

WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

**AT A MEETING OF THE BUS WORKING GROUP
HELD AT WELLINGTON HOUSE ON
MONDAY 16 APRIL 2007**

PRESENT: Councillor D Congreve (Chair)

Councillors C Greaves, P McBride and G Wainwright

11. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Schofield and C Townsley

12. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

13. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 8 January 2007 be approved.

14. PUTTING THE PASSENGER FIRST - UPDATE

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive giving an update on the Government's publication "Putting the Passenger First" and the forthcoming Road Transport Bill which was expected to be published in May.

The Working Group was advised of the further work being undertaken through the Bus Partnership Forum and a number of 'Task and Finish Groups'. Metro was contributing through PTEG to this process.

The Working Group also noted the publication of PTEG's response 'Putting Passengers First', including concern about the role of the Office of Fair Trading (OFT), and comments on a new performance regime, Statutory Quality Partnerships, Quality Contracts, Community Transport and the review of Bus Service Operators' Grant (BSOG).

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

15. BUSINESS CASE FOR QUALITY CONTRACTS

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive and received a presentation on the progress made in the development of a business case for Quality Contracts.

It was reported that the PTA had provisionally approved work on a business case for Quality Contracts. The Group were informed that the key elements of a business case would include:

- Policy Framework
- Objectives and Targets
- Service Specification
- Appraisal of costs, revenue, patronage, economic and environmental benefits

The Working Group was also given a summary of network principles as to how the quality of bus services could be improved. It was pointed out that there would be clear advantages to passengers through local network stability with PTAs being able to better influence and co-ordinate all aspects of the service.

Members were informed that various consultation exercises carried out with passengers consistently revealed that quality encompassed a wide range of issues including network design, reliability, punctuality, service integration and interchange, common ticketing, improved on-street infrastructure, information and marketing as well as the aspects of the service that depended on customer perceptions such as cleanliness, comfort and security and customer care.

The Working Group was advised that a number of issues had been identified which were being explored further through PTEG:

- Guidance to the Traffic Commissioners from DfT
- Operator response
- The Role of DfT in Transport Innovation Fund linked Quality contract submissions
- Provisions on scheme renewal so that business cases need not be resubmitted
- How to build a comprehensive business case for Quality Contracts without comprehensive patronage/revenue data
- The role of smaller operators under franchising and how to safeguard their interests
- Transition arrangements – staff, vehicles and depots including TUPE
- “Operator of last resort” powers for PTEs
- Bond payments by franchisees to protect against default

It was reported that further reports on the development of Quality Contracts would be brought to a future meeting of the Working Group.

RESOLVED -

- (a)** That officers be thanked for their presentation.
- (b)** That further progress reports on the development/business case for Quality Contracts be presented to future meetings of the Working Group.