

WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

Calderdale Passenger Consultative Committee

DATE: 4 April 2006

AGENDA ITEM NO: 4

SUBJECT: INFORMATION

Report of the Passenger Transport Executive

1. MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION

1.1. Matters of information relating to the Calderdale district.

2. INFORMATION

June – December 2006 Rail Timetable

2.1. The Summer/ Autumn 2006 National Rail Timetable will commence on 11 June and operate until 9 December 2006. Apart from the annual seasonal changes and possible planned engineering work effects there will be no changes in West Yorkshire. Some connection times at Shipley will be widened by a minute to ease transfer between trains. There will be some minor changes to TransPennine Express services arising from gradual new trains (Class 185) introduction on some services but the main effect of the new trains will be from the December 2006 timetable.

Easter, May Day and Spring Bank Holiday Train Service Arrangements

2.2. The following arrangements will operate for rail services during the Easter period and Bank Holidays in May.

- **Good Friday** – Northern and First TransPennine Express will operate normal weekday service. GNER will operate an amended service
- **Easter Saturday** – Northern and First TransPennine Express will operate normal Saturday service. GNER will operate an amended service
- **Easter Sunday** – Northern and First TransPennine Express will operate normal Sunday service. GNER will operate an amended service
- **Easter Monday** – Northern and First TransPennine Express will operate normal weekday service. GNER will operate an amended service

- **May Day Bank Holiday Monday** – Northern and First TransPennine Express will operate normal weekday service. GNER will operate an amended service
 - **Spring Bank Holiday Monday** - Northern and First TransPennine Express will operate normal weekday service. GNER will operate an amended service
- 2.3. Services in some areas will however be subject to disruption due to engineering work and passengers are advised to check before travelling. Details of engineering work will be published in a leaflet and on Metro's website.

Easter Bus Services

- 2.4. The following arrangements will operate for bus services during the Easter period:-
- **Good Friday** – a Saturday service will operate on most services however First Leeds and Bradford will provide a normal weekday service
 - **Easter Saturday** – normal Saturday service
 - **Easter Sunday** – normal Sunday service
 - **Easter Monday** – most operators will provide a Sunday service

- 2.5. Full details will be published in a leaflet and on Metro's website.

April Bus Service Changes

- 2.6. The next major bus timetable change of the year occurs on the weekend of the 22nd April 2006. Details of the changes will be set out in a copy of Metro's Changing Times leaflet which will be available at the meeting. The impact of the changes can be summarised as follows: -
- **Leeds** – route and service number alterations to several services, service withdrawn from Beck Hill, Chapel Allerton due to low passenger use
 - **Bradford** – withdrawal of Sunday Bradford – Otley service. Minor route alterations in Odsall and West Bowling areas. Evening service reductions in Keighley, withdrawal of service 713 between Keighley and Silsden
 - **Kirklees** – changes to First Huddersfield evening and Sunday services. Arriva are reducing the frequency of several services in North Kirklees
 - **Calderdale** – changes to several First and Halifax Joint Committee services. Reduction in frequency of the Copley, Boulderclough and Wainstalls services from half hourly to hourly. Timetable changes to services in Sowerby area to improve reliability. Alterations to the Hebden Bridger network

- **Wakefield** – withdrawal of Yorkshire Traction X30 direct service between Barnsley and Leeds

Yellow Bus

- 2.7. The second phase of the My bus project is currently progressing well and will see the implementation of 60 buses this school year. To date, six clusters have been launched covering 9 secondary schools and approximately 30 primaries with 20 buses.
- 2.8. All Phase 2 buses are new low floor vehicles manufactured by BMC and include enhanced specifications including CCTV, seatbelts and radio- CD system. The buses use Euro 3 engines which meet all current EU emission standards. Interior noise levels have been reduced with rear mounted engines. The vehicles have received positive feedback in the trade press and customer reaction has been very positive. Operators of the buses have been very satisfied by the new vehicles.
- 2.9. Contracts have been signed with the 3 operators of the 60 Phase 2 buses, including First (41 buses), CT plus (15 buses) and Teamdeck (3 buses), with 1 bus as yet unallocated. The PR launch for Phase 2 took place in Bingley in January and highlighted the new low floor bus and included a naming ceremony for one of the buses.
- 2.10. On the 10th January 2006 the Department for Transport (DfT) agreed funding to cover Phase 3 of the My bus project. This provides for the implementation of a further 60 buses with £7 million available in 2006/07.
- 2.11. Identification of Phase 3 schools is underway including a proposed scheme for School Base in Calderdale that, if successful, will utilise 30% of the Phase 3 buses. The remaining schools are currently being identified.
- 2.12. The Department for Transport has agreed to an extension of the project until March 2008. This will allow for the extended implementation timescales necessary to ensure that the Phase 3 schemes are fully implemented and monitoring is completed.

Concessionary Travel Arrangements from 1 April 2006

- 2.13. With effect from Saturday 1 April 2006 people holding a Metro Senior or Disabled Concessionary Permit will be entitled to free travel on most local bus services, after 0930 Monday to Friday and all day Saturday, Sunday and Public Holidays. Permit holders will also be able to travel free on most bus services that cross the West Yorkshire county boundary. A 'Frequently Asked Questions' document, which sets out details of the new scheme is, attached (Appendix 1).
- 2.14. The Chancellor's Budget Statement of 22 March announced a national free concessionary travel scheme from 2008.

West Yorkshire Education and Skills Alliance

- 2.15. Through the WYTESA initiative Metro, with support from the Operators, has been able to fund the appointment of a Transport Academy Manager on a fixed term contract for two years. The post holder will co-ordinate the development of the West Yorkshire Transport Academy (WYTA) to enhance the image of the public transport industry in West Yorkshire.

Rail Rolling Stock Extra Capacity

- 2.16. Yorkshire Forward (the Regional Development Agency) has now agreed an £8m contribution to additional rolling stock as part of a funding package which also includes fares revenue. The 12 additional carriages will be used to provide additional capacity and relieve overcrowding on some of the busiest peak services in West Yorkshire. Routes to benefit include the Harrogate and Caldervale lines. The new Leeds - Sheffield semi fast service will also benefit from higher quality trains. The first extra carriages will be fully deployed by December 2006.

Peak Period Rail Patronage at Leeds

- 2.17. The latest survey information in February 2006 at Leeds station shows further significant increases in rail patronage. Approximately 18,000 passengers arrived on 90 peak trains in the morning and approximately 18,500 passengers departed on 92 trains in the evening peak on Mondays to Fridays during February 2006.
- 2.18. These figures further emphasise the issues regarding numbers of seats available during the peaks and the general level of overcrowding on trains serving Leeds. Passengers without a seat on local, Northern run services increased to 15.3% in the morning peak and 13.1% in the evening peak. A new Critical Peak Train Plan has been produced to help Northern prioritise peak strengthening and unit provision.
- 2.19. A major re-diagramming and cascade of part of the Northern diesel train fleet has been undertaken from the December 2006 timetable, following the Yorkshire Forward decision to part fund twelve additional vehicles. Some further trains in each peak on the Harrogate and Caldervale Lines will have 4 carriages, with other trains being cascaded elsewhere to provide additional capacity wherever practical.

YourNextBus Real Time Information Project

- 2.20. Since the public launch in September 2005, the YourNextBus real time bus information system has received over 190,000 text requests for departure times and there have been over 180,000 visits to the web and WAP sites. Usage is continuing to grow with an average now of almost 3,000 enquiries per day.

- 2.21. In West and South Yorkshire over 2,000 buses are equipped, including all vehicles run by Arriva, First, and Keighley & District Travel in West Yorkshire. Yorkshire Traction vehicles are currently being fitted and their entire fleet will be fully equipped by the end of March.
- 2.22. At present 70% of departures for equipped services are displayed as real time predictions and testing of various enhancements to increase this is underway.
- 2.23. Bus operators are beginning to use the data from the system to identify problem areas in their timetables and make minor adjustments which have resulted in improvements in schedule adherence.
- 2.24. Public information is provided now via SMS, WAP and Internet and during 2006/7 this will be extended to include an automated telephone service and on-street displays. Over 900 electronic bus shelter displays will be rolled out around the county from Summer 2006 once the current display testing is satisfactorily completed. Just 6 months after launch, YourNextBus is the most used real time bus information system in the UK and is regularly generating positive feedback from users. Service provision is regularly reviewed with the system supplier ACIS so that problems that can arise with IT technologies are quickly addressed.
- 2.25. Work is progressing to introduce traffic light priority for buses during 2006/7 using position and timeliness information from the YourNextBus system.

West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan

- 2.26. The second West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan was submitted to the government at the end of March. The plan covers all modes of transport across the whole of West Yorkshire for the five year period 2006 to 2011. PCC Members were involved in shaping the strategy and programme which includes substantial investment in improvements to public transport.
- 2.27. Over the five years new investment will be around £150m which includes improved roadside information, a continuation of the bus shelter replacement programme, new bus stations (such as Pudsey and Brighouse), further development of the real time information system (including the installation of displays at stops on core bus routes), improvements to rail stations (including enhanced park and ride and better accessibility) and improved safety and security.

East Coast Mainline

- 2.28. At the end of January, the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) published a preliminary decision on the competing bids for access rights from Hull Trains, GNER (to operate a full half-hourly Leeds-London service) and Grand Central (to operate 4 direct return Bradford and Sunderland to London services). The Bradford services would operate via Halifax, Brighouse and Pontefract.
- 2.29. The preliminary decision was to allow Grand Central to operate three additional services between London and Sunderland (but not Bradford) and Hull trains to continue to run its existing timetable. GNER's proposal for the full half-hourly Leeds service was rejected on the ground of lack of capacity between Leeds and Doncaster. They suggested that additional paths could be found through the ongoing Route Utilisation Study of the East Coast Main Line.
- 2.30. Metro made a response to the decision, setting out concerns with the overall process. ORR held a hearing into the decision on 6 March 2006 at which Metro was able to reiterate the importance of accommodating both GNER and Grand Central for the benefit of West Yorkshire. A final decision by ORR was awaited at the time of writing.

Rail Shelter Replacement Programme

- 2.31. Metro is currently funding the third phase of a programme of shelter replacements at a number of West Yorkshire rail stations and two stations in the Calderdale district will be receiving new shelters during the next couple of months. Replacement shelters will be provided on both platforms at Mytholmroyd and both platforms at Walsden. The old shelters at these sites are now due for renewal and their replacements will be larger in size to provide for the growth in passenger numbers at these stations.

Ryburn Valley TaxiBus Services

- 2.32. The taxibuses are funded through the 2002 Rural Bus Challenge Competition for up to three years and operate in the Colne Valley in Kirklees and the Ryburn Valley in Calderdale.
- 2.33. The Ryburn Valley services commenced on 27 June 2005 and are provided by two 7 seater easy access vehicles operated on behalf of Metro by Ryburn Taxibus (Slaithwaite) Limited of Sowerby Bridge.
- 2.34. There are several services operating as follows: -
- 909 Monday to Friday serving Ripponden, Barkisland, Stainland, West Vale and Elland with pre-booked diversions up to half a mile off route
 - 909 Saturday extension from Elland via the Crematorium to Brighouse (to part replace service 279)

- 910 Monday to Friday AM & PM Peak between Rishworth, Ripponden, Barkisland, Norland and Sowerby Bridge Rail Station
 - 912 Monday to Friday AM & PM Peak between Holywell Green, Stainland, Greetland, Norland and Sowerby Bridge Rail Station
 - On Monday to Friday off peak times one taxibus operates in a “demand responsive” fashion over a large area north of the M62 operating “Door to door” services for pre-booked passengers
- 2.35. A new bus/rail interchange was constructed for MetroConnect Taxibus at Sowerby Bridge Rail Station with shelter, information, turning circle and lighting.
- 2.36. In December 2005 service 909 diverted into the grounds of the new surgery at West Vale.
- 2.37. In January 2006 the Monday to Friday “demand responsive” taxibus area was extended westwards to embrace Cuning Corner and the “Turnpike Inn” with the withdrawal of service 562. At the same time the 909 Saturday bus to Brighouse was extended to commence from Turnpike Inn and Cuning Corner and operate every hour, off peak.
- 2.38. Passenger numbers have grown steadily over the first 9 months as shown by the graph in Appendix 2.

Metro Connect Hebden Bridge

- 2.39. The Hebden Bridger project began in 2003 with funding for three years from the Department for Transport, as part of the Rural Bus Challenge Scheme. Passengers in Hebden Bridge and surrounding areas have benefited from the introduction of four brand new low floor easy access minibuses, improved more flexible and more frequent routes, better integration of local buses with train services, an interchange at Hebden Bridge Rail Station, together with infrastructure improvements including raised kerbs at over 120 bus stops.
- 2.40. As the project funding comes to an end, Metro is able to confirm funding for the Metro Connect network for the next five years. In assessing the future of the network, a value for money appraisal of the services has been carried out in accordance with the Passenger Transport Authority’s policies. Whilst most of the services operate carry sufficient passengers to justify continued public funding, less than three passengers per trip travelled on services from and to Eaves, Fairfield and Hardcastle Crag despite continued promotion and marketing. These services therefore do not meet the Authority’s minimum average of six per trip however they will be retained to operate on a Thursday only basis as most passengers used these services on market day. Seasonal service 906 will provide leisure access to Hardcastle Crag. Services 591 and 593 will continue as at present.

Metro Connect Todmorden

- 2.41. New low floor accessible Optare Solo buses will enter service on the Todmorden local bus network in April as part of the ongoing Rural Bus Challenge project in the town.

Brighouse Bus Station

- 2.42. At the previous meeting of this Committee, members expressed their concerns about the condition of the existing bus station. In view of the delay in providing the replacement facilities, Metro has recently carried out some remedial action including repainting works, upgrading of the lighting, refurbishment of the cleaners' hut and repairs to the roof.

New Bus Lane Schemes on the A629 Halifax-Huddersfield Corridor

- 2.43. Metro has been working with local bus operators and Calderdale Council on a number of bus priority proposals on the A629 corridor between Halifax Town Centre and the Ainley Top roundabout. The following initiatives were approved by Calderdale Council's Cabinet meeting on 13 February 2006.
- A new 320m long 24-hour bus lane on the approach to Ainley Top roundabout. The bus lane would be situated within the existing 3 lane section of southbound carriageway on the Elland By-pass and would terminate adjacent to the Huddersfield bound bus stop at Ainley Top at the point where the three lanes merge back into two.
 - Extension of the operational hours of the existing morning peak bus lane on Skircoat Road between Free School Lane and Oxford Road to cover the evening peak period as well.
- 2.44. Both of the schemes will require Traffic Regulation Orders to be advertised before implementation takes place. It is therefore anticipated that the new measures will be in place later in the 2006/7 financial year.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1. That the report is noted.

Director General
West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive