

WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

**AT A MEETING OF THE TENDERED SERVICES WORKING GROUP
HELD IN WELLINGTON HOUSE ON
WEDNESDAY 9 JANUARY 2008**

PRESENT: Councillor T Brice (Chair)

Councillors D Congreve, R Downes, K Rhodes and G Wainwright

72. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor G Phelps.

73. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor R Downes declared a personal interest in minute 78 with regard to Yeadon bus services, being a ward member for the Yeadon (part) area.

74. MINUTES

Boxing Day Bus Services

The Working Group welcomed initial indications that Boxing Day services in Leeds and Huddersfield had proved to be very well used carrying 30,000-35,000 passengers. They had met approximately one third of their cost reducing the passenger cost to approximately £2 per journey. It was suggested that a press release be prepared highlighting the success of the services.

Comment was made that further analysis of the services would be carried out with a view to preparing a report for a future meeting.

It was also reported that usage on the FreeCity/Town buses had been very disappointing and that it was extremely unlikely that the service would be provided on Boxing Day in the future.

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2007 be approved.

75. RENEWAL OF BUS SERVICE TENDERS

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the renewal of tenders in Batch 346 for services predominantly operated by Arriva and Stagecoach in the Wakefield area.

It was reported that a value for money review of tenders had been carried out. The review had identified 27,822 miles (4%) which would be withdrawn due to low usage and a further 72,063 miles (10%) to be discontinued as they were carrying over 20 passengers per trip. A rationalisation of tendered mileage on services had been undertaken to give clearer demarcation to parts of the timetable which were tendered and those that were commercial. This had led to a minor increase in mileage on some services resulting in a 13% decrease in tendered mileage.

The Working Group were also advised that the following services would be advertised separately to seek to attract more competitive bids.

- Service 153 – Rothwell and Castleford including the extension of some trips to Morley
- South Wakefield services currently operated by Stagecoach
- Huddersfield – Lepton – Wakefield service to include the Sunday operation of service 231 (Wakefield-Netherton) within Batch 446.

RESOLVED - That tenders be sought as detailed in the submitted report, as being consistent with the Authority's policy for the provision of local bus services.

76. RENEWAL OF BUS SERVICE TENDERS – WAKEFIELD/KIRKLEES DISTRICTS

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the renewal of tenders in Batch 446 comprising early morning, evening and Sunday services between Huddersfield, Mirfield and Wakefield which were currently operated by Stagecoach and due to expire on 27 April 2008.

It was reported that in accordance with Metro's '6 and 20' usage criteria, a review had been carried out which had identified that only one Sunday trip between Huddersfield and Mirfield should be withdrawn due to low usage.

RESOLVED - That tenders be sought as detailed in the submitted report, as being consistent with the Authority's policy for the provision of local bus services.

77. SUPPLEMENTARY FUNDING FOR TENDERED BUS SERVICES

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on supplementary funding for tendered bus services from the approved budget for 2007/08 for the Calderdale and Wakefield areas.

Calderdale

Members were advised that preliminary work had been carried out on providing a circular service between Halifax town centre and Halifax Royal Infirmary. The service would provide links to Calderdale College and areas of high density housing in West Halifax which did not have a direct service to the hospital. It was reported that tenders would be sought on a deminimis basis to operate a weekday service between 8am and 5pm with the option of providing a Saturday daytime service.

Comment was also made that the service would be operated on a one year trial basis and that continuation of the service would be dependent on the service meeting the adopted criteria with regard to patronage, accessibility, modal shift and access to health.

Wakefield

The Working Group was advised that discussions were continuing with the Wakefield PTA members to identify any possible appropriate schemes for their District.

RESOLVED - That tenders be invited for a one year trial bus service in Calderdale as detailed in the submitted report, as being consistent with the Authority's policy for the provision of local bus services.

78. IMPACT OF RECENT BUS SERVICE CHANGES

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the impact of recent changes to local bus services in the Holme Valley, Yeadon and Brighouse and North Kirklees areas.

Holme Valley

Members were advised that Metro was continuing to monitor the operation of services particularly school time services. As a result of local concern, minor retimings would be introduced to improve punctuality. Other problems including drivers charging wrong fares and the use of single decked buses instead of double decked buses had been rectified.

Comment was also made that although services H8 and H9 now provided links to the Jackson Bridge/New Mill area on a 'use it or lose it' basis, the area was unserved on weekends and evenings. As a result of discussions with First, variations to their service 313 on an evening and weekends would provide a service to the area with effect from the January service changes date.

Yeadon Area

The Working Group were informed that the services changes in November 2007 had resulted in widespread complaints, particularly amongst the elderly and those with mobility problems, regarding the additional walking distances now involved to access their local bus services.

Following a recent public meeting, options to remodel the local network to restore services to the affected areas could be subject to further local consultation. The Group endorsed the proposed adoption of a short term solution to provide an additional off peak bus service to restore those local links whilst the consultation exercise was completed.

Brighouse and North Kirklees

It was reported that, as a result of service changes which were taking place on 27 January 2008, significant local concern had been received from residents in Brighouse, Elland and Rastrick areas regarding the loss of Service X25 to/from Leeds.

Following discussions with the operator, Arriva had now agreed to provide 3 morning and 3 afternoon peak time services to mitigate some of the concerns raised.

The Working Group noted that changes to services impacted on many local communities. It was suggested that Local Area Committees, Town/Parish Councils etc, should be consulted prior to the implementation of any changes. Members were advised that Metro was currently developing a consultation protocol and that this would be reported to a future meeting of the Group.

The Working Group also noted that the new MetroLocal bus schemes offered an opportunity to address local access issues. They requested that a report on the roll out of the scheme in Kirklees District be brought to a future meeting.

RESOLVED - That the Working Group note the actions taken in response to bus service changes, as detailed in the submitted report.