

WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

DATE: 23 NOVEMBER 2007

AGENDA ITEM NO: **18**

SUBJECT: YOUNG PEOPLE'S STRATEGY

Report of the Passenger Transport Executive

1. MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION

- 1.1. To update the Authority on the development of a Young People's strategy.

2. INFORMATION

Why develop a strategy?

- 2.1. Metro's Vision for School Transport has been in place for some time. It is now appropriate to review the vision and to consider the wider travel of young people including leisure travel and for older teenagers travel for work and training.
- 2.2. Patronage amongst young people is declining. It is vital that services are improved for young people in order that they develop sustainable travel habits for the future. There is a need to attract young people back onto public transport. The vision for young people involves targeting and responding to the needs of young people in terms of transport provision. In order to do this it is important to set up robust consultation arrangements.
- 2.3. There are four key strands to the strategy:
 - Sustainability: Young people are the travellers of the future, so Metro needs to impact on future travel patterns now.
 - Independence: Public Transport travel aids independence and confidence, and reduces social exclusion as access to leisure, training and other opportunities is not dependent on having access to a car.
 - Citizenship: On occasions young people's behaviour can be a deterrent to travel by others as can driver attitude and behaviour – Metro has a training and educational role to help improve understanding between young people and drivers. Travel can

also be linked to an understanding of and caring for the environment.

- Fun: the overall approach is to make public transport friendly, easy to use and fun, while having due respect for others, including staff and other customers.

Consultation

2.4. It is important that the strategy is not just about travel per se but about the reasons why young people may want to travel and the benefits this could bring. It should be clearly linked to the overarching priorities for young people, including health and well-being, safety and security, and educational attainment, as well as the key strands above. An early part of the development of the strategy will therefore involve consultation with

(a) young people themselves via Youth Councils and other such fora, as well as through Metro's own more informal mechanisms (e.g. through website, SAFEMark and other schools based work); and

(b) stakeholders in the development of other strategies and measures aimed at young people including district Children's Services Directorates and Local Strategic Partnerships, together with local bus and rail operators.

2.5. It is believed that measures should be focussed around three main areas: Ticketing and Fares, Services and Communication.

2.6. For the purposes of the strategy, the definition of young people is taken to be anyone up to the age of 22. Strategy measures will need to take into account the differing needs of young children, teenagers and older young people.

Fares/Ticketing

2.7. The current ticketing offering is complex, can be costly for some young people on lower incomes, and often does not meet young people's needs in terms of flexibility. Any strategy thus needs to give some direction towards a ticketing structure that addresses cost, complexity of the market, flexibility and the need to respond to leisure travel requirements. The use of smartcard tickets will be explored.

2.8. The success of SchoolPlus MetroCard for regular travellers suggests that there is room to further expand usage of this ticket and to maintain its current competitive price. Travel for occasional public transport users does however appear to be dropping and a product or fares structure for less regular users or current non-users seems appropriate.

2.9. Young people themselves have seen the introduction of free travel in London and responses from both Leeds and Bradford Youth Councils

suggest that there is a growing demand for this to be considered in West Yorkshire. Whilst there is clearly a huge affordability question, it is right that this be debated and options looked into.

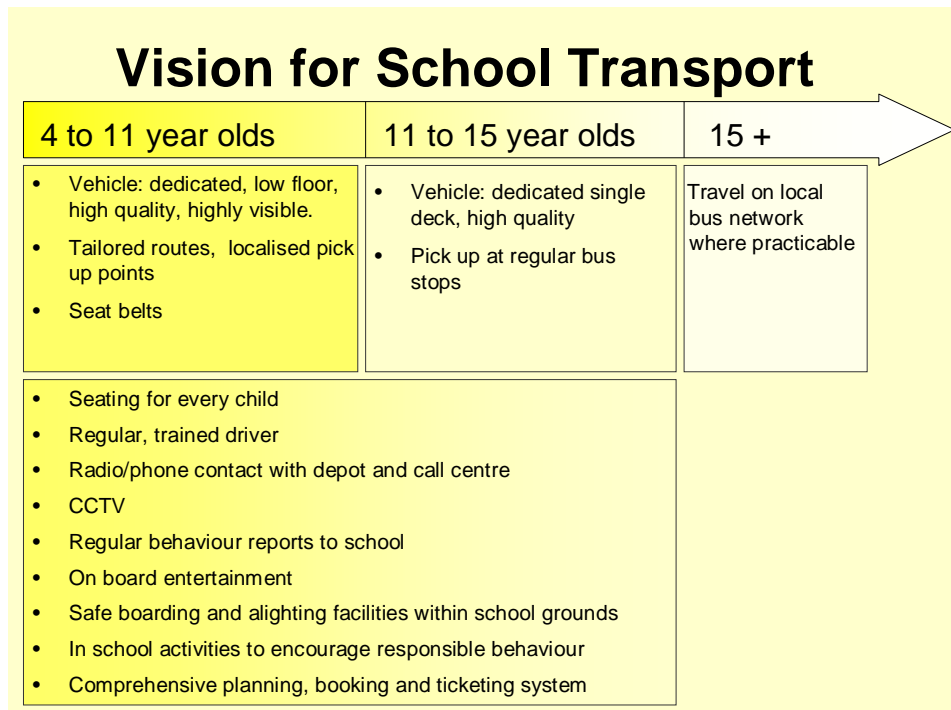
- 2.10. The approach to a ticketing offer for young people might best be considered in the context of the wider debate on discretionary concessionary travel, which is the subject of another report to this PTA meeting.

Services

- 2.11. It is considered appropriate to consider young people's needs in terms of three groups:

- dependent children whose travel needs to be 'escorted' – either because they are very young or have special needs
- dependent young people who are becoming independent travellers
- independent young people

- 2.12. The vision for schools transport and the stepped approach of the Mybus scheme (as shown below) provides a guide to the underlying features required of school bus services. 150 Mybuses will have been implemented by November 2007 and steps are being taken to introduce some of the enhanced features on other schools services (e.g. driver training, CRB checks, seatbelts and CCTV).



- 2.13. There are, however, two outstanding areas – clarifying Metro's approach to the provision or otherwise of these features on non-schools services, and reviewing the network (including both route and

timetable) to ensure that it meets young people's needs in accessing work, training and leisure.

Communications

- 2.14. Under the auspices of Metro's Customer Service strategy, general information is becoming both more targeted and more widely available through different formats. However it is recognised that young people also have specific information requirements. It is for this reason that Metro has developed a website targeted for young people – www.generationM.co.uk. The site includes schools timetables, easy-to-use ticketing information, what's on listings, competitions and opinion polls. A section on special offers is under development and will link to Metro Messenger, to enable Metro to email targeted information to subscribers. Further improvements to public transport information provision via the site are also planned.
- 2.15. Information and marketing will be focussed around key times in young people's lives – starting primary school; transition to secondary school; moving on to work or college – and both website and other marketing materials will aim to help young people at these key points in their lives.

Other issues

- 2.16. Stretching but realistic targets need to be set for the above, together with defined priorities for the first year of the strategy.
- 2.17. How the strategy is to be delivered is a key challenge since there is a need for a dedicated resource within Metro to develop this work. A delivery structure will be developed and opportunities for funding it identified.
- 2.18. A timeline for the development of the strategy is attached at Appendix I.

3. FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1. There will be resource implications for delivery of the strategy. The final version of the strategy will include broad costings and requirements for a delivery structure.
- 3.2. Completion of strategy development can be undertaken within existing resources.

4. STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. It is suggested that strategy delivery be overseen by a steering group with external representation, and can be completed within existing resources.

5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. The strategy is designed to enable all young people to have full access to leisure, work and educational opportunities. It will take into account the requirements of children with special needs.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1. That the content of the report is noted.

**Director General
West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive**