

AGENDA ITEM NO: 15

WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

AT A MEETING OF THE FACILITIES WORKING GROUP HELD IN WELLINGTON HOUSE ON FRIDAY 16 SEPTEMBER 2005

PRESENT: Councillor P McBride (Chair)

Councillors D Blackburn, K Iqbal, M Walker and A Wallace

1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

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

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 May 2005 be approved.

3. ON STREET INFRASTRUCTURE

The Working Group considered a progress report regarding contracts covering the installation and maintenance of on street infrastructure.

Shelters

Members were informed that during 2004/05 over 400 shelters had been installed within West Yorkshire. It was reported that a further 80 shelters would be installed during 2005/06, with an additional 450 new shelters installed during the remainder of the financial year. Recent achievement figures showed that the installation of new shelters had continued to exceed previous performance levels.

The Working Group was also advised that Metro and Trueform were presently undertaking trials at locations within Leeds and Calderdale for the use of solar power at bus stops and shelters. These trials would be undertaken during the winter period to determine the overall effectiveness of the units.

Glazing Contract

It was reported that the Response Group had continued to exceed the standards set for site attendance for both emergency call-outs and planned works. Members were advised that performance data for the period 1 May to 1 August 2005 had confirmed that target times for attendance at locations with broken glazing was well above the set criteria. Metro continued to receive favourable comments from the public and operators regarding the Response Group's prompt attendance at site/replacement of shelter glazing.

Shelter Cleaning

The Working Group was advised that the performance of Metro's in-house team and external contractors had continued to meet PTA approved standards.

On Street Renewal Programme

It was reported that the bus stop plates and poles replacement programme had been completed in the Wakefield and Leeds districts, with works now being focussed the Bradford area.

Adshel

Members were advised that the initial revenue generating shelters had been installed as part of the Yorkshire bus improvement works on the A641 Huddersfield/Bradford corridor, with a further 100 shelters to be installed during the current financial year.

Signature 'Smart 4' Shelters

The Working Group was advised that the majority of Signature 'Smart 4' shelters manufactured about 10 years ago were in need of refurbishment works, including compliance with DDA standards. A refurbishment programme was being devised, with a view to commencement in the Autumn. The Authority had approved expenditure in 2005/06 and further approval would be sought for work in 2006/07.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

4. SECURITY UPDATE

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive regarding the security of Metro bus stations.

Members were informed that following the aftermath of the London bombings at the beginning of July, security and management presence at Metro's bus stations had been increased. It was also reported that measures, such as meetings with the Police, the creation of an operator email contact list for

immediate updates/alerts and liaison with operators regarding security arrangements (including CCTV) on buses were presently ongoing.

With regard to CCTV on buses, Metro had invited operators to submit suggestions for further joint initiatives. Metro officers confirmed that initial responses from operators, such as Arriva Yorkshire and Blazefield, had been encouraging, however, a co-ordinated response from the First Group companies (Yorkshire) was still awaited. The PTA would be asked to consider a further programme of funding in due course.

The Working Group was advised that Metro was continuing with a joint operator bid for Home Office funding for an additional 8 PCSO's. It was also reported that a joint initiative with police and operators was currently being planned to crack down on vandalism and ticket fraud and would take place in the near future.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

5. PROMOTION AND INFORMATION UPDATE

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the development of the updated Information Strategy, an update on the implementation of the Real Time information project and recent marketing and sales activities.

Information Strategy

Members were advised that the draft Information Strategy had been approved for consultation at the meeting held in May and included key areas such as enhanced/extended bus stop information, meeting customer needs and marketing focus on customer groups, real time information and development of travel centres. It was reported that PTE's, operators, Local Authorities, the Traffic Commissioner and PCC members had been consulted on the draft and to-date the feedback received had been very positive. Issues raised included bus service stability/reliability, fewer service changes, additional bus stop information, more fares information on Metro's web site and more on-bus information and clearer destination displays. The Working Group was informed that the Strategy would be updated to reflect these comments, with a view to submitting a further report to this Group prior to consideration by the Authority.

Real Time Information

The Working Group received a demonstration on the Real Time Information System, which was accessible through Metro's web site. It was reported that to-date 1,500 buses had been fitted with real time equipment. The promotional campaign for the scheme began in early September and included posters on buses, advertisements at bus stations/bus stops, radio and prime time television/extensive press coverage.

Members commended the project, but stressed the importance of advertising the benefits of the scheme to both users and non-users of public transport. In this respect, Members suggested that the scheme be advertised on large screens in city centres within West and South Yorkshire as a way of maximising awareness of the service. In response, officers stated they would take on board the suggestion and reassured Members that publicity would be used to encourage users and current non-users.

Other Promotional and Sales Activities

Members were informed that during the past few months marketing activity had been focused on increasing MetroCard and DayRover sales. As a result, first quarterly figures for this financial year had shown an increase of 20% in sales of MetroCards and 21% increase in sales of DayRovers compared to the same period last year.

It was reported that Metro continued to lead the West Yorkshire Travel Plan Network in working with employers to promote public transport use and had secured agreement from operators for the continuation of a discount on MetroCards to companies that are committed to travel planning initiatives for their employees.

The Working Group was advised that the overall travel centre turnover for the period April to July had increased by 15% compared with same period last year and that the August Bank Holiday opening of Leeds Travel Centre had been well received by customers.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

6. BUS STATION AND INTERCHANGE ENHANCEMENTS

The Working Group considered a progress report of the Passenger Transport Executive regarding Metro's current programme of upgrading bus station and interchange facilities.

Batley and Cleckheaton Bus Stations

The Working Group was informed that the two new 'drive-in-reverse-out' style bus stations at Batley and Cleckheaton had opened recently and favourable comments regarding the bus stations' facilities, such as Metrokio, had been received from the public.

The background to the decision not to provide toilet facilities at Batley and Cleckheaton bus stations was explained.

Ossett Bus Station

The Working Group was advised that the opening of the new 'drive-in-reverse-out' style bus station at Ossett had gone well.

Brighouse Bus Station

It was reported to Members that detailed site investigations for the redevelopment of Brighouse bus station had revealed serious site issues relating to fibre-optic cable diversions, sewer diversions and undermining of retaining walls. Members were informed that the scheme no longer represented value for money, as these issues had increased the estimated building costs by £0.5m. Metro and the project architects were investigating alternative options for providing a more cost effective bus station and would present these options to a future meeting of the Group for consideration.

Pudsey Bus Station Redevelopment Proposals

The Working Group was informed that Metro and Leeds City Council had developed plans to build a new bus station in Pudsey town centre, which would bring existing facilities up to the modern standard of Metro's other bus stations. Members of the public were able to comment on the proposed plans via a consultation event in Pudsey Leisure Centre in July. Over 70% of people who attended supported the plans and, as a result, detailed design work would be undertaken, with a view to submitting proposals to the Working Group and Authority for consideration.

Castleford Interchange Proposals

Members were advised that Metro, Wakefield Council and Castleford Town Centre Partnership had developed proposals to improve passenger interchange between bus and rail stations in the Castleford area. It was confirmed that the DfT had in December 2004 provisionally approved £14.5m to fund the scheme. The new rules for major schemes required local partners to fund the costs of the further development works and statutory process (with some subsequent DfT reimbursement) and that the Authority would be requested to consider this expenditure.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That alternative options for the proposed redevelopment of Brighouse bus station be presented to a future meeting of the Working Group.
- (c) That the Working Group support the proposed initial development work required for the Castleford Interchange proposals and note that approval for the necessary funding be sought from the Authority.