

WEST YORKSHIRE INTEGRATED TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

**AT A MEETING OF THE RAIL WORKING GROUP
HELD AT WELLINGTON HOUSE ON
MONDAY 30 NOVEMBER 2009**

PRESENT: Councillor A Carter (Chair)
Councillors C Campbell, K Rhodes and D Robinson

In attendance: Lynn Barker, Network Rail (to minute 12 only)
Kevin Vince, Northern Rail (to minute 12 only)

9. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

10. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2009 be approved.

11. NORTHERN FRANCHISE UPDATE

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the operating performance of local rail services provided by Northern Rail within the West and North Yorkshire Performance Monitoring Unit (PMU). The meeting was attended by Lynn Barker from Network Rail and Kevin Vince from Northern Rail who addressed specific performance issues.

Members considered the performance results for period 5 (26 July 2009 – 22 August 2009), period 6 (23 August 2009 – 19 September 2009) and period 7 (20 September 2009 – 17 October 2009). It was noted despite recent poorer performance that Northern's performance continued to be achieving a level well above the franchise target. A breakdown of responsibility for cancellations and delays for periods 5, 6 and 7 was attached at Appendix 2 and a summary of causes and delays was set out in the submitted report. Mr Vince of Northern Rail advised the meeting that performance had dipped during periods 6 and 7 because of driver/conductor shortage. This was because Northern had taken delivery of some Class 180 units for the Blackpool and Manchester Victoria services and it had been necessary to train their drivers, resulting in the temporary driver shortage.

The Working Group discussed current franchise targets and considered that these should be increased and set by line of route in the next Northern franchise to give a better measure for performance. The breakdown of results for the public performance measure (PPM) on an individual line basis, which was attached at Appendix 3 to the submitted report, was noted and it was requested that the appendix be colour coded for future reports.

It was noted that Network Rail had been responsible for the highest number of cancellations and delay minutes in all three reported periods. Although much of the recent drop in performance could be attributed to weather related problems, Metro had expressed their disappointment that non-weather related fleet and track problems had also been a contributory factor and were pressing for an improvement.

With regard to station cleanliness, it was reported that Northern were to obtain additional resources for a 12 week trial period which would enable more deep cleans to be carried out. An assessment would be made on the overall impact on cleanliness at stations at the end of the trial.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

12. STRATEGIC UPDATE

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive which provided an update on the proposed additional services from Yorkshire to London, the Department for Transport's (DfT) High Level Output Statement and national initiatives for rail electrification and new high speed routes.

East Coast Main Line Service Proposals

It was reported that National Express East Coast Ltd (NEXC) had its franchise terminated on 13 November 2009. With regard to the previously proposed enhancements to services to London, it was reported that the Office of the Rail Regulator (ORR) and Network Rail had published a draft Service Level Commitment 2 (SLC2) timetable. Metro had previously supported SLC2 provided it did not have a negative impact on local Northern Rail services as it would reduce times from Leeds to London. A new franchise was due to be let in 2011 and consultations would commence in 2010. Members stressed the need to put forward a strong case as part of the consultations and a report would be prepared for the Working Group when further information became available.

The Northern Rail Franchise

The Working Group was advised that the DfT was considering the next Northern Rail franchise and Metro had started to develop ideas about the requirements for West Yorkshire and the wider Leeds City Region. It was considered that the next franchise should be let on a longer term to allow for

future growth, planning and investment within the industry together with sufficient safeguard in case of non-delivery. The need to demonstrate the benefits of the ITA and City Regions involvement in the Northern franchise was stressed and members suggested that a robust lobbying strategy should be developed for the Authority.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That members aspirations for the next Northern Franchise be noted.

13. RAILPLAN UPDATE

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive which provided an update on schemes and projects under development that related to the delivery of Metro's RailPlan.

Leeds City Region Transport Strategy

Members were given a short presentation on Leeds City Region's Transport Strategy which had been launched on 27 November 2009. The strategy outlined the wider roles of transport and set out a framework for improving it over the next 20 years including an improved and upgraded rail network. It was reported that the DfT had requested local authorities to be diligent when setting out their future plans and to consider both standstill and reduced budgets in their financial forecasting. The DfT had been urged to retain budget levels for the region in view of previous shortfalls compared to other parts of the country.

Leeds City Region Rail Growth Package

It was reported that the Major Scheme Business Case for the package had been submitted and it was anticipated that the DfT would notify their decision by April 2010. However members considered that there might be a delay in the DfT's decision on this and other funding approvals because of the proposed forthcoming election. It was hoped that this would not be the case and the Working Group was advised that the DfT had made an undertaking to take a decision on the New Generation Transport scheme early in the New Year.

RailPlan 7/LTP3

It was reported that consideration was being given to the preparation of RailPlan 7 as part of LTP3 development. The new RailPlan would need to be in place by April 2011 and members were asked to consider their aspirations and key priorities. The importance of Leeds Bradford Airport as a key economic generator for the area was stressed together with improved rail services, station car parks and park and ride facilities.

Low Moor

Members expressed concern about the need for Network Rail to carry out further timetable work to accommodate additional stops at Low Moor. They requested clarification regarding this and proposals to acquire land from Bradford Council. A position statement would be circulated to members of the Working Group and, if necessary, a report prepared for a future meeting of the Authority.

Wakefield Kirkgate Station

Members had previously been advised that Metro was leading a stakeholder group on the development of a 'master plan' for improving the station and surrounding area. This included potential land sale and commercial development of the disused station building and renewal of the station canopy.

It was reported that as part of the DfT's National Station Improvement Plan (NSIP) initiative, improvements including lighting, CCTV improvements and refurbishment of the subway and lobby area were to commence in December 2009. It was anticipated that these improvements would be completed by March 2010.

The Working Group welcomed the action being taken but was disappointed that it had taken several years for the improvements to be implemented. Comment was made that the slow progress with schemes in general, particularly in respect of rail station car park extensions, was frustrating as there was an urgent need to extend park and ride facilities at many stations to accommodate passenger growth. In response, reference was made to the need to streamline industry processes which were adding both time and cost to schemes.

Pontefract Monkhill Station

It was noted that Metro was working in partnership with Wakefield Council to develop a phased plan for the station which included the proposed car park extension which should be completed by November 2010. Provision of a ticket office would be included as a long term aspiration.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That a position statement on Low Moor Station be circulated to all members of the Working Group.