

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
WAKEFIELD DISTRICT CONSULTATION SUB-COMMITTEE  
HELD ON THURSDAY, 24 MARCH 2022 AT HELD REMOTELY**

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**Present:**

|  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| Councillor Alan Garbutt (Chair)            | Transport Committee   |
| Councillor Charlie Keith                   | Transport Committee   |
| Cliff Baker (Public Representative)        | Public Representative |
| Peter Daniels (Public Representative)      | Public Representative |
| David Hogg (Public Representative)         | Public Representative |
| Christopher Hyomes (Public Representative) | Public Representative |

**In attendance:**

|                  |                                   |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Pete Myers       | Northern Trains                   |
| Dwayne Wells     | Arriva Yorkshire                  |
| Mark Fenwick     | Arriva Yorkshire                  |
| Melissa Farmer   | TransPennine Express              |
| Dave Pearson     | West Yorkshire Combined Authority |
| Janette Woodcock | West Yorkshire Combined Authority |

**12. Open Forum**

Open session for members of the public to ask a question, raise a concern or provide feedback.

It was raised that Wakefield, Kirkgate Station toilets had still not been completed. Local opinion had been sought and it was felt that this was never going to happen. was ever going to happen. A state-of-the-art station was promised years ago along with a waiting room and toilets but there is still a hole on Platform 2 and 3.

In response, the Director for Transport Services, West Yorkshire Combined Authority agreed this was not satisfactory and would make enquiries and come back to the Committee with answers.

It was raised that there is concern that rail services in the Wakefield and surrounding areas would be cut in favour of more profitable services in other

areas of Yorkshire. A BBC radio Leeds interview to discuss rail services in Wakefield had been cancelled and replaced with a discussion on Harrogate.

In response to concerns, assurances were given by the Rail Operator that this was not going to happen. Service cuts and restricted services were being fairly shared around the region. It is not anticipated there will be a return to full service until assurances can be given that there will be a good reliable service provided. All the Yorkshire regions are in the same boat and will be treated the same. Everyone deserves a good service and Operators want to see public transport an alternative to using the car.

The present situation is unusual due to a lot of impact on the public transport network including driver shortages, and increased fuel costs which is creating a shrinkage in services. The Combined Authority are working with Bus Operators in particular to manage a way through as they want to ensure the interest of passengers are a priority as not everyone has an alternative mode of transport to rely on.

It has been a difficult year so far and has been more challenging than the last two years of the pandemic. Although there is no clear way through the desire to put things back to where they were, complete promises cannot be made as to when and how this will be achieved.

Members felt it was a worry that temporary service solutions cannot become the new normal

### **13. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence received from, Ali Usman, Nigel Ashton, John Churms, Peter Howden and Chris Hyoms

### **14. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

There were no items of disclosable pecuniary interests.

### **15. Exempt Information - Possible exclusion of the press and public**

There were items requiring the exclusion of the press and public.

### **16. Notes of the informal meeting held on 14 October 2021**

**Resolved:** That the informal notes of the meeting held on 14 October 2021 be noted.

### **17. Transport Committee Review**

The present Transport Committee has been in the present format since 2014. The Director of Transport Services confirmed that the Transport Committee Review was approved at the Combined authority meeting which will mean that

the Transport Committee will have a new format from June 2022, which will also change the DCSC format. The DCSCs will become more focused on engagement and will be more flexible, with meetings at least twice each year. The Chair will act as an engagement lead for the area and will feed back discussion to the Transport Committee. The DCSC will not be a formal meeting but there will still be the opportunity to discuss any transport issues.

## **18. Chair's Update**

Cllr Garbutt welcomed everyone to the meeting and said that following the meeting the presentation slides will be circulated.

Although unable to bring better news about transport services he wanted to say how much the Hemsley / Ryhill service was appreciated which has been implemented because the evening service has been reduced.

## **19. Information Report**

Members considered an information report which provided an update on transport issues in Wakefield which included

A638 Doncaster Road  
Normanton Rail Car Park  
Moorthorpe Rail Car Park  
Newton Bar  
UTMC Element A Wakefield

It was noted that the Transport Committee receive updates on regional and national issues and the latest information provided was available on the Combined Authority's website.

## **20. Operator Updates**

Members were provided with verbal updates from transport operators:

Arriva

There is a UK wide driver shortage resulting in last minute cancellations and buses not turning up. Temporary timetable changes are being put in place which will be published tomorrow 25 March and some Saturday services suspended. There is an intensive recruitment campaign underway including the recruitment of part time drivers. There are also current absences due to Covid and sickness Drivers are however, returning after leaving for the HGV industry

Arriva Yorkshire continue to go out on the front line with their drivers which gives an insight into driver and passenger experiences.

Northern

Are also experiencing similar challenges to the bus operators. Training is an ongoing battle and as with Arriva short term timetable changes have been put

in place. Throughout the pandemic drivers were placed in training bubbles with continuous covid testing and there is still a back log of training. At present there is a change in the market, Commuter travel has reduced, and the leisure market is terrific changing from shopping trips to visits to the coast and the Yorkshire Dales

Northern also wanted to say in response to the concerns raised about Kirkgate Station. The work on the station is a collaboration between Network Rail and Grand Central and they will ensure that comments are passed on the appropriate team as it is also a problem for Northern.

TransPennine

Sickness levels are rising again resulting in short notice cancellations and it was felt it is better to let people know the day before of train cancellations. Industrial Action is taking place affecting the leisure market with strikes on Sundays and bank holidays which is very disappointing,

## **21. Transport Programmes: A Look Ahead**

The Sub-Committee considered a presentation outlining the proposed goals for public transport over the coming years

## **22. Public Transport After the Pandemic**

The Sub-Committee was given an update on the current trends for public transport following the pandemic, with suggestions to encourage passengers to return to public transport, and how public transport might change to support a return.

In summary people are returning to public transport but there is some way to go to achieve the levels pre pandemic. Ticketing schemes have been impacted and in future staff may only go into work for a specific event of meeting. Passengers are still sensitive to overcrowding and the cost-of-living crisis is impacting with discretionary spending.

Challenges are not being able to keep up with timetable changes. Plans to bring printed timetables back to bus stops have taken longer than anticipated. Not everyone has the internet and the enquiry office at Wakefield has been closed so looking at options for an alternative.