

AGENDA ITEM No: 14.

WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

AT A MEETING OF THE FACILITIES WORKING GROUP HELD IN WELLINGTON HOUSE ON MONDAY 7 NOVEMBER 2005

PRESENT: Councillor P McBride (Chair)

Councillors D Blackburn, K Iqbal and M Walker

7. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor A Wallace.

8. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

9. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2005 be approved.

10. ON STREET INFRASTRUCTURE

The Working Group considered a progress report of the Passenger Transport Executive regarding the contracts covering the installation and maintenance of on street infrastructure.

New Shelters

Members were advised that programme achievement for the installation of new shelters as part of the 2005/06 Yorkshire Bus programme continued to exceed previous performance levels.

Signature Smart4 Shelters

It was reported that Trueform had been awarded the contract to refurbish the Smart4 shelters and that the shelters would be refurbished as part of a works programme, which had commenced in November 2005.

Glazing Contract

The Working Group was informed that performance had continued to meet set standards for site attendance for both emergency and planned worked call-outs.

Shelter Cleaning

Members were informed that the performance of Metro's in-house team and external contractors had continued to meet the Authority's approved standards.

On Street Renewal Programme

It was reported that following completion of the on-street renewal programme in the Wakefield, Leeds and Bradford districts, works were now concentrated on replacing bus stop plates and poles within the Kirklees and Calderdale areas.

Adshel

The Working Group was informed that work continued on the planning/programming for the provision of advertising shelters at locations, which met the Authority's criteria. To-date 10 Metro/Adshel shelters had been installed within the Leeds district and on the A641 Huddersfield/Bradford corridor as part of the Yorkshire Bus improvement works, with a further 100 units planned for installation during the current financial year.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

11. PROMOTION AND INFORMATION UPDATE

The Working Group considered a progress report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the Information Strategy, the implementation of the Real Time Information project and recent marketing activities.

Information Strategy

It was reported that further work was ongoing on key issues and, in this respect, a report would be submitted to a future meeting of the Working Group.

It was reported that there were 10,000 stops/shelters within West Yorkshire without timetable displays. Members were informed that one aspect of the Strategy was to secure operator commitment to fund the revenue costs of the additional provision of roadside displays in order to address customer feedback and concerns. In this regard, officers confirmed that discussions with operators would be taking place in the near future.

Other Developments

It was reported that in general, non-Metro travel centres did not perform as well as Metro travel centres. Metro had been in discussions regarding the management of these travel centres however a number of key issues relating to securing agreement from operators regarding costs were unresolved.

The review of the delivery of the Traveline service was ongoing. Metroline's performance continued to exceed national Traveline targets.

Real Time Information

It was reported that since its launch the information service had received between 800 and 1000 daily users of the text-messaging element of the system. The use of the website was currently approximately 600 users per day. Feedback on the system to-date had been very positive and the integration testing was being progressed.

Members were shown an example of a bus shelter information display unit, which was voice activated for the visually impaired which turned itself off/on when vandalised. Metro was negotiating with the system supplier on the development of a lower cost unit that would allow a greater roll out of bus stop displays.

Other Promotional Activity

The Working Group was advised that Metro, in conjunction with Wakefield District Council, would be promoting through local newspapers public transport during the weeks leading to Christmas and the New Year sales period.

Members were also informed of future marketing plans for the next quarter.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

12. LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN FUNDED SCHEMES

The Working Group considered a progress report of the Passenger Transport Executive regarding Local Transport Plan proposals to improve bus and rail passenger facilities.

Pudsey Bus Station

Members were informed that Metro and Leeds City Council were holding discussions regarding the appearance of the building and the associated highway works in relation to the redevelopment of the bus station. Proposed improvements included a six stand central island concourse structure with two stands for use by the 'ftr' articulated vehicle. Planning applications would be submitted for this scheme with a view to opening the new facility in 2007. Members were informed that a further progress report regarding the scheme would be submitted to a future meeting of the Group.

Brighouse Bus Station

It was reported that during the development of Brighouse bus station risks associated with land ownership and the diversion of fibre optic cables and drains had caused remedial works to become prohibitive to such an extent that the provision of a 'drive in, reverse out' facility no longer offered value for money. Members were advised of an alternative option, which involved redevelopment of the existing covered platform area into a six stand central island concourse. Plans/costings of this option were being retimed and further public consultations would need to take place due to significant changes to the original proposal. Detailed discussions would take place with Calderdale MBC and operators regarding the proposals.

Passenger Information Improvements at Rail Stations

Members were informed that the rail information schemes currently in use were the Customer Information System (CIS) at Airedale and Wharfedale line stations and the Long Line Public Announcement (LLPA) system, which covered all West Yorkshire rail stations and was managed/maintained by Northern Rail. It was proposed to invest in upgrading the 'core' of these systems, as they were life expired. Metro's preferred option, supported by Northern, was to provide a replacement management system that would 'drive' the current visual/audible information, have the capability to serve all West Yorkshire stations, incorporate enhancements in line with DDA requirements and replace existing, remote information controls at Halifax and Huddersfield with centralised control at Leeds. The initiative would cost £520,000. Upgrade of the system would result in revenue saving to Northern Rail, which would be used to fund the additional revenue costs of the shelter replacement programme.

Rail Station Shelter Replacement - Phase 3

Members were advised that further work had been carried out in developing the final phase of the rail station shelter replacement programme. Key benefits of the replacement shelters, which would cost £650,000, included enhanced lighting, compliance with accessibility regulations and the provision of a common standard of facilities at the majority of stations in West Yorkshire.

Minor Accessibility Improvements at Rail Stations - Phase 2

The Working Group was advised that Metro had identified minor improvement works to stations on the Caldervale, Huddersfield and Wakefield lines. All identified works had been prioritised through consultation with disability group representatives. Typical measures included marking out of disabled parking bays, installation of tactile and contrasting step nosing to steps, resurfacing of ramps and installation of handrails.

The Working Group were advised that work was also being undertaken on the prioritisation of more major improvements (such as lifts) and opportunities for Department for Transport and Train Operating Company funding was being

explored. Metro had lobbied for works at larger stations, such as Huddersfield, to be funded through such programmes. A further report would be brought to the next meeting of the Working Group.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That approval be sought from the Authority for the expenditure as set out in Section 2 of the submitted report.

13. MANAGEMENT OF METRO BUS STATIONS

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the management of Metro bus stations.

Security Alert Status

It was reported that Metro continued to work closely with the police and operators to provide a high level of security for customers. However, following a recent briefing by the London Metropolitan Police Anti-Terrorist Unit, the current security alert status was described as standard and had been reduced to “alertness not alarm”. Metro had continued to liaise with contractors and communicated with its own staff in line with comments made on equality and diversity at the last meeting of the Authority.

Cleaning Machines

At a recent meeting of the Authority information was requested regarding the effectiveness of cleaning machines in the removal of chewing gum from bus station floors. It was reported that other methods of cleaning such as high pressure washing and steaming had been investigated, but none had proven as efficient or as cost effective as the current method. Current arrangements, combined with ‘cleaner’ efficiency arrangements, ensured that Metro’s bus stations were relatively free of the problem.

Bus Station Challenge

The Working Group was informed that as part of an ongoing development programme for bus station managers some had been transferred to different stations. Other initiatives had also been introduced to improve customer focus.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.