

AGENDA ITEM No: 16(a)

WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

AT A MEETING OF THE TENDERED SERVICES WORKING GROUP HELD IN WELLINGTON HOUSE ON MONDAY 31 MARCH 2008

PRESENT: Councillor T Brice (Chair)
Councillors C Campbell, D Congreve, R Downes (minute 100 only),
G Phelps and G Wainwright

In attendance: Councillor N Turner, Kirklees MC (minute 100 only)

98. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

99. MINUTES

Service 335

It was reported that representations had been received regarding planned changes to service 335 taking place in April. These related to the withdrawal of the evening and Sunday service and the loss of the through service "across" Slaithwaite.

The Working Group was informed that use of the evening and Sunday services did not meet Metro's minimum criteria and that patronage "across" Slaithwaite was only 0.3 passengers per trip.

The Working Group considered that every effort had been made to support essential journeys for the majority of bus users within the financial constraints available and securing good value for money. On this basis the previous decision of the Group was reaffirmed. The Group also commented that the end of rural bus challenge funding and above inflation costs in the bus industry made the task of funding new and maintaining old bus links more difficult.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the previous decision to proceed with the planned service changes be reaffirmed.
- (b) That the minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2008 be approved.

100. COLNE VALLEY BUS SERVICES

Colne Valley Taxibus

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on action taken following the end of the current contract for the operation of the MetroConnect Taxibus services in the Colne Valley. Members were advised that the Taxibus service had been successful in addressing local accessibility issues however continuation in its current form was financially unsustainable.

It was reported that changes to the current network of tendered and commercial services had addressed most of the travel needs identified by the Taxibus service. This does however mean that passengers who lived in more remote areas and had relied on the demand response element of Taxibus were without a service.

The Working Group was advised that since the last meeting Metro had received representations from the local MP and Ward Councillors together with a petition signed by 800 residents requesting the continuation of some form of service in the affected areas. In this respect it was commented that discussions were being held with Kirklees Council to explore the feasibility of providing an alternative service and the availability of funding possibly through the Area Committee and/or the Community Transport Partnership. In this respect Councillor Turner requested, on the behalf of the residents, for the Working Group to consider the provision of a service until the end of July to allow local discussions to take place regarding the future of the service and possible alternative funding arrangements. It was also reported that a temporary service would also provide a facility until the end of the academic year to the 15 pupils at Wilberlee School who cannot access regular bus services.

Service 937

The Working Group was informed that a request had been received by the operator, JRT, to operate a new accessible vehicle if Metro was prepared to extend the current contract. Service 937 had been adjusted to accommodate some of the travel needs currently provided by the Taxibus and would be extended to provide an hourly facility between Marsden and Slaithwaite. A revised tender price had been agreed which reflected the additional service mileage.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That the Working Group approved the trial introduction of a service similar to MetroLocal until the end of July 2008.
- (b) That the adjustments to other bus services in the area be noted.

- (c) That the award of a de minimis contract to JRT for the operation of service 937 be noted as being consistent with the Authority's policy for local bus services.

101. BATCH 448 – RENEWAL OF BUS SERVICE TENDERS BRADFORD DISTRICT

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the renewal of local bus service tenders in Batch 448 operated by First in the Bradford District.

It was reported that the current contracts had been extended until July 2008 to allow discussions with First on the network implications of the renewal process.

Members were informed that discussions were continuing with First seeking a revised network of services. To enable this it was proposed not to invite tenders for the current 601/602/680 services but extend the contract until 24 October 2008 in order to negotiate a de minimis contract with First for the implementation of a new network. A further report detailing the revised network and contractual arrangements would be presented to a future meeting.

It was reported that the batch also included extensions to the following commercial services:

Services 622/626 Eldwick – Bingley – Shipley – Bradford Wyke – Scholes
Service 614 Fagley – Bradford – Wibsey – Odsal

De minimis arrangements to continue these services would be agreed with First. All other services had been subject to a value for money review and tenders for those would be sought in accordance with the details provided.

RESOLVED - That the invitation to tender for batch 448 as detailed in the submitted report be approved as being consistent with the Authority's policy for local bus services.

102. MISCELLANEOUS TENDERED BUS SERVICE ISSUES

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the award or extension of contracts for the operation of the following tendered bus services:

Craven Link – Service 784

Proposed single contribution of £7,000 to enable the continued operation of the service in 2008 and to support the Yorkshire Dales Society in establishing a sustainable service in the future.

Service 153

Hourly day time service between Morley, Rothwell and Castleford. Award of a de minimis contract until 2010 in order to allow for two contracts to be combined when the batch was re-tendered in 2010.

Norwood Green

Continuation of a limited off peak service operating on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays until August 2009.

Day Tripper Services

Award of de minimis contracts to provide the following services in Summer 2008:

Service 950: Leeds and Castleford to Temple Newsam, Lotherton Hall and Fairburn Ings (Tuesday to Saturday).

Service 956: Huddersfield to National Coal Mining Museum, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Cawthorne, Cannon Hall Country Park (Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Saturdays).

Service 957: Holmfirth to National Coal Mining Museum, Bagshaw Museum, Red House Museum and Oakwell Park (Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays).

Service 812: Bronte Scenic Tour – Keighley, Haworth, Bronte Parsonage. Proposed contribution of £864 to the Bronte Partnership to provide a seasonal Sunday service.

Service 144 Castleford – Featherstone – Pontefract

Award of a de minimis contract for the diversion of commercial service 144 to provide a dedicated service to Halfpenny Lane.

Service 500 Keighley – Worth Valley – Hebden Bridge

Provision of an early morning Sunday service at 10.05 am from Keighley (April to October 2008).

Thorpe Park

Provision of a peak time bus service between the site and Cross Gates Rail Station. Metro would award and monitor the contract which would be wholly funded by developers of the Thorpe Park employment site.

RESOLVED - That the award or extension of contracts as outlined in the submitted report be noted as being consistent with the Authority's policy for the provision of local bus services.

103. EMERGENCY TENDERED BUS SERVICE CONTRACTS

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the award of emergency contracts to maintain access to communities affected by highway works.

Services had been provided at the following locations in order to maintain local links for the affected commuters:

- Closure of New Road, Luddenden
- Linton River Bridge, Linton Road, Linton
- Otley River Bridge, Otley
- Closure of New Road, Mankinholes (24 October 2008 - 5 November 2008)
- Upper Clough Road, Blackmoorfoot
- Minibus link between Medway, Streethouse and Weeland Road, Sharlston

The costs of these arrangements had been almost wholly funded by the third parties undertaking the work.

RESOLVED - That the award of emergency contracts for the provision of bus services to mitigate the impact of road closures be noted.

104. EDUCATION TRANSPORT DE MINIMIS/EMERGENCY AWARDS AND CONTRACT VARIATIONS – AUTUMN TERM 2007

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the award of de minimis/emergency contracts together with variations to ongoing contracts for the period 3 September 2007 to 21 December 2007.

RESOLVED - That the award of contracts and variations to contracts as detailed in the submitted report be noted as being consistent with the Authority's policy for the provision of education transport services.

105. BATCHES 449 AND 450 – SCHOOL SERVICES IN THE KEIGHLEY AREA

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on tenders received in Batches 449 and 450 for the provision of school services in the Bradford District including those administered by Metro on behalf of Education Bradford as part of the Education Transport Agency Agreement.

It was reported that in addition to submitting bids for the services specified, operators had been encouraged to submit alternative tenders to supply 'Mybus' style quality and safety features in accordance with Metro's Young Person's Strategy.

Batch 449

It was reported that discussions were still ongoing with operators and Education Bradford with regard to the bids which had been received and the award of contracts would be the subject of a further report to the next meeting of the Working Group.

Batch 450

It was reported that the level of competition was low with only 4 operators submitting bids. Of those operators, two were too small to undertake the work and the other only tendered for one home-to-school service.

The Working Group was advised that although one group bid was received from Keighley and District; that option did not include the quality enhancements sought and significantly exceeded RPI inflation. Following discussions, it had been agreed to award a de minimis contract to Keighley and District who had now undertaken to convert a number of their 5-6 year old low floor DDA compliant buses with 3+2 seating with seat belts, painted in the Mybus livery and operated to the full Mybus quality standard at a cost of £20,000 per vehicle. These costs would be jointly funded by Keighley and District and Metro.

It was proposed that an initial payment of £100,000 be made to the operator in the current financial year with the balance paid from the 2008/09 tendered services budget. Education Bradford had agreed to fund all future revenue costs to facilitate the quality enhancements.

RESOLVED -

- (a)** That the award of a de minimis contract to Keighley and District as outlined in the submitted report be noted as being consistent with the Authority's policy for education transport.
- (b)** That approval be given to jointly fund with Keighley and District the conversion of buses to Mybus quality standard at a one off cost of £260,000 be approved.