

AGENDA ITEM NO: 10

WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY/ DISTRICT COUNCILS

AT A MEETING OF THE EDUCATION LIAISON GROUP HELD AT WELLINGTON HOUSE ON MONDAY 27 FEBRUARY 2006

PRESENT:	Councillor D Blackburn	-	(Chair)
	Councillor M Bower	-	WYPTA
	Councillor C Greaves	-	WYPTA
	Councillor S Khan	-	WYPTA
	Councillor M McCabe	-	Bradford MDC
	Councillor S Bentley	-	Leeds CC
	Councillor J Kershaw	-	Wakefield MDC
Officers in Attendance:	N Parker	-	Education Bradford
	P Oldroyd	-	Calderdale MBC
	C Perkin	-	Education Leeds
	A Hudson	-	Education Leeds
	N Holt	-	Metro
	A Pilling	-	Metro
	R Chaplin	-	WYPTA

14. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from the Education Department at Wakefield MDC.

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

16. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 5 September 2005 be approved.

17. THE SAFEMARK AWARDS SCHEME PROGRESS REPORT

The Liaison Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on progress on the development of the SAFEMark Awards Scheme in West Yorkshire.

Members noted the schools currently participating in the scheme. A further 11 schools would be invited to begin working on the SAFEMark award during the remainder of the academic year. The progress with Junior SAFEMark was noted. It was reported that a teaching resource had been developed and positive feedback had been received from schools that had used the resource.

It was reported that following changes to the Young Persons PhotoCard scheme, Metro was encouraging selected secondary schools in the SAFEMark scheme to become agents and issue the cards in order to make them easier to obtain. It was noted that 5 schools were interested in piloting the scheme and further discussions would be held with the LEAs. A progress report would be prepared for the next meeting of the Group.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

18. EDUCATION WHITE PAPER

The Liaison Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive updating members on the progress and possible transport implications of the recent Government White Paper.

Members noted the proposals included in the White Paper and the likely implications. It was reported that Metro had been in discussion with the LEAs and other District Council Officers but more detail on the proposals was required before the implications for additional bus services, costs, impact on mode shift and congestion could be understood. A report would be prepared for a future meeting of the Liaison Group when further information became available.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

19. EDUCATION TRANSPORT – MONITORING ISSUES UPDATE

The Liaison Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive updating members on monitoring issues.

It was reported that following the appointments to the new Education Transport Monitoring team, staff had received training and significant progress had been made in the development of the section. It was noted that a full monitoring programme would be implemented at the start of the 2006/7 academic year which would highlight areas of good practice and detail actions that had been taken to address areas of concern. The monitoring team had also been investigating the potential to strengthen procedures for undertaking CRB checks with PSV drivers and the expansion of the checks to cover all West Yorkshire bus drivers.

The Liaison Group welcomed the introduction of the monitoring team but expressed concern regarding the lack of customer care shown by some taxi

drivers. It was noted that all the contracts were awarded by tender and that any new firms who were successful in their application to tender were visited by Metro to emphasise the level of customer care required. It was suggested that transport services provided by voluntary or community groups, some of whom have specially adapted vehicles available, could offer high quality customer care and be used as an alternative to taxis and minibuses. It was noted that contracts had previously been awarded to community transport operators and Metro was in discussion with Yorkshire Forward regarding capacity building in this sector. A progress report would be prepared for the next meeting.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That a progress report be prepared for the next meeting of the Group.

20. SCHOOL TENDER TIMETABLE 2006

The Liaison Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the timetable for the tendering of school services for the 2006/7 academic year.

It was noted that the proposed programme which was attached to the report comprised mainly of the renewal of taxi/minibus services in each of the Agency Districts. The majority of conventional 'big bus' contracts would continue on longer term contracts and the number due for renewal could, therefore, be accommodated within a single tender batch.

It was reported that in addition to the annual renewal programme, it would also be necessary to issue and award contracts for the 60 Yellow Bus vehicles included within Phase 3 of the MyBus scheme.

RESOLVED - That the Tender Programme attached to the report be noted.

21. MYBUS UPDATE

The Liaison Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on progress of the MyBus project.

Members noted that the second phase of the project was progressing well and the DfT had approved funding to cover Phase 3 of the project which would provide a further 60 buses with £7 million available in 2006/7. The release of funding was conditional upon satisfactory evaluation of Phases 1 and 2 of the scheme. The DfT had agreed that £0.504 million would be allocated to a new fourth year, 2007/8, to enable the final school clusters to be fully implemented and monitored. This would allow for the extended implementation timescales necessary to ensure that the Phase 3 schemes fully satisfied the service criteria.

The Liaison Group noted the methods of monitoring services and were advised that in general patronage had been good. However, some primary services had been identified with low usage and marketing initiatives had been introduced to promote these services. If no significant increase in usage could be generated, Metro would need to consider their withdrawal and opportunities would be explored to reutilise the buses at other schools.

Members discussed the financial benefits of hiring the vehicles for journeys other than home to school transport. Private hire utilisation was increasing and the expanded fleet would increase opportunities in the future. Use for recreational services would also be considered as the number of buses in the fleet increased.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That the DfT announcement regarding Phase 3 funding and additional Year 4 be noted.
- (b) That progress on the implementation of Phase 2 and the development of Phase 3 be noted.
- (c) That the process for monitoring and managing primary services be noted.