

AGENDA ITEM NO: 4

WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

AT A MEETING OF THE WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY HELD IN WELLINGTON HOUSE ON FRIDAY 10 FEBRUARY 2006

PRESENT: Councillor K Hussain (Chair)

Councillors J Akhtar, D Blackburn, M Bower, R Downes, C Greaves,
K Iqbal, J Jarosz, S King, J Lewis, P McBride, G Phelps,
J Prestage, K Rhodes, D Schofield, C Townley, P Wadsworth,
G Wainwright, M Walker and A Wallace

87. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S Khan and M Lyons.

It was reported that Councillor Lyons was unable to attend the meeting due to the illness of his wife, Marlene.

RESOLVED - That best wishes be sent to Councillor and Mrs Lyons.

88. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

89. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE AUTHORITY HELD ON 18 NOVEMBER 2005

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2005 be approved and signed by the Chair.

90. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PTA BUDGET BRIEFING MEETING HELD ON 9 DECEMBER 2005

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting of the PTA Budget Briefing meeting held on 9 December 2005 be approved.

91. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PTA SEMINAR ON THE TRANSPORT VISION HELD ON 12 DECEMBER 2005

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting of the PTA seminar held on 12 December 2005 be approved.

92. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE APPOINTED MEMBERS HELD ON 9 DECEMBER 2005

The Director General reported on the success of the Free Leeds City Centre bus service, which in its first week made 10,000 passenger journeys. He also indicated that discussions were still ongoing with Leeds City Council and the business sector regarding the future funding of the service.

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting of the Appointed Members held on 9 December 2005 be approved.

93. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUS WORKING GROUP HELD ON 16 NOVEMBER 2005

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting of the Bus Working Group held on 16 November 2005 be noted.

94. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONCESSIONARY FARES WORKING GROUP HELD ON 25 NOVEMBER 2005

In response to a question raised regarding cross boundary travel, it was proposed that, subject to funding, cross boundary travel arrangements on buses would be continued. In order to simplify the process it was proposed that senior citizens and disabled people would be allowed to travel free on all journeys that cross the West Yorkshire boundary. At the present time further travel would not be allowed, although discussions were ongoing with neighbouring authorities and it was hoped that in the future free travel would be extended into these areas.

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting of the Concessionary Fares Working Group held on 25 November 2005 be noted.

95. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TENDERED SERVICES WORKING GROUP HELD ON 30 NOVEMBER 2005 AND 11 JANUARY 2006

The Authority expressed their grave concerns at the implications of the service changes, which had taken place in Wakefield and North Kirklees. They were encouraged that Metro was continuing discussions with Arriva, which had already identified solutions to allay some of the problems. However, whilst mitigating some of the impact of the service reduction, Members were concerned that the remaining service withdrawals would have a significant impact on passengers with many communities being without a service or a severely restricted/irregular service.

In response, the Director General indicated that the service withdrawals created concerns for delivery of the Authority's Bus Strategy and for the LTP Accessibility Targets.

He went on to suggest that Arriva be invited to attend a meeting of the Authority's Bus Working Group to present its approach for improving services.

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meetings of the Tendered Services Working Group held on 30 November 2005 and 11 January 2006 be noted.

96. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SUPERTRAM WORKING GROUP HELD ON 1 DECEMBER 2005

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting of the Supertram Working Group held on 1 December 2005 be noted.

97. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RAIL WORKING GROUP HELD ON 6 DECEMBER 2005

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting of the Rail Working Group held on 6 December 2005 be noted.

98. MINUTES OF THE PCC SEMINAR ON THE TRANSPORT VISION HELD ON 8 DECEMBER 2005

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the PCC seminar on the Transport Vision held on 8 December 2005 be noted.

99. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT GROUP HELD ON 9 DECEMBER 2005

Members were informed that a seminar on the WYTESA scheme would be held in the very near future.

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting of the Business Improvement Group held on 9 December 2005 be noted.

100. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT WORKING GROUP HELD ON 13 DECEMBER 2005

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting of the Development and Environment Working Group held on 13 December 2005 be noted.

101. PASSENGER CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES

Councillor Iqbal raised the issue regarding lack of toilet facilities at Batley and Cleckheaton bus stations.

It was agreed that the issue of toilet facilities at some of West Yorkshire bus stations be considered by the Facilities Working Group.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the minutes of the meeting of the Leeds Passenger Consultative Committee held on 16 January 2006 be noted.
- (b) That the minutes of the meeting of the Kirklees Passenger Consultative Committee held on 18 January 2006 be noted.
- (c) That the minutes of the meeting of the Wakefield Passenger Consultative Committee held on 19 January 2006 be noted.
- (d) That the minutes of the meeting of the Bradford Passenger Consultative Committee held on 20 January 2006 be noted.
- (e) That minutes of the meeting of the Calderdale Passenger Consultative Committee held on 24 January 2006 be noted.

102. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN STEERING GROUP HELD ON 30 JANUARY 2006

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting of the Local Transport Plan Steering Group held on 30 January 2006 be noted.

103. ITEM SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR LYONS - CONCERN REGARDING THE INCREASING NUMBER OF COMMERCIAL SERVICES BEING WITHDRAWN THROUGHOUT WEST YORKSHIRE

In the absence of Councillor Lyons the item submitted by Councillor Lyons under Standing Order 3 (3) was withdrawn.

104. AUTHORITY AND EXECUTIVE REVENUE BUDGET 2005/6 AND 2006/7

The Authority considered a report of the Chief Financial Officer and Director General on the 2005/6 and 2006/7 budget.

The Chairman spoke on the proposed budget for 2006/07 and reminded the Authority that the strategy put forward at the pre budget meeting continued the previously agreed approach with the exception of the changes to the Concessionary Fares scheme, which was required by the Chancellor's Statement in 2005 giving free bus travel to the elderly and disabled.

He reminded Members of the 3 year strategy whereby the £5 million which had been accrued by the Executive had been transferred back to the Districts in 2005 and in return the Districts had guaranteed a 4% increase per annum

for 2005/06, 2006/07 and 2007/08. Apart from the 4% increase in the levy, it was proposed that an additional sum be added to the levy to meet the Government's required change to the Concessionary Fares scheme.

The Chairman reported that in view of the fact that each district was receiving an additional Government grant to cover their element of the concessionary fares cost, the actual effect on the level of the Council tax charged to householders was 4% in line with the PTA's 3 year strategy.

Concerning the subsidised bus services, the Chairman indicated that it was essential for the Tendered Services Working Group to continue to scrutinise all tenders to achieve value for money but at the same time retain socially necessary services. In reporting the very serious problem of rising industry costs, he commented that by adopting this procedure and working closely with operators, Metro had managed to keep its tender award costs below the national average, which was 16%.

Concerning AccessBus, the Chairman reported that the budget had been increased at the rate of inflation. He also indicated that the recent accessibility review had highlighted the increasing demand for AccessBuses. A review of the service would be overseen by the Bus and Tendered Services Working Groups. Apart from considering alternative strategies for AccessBus it would also be addressing Members' concerns regarding the use of taxis, which had increased significantly over the last few years.

In the absence of Councillor Lyons and with the agreement of the Authority, Councillor Phelps proposed an alternative budget on behalf of the Labour Group. He commented that the Labour Group had withdrawn the recommendation in their report regarding AccessBus services including the increasing use of taxis. In presenting the Alternative Budget he welcomed the increase to the Tendered Services budget, but it was his group's opinion that this should be boosted even further by using the underspend of £500,000 which had been previously reported and also by instructing officers to find appropriate savings of a further £500,000 which would allow a real change to tendered services. He stressed that over the last couple of years considerable tendered mileage had been lost and commercial services had been withdrawn creating gaps in the bus network, which had left many communities without a bus service.

In recommending the Alternative Budget, Councillor Phelps indicated that the revenue should be a 'one off' increase and that they continued to support the methods used by Metro to encourage operators to commercialise as much of the mileage as possible, negotiate on tenders and reorganise services to ensure that they are more attractive financially.

Councillor McBride also reported on the very poor performance of the bus operators who were consistently not reaching the standards laid down in Metro's Strategy for both tendered and commercial services. It was the impression of the Labour Group that they were continually failing in their duty to provide a good reliable bus service and that the PTA should send a clear message to the operators by expediting the introduction of quality contracts with the Government.

In response, the Director General indicated that after seeking legal advice he would be extremely reluctant to support, at this stage, any resolution for the introduction of Quality Contracts. He went on to say that even if the Members were minded to approve the resolution for Quality Contracts the Authority would have to demonstrate this action was the only way of implementing their Bus Strategy. He emphasised that by delaying the decision until Metro's Bus Strategy was completed, Members would then be in a much better position to debate the case for Quality Contracts at a future meeting.

The Authority would also need to be clear about its objectives, which had to be justifiable and well drafted as any application for Quality Contracts would be almost certainly challenged by the operators. He reported that Quality Contracts would be subject to approval by the Secretary of State for Transport and even if the Authority was successful there was every possibility that it would be extremely difficult to find big operators who would be prepared to submit Quality Contracts.

Prior to taking a vote clarification was given by the Solicitor and Secretary on the legal position on the motion which was proposed by Councillor McBride and which did not appear on the agenda prior to the meeting taking place.

After discussions, a vote was first taken on Agenda Item 23b. The result was as follows:

FOR	6
AGAINST	14

Which was then followed by a vote on Agenda Item 23a. The result was as follows:

FOR	14
AGAINST	6

RESOLVED -

(A) Revenue Budgets

- (i)** That the Authority's budget for 2005/06 and 2006/07, as submitted, be approved.
- (ii)** That the Executive's budget for 2005/06 and 2006/07, as submitted, be approved.
- (iii)** That the implications of the budgets, as detailed in the submitted report, be noted.
- (iv)** That the Passenger Transport Executive be authorised to use the Authority's grant in accordance with the Capital and Revenue budgets, subject to the provision that the following require the specific prior approval of the Authority, as defined in paragraph 11 of the submitted report:

- All capital commitments.
- All releases from the Contingency Fund.
- All virements as defined in the submitted report.

(B) Levy

- (i) That, in accordance with the powers contained in the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (as amended) and the Transport Levying Bodies Regulations 1992, and having regard to the requirements of the Passenger Transport Authority, a levy of £87.301m be determined for the year ended 31 March 2007.
- (ii) That the Chief Financial Officer be authorised to issue the Levy in respect of the financial year ending 31 March 2007 to the five District Councils in West Yorkshire.
- (iii) That the payment of the levy be agreed with each District Council on the basis of 10 equal consecutive monthly instalments commencing in April 2006.
- (iv) That approval be given to a payment of £3.6m being made to the District Councils in accordance with the table in paragraph 3 of the submitted report.

(C) Revenue Grant to the Executive

- (i) That, in accordance with Section 4(i) Transport Act 1983, revenue grants up to the sum of £133.2m be made to the Passenger Transport Executive in 2006/07 (to include the Government rail and rural bus grants, which are to be adjusted later to reflect the actual receipts by the Authority).
- (ii) That the Authority direct the PTE under Section 11(3A) of the Transport Act 1968 to finance any deficit in 2006/07 by an appropriation from their reserves.

(D) Concessionary Fares

That the recommendations for changes to the Concessionary Fares Scheme as set out in Appendix D of the submitted report be approved.

(E) Capital Programme

- (i) That the position of the local transport allocation [SCE(R)] be noted in relation to the Authority's schemes and that the Executive be authorised to explore other methods of supplementing LTP resources.
- (ii) That the Chief Financial Officer be authorised to arrange appropriate funding for all expenditure in 2005/06 and 2006/07, subject to statutory limitation and subsequent reporting back to the Authority.

- (iii) That expenditure on the capital schemes, set out in paragraph 9 of the submitted report, be approved.
- (iv) That grants and other external funding be sought wherever possible to maximise funds available to the Authority.
- (v) That no uncommitted capital schemes be commenced without the approval of the Authority, who shall also determine the method of funding.

(F) Treasury Management

That in accordance with Appendix B of the submitted report:-

- (i) That the adoption of the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Public Services be reaffirmed.
- (ii) That the Treasury Management policy, as outlined in Appendix B of the submitted report, be approved.
- (iii) That the overall capital programme and prudential limits for the next 3 years, set out in Appendix B of the submitted report, be adopted as follows:
 - i Operational boundary as shown.
 - ii Authorised Limit as shown.
 - iii Maturity Loan structure as shown.
 - iv A variable rate loan limit of 40%.
 - v A fixed rate loan limit of 100%.
- (iv) That the short-term investment criteria be approved.

105. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED - That the press and public now be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that if they were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information defined in Part 1 (paragraph 9) of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972.

106. UNIT 3 DEWSBURY BUS STATION

The Authority considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on proposed terms for a new lease in respect of Unit 3 at Dewsbury Bus Station.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That approval be given to the granting of a lease to Stanley Gath Coaches limited, subject to the terms outlined in paragraph 2 of the submitted report.

- (b) That the Passenger Transport Executive be authorised to carry out the necessary documentation.

107. LEASE IN RESPECT OF CREW ROOM AT HUDDERSFIELD BUS STATION

The Authority considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on proposed terms for a new lease in respect of a unit at Huddersfield Bus Station.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That approval be given to the granting of a lease to Yorkshire Traction Company Limited, subject to the terms outlined in paragraph 2 of the submitted report.
- (b) That the Passenger Transport Executive be authorised to carry out the necessary documentation.