

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
WAKEFIELD DISTRICT CONSULTATION SUB-COMMITTEE
HELD ON THURSDAY, 14 FEBRUARY 2019 AT OLD COURT ROOM,
WAKEFIELD TOWN HALL**

Present:

Councillor Kevin Swift (Chair)	Transport Committee
Usman Ali (Deputy Chair)	Public Representative
Councillor Matthew Morley	Wakefield Council
Nigel Ashton (Public Representative)	Public Representative
John Churms (Public Representative)	Public Representative
Peter Daniels (Public Representative)	Public Representative
Thomas Randall (Public Representative)	Public Representative
David Young (Public Representative)	Public Representative

In attendance:

Paul Flanagan	Arriva Yorkshire
Pete Myers	Arriva Rail North Limited
Peter Taylor	Arriva Yorkshire
Neale Wallace	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Helen Ellerton	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Megan Hemingway	West Yorkshire Combined Authority

11. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor David Dagger and Public Representative Cliff Baker.

12. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests declared by members at the meeting.

13. Exempt Information - Possible exclusion of the press and public

There were no items requiring the exclusion of the press and public.

14. Minutes of the meeting held on 1 November 2018

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 1 November 2018 be approved.

15. Open Forum

The Sub-Committee made the following suggestions and comments:

- The Knottingley to Leeds Train via Wakefield Westgate does not stop at Outwood and yet there seems time to stop there. Northern agreed to look at this as he agreed it may be an option.
- There is not enough capacity on the Outwood Service and concerns are being raised in regards health & safety of passengers. Passengers were pushing onto over-crowded trains as trains are already full when reaching the station.
- The 7.30am train is often unreliable so passengers are forced onto the next train of only two carriages. Northern are aware of the capacity issues at Outwood. The electrification at Bolton will release more trains and these will be put at stations where overcrowding is an issue- Outwood being one.
- Disability accessibility at Monkhill Pontefract is an issue for passengers using platform 1. This means they have to travel to Knottingley and get off there to travel back to Monkhill to use the accessible platform 2. Northern confirmed that it is the responsibility of Network Rail to provide accessible access. There is also an 'Access for all Fund' which can be bid for – criteria being foot-fall at the station, population and its locality. However, as foot-fall is low at Pontefract it is unlikely to qualify. Northern can only fund minor works such as hand rails. They checked and can confirm that Monkhill Pontefract was included in the recent bid.
- Northern was asked to clarify their mobility scooter policy. They confirmed that they do not take mobility scooters unless they are the folding type. They do however accept wheelchairs. There are a number of reasons why scooters are not accepted:

They do not fit on some of Northern's rolling stock.
They have lower ground clearance than wheelchairs.
By law, they are a vehicle not a mobility aid.
There is an issue as to having ramps at all stations.
There is no national standard for operators allowing scooters.

Northern did however inform the Sub-Committee that Leeds NW are running a trial permit system at present as they have accessible rolling stock. Northern's review is ongoing as they have to look at all stations as well as rolling stock.

As Pacer Trains are replaced it will be easier to look at this issue. Northern do want to take mobility scooters in the long term but also have challenges in terms of platforms accessibility.

The Sub-Committee felt that Northern should offer this service if other operators do and asked what would happen if passengers got stranded at a station. Northern confirmed that they would put passengers in a taxi at Northern's cost.

The sub-committee requested an update at a future meeting.

- Wakefield bus station has a real-time display missing at Stand 14. The Combined Authority agreed to look into this.
- 189 / 187 service Wakefield to Leeds has had a 29 seater on it on some occasions instead of a double-decker which is not fit for passenger numbers.

Arriva informed the Committee that some buses in their fleet are currently undergoing retrofit work and when this work is complete the right buses should be on the correct routes consistently.

confirmed that ADL work Monday – Friday so have to fix buses during this time. There is a known issue as to reliability of double deckers which Arriva are working with.

- Signage for additional car parking near Kirkgate was still absent and causing issues. Northern agreed to chase this up to put signs in place.

16. Operator Updates

The Sub-Committee was provided with updates from the bus and rail operators.

Arriva updated the Sub-Committee on service changes due to take place in the Wakefield area on 23 and 24 February. A new 268 timetable would improve punctuality and reliability. The 446 was now pulling into Royds School due to previous safety issues. The Outwood School service was changing as buses kept getting held up in traffic.

New ticket machines are coming in April with the contactless facility like other operators. 19 new hybrid-electric buses are coming later this year.

Wakefield bus station- staff have moved upstairs and there are now 2 regular bus station managers to increase the help available to customers on the concourse. This will be in addition to existing security staff. Improvements are being made to signage and the tannoy is being upgraded.

Trojan bus operations have been taking place and being successful in identifying crimes in general.

The Sub-Committee noted that bus times were not always accurate. They were informed that the tracking systems should see buses but that there had been issues in Leeds City Centre. If a bus broke down then the journey should be able to be cancelled. However, at the moment Arriva's software doesn't allow a journey to be cancelled once it has started. This is being worked on by Arriva and the Combined Authority.

Northern updated the Sub-Committee on its services. The 6.57 service Doncaster to Leeds was supposed to be an electric train but there had been shortages due to time table issues so this had been moved. This service has

been reliable recently.

The Sub-Committee was also informed that the long running dispute of 2 years was now over and officially suspended with normal Saturday service being resumed from next week.

Performance has improved to 85% in terms of reliability due to the changes made in the December 2018 timetable, this also now means that other issues can be more easily identified. Further changes are planned in 2019:

- From May 2019 Huddersfield to Wakefield Kirkgate will now extend to Castleford and
- York to Preston will go on to Blackpool.
- Additional trains each way York to Sheffield via Pontefract Baghill.
- On Sundays hourly trains from both Doncaster to Leeds and Sheffield to Leeds.
- December 2019 will see the introduction of Northern Connect across the Calder Valley with a link to Manchester Airport.

The Sub-Committee was informed that new trains are now in the UK and are being tested. The first electric service will be Doncaster to Leeds in May 2019 and at the same time the new diesel and electric trains will be phased in to be mainly out by December 2019. The on-going refurbishment of trains will be completed by the end of the year with Pacers gone by then.

Northern are also working with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority regards the new Elland Station and the car park extensions planned in the Calder Valley. Work is underway for Platform Zero at Leeds Station, this will help the West side of Leeds.

Members asked the following questions:

- Will they reinstate another platform at Castleford?
Transpennine are looking to run services to York from Huddersfield and may use the other Platform at Castleford.
In order for the other platform to be opened work would need to take place on the train lines by Network Rail.
- Can the Huddersfield to Castleford train be extended on to Scarborough in the Summer?
Leeds to Scarborough is being looked at, via Castleford.
- More connectivity would be welcomed around Pontefract also.

It was confirmed that Castleford station work will be taking place in April / May 2019. This was welcomed by the Sub-Committee.

Resolved: That the train and bus operators' updates be noted.

17. Consultation Items

The Sub-Committee considered a presentation by Helen Ellerton on 'Planning for Growth: At the heart of the North- The City Region Connectivity Strategy'. Members were asked for their views on the strategy to inform its ongoing

development.

The presentation was a starting point of a larger conversation around what transport looks like in the next 5 to 20 years. After examining the current situation areas have been identified for development. The following key points were made:

- Targets have been set to increase use – are these the right ones?
- New stations are proposed.
- High-speed line and the Northern Powerhouse plans are included as the Region is pushing Government for these as a priority.
- Are the geographical areas identified the right areas?
- Key goal is getting people to work – the specific routes and modes would be decided later.
- There are many new options becoming available for mass transit technologies which would be considered.

The Sub-Committee was informed that the information would be made available on the West Yorkshire Combined Authority website asking for feedback and therefore starting the official consultation.

Members noted that there were many key areas of Wakefield which had issues regards traffic flow, Denby Dale Road – the A636 and J39 being one. It was acknowledged that there were issues with all main arterial routes in the area and that the Combined Authority and Wakefield Council were looking at these.

The Sub-Committee raised the following questions:

- Are driverless cars being looked at?
Yes as a potential option.
- Are we looking at opportunities for re-generation in the South East of the District?
- Travel to industrial sites needs to be examined as often a lack of public transport to get workers there. Often low paid jobs and no car to get to work.
Arriva acknowledged that there used to be workers buses transporting them to factory sites historically. However the funding of providing such a service is often a problem and the businesses do not want to contribute. Sherburn Industrial Estate being a case in point – requiring a bus service since 2017 but no funding being available.
- Options other than mass-transit need to be explored, particularly for more rural areas as they are not in a neat corridor.
- The strategy needs to be about getting people into Wakefield to work and not just from Wakefield to work in Leeds. Also there is travel taking place from Wakefield to employment in Dewsbury and Huddersfield so public transport needs to support this.

Comment was made that there didn't seem to be a scale of people going from A to B in the slides and that it would be helpful to see levels of use. Helen confirmed that work has been done on this at the Combined Authority but it

just wasn't included in the pack.

Resolved: That the report, presentation and Sub-Committee's feedback be noted.

18. Information Report

The Sub-Committee considered a report of matters of information relating to the Wakefield District.

Budget

The budget will be formally approved at the Combined Authority on 14 February with a reduction of £1m per annum for supported bus services.

Boxing Day Services

A slight increase in passengers was seen this Boxing Day. It is not clear whether this is a continuing trend as the day of the week does move and the weather has impact. The biggest increase was seen particularly in relation to travel into Leeds due to the retail offering.

Bus Shelters

There is a four hour call-out SLA regarding smashed glass at bus shelters and in relation to any offensive or racist graffiti. Any damage to a lesser degree falls under a 24hr SLA.

Neale Wallace- Retirement

The Chair gave his thanks on behalf of the Wakefield District Sub-Committee to Neale, and Diane for all of their advice and hard work over the years. This was seconded by a number of Members. It was noted this was Neale's last DCSC as he leaves the Combined Authority in March 2019.

Resolved: That the information report be noted.