

AGENDA ITEM No: 12

WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

AT A MEETING OF THE KIRKLEES PASSENGER CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE HELD IN THE TOWN HALL, DEWSBURY ON WEDNESDAY 5 APRIL 2006

PRESENT: Councillor K Iqbal (Chair)

WYPTA

K Hussain
P McBride

PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES

John Appleyard
Don Burslam
Sean Flood
Martin Furness

Kathleen O'Shea
Keith Parry
Anne Prince

KIRKLEES MC

M Harkin

Also in attendance:

F O'Sullivan	-	First
D Squire	-	Arriva Yorkshire
V Podgorski	-	Kirklees MC
D Haley	-	Northern
D Mallender	-	TransPennine Express

12. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor L Wilkinson and public representatives Mr Fieldhouse and Mr Pygott.

13. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting of this Committee held on 18 January 2006 be approved

14. FEEDBACK REPORT

The Committee considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive advising them of the feedback received at the meeting of the Committee held on 18 January 2006 and the action taken.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

15. INFORMATION REPORT

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

Service Changes

It was reported that the next major bus timetable change would take place with effect from 22 April 2006.

The Committee expressed their deep concern about the frequent changes and cuts that Arriva were making to their services. Members commented that the planned changes had serious implications and many people would have to change their working hours because of the reduced frequencies. Councillor Iqbal advised Mr Squire from Arriva that concerns about service changes had been raised at every meeting of the Committee during the last 12 months. He said this was not acceptable and he would be recommending that the Local Authority and Passenger Transport Authority take action to address the serious problem, as Arriva were not providing a service to the public. Councillor Hussain, Chairman of the PTA, advised the Committee that he would be meeting with the senior management of Arriva and would pass on the Committee's concerns and urge them to reconsider their decisions. He added that he would be seeking financial compensation for the additional costs being incurred by Metro because of the large number and frequency of changes by the company.

Comment was made that residents in Denby Dale would be isolated because of the withdrawal of evening and Sunday services. It was reported that funding had been approved for a Denby Dale Community Transport Scheme and questionnaires would be circulated in the area asking for suggestions on what journeys were required. It was possible that this new project would deliver essential travel requirements for people adversely affected by the recent local bus service changes.

Concessionary Travel Arrangements

The new concessionary travel arrangements had been introduced on 1 April 2006 and all men and women over 60, and certain categories of disabled people, were eligible for free travel. Permit holders were also able to travel free on most bus services that crossed the West Yorkshire county boundary.

It was reported that there was some confusion amongst drivers regarding the issuing of tickets prior to 9.30 am on services due to operate after 9.30 am. Arriva would issue a staff notice and Metro would bring this to the attention of the other local operators.

Rail Rolling Stock Extra Capacity

Members were advised that Yorkshire Forward had agreed an £8m contribution to provide additional rolling stock. This would provide 12

additional carriages, which would be used to address overcrowding problems on some of the busiest peak services in West Yorkshire including routes on the Caldervale line.

Peak Period Rail Patronage at Leeds

It was reported that a recent survey carried out at Leeds Station showed a significant increase in rail patronage, which emphasised the issues regarding numbers of seats available during the peaks and the level of overcrowding. A Critical Peak Train Plan had been produced to help Northern prioritise peak strengthening and unit provision and a major re-diagramming and cascade of part of their fleet would be undertaken from the December 2006 timetable.

West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan

It was reported that the second West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan had been submitted to the Government at the end of March 2006 and PCC members were thanked for their involvement in shaping the strategy and programme.

East Coast Mainline

It was reported that following the Office of Rail Regulation's (ORR) decision to reject the applications from GNER and Grand Central to run additional rail services in West Yorkshire, GNER had been asked to provide further details on five additional paths they had identified where services could run between Leeds and Doncaster.

Rail Shelter Replacement Programme

It was reported that replacement shelters would be provided on both platforms at Shepley, the Huddersfield bound platform and the island platform at Mirfield and on the platform at Berry Brow stations. They would be larger than the existing shelters to allow for the growth in passenger numbers at the stations.

Colne Valley TaxiBus Services

The Committee were updated on the Colne Valley TaxiBus services, which had commenced in March 2005 and noted the passenger growth during the first 9 months of operation. It was reported that from January 2006 the Metro Connect Taxibuses were better utilised when the contractor was appointed to operate service 335, using them on Friday and Saturday evenings and all day on Sundays.

Kickstart – Holme Valley

Members were advised that following a successful joint bid to the Department for Transport, services would be extended linking Huddersfield with the Holme Valley through Huddersfield Rail Station. The scheme would incorporate joint ticketing arrangements with TransPennine Express services and would allow passengers to buy tickets through to Holmfirth.

Safety and Security Issues at Dewsbury

Members welcomed the decrease in anti-social behaviour at Dewsbury Bus Station following the implementation of an action plan. This had involved close liaison between Metro, Kirklees Anti-Social Behaviour Unit and Dewsbury Neighbourhood Policing Team. The situation would continue to be monitored.

Rail Station Accessibility

The Committee were advised that as part of an overall strategy, Metro had agreed to fund some minor accessibility improvements at local stations including Batley, Mirfield and Ravensthorpe. The improvements would provide additional handrails, tactile warning pavers and clearly marked disabled parking spaces with dropped kerb access and would complement the large scale improvements still required to provide 'step free' access.

Audio Announcements at Cleckheaton and Batley Bus Stations

It was reported that an audio information system had been installed at the new Batley Bus Station, which provided the same information as the display boards at each stand. The system would also be provided at Cleckheaton in the near future and an RNIB key fob system was in the process of being installed. The Committee would be advised of progress on these matters at its next meeting.

Comment was made that the audio and visual displays at rail stations were often confusing. Mr Haley of Northern advised members that a new integrated system, jointly funded by Metro, would be installed in the near future which would alleviate the problems currently being experienced.

Enforcement of Bus Lanes

The Committee were advised of Kirklees Council's plans to introduce Decriminalised Parking Enforcement from July 2006. In order to assist in the enforcement of bus lanes and parking at bus stops, Metro, in association with the bus operators, had agreed to provide free bus travel to parking attendants on duty.

Rail Issues

It was reported that there had been several reported incidents when tickets or fares had not been collected on local rail services. Councillor Hussain was concerned about the loss of revenue and asked the rail operators to investigate the matter.

Comment was made that reliability, particularly on TransPennine services, had been poor. It was reported that there had been several incidents of signalling cable being stolen that had resulted in delays, but the perpetrators had been dealt with and punctuality would improve with the introduction of the new rolling stock.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

**16. CONSULTATION ITEM -
HOW TO MAKE BETTER USE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

The Committee considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on ways to make better use of public transport.

Following a brief presentation, members were asked to provide feedback and suggestions for future action on ways to make better use of public transport capacity. They were asked to consider how to increase off-peak rail use, evening and Sunday bus use and how commuters could be encouraged to travel at different times in order to reduce over-crowding.

The following comments were made:

- Provide more park and ride sites
- Increase frequency and reliability of services
- Reduce journey times – bus priorities
- Promote the area
- Provide integrated transport facilities especially in areas where there were new residential developments

Members were thanked for their useful contributions and were asked to forward any further suggestions to Metro.

RESOLVED – That PCC members' comments and views be sought.