

WEST YORKSHIRE INTEGRATED TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

**AT A MEETING OF THE KIRKLEES PASSENGER CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE TOWN HALL, HUDDERSFIELD
ON WEDNESDAY 8 JULY 2009**

PRESENT: Councillor T Brice (Chair)

WYITA

A Pinnock

PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES

John Appleyard
Don Burslam
Richard Fieldhouse
David Hargreaves

Shaun Jordan
Keith Parry
Shamir Patel
Chris Taylor
William Kirby

KIRKLEES MC

L Wilkinson

Also in attendance:

C Newbury	-	Arriva Yorkshire
S Ottley	-	Arriva Yorkshire
S Simpson	-	First
D Haley	-	Northern
D Mallender	-	First TransPennine Express
L Humphries	-	First TransPennine Express
M Owens	-	Above & Beyond Architects

Observer: Councillor W Young - Meltham Town Council

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor P McBride, public representative Mark Denton and Taj Singh (Centrebus).

2. MINUTES

Further to minute 25 of 5 June 2009, members welcomed the amendment to the previously proposed withdrawal of service 307. The service would now operate on a half hourly basis on a 'use it or lose it' basis and would be reviewed again in October 2009.

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meetings held on 1 April 2009 and 5 June 2009 be approved.

3. MEMBER FEEDBACK

The Committee considered a report advising members of the feedback received at the meeting of the Committee held on 1 April 2009 and to report the action taken.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted

4. INFORMATION REPORT

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

Bus Service Changes

The Committee was updated on the forthcoming service reductions which had been the subject of a special PCC Meeting held in June 2009. Full details of the changes were incorporated in the Changing Times leaflet which had been circulated to members. It was reported that Metro would fund the continued operation of Service 537/538 until January 2010. Passenger usage would then be evaluated within a wider review of the bus services that Metro funds in the Calderdale area.

Petition – Service 261

Metro was handed a petition from Councillor Lees on behalf of residents regarding the withdrawal of Service 261 on Waterloo Road. The Committee was advised that Centrebus had operated the service on a trial 'use it or lose it' basis following previous passenger concerns. Unfortunately the service had carried less than one passenger per trip and had therefore been withdrawn.

Service 384/385 Huddersfield – Birkby - Brighouse

It was noted that following concerns about poor reliability and punctuality, Metro had replaced the operator providing the tendered service and patronage was increasing.

Rural Bus Services

It was reported that performance had been monitored for several rural services which had been provided on a use or it lose it basis. Members noted that due to low usage the hourly Service 95 (Denby Dale – Barnsley) would not be continued. An alternative service operated by the Huddersfield Bus Company would be provided on market days. Members expressed concern regarding the withdrawal of Service H8 which would affect many elderly people who relied on the service to make journeys to health services. Despite

a prolonged period of trial operation, the service only carried 2 passengers per trip. The remaining Holme Valley H buses would continue to operate and the MetroLocal ML17 taxibus service in the Colne Valley would continue subject to an ongoing review of passenger numbers.

English National Concessionary Travel Scheme – Replacement Passes

It was reported that since the introduction of ENCS Passes in April 2008 over 12,000 passes had been lost and replaced. Several Travel Concessions Authorities (TCAs) made a charge for replacing passes and Metro was therefore to introduce a £5 fee for the replacement of a lost pass to cover the cost of producing a new pass and to encourage people to be more careful with them.

Heckmondwike Bus Facilities

It was noted that Kirklees Council would be submitting an outline planning application in the near future for the proposed bus facilities in Heckmondwike town centre. The Council still had to finalise an implementation programme due to problems assembling the land required for the development. Concern was expressed that the bus stations in Cleckheaton, Batley, Brighouse and Ossett were locked at 8 pm each evening. This was necessary to avoid issues of anti social behaviour as the stations were unstaffed. It was noted that nightstands were provided outside the stations for passengers who could shelter in inclement weather.

St George's Square/Northumberland Street, Huddersfield

Members were updated on progress with the scheme. It was reported that work on the bus shelters was complete and Kirklees Council continued to work on the Square. It was noted that there would be road closures during July/August and members were advised of the bus service diversions during that time.

Galpharm Stadium Development

It was noted that discussions were being held between Metro, Kirklees Council and Kirklees Stadium Development Ltd regarding an outline planning application for developments within the Galpharm Stadium site. Consideration was also being given to the feasibility of a number of measures to ensure a good level of bus penetration and priority into and through the site.

Realtime at Bus Stations

It was reported that realtime information had been installed at Keighley Bus Station. It was anticipated that the new screen would be installed at Huddersfield Bus Station within the next few weeks. The roll out of realtime would continue during the summer at Bradford, Dewsbury, Pontefract, Leeds, Halifax and Wakefield bus stations.

Mirfield Rail Station

It was reported that the Leeds City Region Rail Growth Package included proposals for new rail stations at Apperley Bridge and Kirkstall Forge together with car park extensions at a number of existing stations. Improvements were proposed for Mirfield and Metro had commissioned Northern to carry out the outline feasibility studies and design work on the car park extension. The proposed extension would provide an additional 29 car parking spaces and would include lighting and CCTV facilities. It was anticipated that the improvements would be completed by 2012, subject to all the necessary consents being obtained, including planning permission, and being affordable. Progress would be reported to future meetings of the Committee.

Low Moor Rail Station

Members requested that progress with the development of the new station at Low Moor be reported to future meetings of the Committee as the station was conveniently located for local people in the Cleckheaton and Spen Valley area of Kirklees.

High Speed Rail

Members expressed their disappointment that there was no proposed link between Huddersfield and London. Comment was made that as part of the National Route Utilisation Study, consideration was to be given to electrifying the TransPennine route. This would offer shorter journey times from Huddersfield to Leeds where connections could then be made to London.

Zone 6 and 7 Tickets

Members noted the recent launch of Zone 6 and 7 rail tickets. These allowed rail travellers in Harrogate or Skipton to save money with onward train travel within West Yorkshire. It was clarified that the tickets were also valid for passengers travelling from West Yorkshire into North Yorkshire. Work was ongoing to develop proposals for expanding the new zonal tickets to other areas within the Leeds City Region.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

5. OPERATORS' COMMENTS

The Chair invited operators to update the Committee on any relevant issues.

Mr Newbury reported on Arriva's new ticketing service and of further minor amendments which were being made to some of their services in response to customers' requests.

Members were reminded that operators would be available at the close of the meeting to discuss individual detailed matters.

6. **CONSULTATION ITEMS -**
- (a) Sustainable Cities Bid**
 - (b) Rural Bus Shelters**
 - (c) Realtime Voicesserver**
 - (d) Huddersfield and Dewsbury Stations**
 - (e) Future Local Rail Timetable Development**

Sustainable Cities Bid

It was reported that the government had recently announced details of a competition to fund a sustainable travel cities project. It was noted that Metro was working with partners to develop a funding bid centred on Leeds which had to be submitted to the Department for Transport by mid July. Members were given a short presentation on the draft bid and proposed programme and their views were sought on the proposal.

The following comments were made:

- It was important to provide environmentally friendly, low cost services
- There was a need to influence people's choices through marketing
- 'Good news' stories should be publicised eg. how the ENCS passes have opened up travel opportunities for people who were previously car drivers
- Concern was expressed regarding the lack of connectivity to areas outside the Leeds conurbation.

Metro officers were commended for their efforts in developing a bid within such tight timescales.

Rural Bus Shelters

The Committee was advised that one of the targets in the Local Transport Plan 2 was that 95% of the shelters in West Yorkshire would be upgraded to meet modern standards by 2011. There were 4,500 bus shelters in West Yorkshire and the current criteria for the provision of a shelter was that it must have 50 boarding passengers per day. However, it was acknowledged that it was not possible to meet this criteria in many rural areas. Members were given a short presentation and their views were sought on Metro's proposals to develop a rural bus shelter programme. They were also asked to consider several aspects including:

- What criteria should be used for rural shelters eg. should there be a shelter in every village?
- How important is lighting in a rural shelter?
- What type of structure and what materials should be used eg. wood, brick, glass etc?

- How often the shelter should be cleaned eg. would less than the current 2 weekly cycle be acceptable?

Members were asked to forward any suggestions on the questionnaire provided at the meeting.

Realtime Voice Server

The Committee was given a short presentation on the development of the YourNextBus Automated Voice System. It was reported that the voice server would allow users to call a number, type in their stop number and have the real time information read out to them. The system was currently being tested and, depending on the feedback, would be rolled out over the next few months.

Members welcomed the development and they were asked to test the system and pass any comments to Metro, including how it could be promoted to the public.

Huddersfield and Dewsbury Stations

Members were given a presentation by Above and Beyond, the architects who had been appointed by First TransPennine Express to develop plans for improvements at Huddersfield and Dewsbury Rail Stations.

Members welcomed the plans to make large scale passenger improvements at Huddersfield rail station which would include changes to the ticket office and allow for better passenger flows. It was reported that the return of tenders for the work were expected in the near future and it was anticipated that the improvements would be completed by April 2010.

There were also plans to install passenger lifts linking platform 1 with the subway and island platform as part of the Department for Transport's National Access for All Scheme initiative and revenue protection barriers which would be delivered independently of the station improvement scheme. Members expressed concern regarding the level of fare evasion at the station because of passengers being able to exit the station platform via the Head of Steam pub. The Committee were advised that FirstTransPennine Express were aware of the problem and options to address the issue were being considered.

Members noted the proposed plans for Dewsbury Rail Station which included improvements to the ticket sales area which would be extended by relocating the retail outlet and reorganising staff facilities. It was anticipated that the scheme at Dewsbury would be completed by February 2010.

Future Local Rail Timetable Development

Mr Haley of Northern Rail briefed members on the process for the development of their rail timetables.

It was reported that work had commenced on compiling the December 2010 timetable and members were asked to provide Northern with any ideas, suggestions or aspirations which could be evaluated as part of the timetable process. In particular, their views on enhancements to Sunday services would be welcome.

Members commented that additional services were essential on Sundays as it was now classed as a normal trading day in many areas. The low frequency of services meant that many potential rail passengers currently used their cars for shopping and leisure activities. Members also considered that there was a need for better connections and integration between buses and trains.

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.