybus and taxi services. Members were also briefed on progress with the Electronic Data Capture project for monitoring services.

Members noted the summary of monitoring activity which had taken place between September 2007 and July 2008. As a result of the monitoring and associated partnership work with VOSA and district licensing authorities, 14 Formal Warning Investigations had been instigated and one operator was being investigated by the Licensing Authority.

It was reported that Metro was implementing a system of electronic data capture. This involved the use of a hand held device to capture data electronically and allowed the monitors to import service and contract information directly from Metro's services system (COSA). It would no longer be necessary for the monitors to travel to Wellington House to input data each day and therefore allowed more time for other checks to be undertaken. It was expected that the pilot phase would be completed by the end of the year.

It was noted that in terms of future developments, Metro was working to expand the penalty point regime to include other school bus and taxi services and a report would be prepared for the next meeting of the Group.

**RESOLVED** -

- (a) That the progress of Metro's monitoring team be noted.
- (b) That details of the penalty points system be reported to the next meeting of the Group.

## **8. TICKETING ISSUES**

The Liaison Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the current activity regarding young people's ticketing provision.

It was reported that consultation carried out with young people had highlighted cost of travel and also the complexity of the range of tickets as significant issues.

Members were advised that Metro had issued a brief to consultants to review the case for free travel for young people (as exists in London) and 7 bids had been received and were being evaluated for value for money.

It was also reported that during the Summer Metro had worked with operators to promote an offer for young people with a Young Person's PhotoCard to access bus travel all day for a pound during August. The promotion had been widely supported providing an inexpensive and simple travel option for young people and it was hoped to be able to repeat the offer next year.

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

## **9. THE SAFEMARK AWARDS SCHEME PROGRESS REPORT**

The Liaison Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on progress with the SAFEMark Award scheme.

Members noted the progress of the schools currently participating in the scheme and that 23 West Yorkshire schools had been awarded SAFEMark. With regard to Junior SAFEMark, it was reported that workshops had been held during June and July 2008 at venues in each district and Metro staff had also visited schools throughout the County.

It was reported that the young person's website, [www.generationm.co.uk](http://www.generationm.co.uk) had attracted 3400 visitors per month during the summer and it was believed that the presence of the site had reduced the number of calls made in relation to tickets, passes and school bus services.

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

## **10. DRIVER TRAINING INITIATIVES**

The Liaison Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on progress regarding Metro's driver training initiatives.

It was reported that consultation with young people had indicated that they had a negative view of bus drivers and verbal confrontations between them were common. In order to address this, Metro had developed driver training packages and Members noted the course content which was outlined in Appendix A to the submitted report.

The Liaison Group were advised that Metro had also joined forces with Huddersfield College and Aberdeen Skills and Enterprise Training (ASET) to

provide the NVQ Level 2 in PCV driving (Bus and Coach). This joint approach would allow Metro to become a driving force in raising the skills levels of bus drivers in the region and would provide support to the smaller operators. A trailer had been adapted into a mobile training unit which was equipped with plasma-screen and laptop workstations for up to six people. The unit could be located on-site at depots, garages, or other convenient locations for the training sessions.

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