

WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

**AT A MEETING OF THE FACILITIES WORKING GROUP
HELD IN WELLINGTON HOUSE ON
TUESDAY 11 SEPTEMBER 2007**

PRESENT: Councillor M Harkin (Chair)

Councillors C Greaves, T Leadley, T Swift and A Wallace

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor G Wainwright.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor T Leadley declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 8(2) - Pudsey Bus Station - as he was a member of the Leeds Plans West Panel.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That, in the absence of any previous members of the Working Group being present, the minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2007 be approved.

4. INFORMATION AND PROMOTION UPDATE

The Working Group considered a progress report of the Passenger Transport Executive on information, promotion and marketing activities.

Metroline/Traveline

The Group was informed that Metro had each month exceeded the two main Key Performance Indicators and had, as a result, maintained its position in the country's top five call centres. Members commended the achievement, especially in view of the challenging circumstances/disruption caused to the public transport network due to the recent flooding.

It was explained to Members how a trial of home-working as a cost effective means of providing service during 'unsocial' hours was planned to commence in mid September. In this respect, concern was expressed about possible isolation from Metro as a work place for the two members of staff undertaking the trial. In response, Members were assured that the employees concerned would continue to also work within Metroline and attend team briefings. It was also confirmed that the first couple of shifts of 'unsocial' hours would be trialled in-house before rolling out to the employees' homes.

Marketing Activities

Members were informed that the main focus of marketing activity had been on the English National Concessionary Scheme, which would become effective in April 2008. New permits would be required for the scheme, therefore, Metro was actively promoting this to eligible persons through a campaign entitled Smile. It was reported that of 135,000 people had to-date applied for the new permits.

The second major area of activity was focused on Metro's new young people's web site launched under the brand name generationM, which would form part of the Young Person's Strategy being developed. The site aimed to provide useful information on school services, ticketing options, Mybus and Safemark schemes and special offers, as well as being used by Metro to obtain feedback from customers.

The Group was advised that Metro's Messenger emailing service had been well received with over 5,000 users registering for travel news and service updates, etc, since inception in mid April 2007. Members suggested approaching businesses, with a view to emailing their employees with details/web link to the Metro Messenger service.

It was confirmed that the Travel for Work project, funded by Yorkshire Forward, was progressing well. Staff training and induction had been completed and the first quarterly claim had been submitted to Yorkshire Forward. The aim of the project was to work with employers to encourage their staff to use more sustainable modes of travel.

Market Research

The Group was informed of the results of Metro's recent market research concerning customer service facilities such as Metroline, travel centres/bus stations, bus stops and shelters and overall customer satisfaction with bus/rail services in West Yorkshire. The survey showed a general increase in satisfaction levels across all aspects of service provision and illustrated a growing use of Metro's website as a source of information. It was reported that the most notable increase related to the provision of public transport information.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

5. REAL TIME PASSENGER INFORMATION

The Working Group considered a progress report of the Passenger Transport Executive concerning the South and West Yorkshire real time passenger information system 'yournextbus'.

Members were informed that since the launch of the real time project there had been an average of 5,000 internet and mobile based enquiries each day. The SMS service was delivering 3,500 text messages a day in West Yorkshire

with over 5,000 a day during major traffic disruptions such as those caused by the recent flooding. It was reported that 230 on-street displays had been installed to bus shelters located on key bus routes and rural/suburban areas. Of these, 80 were the large 3 line LED displays and 150 were the smaller LCD displays. Unfortunately, the smaller LCD units had been subject to vandalism and, therefore, the roll out of these displays had been suspended whilst their location/protection was investigated with ACIS.

The Group was advised that, as an extension to the project, Traffic Light Priority hardware had been installed to 200 road junctions across West Yorkshire, which enabled late running services to access junctions quicker by altering the traffic light phasing. Initial results had proven successful in allowing services to catch up with their schedules.

Members were advised of the next phase of the project, which included the continued rollout of the Traffic Light Priority, installation of bus shelter displays and the provision of the automated voice server 'yournextbus' InfoLine. Other enhancements included a service cancellation feature and integration of the system with the displays at Metro's major bus stations.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

6. ON STREET INFRASTRUCTURE

The Working Group considered a progress report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the management of Metro's on street infrastructure.

Shelter Glazing

It was reported that performance data covering the period 1 March 2007 to 31 July 2007 had demonstrated that the existing contractor continued to exceed the standards set for attendance at site for both emergency call-outs and planned works.

Shelter Cleaning

Metro's in-house team and external contractors continued to meet performance standards. In order to ensure that Metro continued to receive value for money and meet customer expectations, a review of the present cleaning arrangements was currently being undertaken.

Shelter Contract

As previously reported, a full tender exercise had been undertaken during April/May 2007 for the provision of new passengers shelters. Members were advised that Trueform had been awarded a 3 year contract from 1 July 2007 and that Metro was to date very satisfied with work undertaken by the company.

Shelter Advertising

It was reported that year two of the revised agreement with Clear Channel (Adshel) was progressing in line with the commitment to install a further 500 new advertising panels in West Yorkshire. However, discussions continued with Wakefield Council regarding progress on the installation of advertising panels within the district.

Shelter Refurbishment

The Group was advised that work to refurbish over 400 Signature Smart 4 shelters had been completed and that favourable comments had been received from bus operators and members of the public regarding the overall improvements.

Bus Passenger Shelter Policy

Members were advised of the proposals to refine Metro's current approach for the replacing little used existing shelters where demand had been reduced as a result of changed patterns of bus services, land uses or other factors affecting demand and the ongoing revenue costs for the maintenance of shelters. It was proposed that the approach of giving further consideration to sites with less than 25 boarding passengers, as set out in the report, be adopted, as it would be more cost effective than the current approach. In this respect, Councillor Greaves commended Metro's approach to re-siting shelters in the Shipley area. The implementation of this approach would be reported to future meetings of the Group.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That the proposed approach to the replacement of existing shelters be approved.

7. MANAGEMENT OF METRO BUS STATIONS

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

Safety and Security

Members noted the reduction in anti-social behaviour at bus stations over recent years and that the revised funding arrangements for 8 Police Community Support Officers had been finalised.

Members were also informed of Metro's actions following security incidents at Glasgow and Heathrow airports. The security status had been upgraded to critical and, as a result, Metro had increased patrols of bus stations, lockers and bins had been removed from use and control room officers had carried

out more intensive CCTV patrols. The security status had now been downgraded to severe.

The Chair commended Metro's efforts at reducing anti-social incidents at Batley bus station, but commented that youths might instead be loitering outside the station. In response, it was agreed that Metro officers would investigate this possibility.

Asset Management

Members were reminded of the ongoing work to develop Metro's asset management strategy. The key parts of the strategy included integration with Metro's management and business planning processes and the instigation of a stakeholder consultation with operators, tenants and customers. An outline of how this would be achieved was detailed in the submitted report.

Revenue Generation

It was noted that Metro continued to develop initiatives to generate income from bus stations through leases, temporary events and advertising.

Councillor Wallace was advised that the Assistant Director of Customer Services would contact her directly to arrange a visit to Bradford Interchange to discuss provision for disabled customers.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

8. LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN FUNDED SCHEMES

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

Pudsey Bus Station

The Group was informed that following briefings with PTA/local members, a public information event outlining proposals for the bus station, existing market, Pudsey park and shop frontages was held in June 2007. Pudsey Civic Society had submitted their concerns about proposals to Metro who, in partnership with Leeds City Council, had co-ordinated a formal written response. It was reported that the submission of a planning application was imminent and it was anticipated that, subject to the necessary approvals, work could commence early 2008.

Brighouse Bus Station

Members were informed that detailed design work on the 'drive-through' style bus station was well advanced and that work to the scheme could commence early 2008. It was noted that Calderdale Council had received three letters of objections to the proposed Traffic Regulation Order and that the Council was presently considering their validity and any potential resolution.

Heckmondwike Bus Facilities

The Group was informed that discussions were ongoing between Metro and Kirklees Council to develop a combined modern bus facility, library and information centre in Heckmondwike. Kirklees Council were progressing the feasibility of whether a four stand 'Drive In Reverse Out' station could be accommodated within the overall design. It was reported that in order to progress the scheme Kirklees Council was seeking a committed contribution from Metro to cover the cost of the bus station element of the initiative. However, in this respect, Metro required detailed scheme cost estimates from the Council in order that a business case could be developed prior to consideration by the Authority.

Hemsworth Bus Station

It was reported that Metro was currently awaiting programme/phasing information from Tesco's contractors regarding construction of the new bus station.

Castleford Interchange Proposals

It was anticipated that detailed design work on the scheme would be completed by the end of 2007 with works commencing late Summer 2008. There had been delays relating to land acquisition for the site, which needed resolving by Wakefield Council prior to Metro obtaining full approval for the scheme and commencement of construction work. It was reported that Wakefield Council was considering a number of options for progressing land acquisition.

It was also reported that the land issues concerning Network Rail were still being pursued and that Network Rail was to seek their Board's approval to Metro's proposals.

RESOLVED -

- (a)** That the report be noted.
- (b)** That PTA approval to the associated expenditure be sought in due course.