

WEST YORKSHIRE INTEGRATED TRANSPORT AUTHORITY
AT A MEETING OF THE BRADFORD PASSENGER CONSULTATIVE
COMMITTEE HELD AT CITY HALL, BRADFORD
ON THURSDAY 4 JUNE 2009

PRESENT: Councillor A Hawkesworth (Chair)

WYITA

C Greaves

PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES

Andrew Jewsbury Keith Renshaw
John Prestage Andrew Wowk

BRADFORD MDC

J Dodds
J Watmough

Also in attendance

D Alexander - First Leeds
R Harris - First Leeds

Observers

Councillor D Green - Bradford MDC
Councillor D Smith - Bradford MDC
N Featham - Arriva Yorkshire
K Harbourne - Bradford Community Broadcasting
M Meneaud - Telegraph and Argus
L J Clough - Observer
M Palliser - Observer
D Spencer - Observer
K A Webster - Observer
R Wilkes - Observer

22. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S Khan and D Robinson (WYITA) and public representatives Mr M Chappell, Mr G Lakin, Mr G Peacock, Rev G Reid and Mr C Walters.

23. JULY BUS SERVICE REDUCTIONS

The Committee considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive advising members of changes to commercial local bus services registered by First in the District.

It was reported that changes to First commercial services had been registered for implementation on 18 July 2009. Mr Alexander advised that it was necessary to undertake these changes due to the current economic climate and significant reductions in patronage levels. It was noted that the changes proposed by First had very significant and wide ranging impacts in the District. On a wider basis they would also affect the delivery of LTP patronage, mode shift and congestion targets. It was stressed that Metro would be unable to financially support all the deregistered services and had, therefore, made strong representations to First seeking to address some of the issues, which would arise.

Discussions ensued regarding current patronage levels with Metro's latest data to December 2008 demonstrating no change overall only in bus use. Despite repeated requests for patronage figures First had failed to supply the requested data. In response, Mr Alexander confirmed that the overall passenger figures had not decreased. However, changes in travel patterns within certain users groups, such as concessionary fare pass holders, had significantly affected revenue generation. He confirmed that data relating to the specific service withdrawals/changes had been supplied to Metro, but that dated relating to the wider performance of the company would not be provided.

The Committee and members of the public expressed extreme disappointment at the lack of consultation prior to the proposed cuts to commercial services. They were very concerned at the impact they would have on people, particularly those who relied on buses to make essential journeys, such as the elderly and non-car users/owners, as well as seriously affecting links to employment. Members expressed concerns about the proposed changes to Services 613, 653 and 675/77, which would seriously affect areas including Moor Avenue, Cottingley, Nab Wood, Windhill, Otley and Menston. In this respect, Mr Harris confirmed that negotiations were presently ongoing between First and Metro with regard to exploring options to retain some aspects of these services.

Negotiations would continue with First to seek to mitigate the impact of the changes although it would be impossible to meet all the demands for reinstatement. In this respect, individual views and issues expressed by the Committee, Bradford councillors and members of the public were extensively debated with First.

The Chair of the Committee advised members that, in view of the proposed changes by First, Bradford Council's Executive Committee had recently agreed to defer implementation of the Council's Bus Action Plan until further negotiations had been undertaken with the bus company. Whilst the principle of the Plan had been endorsed, implementation would be focussed on corridors served by operators that demonstrated an ongoing commitment to the District. In response, Mr Alexander emphasised the necessity of the Action Plan in order to deliver significant benefits to bus passengers. He stated that if the Plan was deferred then he would consider doing the same

with local investment to introduce 70 new vehicles across the Leeds and Bradford districts over the next 3 months.

Councillor Greaves passed on this thanks to everyone and in particular to Metro officers who would continue discussions with operators in an attempt to mitigate the impact of the changes.

RESOLVED - That the Committee's views on the impact of the July service changes be noted.