

# AGENDA ITEM No: 6a

## WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

### AT A MEETING OF THE TENDERED SERVICES WORKING GROUP HELD IN WELLINGTON HOUSE ON MONDAY 6 AUGUST 2007

**PRESENT:** Councillor T Brice (Chair)

Councillors D Congreve, G Phelps and G Wainwright

#### **13. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor C Campbell.

#### **14. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

#### **15. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** - That the minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2007 be approved.

#### **16. BUS SERVICE 911**

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the award of a de minimis contract for the operation of service 911, which runs between Meltham and Honley.

It was reported that the contract for the service was due to end in 2007. The existing operator, K Line, had approached Metro with an offer to continue to operate the service at less than the current price using a new Metro Connect liveried low floor DDA compliant Optare Solo bus on the route.

**RESOLVED** - That the award of a 5 year de minimis contract to K Line for the operation of service 911 be noted as being consistent with the Authority's policy for the provision of local bus services.

#### **17. WAKEFIELD FREE CITYBUS**

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the progress of the Wakefield Free City bus.

It was reported that the Wakefield Free Citybus had exceeded key performance indicators with regard to patronage, modal shift and accessibility.

Current average weekly loading exceeded 3,960 passengers and was continuing to increase.

Comment was made that the service was operated using 3 vehicles, which had previously been used on the Leeds Free Citybus. Although, Metro had arranged for a full inspection of the vehicles prior to the transfer, which also required the existing operator to bring them up to a condition commensurate with age and mileage, the new service provider had found it necessary to undertake further maintenance as part of the MOT procedure. Metro had met these additional costs and was seeking to recover them back.

Tenders for the service were invited prior to the decision to use vehicles from the Leeds service. Star Travel had based their bid on the provision of new vehicles and had not built in any contingencies for using older vehicles into their original tender price.

The Working Group were of the opinion that, given that the original tender assumed new vehicles, it was reasonable to adjust the annual cost of operation to reflect the higher maintenance costs. In this respect, members were told that the revised cost was significantly cheaper than the next lowest tender submitted.

Comment was also made that discussions were currently taking place with Mecca Bingo regarding the possibility of sponsoring a vehicle. A meeting had also been arranged with English Cities with a view to agreeing possible sponsorship for a bus and that any sponsorship income would be equally shared between Metro and Wakefield District Council to offset the costs of operation of the service.

#### **RESOLVED -**

- (a)** That the performance of the Wakefield Free Citybus be noted.
- (b)** That the continuation of service beyond the initial 6 month trial period, subject to Wakefield District Council's agreement to match fund the service on a 50:50 basis, be noted.
- (c)** That the amendment to the contract value arising from increased maintenance costs be noted.
- (d)** That a report be submitted to a future meeting of the Working Group setting out various options with regard to the maintenance of Metro owned vehicles leased out to operators.

#### **18. WAKEFIELD AND KIRKLEES TENDERED SERVICES ISSUES**

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the withdrawal of tendered service 58 following the registration of an alternative commercial service and the adjustment to contract termination dates.

### **Withdrawal of Contract**

It was reported that following the withdrawal of service 58 by Stagecoach, Metro had received a significant number of complaints from the residents of Woolley who no longer had a daytime service. Following discussions, Metro had received the co-operation of Arriva to extend the operation of commercial service 443 to Barnsley, which would provide a two hourly daytime service via Woolley.

Members were advised that the service precluded the need for the tendered journeys provided by Stagecoach and, therefore, the contract was withdrawn on 29 July 2007.

### **Adjustment of Contract Renewal Date**

The Working Group were informed that discussions had been held with Arriva and Stagecoach to co-ordinate the renewal of forthcoming tendered service contracts to co-ordinate with the companies programme of bus network review. This would affect the following Batches:

Batch 435 (Arriva) Wakefield district expires 1 September 2007

Batch 349 (Arriva) Wakefield district expires 26 January 2008

Batch 368 (Stagecoach) Wakefield and Kirklees districts expires 26 January 2008

Batch 369 (Stagecoach) Wakefield district expires 26 January 2008

In this respect, comment was made that Arriva were proposing to carry out a full appraisal of their commercial services, which were extended by the tendered trips within batches 435 and 349 and, therefore, it was proposed to extend both batches to January and April 2008. Batches 368 and 369 related to services operating within the networks, which were extensively changed by Stagecoach in May 2007. It was, therefore, proposed to extend the term of these contracts until July 2008, enabling a fuller evaluation of the new network performance.

### **RESOLVED -**

- (a) That the withdrawal of tendered services contracts for the operation of service 59B, with effect from 29 July 2007, be noted as being consistent with the Authority's policies for the provision of local bus services.
- (b) That the revised contract expiry dates with regard to batches 435, 349, 368 and 369 be noted.

## **19. FORTHCOMING BUS SERVICE CHANGES - HEAVY WOOLLEN DISTRICT, HOLME VALLEY AND BRIGHOUSE/RAISTRICK**

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on anticipated commercial bus service changes, which impacted on tendered services in the Heavy Woollen, Holme Valley and Brighouse/Raistrick areas.

### **Heavy Woollen District**

It was reported that Stagecoach were withdrawing service X62, which operated between Huddersfield, Mirfield, Dewsbury and Leeds. Service 262 had been curtailed to run to Dewsbury only, though the company has expressed doubts concerning its future commercial viability. Metro was exploring options to retain the service with the operator, as it provided a valuable link between Mirfield and Huddersfield via Upper Heaton and Waterloo.

The Working Group suggested that the bus operate via Dewsbury rail station before terminating at the bus station.

### **Holme Valley**

It was reported that First had started a review of the Holme Valley service. As a consequence, some areas would benefit from more direct services to Huddersfield, although some settlements would experience reduced frequencies and/or longer journey times. Metro were currently working with the operator to develop final network proposals.

Members were advised that a presentation of the proposed changes would be made to local PTA members, ward members and parish councillors on 7 August 2007.

### **Brighouse/Raistrick**

It was reported that First were considering changes to services affecting the Brighouse and Raistrick areas, which would be introduced in January 2008.

The Working Group were advised that consultation with PTA members, ward members and parish councillors would take place in the Autumn.

### **RESOLVED -**

- (a) That the current discussions regarding the proposed bus service changes be noted.
- (b) That the implications for tendered services arising from the proposals be presented to a future meeting of the Working Group.

## **20. BUS SERVICE CHANGES - LEEDS - PARK ROW - WOODHOUSE RIDGE - ST JAMES' HOSPITAL**

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the proposed withdrawal of service 58 from September 2007.

It was reported that Metro had undertaken passenger usage surveys, which had revealed an average of 5 passengers per trip, which did not meet the Authority's criteria for tendered services. Members were advised that the

Woodhouse Ridge area would keep a link to the city centre on evenings and Sundays by service 60, which operated via Hyde Park and Little London.

Members noted with regret that the service was being withdrawn. They indicated that whilst recognising that the service was not being well used, it offered an invaluable direct service to St James' hospital to many elderly and people with mobility impairment living in the area affected.

**RESOLVED** - That the report be noted.

**21. TENDERED SCHOOL TAXI CONTRACTS - BATCH 422 - BRADFORD DISTRICT**

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the results of tenders received in Batch 422 for the provision of school taxi and minibus services in the Bradford district including those administered by Metro on behalf of Bradford Education Authority as part of the Education Transport Agreement.

The Working Group were advised that Batch 422 comprised of 157 tenders for the transportation of 297 school children. In addition, a number of contracts would be continued in the 2007/08 academic year through the award of de minimis contracts where services represented value for money. As a result, the annual cost of the award was a 6.9% reduction on the previous academic year.

**RESOLVED** - That the awards, as detailed in Appendices 1 and 2 of the submitted report, be noted as being consistent with the Authority's policies for the provision of schools transport services.

**22. BATCH 424 - SCHOOLS TAXI AND MINIBUS TENDERS - LEEDS DISTRICT 2007/08**

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the results of tenders received in Batch 424 for the provision of schools taxi and minibus services in the Leeds district including those administered by Metro on behalf of Leeds Education Authority as part of the Education Transport Agency Agreement.

**RESOLVED** - That the award of tenders, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the submitted report, be noted as being consistent with the Authority's policies for the provision of schools transport services.

**23. TENDERED SCHOOL TAXI CONTRACTS - BATCH 425 - WAKEFIELD DISTRICT**

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the results of tenders received in Batch 425 for the provision of schools taxi and minibus services in the Wakefield District, including those

administered by Metro on behalf of Wakefield Education Authority, as part of the Education Transport Agency Agreement.

**RESOLVED** - That the award of tenders, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the submitted report, be noted as being consistent with the Authority's policies for the provision of schools transport services.

#### **24. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The Tendered Services Working Group considered a recommendation to exclude the press and public from Agenda Items 13, 14, 15 and 16, which contained exempt information defined in Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12a Local Government Act 1972.

**RESOLVED** - It was agreed that because disclosure of the reports might prejudice future negotiations due to the commercial confidentiality of tender prices, the public interest would be better served by maintaining the exempt information and, therefore, the press and public be now excluded.

#### **25. TENDERED SCHOOL SERVICES - BATCH 420 - CALDERDALE AND WAKEFIELD DISTRICTS AND SCHOOL SERVICE DE-REGISTRATIONS IN KIRKLEES DISTRICT**

The Tendered Services Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the awards of tenders received in Batch 420 for school services in the Calderdale and Wakefield districts and work to replace schools transport services in the Kirklees district, which had been deregistered by First and Stagecoach.

It was reported that Wakefield district tenders were for the renewal of contracts to operate 'within' school hours services and in Calderdale tenders were for the renewal of contracts for a mix of 'home-to-school' and 'within' school hours provision.

Members were advised that during the evaluation stage Metro had received notification from both First and Stagecoach of their intention to deregister a number of schools transport services in the Kirklees district. As a consequence, Metro was working with operators to secure services at the lowest possible costs. In this respect, Metro had already secured the co-operation of Arriva to provide a number of journeys on a commercial basis through changes to their network of services in South Kirklees. The Working Group were advised that a number of other service issues required resolution and that a further report on the outcome would be prepared for a future meeting of the Working Group.

Comment was also made that First had submitted an alternative bid to supply a 'Mybus' type service providing quality and safety, but at a significant additional cost. Calderdale Council were very supportive of this proposal and had agreed to meet a proportion of the additional costs. However, in view of

the financial uncertainty from the replacement of the deregistered services in Kirklees further evaluation was needed on the affordability of the proposal.

**RESOLVED -**

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That a further report be prepared detailing the schools tenders, as discussed in the submitted report.

**26. AWARD OF BUS SERVICE TENDERS - CALDERDALE**

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the award of contracts in the Calderdale district including several cross boundary services jointly funded by Lancashire County Council and Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive.

**RESOLVED** - That the award of contracts to First be noted as being consistent with the Authority's policies for the provision of tendered local bus services.

**27. AWARD OF CONTRACT - BATCH 433 - MYLITTLEBUS/METRO LOCAL**

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the award of contracts in Batch 433 for the operation of Mylittlebus/Metro Local services in the Kirklees area and to recommend the preferred bidders for the Bradford and Wakefield areas.

It was reported that 13 bids had been received from 11 operators. On that basis meetings had been held with the operators who had submitted the 3 lowest tenders to evaluate the relative strengths and risks, particularly with regard to staff recruitment and retention, driver suitability, facilities/premises, understanding and appreciation of Mybus and their commitment to the long term success of the scheme.

As a result of post tender discussions with the preferred bidders, the bid prices had been adjusted to reflect the required service levels. However, despite these changes the 3 preferred bidders still represented the cheapest tender prices.

The Working Group were given an update on the development of the Mylittlebus and Metro Local services with Kirklees LEA and the Area Committees. In this respect, they were also advised that whilst funds were not available for the further development of schemes in the Wakefield and Bradford districts, it was considered desirable that the bids from TLC Travel and BL Travel be accepted to enable future expansion of the initial Kirklees pilot should this prove successful.

**RESOLVED -**

- (a) That the award of the following contracts for the operation of Mylittlebus/Metro Local pilot scheme be noted as being consistent with the Authority's policy for local bus services.

Mount Taxis	2 vehicles	Huddersfield area
TLC	3 vehicles	North Kirklees/Dewsbury area

- (b) That the bids submitted by TLC and B L Travel be accepted to enable future expansion of the scheme in Wakefield and Bradford should the pilot scheme in Kirklees prove successful.

**28. MYBUS TENDER BATCH 439**

The Working Group considered a report of the Passenger Transport Executive on the results of tenders received in Batch 439 for the provision of Mybus services in the Bradford and Leeds areas.

It was reported that tenders had been sought following notification from the existing operator requesting early termination of the contract due to the rationalisation of their services.

The Working Group were advised that the tender batch had been advertised in 2 lots and the bids which had been submitted revealed that the new prices received were less than those currently paid. Members were, therefore, of the opinion that it was beneficial to Metro to accept Gelderd's proposal to terminate their contract and award new contracts to the lowest tenderers. In this respect, it was intended that services would commence in September provided that the necessary checks of vehicles and transfers could be facilitated within the timescale.

**RESOLVED -**

- (a) That the termination of Geldard's Mybus contract for tender batch 380 be approved.
- (b) That the award of contract to Rollinsons (Lot YB2) and C T Plus (Lot YB6) be approved as being consistent with the Authority's policy for the provision of school transport services.