

# WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

## LEEDS PASSENGER CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

DATE: 3 JULY 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 Leeds district.

#### 2. INFORMATION

##### PTA Membership 2006/2007

2.1. At its Annual Meeting held on 23 June 2006, the PTA elected Councillor Stanley King as Chairman and Councillor Ryk Downes as Vice Chairman. The District Spokespersons for the year will be:

Bradford	-	Councillor Chris Greaves
Calderdale	-	Councillor Geoffrey Wainwright
Kirklees	-	Councillor Karam Hussain
Leeds	-	Councillor David Schofield
Wakefield	-	Councillor Graham Phelps

2.2. A PTA Year Book which incorporates details of membership and useful contact numbers is being prepared and will be distributed to all Passenger Consultative Committee members in the near future.

##### July Bus Service Changes

2.3. The next major bus timetable change of the year occurs on the weekend of the 22<sup>nd</sup> July 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- **Leeds** – summer timetables operate on several routes, service 904 Otley to Harrogate withdrawn
- **Bradford**- service 903 altered to include a through journey to Keighley. Withdrawal of evening and Sunday X84 services between Ilkley and Skipton
- **Kirklees** – Services 343/ 344 Halifax- Elland - Huddersfield will no longer run on to Kirkheaton and Upper Heaton, new service 317 will maintain services between Kirkheaton ,Upper Heaton and

Huddersfield. Minor alterations to several First services in Huddersfield

- **Calderdale** – minor changes to First services, alterations to the Hebden Bridger network.
- **Wakefield** – withdrawal of Stagecoach Yorkshire Traction off peak 84 service in South Elmsall with minor route amendments to 247, 248 and 249

#### Day Tripper Services

- 2.4. Since 2003, Metro has provided Day Tripper services during the summer school holidays to give people the opportunity for days out at popular West Yorkshire tourist attractions which are not served by regular services. The experience gained in previous years has indicated that the following services are well used by passengers and will operate in 2006:
- **Service 950** – Leeds and Castleford to Temple Newsam, Lotherton Hall and Fairburn Ings operating from Tuesday to Saturday.
  - **Service 956** – Huddersfield to National Coal Mining Museum, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Cawthorne, Cannon Hall operating on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Saturdays.
  - **Service 957** – Holmfirth, Dewsbury and Batley to National Coal Mining Museum, Bagshaw Museum, Red House Museum and Oakwell Park operating on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.
- 2.5. The Day Tripper services operate from 24<sup>th</sup> July to 2<sup>nd</sup> September.
- 2.6. In addition Metro is again providing service the seasonal service 906 which provides links from Hebden Bridge to Hardcastle Craggs and Widdop reservoir.

#### Concessionary Fares Scheme

- 2.7. The Chancellor of the Exchequer announced in March 2006 that free bus travel arrangements for seniors and people with disabilities would extend nationwide from 2008. This would mean that passholders would be entitled to free travel after 9:30 am anywhere in the UK rather than just in their local area as at present. The details of how this scheme would operate and the implications for the current free travel scheme in West Yorkshire are awaited at present and will be reported to future meetings of the Committee.

#### Yorcard Update

- 2.8. A funding decision from the Department for Transport is awaited on the pilot scheme in South Yorkshire.

## Rail Station Access

- 2.9. The Department for Transport (DfT) has recently launched its 'Railways for All, The Accessibility Strategy for Great Britain's Railways' funding initiative that is aimed at improving the accessibility of rail stations over a period of 10 years. The £370 million funding provision is split into two parts:
- £35 million per year for improving access at the busiest stations to ensure a minimum 'accessible route' within each station. By 'accessible route', it means a clear, well lit and signposted route that provides access to facilities and platforms for ambulant, disabled people and those who use wheelchairs.
  - £7 million per year, the majority of which will be available for 'Small Schemes' funding. It is aimed at innovative or locally focused solutions to access problems. The maximum amount of funding available is £250k per scheme up to a maximum of 50% of the total scheme cost. There is a process for the application of funding. The deadline for the application of the first year of funding was 26 May 2006. There is also a requirement for any such project to have reached a credible stage with the highest certainty of completion by March 2007.
- 2.10. A 3-year programme for providing accessible routes at stations has also been announced. Whilst two-thirds of the investment is based on achieving best value for money, the remaining funding is prioritised for improving access across the network. Shipley and Huddersfield rail stations are included in the first 3-year programme and the current programme suggests that by 2009 these stations will have an accessible, step-free route.
- 2.11. In response to the launch of "Access for All" funding, Metro is continuing to work closely with DfT, Northern and Network Rail in order to make sure that appropriate solutions are developed for Shipley and Huddersfield. DfT are being asked to include other high usage sites in West Yorkshire within subsequent phases of their initiative.
- 2.12. In respect of the 2006/7 'Small Schemes' initiative, Metro has recently submitted two applications in order to maximise the opportunity for accessing DfT funding. These are for access improvements at Garforth and Ilkley rail stations and they have been submitted because they were already developed to a stage that would enable them to meet the DfT's deadline for submission and their criteria for application.
- 2.13. The proposal for Garforth will provide ramped access from the York / Selby – bound platform to the adjacent highway bridge. At Ilkley, a scheme has previously been developed to provide additional access from Railway Road to Platform 2, which will significantly improve access for all rail passengers including those with mobility difficulties.

- 2.14. If these bids are successful, approval for any match funding required will be funded from the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan. It is proposed that further schemes will be considered for development so that future bids can be submitted within each annual stage of DfT's programme. Schemes to be brought forward will be prioritised on the basis of cost, practicality and overall level of passenger benefit, taking into account daily passenger footfall. Members will be kept informed of progress and of future bids.
- 2.15. In addition to the above, members will be aware that Metro has previously funded two phases of minor accessibility works at local rail stations. The first covered the Airedale and Wharfedale lines and the second, which has recently been completed, included stations on the Caldervale, Huddersfield and Wakefield lines. Proposals are currently being drawn up for a third and final stage that will incorporate minor access improvements at the remaining stations.

#### Real Time Update

- 2.16. Metro's yournextbus real time information system, launched in West Yorkshire in September 2005, continues to be the most used bus real time information system in the UK. The system, which provides bus departure information by text message, WAP and the internet, has now received over 1/2 million enquiries since its launch.
- 2.17. In April alone, 50,000 text messages were sent to 63876 (which spells Metro on the phone's keypad) and at peak times the system is handling up to 500 messages an hour. The separate bus departure information system run by Kizoom for Traveline, which covers most of the other regions in the UK, received a nationwide total of just 20,000 text messages in April so the West Yorkshire system received 2.5 times more requests than the combined total of other regions. Usage of yournextbus in West Yorkshire continues to rise thanks partly to a successful bus poster advertising campaign where the strapline "Nxt Bus, Txt Us" was used.
- 2.18. Nearly 1,000 electronic real time information displays will be installed in West Yorkshire starting in 2006, and the first six displays will be installed this summer as part of a trial to assess the technical performance of the displays. Metro is grateful to those PCC members who suggested locations for the displays in previous PCC meetings, and is currently using these suggestions to help decide which shelters the real time displays will be rolled out to.

#### LTP Major Scheme Funding

- 2.19. Metro and the West Yorkshire LTP partners are still awaiting feedback from DfT on a number of major scheme funding bids submitted last year. Further analysis has been requested on the proposed scheme to increase station capacity at Wakefield Westgate. No further details have been requested on the A65 Kirkstall Road quality bus corridor

scheme. Both of these schemes were given priority by the Regional Transport Board but the final decision rests with government ministers.

### Yellow Bus

- 2.20. The second phase of the MyBus project is close to completion. By the end of the summer term, 52 of the 60 buses in Phase 2 will be in service. In the 05/06 school year, 16 clusters were launched covering 22 secondary and 39 primary schools and carrying 2000 children and young people every day.
- 2.21. The Department for Transport (DfT) has already agreed funding to cover Phase 3 of the MyBus project, which will enable the implementation of the final 60 buses. Currently the first batch of 15 buses to serve School Base in Halifax has been tendered and awarded to First, to begin in September 2006. Two further batches will be tendered over the next few months covering the other four West Yorkshire districts. The majority of these services are timetabled to start within the 06/07 school year. An extension of the project until March 2008 has been agreed, which will allow time for the project team to ensure that all services are fully implemented and any initial issues resolved.
- 2.22. The team is currently preparing the annual monitoring report for the Department to report on the results of Phase 2 in terms of transport impacts, including reduction in school gate congestion, mode shift and increased bus patronage. It will also report on customer feedback (children, parents and teachers) on quality issues, and non-transport impacts such as decrease in truancy, increased readiness to learn and social benefits.
- 2.23. The team was also very proud to have been awarded the 'Working Together' Award at the national Public Servants of the Year Awards in May. The Award is a reflection of how crucial partnership working has been to the success of the project, and recognises the importance of the input of schools, parents, governors, LEAs, Government Office, operators and of course, the young people themselves.

### First TransPennine Express' New Trains

- 2.24. About one third of the fleet of new Class 185 "Pennine" diesel trains has now been delivered and some have been in service since 14 March 2006. By mid June 12 new trains were available for service working five diagrams on Hull – Manchester Piccadilly services. Train crew training on the new units elsewhere continues. From the beginning of July they will be introduced on South TransPennine Cleethorpes – Manchester Airport services followed in late August by some North TransPennine services via Huddersfield and Leeds from Liverpool and Manchester Airport to York, Scarborough, Middlesbrough and Newcastle. From 17 July 2006 they will be also used on some additional summer trains between York and Scarborough. All 51 units

are due to be in service by January 2007. A new Siemens fleet maintenance depot at Ardwick, Manchester was opened by the new Secretary of State for Transport on 16 May 2006.

#### Leeds FreeCityBus Update

- 2.25. FreeCityBus commenced service on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2006. Since then it has gone from strength to strength and is now carrying on average 29000 passengers per week.
- 2.26. Metro has done recent market research which identified:
- there are probably 1450 less car journeys being made in Leeds as a result of the service
  - the most popular journey is between the bus and rail stations
  - almost half the passengers are either mobility impaired or have some kind of encumbrance
  - the service has also encouraged around 900 people to come into the city who would not have done so had the service not existed
- 2.27. The service has been well run by the current operator First.
- 2.28. Metro has agreed in partnership with Leeds City Council to continue the service and seek other contributions.

#### AccessBus

- 2.29. AccessBus services in Leeds have been provided by First under a contract with Metro. This contract expires at the end of September 2006 whereupon a new contract will be issued to CT Plus who will operate the service from October 2006. The service will continue to operate under its current form with the existing buses transferred to the new operator.
- 2.30. CT Plus are the trading arm of Hackney Community Transport who have established an operation in West Yorkshire following the successful award of contracts for the operation of MyBus school bus services. The organisation is familiar with accessible transport operating several services similar to AccessBus in the London area.

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1. That the report be noted.

Director General  
West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive

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