

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY GROUP
Wednesday 17 May 2023

Present:- Councillor Beck (in the Chair); Councillors Atkin, Bacon, Bennett-Sylvester, Bird, Browne, A Carter, C Carter, T. Collingham, Griffin, Havard, Hoddinott, Keenan, Tarmey, Wilson, Wyatt and Mr . C. Jepson (Anston Parish Council) .

Also present were Richard Isaac (Northern Railway), Adrian Parkinson (Rotherham Community Transport) and John Young (Stagecoach).

40. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Baker-Rogers, Baum-Dixon, Brookes, Burnett, Z. Collingham, Cusworth, Khan, McNeely, Mills and Reynolds

41. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 1ST FEBRUARY, 2023

Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous meeting held on 1 February 2023.

Agreed:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 1 February 2023, be approved as a true record.

42. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES (NOT COVERED BY THE AGENDA ITEMS)

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

43. QUESTIONS ON TRANSPORT ISSUES

The Transportation Advisory Group noted the questions and answers on transport matters that had been submitted in advance of the meeting that had been included in the agenda pack.

In the absence of a representative from the First Group, Cllr A. Carter outlined that he had been contacted by residents regarding reports of anti-social behaviour at the Bonet Lane bus stop involving students from Brinsworth Academy. The residents had contacted South Yorkshire Police and it had been raised at Neighbourhood meetings. The Chair committed to contacting First Group to raise the issue and seek a response. Both Cllr A Carter and Cllr C Carter indicated that they were happy to meet further to discuss.

Cllr Griffin indicated that he was satisfied with the response as it had clarified what appeared to have been a misunderstanding. The bus service would not be ended in May 2023 and it was in the process of retendering, with a view to the service continuing from July 2023 onward.

Cllr Wyatt asked for clarification on his query regarding cancellation of Norther Rail services.

Cllr Bennett-Sylvester raised concerns from residents that the road markings were not helping traffic flows at the Mushroom Roundabout. Cllr Bennett-Sylvester enquired if there was a way to measure the driver experience. In response, Nat Porter outlined that this would be a detailed piece of work to seek views of road users and it would be difficult to find a representative sample of the users.

Cllr Bennett-Sylvester raised a question about access to Thrybergh Country Park by public transport. It was noted that the park was not on the transportation map. The x78 was a strategic bus route linking Sheffield to Doncaster and passed the park, however this was not promoted as a strategic, county-wide asset. It was asked if SYMCA could be involved in helping to support sustainable travel to this location. In the absence of a representative from SYMCA, the Mayor's office would be contacted.

Cllr Atkin questioned a local bus service in Wath which had been diverted and if the bus could plan additional stops to minimise inconvenience to passengers. John Young (Stagecoach Group), outlined that there were concerns about punctuality on this route and therefore additional unscheduled stops may lead to service delays.

Cllr Havard raised a concern about the Number 26/26a service and if a route could be reinstated. In response Mr. Young outlined that the service was funded by SYMCA and they would take the decision about the route and timetable. He indicated that they would need to be a detailed assessment and suggested that the ward councillors contacted SYMCA to inquire.

Cllr Hoddinott outlined that road works related to installation of the broadband network had led to more diversions. However, there was a lack of notice about when the diversions would come into force. She gave an example of signage being put up after the diversions were in place. She also outlined that the information on the notices differed from the actual routes. She stated that residents were inconvenienced and unable to access buses. The Chair committed to raising this with the First Group.

Agreed:

1) That the Chair contact the First Group regarding the issues with the bus stop on Bonet Lane; and issues regarding late notice of diversions and poor communication.

2) That the Chair contacts SYMCA explore how sustainable travel to Thrybergh Country Park can be supported; and to ascertain if assessment could be undertaken on reinstating parts of the Number 26/26a bus route.

There was no update from the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority Transport.

45. **BUS OPERATORS - UPDATE**

- 1) First Group – No representative was in attendance
- 2) Stagecoach

Mr. Young noted that he valued the opportunity to share information at these meetings. In response to the concerns raised about diversions, He also gave examples of late notice being given to bus operators. He asked for support from elected members in raising concerns to contractors and statutory undertakers to improve communication.

- Mr. Young outlined that's in respect of patronage, the operator was at 75 percent compared with pre pandemic levels. The £2 fair cap had helped to increase numbers slightly.
- An improvement has been seen in driver recruitment Although there were still some pressures in this area. It was noted that staff shortages were more related to sickness than recruitment issues. it was felt that resilience was improving.
- 23 new electric buses where to be delivered to the Rawmarsh depot in early 2024. There would be joint publicity between the Council and SYMCA when they arrive. There were plans 2 change the change the livery to make the vehicles stand out. customer feedback had been very positive.
- There had been an announcement that day that the two pound fare cap would be extended until November 2024. This was positive news and would help to maintain networks. further details of the funding arrangements were awaited.
- Some details were given on the tendering process. It was noted that funding had been extended and it was hoped that services would continue relatively unchanged in the short to medium term.

3) Rotherham Community Transport

Adrian Parkinson gave an update regarding services and it was outlined that the work undertaken with community groups had gone back to pre-pandemic levels. Community Transport was undertaking work with community connectors in Rotherham and working with the social prescribing team to encourage people to go out and about. They had also started a programme of day trips and outings. Mr Parkinson ask for the support of elected members to remind constituents of the service.

Cllr Bennett-Sylvester asked for printed materials which could be distributed in community and neighbourhood centres. Clarification was sought about whether an evening service could be provided. It was outlined that there was little demand however, this could be provided

should there be a request.

Members of the advisory group thanked Community Transport For their community work.

Agreed:- That the update be noted.

46. RAILWAY OPERATORS - UPDATE

Mr Richard Isaac from Northern Rail gave an update and responded to the questions submitted. He apologised for joining the meeting late.

He outlined that cancellations cited on 10 May 2023 were due to train crew shortages. The depots at Hull and Sheffield had experienced higher sickness rates and Northern Rail had planned cancellations to deal with this. Additional resources had been directed to the depots to build resilience at the depots.

It was noted that the representative who attended previous meetings of the TAG had left her role. It was anticipated that recruitment would commence shortly for a replacement who would attend future meetings.

Assurance was sought from Cllr Wyatt that decreased passenger number at stations such as Swinton because of cancellations would not be taken into consideration when considering service levels.

Cllr Keenan commented as a regular rail user, the level of disruption to services was challenging. Further details were sought about how resilience was being built. In response, Mr Isaac gave details about building competency and training more staff to familiarise them with train routes. Work was underway to identify staff shortages and establish trends. A further update would be brought to the next meeting.

He gave details of work with schools and colleges to develop an art programme for Rotherham Central. Local students had engaged with the programme, creating artwork for the station that would be refreshed every six to seven months. Mr Isaac invited members to visit the installation and speak to the students. He cited work undertaken in West Yorkshire to engage young people which had been a success. A college had put on an event which brought apprentices from across the region into the college, to talk about engineering opportunities. It was hoped that something similar would be rolled out in Rotherham shortly. He noted that recruitment of engineers was challenging so they were looking at creative ways to engage. It was felt that more women engineers had been recruited through these initiatives.

Cllr Wyatt gave an example of work with the Friends of Swinton Station Group using work from Swindon Academy students. he suggested that it would be helpful to have a map at the station which shows heritage assets, parks and spaces and other places of interest.

Mr Isaacs gave other examples of community engagement from the South Yorkshire region, including work with asylum seekers and refugees.

Agreed: That The update be noted.

47. **RMBC TRANSPORTATION UNIT - UPDATES**

Nat Porter, Planning Regeneration and Transport Manager, gave an update with the aid of the following powerpoint presentation:

Agenda

- Update since February meeting
- Current government position
- Capital schemes in / nearing delivery
- Ongoing revenue activity
- Forward look

Since last meeting...

- Sheffield Clean Air Zone went live 27th Feb
- Broom Road and Wath to Manvers cycleways schemes into construction
- All of RMBC TCF programme received FBC approval
- Successful bids –
 - A.6022 Road Safety Fund

Current government position

- Key objectives –
 - driving growth and productivity
 - decarbonising transport
 - *including quantifiable carbon reduction*
 - levelling up services and areas
- Primary focus in local transport remains active travel and buses – *all Govt funded schemes now expected to contribute*
- Bus recovery grant and £2 fare cap extended
 - both expire end June '23
- LTP4 guidance & development

RMBC capital schemes in delivery

- Broom Road cycleways
 - Mar '23 – Jan '24
- Wath to Manvers cycleway
 - Apr '23 – Jul '23
- Sheffield Road cycleways
 - May '23 – Jul '24
- Rotherham – Maltby bus corridor
 - May '23 – Feb '24

RMBC capital schemes to commence delivery 2023

- The Whins / Cinder Bridge Road passing bay
 - Summer '23 forecast commencement
- Morthern Rd crossing at Wickersley R'about
 - Summer '23 forecast commencement
- Upper Wortley Road crossing at Gt Parks Rd
 - Summer '23 forecast commencement

RMBC capital schemes to commence delivery 2023

- Local Neighbourhood & Road Safety tranche 1
 - Schemes approved in 6 of 13 wards
 - Remainder subject to ongoing engagement
- A.6022 Safer Roads Fund scheme
- Bus corridor hotspots work
 - At earliest stage, potential projects to be identified in liaison with SYMCA and bus operators.

Ongoing revenue activity

- Cycle hub
- Active Travel Officer schools work
- Schools road safety training
- Development of active travel links to Mainline Station
- Commencement and early engagement regarding City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement schemes

City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement

- £46.6 million capital investment to 26-27
- Public transport, walking and cycling improvements leading into Rotherham town centre
- Contribution to two new stations
 - Rotherham Mainline
 - Waverley

Integrated Mainline & Tram Train Station

- £1m CRSTS to develop Outline Business Case
 - station & tram train stop design, timetable capacity analysis and modelling work
- £10m Town Fund investment to acquire land
- Station masterplan currently being prepared
- OBC programme for completion March 24

Looking further forward

- Local Neighbourhood & Road Safety tranche 2
 - Members' feedback to be invited from the Summer
- Eastwood footbridges improvement
- Junction 33 services – construction commencement mid '23
- First CRSTS Strategic Outline Cases ready late summer '23
- Local Transport Plan refresh
 - For finalisation from Summer '24
- Initial announcement of CRSTS2

- Potential significant funding opportunity after 26-27

The Chair invited comments and questions from the group.

Cllr Wyatt thanked officers for their work to secure funding for works on the A6023. Clarification was sought on plans to publicise the Safer Roads Fund via ward newsletters. It was confirmed that a project officer was in place who would liaise on communications.

Cllr Bennett-Sylvester asked if there were any plans to improve public transport or walking connectively between Parkgate and Aldwarke Lane. It was clarified that it was unlikely that the link road would be used for public transport however, there were improvements to footways between these locations.

The Chair highlighted the funding coming through from SYMCA. He also referred to the local road safety programme for members to determine priorities in their local wards. 6 schemes were being consulted on, with others in the pipeline.

Agreed: That the update be noted.

48. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business to be considered.

49. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

Agreed: that the next meeting be held Wednesday 26 July 2023 at 10.00am