

WEST YORKSHIRE INTEGRATED TRANSPORT AUTHORITY
AT A MEETING OF THE TENDERED SERVICES WORKING GROUP
HELD IN WELLINGTON HOUSE ON
WEDNESDAY 4 MARCH 2009

PRESENT: Councillor T Brice (Chair)

Councillors E Firth, G Phelps and A Pinnock

66. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no personal or prejudicial interests declared by members.

67. MINUTES OF A JOINT MEETING OF THE BUS AND TENDERED SERVICES WORKING GROUP

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the joint meeting held on 11 February 2009 be approved.

68. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2009 be approved.

69. AWARD OF BUS SERVICE TENDERS – LEEDS DISTRICT

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the results of tenders received in Batch 470 operated by Transdev (Harrogate & District) for the provision of evening and Sundays journeys on service 770 between Wetherby and Leeds.

It was reported that 2 bids had been received, one of which did not comply with the tender specification. The other bid had been submitted by the existing operator, Transdev. The Working Group were advised that whilst the bid represented a 9.5% increase in cost, it was considered that it still represented value for money. The price was based on a 3 year contract although the operator, Transdev had indicated their intention to review the service in 2010 as they had concerns regarding its financial performance. The award, therefore, provided for a review of the tender price or termination after the first year.

RESOLVED - That the award of the contract to Transdev (Harrogate & District) for the operation of service 770 as detailed in the submitted report be noted as being consistent with the Authority's policy for local bus services.

70. ARRIVA BUS SERVICE CHANGES – NORTH KIRKLEES

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the implications of proposed changes planned by Arriva to their network of services in the North Kirklees area at the end of April 2009.

The Working Group was advised of the issues which had arisen during the consultation process and solutions which had been agreed to mitigate the impact on passengers in the areas listed below.

Members recognised the operator's commercial priorities and expressed their satisfaction at the consultation process undertaken. Members recommended that operators be encouraged to follow Arriva's example of Good Practice when changes were required to their networks in the future.

The Working Group commented that the withdrawal of commercial services was beyond the control of the Authority. Whilst very sympathetic towards passengers' concerns, Metro was extremely limited in what actions it could take to influence the operators.

In particular, concerns remained regarding:

- The loss of a direct service to Leeds for the people of Hunsworth.
- Loss of a direct service between Windy Bank and Huddersfield.
- The reduction in through buses from Brighouse/Clifton to Leeds.

Service 227

It was reported that as part of the consultation process a review of the performance of the tendered elements of the Arriva services had revealed that the evening and Sunday journeys on service 227 between Cleckheaton and Heckmondwike via Gomersal and Firthcliffe had fallen below Metro's criteria for tendered services. On those sections of route not covered by other services, an average of 3 passengers per trip (evenings) and 2 passengers per trip (Sundays) were using the service. Comment was made that a direct link between Cleckheaton and Heckmondwike and an hourly service between Cleckheaton and Gomersal remained. It was therefore proposed to amend the existing contracts by withdrawing that section of the route. The cost saving would be used to provide an off peak extension of daytime service 209 between Birstall and Heckmondwike via Firthcliffe, thereby maintaining a daytime link for Firthcliffe estate. The Working Group recognised that whilst residents would lose an evening and Sunday service, a daytime service threatened by the commercial cuts had been retained.

Replacement Service 63

It was reported that Arriva had now integrated the short term replacement service between Leeds and Drighlington into their revised network which would improve the timetable at peak times and offered a much better integrated service for the Drighlington area.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That the contracts for the evening operation of tendered service 227 be amended to withdraw the service between Heckmondwike and Cleckheaton.
- (b) That the award of a de minimis contract to Arriva for the operation of service 209 between Birstall and Heckmondwike be extended to expire in January 2011 as detailed in the submitted report be noted as being consistent with the Authority's policy for local bus services.
- (c) That the award of a de minimis contract to Arriva for the operation of bus services between Leeds and Drighlington as detailed in the submitted report be noted as being consistent with the Authority's policy for local bus services.
- (d) That Arriva be commended for their consultation exercise on these changes and that other operators be encouraged to adopt a similar approach.

71. BOXING DAY BUS SERVICES

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive regarding the performance of the Boxing Day 2008 services and recommendations for the planning of services over Christmas 2009.

It was reported that the service had attracted 57,900 passengers which was a 55% increase over the previous year. In welcoming the success of the services, the Working Group were extremely encouraged by the high patronage levels to St James' Hospital and Huddersfield Royal Infirmary.

The report also highlighted a number of conclusions which had been reached which would be considered when planning Boxing Day services for 2009.

In this respect it was commented that Boxing Day 2009 would fall on a Saturday with a further Bank Holiday on Monday 28 December 2009. This was likely to spread festive activities over a 4 day period and could reduce the demand for Boxing Day travel.

Notwithstanding this the Working Group supported in principle the operation Boxing Day services in 2009. It was agreed that due to the uncertain economic climate the arrangements/level of services should be deferred until later in the year when forecasts of demand would become much clearer.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the performance of the trial of bus services on Boxing Day 2008 be noted.

- (b) That subject to a further report to a future meeting of the Working Group providing detailed arrangements the Group support in principle the provision of Boxing Day services in 2009.

72. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Committee considered a recommendation to exclude the press and public from Agenda Items 9 & 10, which contained exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)) of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

It was recommended that, because disclosure of the reports might prejudice future negotiations due to the commercial confidentiality of tender prices, the public interest would be better served by maintaining the exemption and, therefore, that the press and public should be excluded.

RESOLVED - That, as disclosure could prejudice future negotiations, the press and public be now excluded from Agenda Items 9 & 10.

73. AWARD OF BUS SERVICE TENDERS – KIRKLEES DISTRICT

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on tenders which had been received for Batches 466, 479, 480 and 481 for bus services in the Huddersfield area.

- Batch 466 early morning, evening and Sunday operation of services in the Huddersfield network.
- Batch 479 early morning, evening and Sunday operation of services in the Holme Valley network.
- Batch 480 Huddersfield to Stockmoor rural daytime service.
- Batch 481 Huddersfield to Scapegoat Hill rural daytime service.

A summary of the bids received was outlined in the report for members' consideration.

Batches 466 and 479

Members were extremely disappointed that only one bid had been received from First to operate services in Batches 466 and 479. They expressed their utmost concern at the high cost increases which in their opinion could not be justified, particularly when it was public money and would put further pressure on the Authority's tendered services budget. It was considered that further discussions and review should be undertaken in order to achieve better value for money from this award.

Batch 480

It was reported of the two bids submitted that from Centrebus trading as Huddersfield Bus Company was the lowest received. The bid secured a 14% saving on existing batch costs.

Batch 481

It was reported that two bids had been submitted by Centrebus trading as Huddersfield Bus Company and First. Whilst the bid submitted by Centrebus was the lowest it still represented a significant increase. The new cost per mile was however considered reasonable compared with other similar services.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That the contracts in respect of Batch 480 and 481 be awarded to Centrebus trading as Huddersfield Bus Company, as detailed in the submitted report, be noted as being consistent with the Authority's policies for the provision of local bus services.
- (b) That further discussions be held with First with regard to Batches 466 and 479 and the outcomes reported to the Working Group.

74. AWARD OF BUS SERVICE TENDERS – BRADFORD DISTRICT

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the award of tenders in Batch 463 for bus services in the Bradford District.

It was reported that the batch comprised of services in the Keighley area operated by Keighley and District and ones in Bradford operated by First.

Members were disappointed that only 2 bids had been received from First and Transdev for the contracts they currently operated.

Transdev

The Working Group was informed that following discussions with the operator minor adjustments to the timetables had resulted in a revised price, which represented a 9.8% increase which was considered acceptable.

First

It was reported that First had submitted individual bids together with a package bid which represented a 23% increase in current costs. A further bid which incorporated revisions to the existing timetable was also submitted which represented a 13% increase. That price was conditional on the adoption of revised timetables for some services which were acceptable.

The revised price was also linked to a further network review scheduled for Summer 2009.

Evening Services - Baildon

Comment was also made that First had identified an anomaly with regard to the operation of Services 657, 658 and 659 whereby the daytime service was tendered and the evening service commercial. The operator had indicated their intention to withdraw the evening journeys from April 2009 as they were no longer financially viable. As a consequence the North and West areas of Baildon would not have a service after 1800 hours and Baildon itself would be reduced to an hourly commercial service.

It was therefore proposed to award a de minimis contract for the evening service to run concurrently with the main Batch 463 contract.

RESOLVED - That the award of contracts, as detailed in the submitted report, be noted as being consistent with the Authority's policies for the provision of tendered local bus services.

75. TIME OF FUTURE MEETINGS

RESOLVED - That future meetings of the Working Group commence at 10.00 am.