

# **AGENDA ITEM No: 18**

## **WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY**

### **AT A MEETING OF THE WAKEFIELD PASSENGER CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE HELD IN COUNTY HALL, WAKEFIELD ON THURSDAY 19 JANUARY 2006**

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

#### **WYPTA**

K Hussain  
J S King  
K Rhodes  
M Walker

#### **PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES**

Catherine Bairstow	Barbara Darlison
Sharon Churchill	Natalie Elsey
John Churms	Derek Farren
Michael Dalton	Keith Watson

#### **Also in attendance:**

G Cooper	-	Arriva Yorkshire
M Lowery	-	Arriva Yorkshire
M Drinkwater	-	GNER
G North	-	GNER
D Haley	-	Northern
I Goldthorpe	-	Wakefield MDC
C Barraclough	-	Yorkshire Traction

#### **8. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor D Hopkins and public representative Brenda Fruish.

#### **9. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** - That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2005 be approved.

#### **10. MEMBER 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 20 October 2005.

Members were reminded that individual detailed matters could be raised with Metro officers at the close of the meeting.

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

## **11. INFORMATION REPORT**

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

### **Bus Companies – Changes of Ownership**

It was reported that Stagecoach Group plc had acquired the Traction Group Ltd, which was the parent company of Yorkshire Traction and the Blazefield Group (which included Keighley & District Travel, Harrogate & District Travel and Yorkshire Coastliner) had been sold to Transdev.

### **Realtime – YourNextBus**

It was noted that feedback from customers using the system had been positive and all PCC members had been invited to attend a demonstration of the Realtime system at Wellington House, Leeds on 2 February 2006.

### **Free Travel Concessions Update**

Members were advised that with effect from April 2006, free travel would be provided for men and women over 60 and certain categories of disabled people. The concessions would apply between 0930 and 2300 hours but would apply to bus journeys only within the area of the authority. However it was noted that the PTA would be considering arrangements for rail and cross-boundary journeys as part of its budgeting process for 2006/7.

### **LTP Settlement**

The Committee were advised of the positive feedback received from the DfT on the progress made in delivering the first Plan during 2004/5 and it was reported that the LTP partnership had been awarded a 5% funding bonus for 2006/7 based on a 'good score' for the progress made.

### **MyBus**

It was noted that Phase 2 of the MyBus scheme was planned for implementation during 2006 and the Department for Transport had recently approved funding for Phase 3.

### **Arriva Bus Service Changes**

The Committee expressed their dissatisfaction regarding the extensive bus changes announced by Arriva and due to be implemented on 28 January 2006. It was reported that following discussions with Arriva a number of revisions to tendered bus service contracts had been made to mitigate some of the effects of the service reductions. The Committee were extremely concerned that the remaining service withdrawals would impact significantly on passengers in Wakefield many of whom would be further than 400 metres

away from a bus services, particularly those living in Bottom Boat, Moorhouse Estate and parts of Outwood and Stanley. The committee also expressed their dissatisfaction regarding the reduced frequency of many services from half hourly to hourly and the withdrawal of evening and Sunday services. In view of the reduced frequency, it was recognised by Arriva that it was vital that the proposed hourly services were both reliable and punctual and that they would be monitoring them very closely to avoid any further problems for passengers.

Councillor Phelps advised that the Council were taking the changes very seriously and that following a briefing for local councillors a special Council meeting had been convened to discuss this matter.

### **Leeds – Sheffield Fast Rail Service**

It was reported that since the introduction of the joint initiative between Northern Rail, Metro, South Yorkshire PTE and Yorkshire Forward in December 2004, the service had achieved an 11% increase in patronage between Leeds and Sheffield.

Members made comment that although they welcomed the success of the service in terms of patronage they were extremely worried that over the last few months Northern were using Pacer instead of Sprinter units which was making the journey very unsatisfactory from a comfort point of view. In response, Mr Haley indicated that it was hoped to introduce some refurbished 158 units in April 2006 which would be exclusively used on the Leeds – Sheffield service.

### **Castleford Rail Station - Shelter**

It was reported that repair works to the shelter at Castleford Rail Station would be completed by the end of February 2006. The Chair requested that if possible the works be brought forward to mitigate passenger inconvenience. It was explained that regrettably this was not possible due to the extent and nature of the works required and that the programme was the best possible that could be achieved.

### **Kirkgate Station Issues**

The Committee welcomed steps which were being taken to address a number of issues which had been raised previously by members. Improvements would be made to the entrance hall including a new floor and holes in the ceiling had already been repaired. Mr Haley of Northern told members that a deep clean of the subway would be carried out very shortly followed by a repainting programme.

Comment was made regarding alleged mice infestation at the station. Northern indicated that they would investigate and if necessary take the appropriate action to eradicate the nuisance.

## **Rail Information at Stations**

It was reported that Metro would be contributing to a scheme that would replace the information control systems for existing long line public address announcements and passenger information screen displays at rail stations.

### **12. CONSULTATION ITEMS: (a) LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 2 (b) REAL TIME INFORMATION DISPLAYS**

The Committee considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the 2<sup>nd</sup> West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan accessibility planning and locations for real time information displays.

#### **Local Transport Plan 2 – Accessibility Planning**

Members were given a short presentation on the Accessibility Strategy which would form part of the Local Transport Plan 2. Consideration was given to the accessibility planning for the Wakefield area and it was noted that an action plan was being developed through consultation with local stakeholders and service providers.

The Accessibility Strategy highlighted a number of issues and actions as priorities for the coming year which included access to health services, employment and education. A questionnaire was circulated at the meeting and members' feedback and views were sought.

The Committee indicated that a longstanding aspiration had been the provision of a free bus service connecting Wakefield Westgate, Wakefield Kirkgate and Wakefield bus station and suggested that initial discussion take place between Metro and bus and rail operators regarding the possibility of jointly funding a scheme.

#### **Real Time Information Displays**

The Committee were advised that Metro were to install realtime information displays at 800 bus stops across West Yorkshire and members were shown an example of the larger type of display to be installed at the busiest bus stops. Members were asked to complete the questionnaire circulated at the meeting to provide Metro with any suggestions or comments regarding the locations for the displays.

**RESOLVED** - That PCC members' comments and views be sought.