

WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

**AT A MEETING OF THE BUS WORKING GROUP
HELD AT WELLINGTON HOUSE ON
MONDAY 8 OCTOBER 2007**

PRESENT: Councillor D Congreve (Chair)
Councillors T Brice, C Campbell, J Jarosz and G Wainwright

8. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor K Rhodes.

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 19 September 2007 be approved.

11. ACCESSBUS UPDATE

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive providing an update on the AccessBus service.

AccessBus Operating Contracts

It was reported that all five existing operators had agreed to continue to run the service. The extension of contracts to 2009 gave an opportunity to implement and evaluate the MetroLocal service and enable further consideration of the repositioning of the AccessBus service.

Replacement AccessBus Vehicles

The Working Group welcomed the positive feedback from customers and operators following the introduction of 7 new slim line low floor Optare Solo vehicles in April 2007.

Comment was also made that, in view of the fact that the original Solo vehicles were now entering their eighth year in service, an evaluation exercise was currently being carried out, to assess various options including a short term refurbishment programme or their replacement.

AccessBus Customer Entitlement

It was reported that the document setting out guidance to passengers on when they are able to use AccessBus had been revised. Members were also advised that other AccessBus publicity was being updated aimed at giving clarity to customers on what they can expect from the service.

The Working Group indicated that in parts the Guidance Note should highlight the positive aspects of the service. They requested that this matter be considered in the preparation of the final publicity material.

RESOLVED -

- (a)** That the report be noted.
- (b)** That AccessBus documentation be amended to reflect the comments expressed by the Group.

12. TENDERED BUS SERVICES - CONDITIONS OF CONTRACT

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive and were given a presentation setting out proposals to update the contractual obligations relating to tendered bus services.

It was reported that the objective of the review was to ensure that the provision of tendered bus services was more closely aligned to the service quality/delivery standards, which link with the Local Transport Plan, Metro's Bus Strategy and Disability Discrimination Act.

The Working Group were advised that a target date of 2010/11 had been set to:-

- secure improved standards and a timescale to uplift service quality
- revise tendering procedures to enable bids to be evaluated on the basis of quality
- introduce new service quality standards
- revise the contract compliance scheme to accommodate the revised quality standards and real time monitoring
- update and simplify the General Conditions Of Contract
- amend tender documentation to accommodate the above changes

Consultation was already being undertaken with bus operators to discuss the review including new features within the existing conditions of contract. It was planned to introduce the new requirements for all contracts in April 2008 and

that final proposals would be presented to a future meeting of the Bus and Tendered Services Working Groups for approval.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That officers be thanked for their presentation.

13. MYBUS UPDATE ON PRIMARY SCHOOL SERVICES WITH LOW USAGE

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive giving up to date patronage figures on the following 5 primary schools with low usage patronage levels.

Iqra Primary School, Bradford
Thornbury Primary School, Bradford
Myrtle Park and Trinity All Saints, Bingley
St Joseph's, Otley
Old Earth Primary School, Elland

It was reported that although further marketing exercises had been undertaken to promote the services, patronage had not improved. Whilst recognising that the services should be withdrawn, members were of the opinion that they should operate until Easter to allow parents to secure alternative travel arrangements for their children, particularly because of the dark mornings/evenings and the adverse winter weather conditions.

RESOLVED - That officers continue to market the services and that if the service levels do not reach the agreed patronage levels the services be withdrawn at Easter 2008.