

## **AGENDA ITEM NO: 7**

### **WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY**

#### **AT A MEETING OF THE BUS WORKING GROUP HELD AT WELLINGTON HOUSE ON WEDNESDAY 22 JUNE 2005**

**PRESENT:** Councillor J Lewis (Chair)  
Councillors P McBride, D Schofield and G Wainwright

#### **36. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors K Rhodes and C Townley.

#### **37. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

#### **38. MINUTES**

Further to minute 34, Members sought clarification on the method of consultation which had been used to identify potential schemes for the Calderdale area to be submitted to the Kickstart competition. Members were advised that the potential schemes had been developed from ideas that had been received from Councillors, PCC Members and local bus operators.

**RESOLVED** - That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 May 2005 be approved.

#### **39. KICKSTART**

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive seeking approval to the projects to be submitted to the Department for Transport's current Kickstart competition.

It was reported that detailed discussions had been held with operators to refine the initial list of schemes which met the DfT's criteria. Members noted that Metro proposed to submit the following bids:

- Bradford (First) - Extension of Service 636/637 Orange Line
- Kirklees (First) - Extension of Holme Valley Services to Huddersfield Rail Station
- Leeds (First) - Extend Night Bus network
- Wakefield / Kirklees (Arriva) - X34

Members were advised that all of the bids were seeking capital and revenue support for an initial 3 year period, with operators making a commitment to run services on a commercial basis after the end of the funding period. All of the schemes were aimed at patronage growth and demonstrated strong links with the Local Transport Plan objectives.

**RESOLVED** - That Metro's bids to the 2005 Department for Transport Kickstart process be endorsed.

#### **40. PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PARTNERSHIPS**

Members noted that several Task and Finish Groups aimed at identifying a way forward with key issues affecting the provision of bus services had been introduced through the Bus Partnership Forum. One of these groups concentrated on bus service punctuality and recommended the formation of partnerships between bus operators, highway and transport authorities/PTEs to identify and address the issues which affected bus service reliability and punctuality.

Members were advised that these partnerships, known as 'Performance Improvement Partnerships' (PIPs), would set targets against an agreed monitoring methodology and would establish action plans for all partners to secure improved service punctuality and reliability.

It was reported that Local Transport Plan guidance recommended the adoption of PIPs as a practical means by which the LTP target for bus punctuality could be met. There was a clear incentive for both operators and PTEs to establish effective PIPs.

The Group noted that a model PIP would be discussed with operators in July and, once agreed, a process of target setting and action planning would proceed. The outcome of this work would be reported to the Group together with performance and progress against the targets agreed. The PIP benchmarks would initially be based upon current observations, however it was intended that a new methodology based upon the real time data would be introduced in due course.

**RESOLVED** -

- (a) That Members noted the work undertaken to develop PIPs.

- (b) That a further report be presented to the Group detailing the targets and action plans established in PIPs with bus operators in West Yorkshire.

#### 41. **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 (Paragraphs 7 and 9) of schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972.

#### 42. **YELLOW BUS – VEHICLE PURCHASE**

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive reviewing the vehicle options for delivery of Phase 2 of the yellow bus project and approve the selection of the preferred supplier.

Members noted that investigations had identified four manufacturers that would be able to supply appropriate low floor vehicles. The manufacturers were:

- BMC (UK)
- Optare
- Alexander Dennis
- Wright Volvo

Following initial evaluation of the vehicles available from each manufacturer, the options from Wright Volvo and Optare had been rejected on price and value for money considerations. Further evaluation of the Alexander Dennis and BMC products had concluded that the SLF vehicle offered by BMC was the preferred product.

Members noted that the SLF was a vehicle that was currently operating in the UK and that the reliability of this vehicle had been excellent. The SLF also met with the vehicle specification that was being sought.

Members discussed an e-mail which Councillor Townley had sent expressing her concerns regarding the decision to purchase Turkish vehicles, rather than British ones, based on the up front price. The Group were particularly concerned about the after sales support, the availability of parts and service network and the potential cost of future management time in resolving rectification issues for the SLF vehicles. The Group were advised that BMC had reached agreement with LEX to provide a 24 hour support service. BMC had also confirmed an agreement with Northern Commercial to provide engineering support. These issues were a key consideration in the contract negotiation with BMC.

**RESOLVED -**

- (a) That the Group noted the current position regarding vehicle purchase for the MyBus project.
- (b) That PTA approval be sought to capital expenditure for Phase 2 of the MyBus project.

**43. ACCESSBUS VEHICLES**

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive seeking approval to the replacement of life expired Accessbus vehicles.

It was reported that following the Best Value Review of Accessible Transport, approval was sought to implement a vehicle replacement programme through the use of Local Transport Plan funding. The replacement programme would involve the replacement of 15 tail-lift buses purchased before 1997/1998.

The proposed replacement programme would consist of 2 phases. Phase 1 would include the replacement of 8 vehicles during 2005/2006 and Phase 2 would include the replacement of the remaining 7 vehicles during 2006/2007.

The Group were advised that tenders were invited from 8 companies with bids being obtained from 2 manufacturers, Optare and Mellor Coachcraft. It was reported that the vehicle offering the best value for money was the 'Sprinter' vehicle offered by Mellor Coachcraft. Approval was therefore sought to acquire 15 of these vehicles.

It was noted that the order would be for the initial 8 buses with an option for the second phase delivery being based on the performance of Phase 1 buses.

**RESOLVED** - That the Authority be asked to approve expenditure to replace the life expired Accessbus vehicles as set out in the attached report.