

WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

**AT A MEETING OF THE TENDERED SERVICES WORKING GROUP
HELD IN WELLINGTON HOUSE ON
MONDAY 8 JANUARY 2007**

PRESENT: Councillor C Townsley (Chair)
Councillors D Congreve, B Hyde, M Slater and G Wainwright

50. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor G Phelps.

51. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

52. MINUTES

Consolidation of Services 207, 208, 128 – Hourly Service Between Dewsbury and Wakefield via Grange Moor

It was reported that a small number of complaints were still being received from residents in the Briestfield area. Members reiterated that in view of the financial constraints and the very low passenger usage the service should continue to operate via Whitley which would be more sustainable in the long term.

Norwood Green

It was reported that following a meeting between the Chair, District Spokesperson and local residents, various options were now being considered to try and restore a limited service to the village.

Emergency Contract – Thorp Arch River Bridge, Boston Spa

It was reported that following representations made on behalf of the Working Group, Leeds City Council had now agreed to meet 50% of the costs to fund a service during the recent emergency works. The Working Group accepted that this was a satisfactory outcome but emphasised the need to ensure that the full costs of bus service provision be included in future schemes.

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2006 be approved.

53. RENEWAL OF BUS SERVICE TENDERS – LEEDS DISTRICT

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the renewal of bus service tenders in the Leeds District.

It was reported that following a thorough review of tenders in the batch a number of individual trips which did not meet Metro's criteria had been withdrawn. In this respect the Working Group were informed that whilst the review had identified the withdrawal of 51,949 miles (2%), this would have only a limited effect on accessibility. A further 8% of mileage had been withdrawn as it met commercial criteria. This was mainly concentrated on the core network in Leeds.

A review of the Horsforth Shopper service had also been carried out. As a result it was proposed to revise the tender specification for a one bus operation. Members were informed that whilst reducing the frequency it gave an opportunity to run the service to Holt Park supermarket which was currently inaccessible to passengers within the Horsforth area. It was proposed to invite tenders for this service as a separate batch as it was hoped that the service would be an attractive operation for smaller operators.

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

54. MISCELLANEOUS TENDERED BUS SERVICE CONTRACTS

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on amendments to various contracts for the operation of tendered bus services.

Service 846

It was reported that Metro was still in the process of consulting various groups, including Bradford PCC on 19 January 2007. Members were advised that to date, feedback on the changes had been very positive and therefore it was proposed to issue a deminimis contract to First to run the revised service in the very near future.

Paragon Business Park – Service Update

The Working Group were informed that despite extensive promotion by Metro and Wakefield MDC, the trial service was attracting on average only 13 passengers per day which fell well below the target performance criteria for the service. Representations had been made to the developers and

Wakefield MDC advising them that on current performance Metro would not be able to sustain the service beyond April 2007.

Quickstep Travel Ltd – Novation Agreement

It was reported that Quickstep Travel, a subsidiary of First West Yorkshire Ltd, was being wound down. First West Yorkshire Ltd had now applied to Metro to formalise the transfer of contracts for tendered bus services from Quickstep Travel Ltd to First West Yorkshire Ltd, together with their rights and responsibilities.

Worth Valley Local Services

It was reported that the “M” network of minibus services currently operating in the Haworth area were operating successfully and it was proposed to extend the contract to April 2008 to facilitate a review of passenger use during the summer period.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That the outcome of the consultation exercise on proposals to amend the Bradford minibus contracts be reported to a future meeting of the Working Group.
- (b) That the current performance of the experimental bus service to Paragon Business Park be noted and that a further report be presented to the Working Group detailing the final outcome of the trial.
- (c) That the assignment of contracts for tendered services from Quickstep Travel Ltd to First West Yorkshire Ltd be noted.
- (d) That the extension of the term of contracts awarded to Tyrer Tours for the “M” network of services in the Worth Valley until April 2008 be noted.

55. WAKEFIELD FREECITYBUS

The Working Group considered a progress report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the proposed development of the Wakefield FreeCityBus in partnership with Wakefield MDC on a 50:50 cost sharing basis.

Members were advised that, subject to Authority approval, the service start was scheduled for early in the 2007/08 financial year.

It was proposed that vehicles would be secured and funded by operator grant under Section 56 of the Transport Act 1968. Members were informed that this approach was desirable and cost effective in view of the trial nature of the service and that it was consistent with the approach adopted for the Leeds and Huddersfield services.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That progress on the development of the Wakefield FreeCityBus be noted.
- (b) That the Authority be recommended to approve the capital expenditure of £373,800 for the purchase of three buses and related items, funded from the Local Transport Plan.
- (c) That the award of the operational contract be considered at a future meeting of the Working Group.

56. SCHOOL TENDER TIMETABLE 2007

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the proposed timetable for the tendering of school services for 2007/2008 academic year.

RESOLVED - That the tender programme as detailed in Appendix 1 of the submitted report be noted.

57. MYBUS BATCH 426 – TENDER EVALUATION

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the results of tenders received in 'My bus' Phase 3 (Batch 426 tenders).

It was reported that 5 operators had submitted tenders for the operation of 21 buses in the Calderdale and Bradford Districts. All tenderers had been interviewed to ensure that they fully met the quality criteria contained in the tender specification. In this respect, comment was made that all operators who submitted the lowest tender price had met the quality criteria and therefore it was proposed to award the contract to the lowest individual bids.

RESOLVED – That the award of contracts as detailed in the submitted report be approved as being consistent with the Authority's policy for Education Transport provision.

58. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Working Group considered a recommendation to exclude the press and public from Agenda Item 10, which contained exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

RESOLVED - It was agreed that because the report contained commercially sensitive information on tenders received, which could also prejudice negotiations in the future, the public interest would be better served by maintaining the exemption and, therefore, the press and public should be excluded.

59. PEGASUS UPDATE

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the award of contracts for services previously operated by Pegasus.com together with an update on the negotiations which had taken place to secure the operation of services between Menston and Otley.

It was reported that two tenders had been received for the operation of Services 960/961/962/963 which formed the network of MetroConnect branded minibuses in Ilkley and Otley. Both bids offered to provide low floor minibuses on the network by Spring 2007 which would restore the quality of services provided by the previous operator.

It was noted that the bids submitted were significantly higher than the previous tenders in 2005 which reflected the additional cost of operation in an area remote from the company's respective bases in Leeds and Silsden. It was proposed that the contract be awarded to the lowest tenderer, First Leeds.

It was reported that First Bradford had agreed to operate Service 967 on the current basis until the service changes date in April 2007. Discussions were still ongoing to integrate the operation of Service 967 into the wider local network which would also include a sustainable network outcome to the travel needs of the nearby High Royds housing development.

RESOLVED -

- (a)** That the award of contracts to First for the operation of services 960, 961, 962 and 963 be noted as being consistent with the Authority's policies for the provision of local bus services.
- (b)** That a report be submitted to a future meeting on the outcome of negotiations regarding Service 967.