

WEST YORKSHIRE INTEGRATED TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

**AT A MEETING OF THE CALDERDALE PASSENGER CONSULTATIVE
COMMITTEE HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, HALIFAX ON
TUESDAY 12 JANUARY 2010**

PRESENT: Councillor K Watson (Chair)

WYITA

R Pearson

PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES

Peter Melling

Neal Ricketts

John Sheppard

John Sykes

Peter Stocks

John Whiteley

CALDERDALE MC

G Carter

B Collins

R Goldthorpe

Also in attendance:

D Haley - Northern Rail

15. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from public representatives J Calland and H Dobson.

16. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meetings held on 6 October and 18 December 2009 be approved.

17. MEMBER FEEDBACK

The Committee considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive advising them of the feedback received at the meeting of the Committee held on 6 October 2009 and to report the action taken.

With regard to the implementation of a FreeTownBus in Halifax town centre, it was confirmed that a letter in support of the initiative had been sent on behalf of the Committee to the Leader and Chief Executive of Calderdale Council. In this respect, it was advised that Calderdale Council was committed to co-funding the provision of a FreeTownBus service. Further progress regarding

the scheme and route development would be reported to a future meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted

18. INFORMATION REPORT

The Committee considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on information regarding current developments and issues affecting the Calderdale District.

Governance

It was reported that the ITA had established an 8 member ITA Executive Board which would meet on a monthly basis to carry out all the current functions of the full ITA with the exception of budget setting and the Annual Meeting. The new arrangements would help to deliver stronger governance and decision making and assist in securing more innovative approaches to funding and strategic delivery. It was noted that West Yorkshire was the first ITA to adopt the new arrangements and further reports would be provided at future meetings.

The Committee expressed concern at the lack of representation from the Calderdale district on the ITA Executive Board. Members pointed out that funding towards the ITA was provided by all 5 Districts and in order to ensure geographical and political balance Calderdale should be represented on the Board. It was also requested that this issue be brought to the attention of the Leader and Chief Executive of Calderdale Council.

The Chair, Councillor Watson, agreed to investigate on behalf of the Committee the concerns raised by members in relation to the membership of the ITA's Executive Board.

Bus Service Changes - January 2010

Following on from the Committee's meeting in December 2009, members were advised that most of the issues surrounding the new network of services had now been resolved. This included the provision of school bus service links from Copley to Ryburn Valley High School, the operation of an early evening tendered Service 579 along Sowerby New Road and the maintenance of evening services to Rishworth via the extension of the Barkisland service. It was reported that Metro would monitor the network changes, with a view to implementing any improvements at the April 2010 service change date.

Members also noted the withdrawal of Service 36 from January 2010, which was operated by the Halifax Joint Committee. This would result in a reduction in service to the Skircoat Green area in peak periods, although it would continue to run half hourly during off peak periods. Metro was regrettably

unable to procure the withdrawn journeys in these circumstances, but officers would continue to investigate possible solutions to this issue.

Discussions ensued regarding the actions of First and their withdrawal of services from the rural areas of Calderdale. In particular, members had expressed concerns that the operator had undertaken a higher level of cuts in the Calderdale area compared to the other Districts. In this respect, members commended the work undertaken by Metro to implement the new service network, but suggested that a consultation exercise be undertaken via local community groups in order to determine public opinion following implementation.

Boxing Day 2009 Services

It was noted that a network of bus services had operated on Boxing Day linking several communities with Leeds and Huddersfield. Although final patronage figures were awaited, initial indications suggested that the services had been well used. It was commented that Service 508 from Halifax via Bradford had been very popular.

Kickstart

Members were advised that a decision was still awaited from the Department for Transport regarding the two bids submitted in early 2009. These included the development of the Wakefield town services in partnership with Arriva and the implementation of a community bus service in Brighouse in partnership with Calderdale CT.

Quality Contracts

The Committee was advised of the unanimous decision by the Integrated Transport Authority to pursue the development of a Quality Bus Contract Scheme. It was reported that PCC members would be consulted on the development of the proposal and that an initial PCC member consultation was scheduled to take place on 4 February 2010. Operators, District Councils and other key stakeholders' consultations were also planned.

The Committee commented on the importance of engagement with bus operators to improve bus service provision. Members commended the Quality Bus Contract Scheme and made a resolution to endorse the development and implementation of the initiative.

Members also discussed how indiscriminate parking at bus stops could impact adversely on bus service provision.

Real Time at Bus Stations

Members welcomed the installation of real time at the 8 main bus stations in West Yorkshire. The next phase involved the provision of a real time audio

system at all 8 stations, along with a replacement of the life expired electronic displays.

Halifax Rail Station

It was reported that the renovation of the island platform canopy and the footbridge had been completed. Members noted that further improvements funded by Metro and the national Station Improvements Programme would commence in the New Year. The improvements included relocating the existing platform retail facility onto the concourse level waiting room area and opening up a large platform level waiting room with passenger toilet facilities.

Rural Accessibility Partnership

The Committee was advised of Metro's appointment by Yorkshire Forward to manage a funding package aimed at improving access to employment and training for people living in rural areas in West Yorkshire.

Grants would be available to support small projects, which would assist rural people travel to work or college. Stakeholder meetings had been held in each district to promote the scheme.

Weather Conditions and Public Transport Services

The Committee discussed how the recent snow had impacted on bus service provision. Members acknowledged the severity of the weather, but made comment on how quick certain operators had been to withdraw services leaving many passengers facing difficulty. However, overall, members recognised that bus companies and bus drivers had done an excellent job in running the bus services in the district.

Comment was also made on the importance of communication between Calderdale Council, Metro and the bus operators with regard to the gritting of the roads and bus routes.

Members commended the high standard of information provided to the public via Metro's website and MetroLine during the bad weather. It was unanimously agreed that this source of information during the disruption had been excellent. Northern Rail was also commended for the exemplary service levels on the Caldervale Line.

RESOLVED -

- (a)** That the report be noted.
- (b)** The Chair agreed to investigate on behalf of the Committee the concerns raised by members in relation to Calderdale's representation on the ITA's Executive Board.

- (c) The Committee endorsed the development and implementation of a Quality Bus Contract Scheme.

19. CONSULTATION ITEMS:-

- (a) **West Yorkshire's 3rd Local Transport Plan 2011-26 ('MyJourney' West Yorkshire)**
- (b) **Marketing Plan**
- (c) **Priorities for SmartCard Roll Out**

West Yorkshire's 3rd Local Transport Plan 2011-2026

It was reported that the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan 3 (WYLTP3) 2011-2026 would be prepared in partnership with the District Councils and it was intended that a draft strategy would be in place by the end of Summer 2010 and the plan being completed by March 2011. Initial awareness raising and engagement was currently taking place with partners and key stakeholders through newsletters, workshops and meetings and a survey was to be launched to capture initial feedback.

Further consultation would take place with the Passenger Consultative Committees and members were asked for their suggestions on how best to capture the views of the public.

In order to obtain wider public consultation, it was suggested that links to the consultation document/survey be provided via each of the five Districts' websites.

Marketing Plan

The Committee received a presentation on the marketing campaigns, which had been undertaken during 2009 and included the Go Greener and Settle-Carlisle campaigns, MetroMessenger and festive services.

It was proposed to include YourNextBus and MetroCard campaigns, the Travel for Work Project and the further promotion of MetroMessenger in the Marketing Plan for 2010/11. Members were asked to forward ideas for any other key themes that could be included in the Plan.

Members commented on the issue of 'through ticketing' on bus services and whether this could be addressed via a marketing campaign. It was further suggested that, as a condition of operating a tendered service, operators display all of Metro's publicity material on their vehicles. Members confirmed that this was not always the case.

Priorities for SmartCard Roll Out

It was reported that the Department for Transport (DfT) had announced a funding package of £20m to support the development of smart and integrated ticketing in the 9 largest urban areas outside London, which included the 6

PTEs, Nottingham, Leicester and Bristol. The funding would go towards implementing ITSO smart ticketing schemes and £2.2m had been allocated to each urban area. Half of the funding would need to be spent by the end of March 2010 and it was intended that Metro would work with South Yorkshire PTE to jointly procure the necessary infrastructure for implementing ITSO smartcard schemes.

The DfT had also announced an 8% increase to the BSOG rate for bus operators that introduced smartcard infrastructure on their buses. This would equate to approximately £800 per vehicle per year.

It was noted that there were plans to enable the ticket barriers at Leeds and Bradford Interchange rail stations to accept ITSO smartcards and work was ongoing to progress this. The Committee welcomed this approach.

Members were asked to consider where they would expect to be able to purchase smartcards and associated travel products. It was commented that the Oyster system in London was very successful and, therefore, West Yorkshire should follow their example. The system should also be easy to use.

Members were thanked for their suggestions to all the consultation items and asked to forward any further ideas or comments on the questionnaire provided at the meeting or by email to erica.ward@wypte.gov.uk.

RESOLVED - That PCC members' feedback and views be noted.