

WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

Leeds Passenger Consultative Committee

DATE: 16 January 2006

AGENDA ITEM NO: 4.

SUBJECT: INFORMATION

Report of the Passenger Transport Executive

1. MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION

1.1. Public transport information relating to the Leeds district.

2. INFORMATION

January Bus Service Changes

2.1. The first major bus timetable change of the year occurs on the weekend of the 30th January 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;

Bradford - timing changes to several services. Arriva services to operate via Little Horton Lane rather than Park Road.

Calderdale - withdrawal of M62 Halifax to Leeds and M1 Halifax to Sheffield services, 562 Halifax to Oldham will terminate at Rishworth during the daytime (renumbered 561), minor revisions to First and Halifax Bus Company services.

Kirklees - alterations to First services between Huddersfield and Meltham, timing changes to First services in Golcar, First service 373 withdrawn all sections of route covered by other services. Minor revisions to other First services. Route changes to Arriva services in Thornhill together with timing changes to other Arriva services.

Leeds - Timing changes to First services. Route changes to First services in the Woodhouse Moor area. Withdrawal of Arriva services 112/122 between Drighlington and Wakefield. Withdrawal of Arriva service 118 will reduce off peak frequency Leeds – Tingley- Ossett – Wakefield to hourly. Withdrawal of service 482 reduces frequency of Arriva services between Wakefield – Middleton – Leeds to hourly.

Wakefield - Extensive changes to Arriva services in the Wakefield and Ossett areas resulting in route changes and renumbering for many passengers. Withdrawal of services 108/ 109 and 111/113 will reduce bus provision in the Outwood and Stanley areas. New service introduced by South Yorkshire Motors between Pontefract and Chequerfield.

Changes of Ownership of Bus Companies

- 2.2. Stagecoach Group plc announced on 14 December 2005, that it had completed the acquisition of the Traction Group Limited, parent company of Yorkshire Traction. Traction was the sixth largest operator of bus services in the UK and is the largest operator that was still privately owned. In addition to South and West Yorkshire, Traction's operations also included bus operations in Lincolnshire and Tayside.
- 2.3. The day to day operation of local services by Yorkshire Traction have not been affected by this move. Metro will be meeting the new management at Yorkshire Traction later in January to discuss the implications of the change for local passengers.
- 2.4. It has also been announced that Transdev have acquired the Blazefield Group of companies, including Keighley & District Travel, Harrogate and District Travel and Yorkshire Coastliner. It is understood that the transition will be managed over a period of up to two years to ensure continuity.

Realtime - YourNextBus

- 2.5. The launch of the real time information system, yournextbus, in September 2005 was accompanied by a marketing campaign to promote the services.
- 2.6. Feedback from customers on the system has been very positive and further promotional activities are planned for January and February.
- 2.7. The system gives a combination of real time and scheduled information on bus departures. The project team is working with the operators, Districts and the supplier to increase the proportion of real time predictions given by the system.
- 2.8. Work is ongoing on the procurement of electronic signs for bus shelters to show real time information and these will be installed later in the year. PCC Members' views regarding potential locations is being sought. PCC members are also being invited to attend a further briefing / demonstration of the current ways of accessing the information.

Free Travel Concessions Update

- 2.9. With effect from April 2006 there will be a statutory requirement on Metro to provide free bus travel for men and women over 60 and certain categories of disabled people. The requirement is for free travel between 0930 hrs and 2300hrs Monday to Friday and all day Saturday, Sunday and Public Holidays.
- 2.10. The statutory requirement (and additional funding) for free travel applies to buses only and for journeys within the area of the authority (there is no requirement to provide cross boundary or rail concessionary travel and the Government are not introducing a national scheme). WYPTA will be considering arrangements for rail and cross-boundary journeys as part of its budgeting process for 2006/07.

CCTV On Bus Initiative

- 2.11. A third phase of Metro's initiative to assist bus operators in fitting CCTV on vehicles is now underway. This latest initiative, worth £1/2 million will enable a further 168 vehicles to be equipped in West Yorkshire. The two previous phases totalled £934,000 in value and equipped 333 buses. Operators participating in the current phase are Arriva Yorkshire, First, Yorkshire Traction and Geldards.

LTP Settlement

- 2.12. In December, the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan partnership (Metro and the 5 District Authorities) received positive feedback from the Department for Transport on both the provisional LTP for 2006 and 2011 and the progress that has been made in delivering the first Plan.
- 2.13. The Provisional Plan was scored as 'promising'. There is an opportunity to update the plan before it is submitted in final form in March. The response noted convincing strategies on accessibility and road safety, but the approach to congestion and air quality need further work. Further detail is required on demand management measures and the impact these will have on congestion.
- 2.14. The Partnership was awarded a 5% funding bonus for 2006/07 based on a 'good' score for the progress we made in delivering the first Plan during 2004/05. The DfT considered our scheme delivery was good and the elimination of previous years under spend helped achieved this score. Performance on target delivery was encouraging, but the bus patronage target was not on track.

MyBus

- 2.15. Funding for each of the 3 phases of the MyBus scheme is dependent upon the successful implementation of earlier phases. Phase 1 was introduced during 2005. Phase 2 is being planned for implementation during 2006. The DfT advised they will shortly announce the decision

about the release the funding for Phase 3 (£7 million) following the supply of performance information by Metro.

Rail Information at Stations

2.16. Metro will be contributing to a scheme costing £520,000 that will replace the information control systems for existing long line public address announcements and passenger information screen displays at rail stations. This new control system will be centralised at Leeds rather than the current situation where information is fed into the network at Halifax, Huddersfield and Leeds. It will offer the following benefits:-

- Sufficient capacity to cover the whole West Yorkshire rail network should there be the future opportunity for expansion of passenger information displays.
- Consistency of information due to the integration of both visual and audible information systems at those stations currently provided with both facilities.
- Improved quality and reliability with less reliance on human intervention. Compatibility with Metro's longer term aspiration to provide real time information at rail stations.

Northern's programme for implementing the new system is due for completion in the spring of this year.

Shelter Refurbishment

2.17. Metro is seeking to rationalise its shelter stock to two main makes (Signature and Trueform), with a view to raising the overall standard of shelter provision and achieving maintenance cost efficiencies.

2.18. There are currently over 400 older Signature (Smart 4) type shelters across West Yorkshire. A sample check showed that the shelters would benefit from a refurbishment programme. This programme will ensure that the shelters are DDA compliant, improve their appearance and extend the life span of the stock for a further 10 – 15 years. Each shelter will be checked for safety, corrosion, paintwork and glazing. Benefits following refurbishment will include,

- Improved access/exit through and around the shelter for passengers and other pedestrians, thereby, ensuring the shelters are accessible to all
- Simplify glazing sizes for contractors called out to repair smashed glass etc, thereby reducing repair costs
- Meeting DDA compliance by enabling new large size timetable cases to be fitted.

- 2.19. The programme commenced during the Summer 2005 and will be completed by March 2007.

Supertram

- 2.20. The Leeds Supertram Project was cancelled at the beginning of November 2005, as were light rail projects in Portsmouth and Liverpool.
- 2.21. The letter cancelling the project refers to a consultant study that suggested that a bus-based scheme would be better value for money. Metro disagreed with aspects of this study.
- 2.22. Metro is now working with Leeds City Council to review options for the 'Supertram' corridors (and other parts of Leeds) and will be setting out a revised approach in the Local Transport Plan submission.
- 2.23. It is likely that this approach will include relatively short-term actions, such as park and ride use of the frt vehicles on route 4 (see below) as well as the implementation of the findings of studies (such as that covering the Harrogate Line).
- 2.24. PCC members will be briefed, and consulted, on a revised approach at future meetings.

Metro Connect Free City Bus

- 2.25. There have been long term aspirations for central area shuttle buses in the major centres in West Yorkshire. An experimental free bus service will commence operation in Leeds on 30th January 2006 operating every 6 to 8 minutes Monday to Saturday from 06:30 until 19:10. A one way circular route will operate from Leeds Rail Station Interchange via Park Lane College, Leeds General Infirmary, Leeds Metropolitan University, Merrion Centre, Headrow, Leeds Bus Station, Vicar Lane returning to the Leeds Rail Station Interchange. The service will operate using new accessible buses.
- 2.26. The service will initially operate for an experimental period until June 2006. If successful, funding partners will be sought to operate the service on a long term basis.

Kickstart

- 2.27. Members of the PCC will be aware that Metro and First submitted a bid to the Department for Transport's Kickstart scheme to introduce late night bus services on most Overground routes in Leeds on weekend evenings. Regrettably the bid was unsuccessful. Metro and First are continuing to explore options to increase the provision of late night bus services in response to recent alterations in licencing hours.

Ftr – Route 4

- 2.28. Work is underway for the introduction of First new 'ftr' vehicle onto the Route 4 service in Leeds operating between Pudsey and Whinmoor. First is planning to introduce the new 18.7m articulated vehicles from autumn this year. The new vehicles (produced by Wrights) are designed to have a futuristic feel and raise the image and quality of bus travel.
- 2.29. Metro and Leeds City Council are working on complementary infrastructure improvements (including bus priorities, upgrading of shelters to modern standards, raised kerbs at all stops and bus stop clearways to prevent parking at stops).
- 2.30. It is also planned to introduce real time information displays at the busiest stops.
- 2.31. A marketing campaign is also being developed by the partners.

Wharfe Valley Bus Services

- 2.32. Passengers have been complimentary about the Metro Connect services operating in the Otley and Ilkley areas following their launch in October 2006. Patronage is growing on routes that were revised following a public consultation exercise.

Leeds-Sheffield Fast Rail Service

- 2.33. Leeds Sheffield Fast rail services celebrated their first anniversary on Monday 12 December. Since the service was introduced there has been an 11% increase in overall rail passenger numbers between the two cities, 12% of whom were formerly either drivers or passengers in cars.
- 2.34. Journey times between Leeds and Sheffield on the Fast service, which also stops at Wakefield Kirkgate, Barnsley and Meadowhall, are on average, 57 minutes.
- 2.35. The Leeds Sheffield Fast service was introduced as a result of a joint effort between Northern Rail, Metro and South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive and Yorkshire Forward.
- 2.36. A popular half-price offer for passengers travelling off-peak from Leeds or Wakefield Kirkgate to Sheffield, Barnsley or Meadowhall, is operating throughout January.

Pudsey Bus Station

- 2.37. Metro has worked in partnership with Leeds City Council to develop a preferred layout for a new bus station in Pudsey Market Place. It is anticipated that the new bus station will be open to passengers in 2007. The key elements of the proposal are:
- Leeds City Council will re-model the Leisure Centre car park to provide spaces lost through the proposals
 - All bus stops will be removed from Church Lane and re-located into the new bus station
 - Passenger facilities will be improved in a central concourse with new seating, level access boarding and 'real-time' information
 - The one way system on Market Place will be reversed to allow passenger to alight at the central bus station concourse
 - A new signal controlled junction will allow buses to exit easily
- 2.38. A consultation exercise was carried out in July 2005 in two phases. Firstly, a meeting was held with invited business interests who could be directly affected by the proposals. Fourteen local business people and residents who live in very close proximity to the bus station attended, and their response was mostly favourable.
- 2.39. Secondly, a wider general public consultation was undertaken. Approximately 700 people attended over the three days, and over 70% of the respondents appear to be in favour on the proposals.

New Rolling Stock – TransPennine Express

- 2.40. The First TransPennine Express train operating company has taken delivery of its first new Class 185 Desiro diesel unit, the first of a fleet of 51 3-car trains built by Siemens in Germany and leased through HSBC. They will start to enter service in the Spring after testing and driver training, with 41 units in traffic by the end of October and all trains in traffic by January 2007 on TransPennine Express services.
- 2.41. Some minor adjustments to the timetable from December 2006 are planned to take advantage of the improved performance and point-to-point timings.
- 2.42. Certain peak trains will run as 6-car formations giving extra capacity to and from Leeds and Manchester. As currently proposed the 0808, 0823, 0834 and 0910 arrivals from the Huddersfield direction and 0805 and 0824 arrivals from the York direction will be 6 cars giving 362 seats per train. In the evening peak the 1709 and 1724 departures towards Huddersfield and the 1812 departure towards York will be 6-car formations.

3. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1. That the report is noted.

Director General
West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive
