

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY GROUP

Date and Time:- Wednesday 19 March 2025 at 10.00 a.m.

Venue:- Microsoft Teams

Membership:- All Elected Members and Parish Council Representatives.

The items which will be discussed are described on the agenda below and there are reports attached which give more details.

Rotherham Council advocates openness and transparency as part of its democratic processes.

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for Absence**

- 2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 27th November, 2024 (Pages 3 - 10)**

- 3. Matters arising from the previous minutes (not covered by the agenda items)**

- 4. Questions on Transport Issues (Pages 11 - 14)**

- 5. South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority Transport, - Update**

- 6. Bus Operators - Update**
 - (1) First Group
 - (2) Stagecoach
 - (3) Rotherham Community Transport

- 7. Railway Operators - Update**

8. RMBC Transportation Unit - Updates

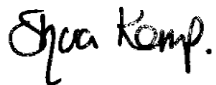
9. Any other business

10. Dates of Future Meetings

Wednesday, 18 th June,	2025
17 th September	
19 th November	
11 th February,	2026

All commencing at 10.00 a.m. and via Microsoft Teams

**The next meeting of the Transportation Advisory Board
will be held on Wednesday 18 June 2025
commencing at 10.00 a.m.
via Microsoft Teams.**



SHARON KEMP, OBE
Chief Executive.

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY GROUP
Wednesday 27 November 2024

Present:- Councillor Taylor (in the Chair); Councillors Adair, Bennett-Sylvester, Beresford, A. Carter, Elliott, Ismail, Harper, Jackson, McKiernan, Rashid, Sutton, Thorp and Williams, Mr. R. Croxton (Treeton Parish Council), Mr. C. Jepson (Anston Parish Council) and Mr. D. Smith (Dinnington St. John's Parish Council).

Also in attendance were Nathan Broadhead (SYMCA), Jessica Clarke (Northern Rail), Brian Edwards (SYMCA), Paul Hopkinson (First Group), Richard Isaac (Northern Rail), Adrian Parkinson (Rotherham Community Transport), Matt Reynolds (RMBC) and John Young (Stagecoach)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Allen, Baggaley, Baker-Rogers, Blackham, Brent, Currie, Cusworth, Garnett, Marshall and Yasseen, Maltby Parish Council and Ravenfield Parish Council.

9. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 31ST JULY, 2024

Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous meeting held on 31st July, 2024.

Agreed:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 31st July, 2024, be approved as a correct record of proceedings.

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

Arising from Minute No. 2 (non-attendance), it was noted that the issue of non-attendance had been raised with the Director of Public Transport at the PTE. A response was awaited.

Arising from Minute No. 3 (questions on transport issues), it was noted that the issue with regard to pick-up and drop-off times for disabled adults was being responded to directly with the Councillor concerned.

11. 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 and included with the agenda pack.

Further to question 1, Councillor Thorp asked how a better bus service could be provided for Whiston. It only had one bus an hour, a single decker vehicle, that came from Harthill. Parts of Whiston did not have a service at all.

Nathan Broadhead, advised that, unfortunately for the Whiston/Aston area, First Group had made the commercial decision to remove all

services from that corridor. The MCA was now spending £23M on bus services whereas it used to spend £7M before Covid and was doing what it could with the resources available. A tender had been put out which was won by Stagecoach and tried to cover everyone with the limited resources available. Stagecoach unfortunately because of how services had to interwork meant that it operated a single decker from Rawmarsh. It was an area underserved.

The best solution was looking at Bus Reform. Bus Reform did not have the answer to everything but if a decision was taken to remove franchising then that would put it more in the local authority decision but did not automatically mean that it would remedy the situation. If the franchising decision was not to go that way, the MCA would continue to work with operators.

Councillor Sutton asked if consideration could be given to a direct bus route from Maltby to the hospital due to the number of staff who lived in the area and residents who had to attend hospital appointments.

Nathan advised that it was the commercial bus operator's decision to remove the service due to the small patronage numbers. The MCA could not fund that service when there were 10 people a day. In terms of staff, meetings had taken place with the hospital on a number of occasions. Staff came from a number of directions and there was nowhere natural for a park and ride service. Also the finishing times of staff meant that it was very difficult to provide a bus service for the varying times. Currently the MCA could not afford to provide another standalone service from Maltby and it was not financially viable for First Group.

Paul Hopkinson, First Group, confirmed that the numbers were as low as 10 passengers a day that the service had been carrying.

Councillor Adair asked if the bus service was running smoothly at the current time.

Nathan Broadhead reported that there had been some challenges and some major investment by Rotherham in terms of works around Sheffield Road, Broom Valley and Wickersley as well as bridge repair works around the ring road. They had all had some impact on bus services. Christmas was now approaching with the associated traffic around Meadowhall and Parkgate which caused challenges.

TM Travel had had a number of problems i.e. struggling with parts for vehicles and retaining drivers. The situation was improving but not at the level where it should be.

Work would continue with the operators and local authorities.

Nathan Broadhead, Bus Partnership and Development Manager, reported on some personnel changes at SYMCA with Brian Edwards now being the new Assistant Director and specifically for buses within SYMCA. Nathan and/or Brian would continue to attend the TAG meetings with others attending for specific agenda items.

Christmas Period

There would be the usual changes to service levels over the Christmas period with operators running Saturday services with extra early morning buses for shift workers where required. The information would be communicated through the South Yorkshire website to enable passengers to be able to plan their journeys.

Service Changes

Other than minor changes there were 2 service changes a year with the next being the Sunday after Easter Sunday.

Bus Reform

The Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) Authority and Board was taking forward potentially the next steps of franchising. Work has been done on the costings and business plans and was now out to 12 weeks public consultation and would end in January 2025. There were a number of drop-ins taking place in Rotherham (see below) that members of the public could attend.

Sheffield Interchange	6 th December, 2024 10.00 a.m.-2.00 p.m.
Meadowhall Interchange	9 th December, 2024 3.00 p.m.-6.00 p.m.
Rotherham Interchange	12 th December, 2024 12.00 Noon-2.00 p.m.
Wickersley Library	17 th December, 2024 4.00 p.m.-6.00 p.m.

Nathan advised attendance at the drop-ins or email with any specific questions.

Councillor Williams queried the consultation events taking place. The nearest event for the Hooper Ward had been at Wath Montgomery Hall which had been advertised at short notice. Parts of the Ward were very rural with residents dependent on the existing bus service.

Nathan advised that there was a separate Bus Reform Team who were arranging additional events as and when resources allowed. The event at Wath had been well attended but probably more from the Wath/Dearne Valley area.

Matt Reynolds advised that the initial feedback from the Bus Reform was that 3,500 responses had been received across South Yorkshire. It was essential that the Rotherham voice was heard in the conversation. Members were urged to share the consultation information that was available.

MCA

Parkgate – the new link road and extended park and ride for tram train was due to open December/early January. There had been some delays mainly due to utilities but work was ongoing to resolve.

Tram train – Magna park and ride was progressing. There would be suspension of services to accommodate some of the work with a bus replacement service provided.

Councillor Bennett-Sylvester asked if there was any potential for linking bus routes through Aldwarke Lane into the park and ride.

Nathan advised that the link road would open and provide that link, however, there was the issue of the bridge that caused issues for the larger buses. There were a number of planning applications for that area and work would take place with the Planning Department with regard to any potential Section 106 funding. To provide a park and ride link into that end there would still be quite a walk and would be talking about a bus running straight through. Only one end would be adopted by Rotherham and the remainder owned by a private landowner who was not in favour of a bus running through the site.

13. BUS OPERATORS - UPDATE**First Group**

Paul Hopkinson, Network and Schedules Manager, reported that it was a period of stability for the Group's services with no planned changes for the foreseeable future.

There were no issues with staff or engineering problems.

Stagecoach

John Young, Commercial Director, reported that service delivery was really strong particularly in the Rotherham area thanks to the performance of the Rawmarsh Depot. Of Stagecoach's 5 depots, Rawmarsh was the top performer.

Lost mileage i.e. journeys that did not run for any reason was 0.4%, some weeks even less so in general in excess of 99%.

Punctuality was also very good but was now in the most challenging time of the year. A spare bus had been added into the Rawmarsh depot until early January to provide the ability to react to conditions more effectively and more quickly. It did add a cost into the business but the company felt it was important to do to and try and keep the service running.

In period 4 (August) punctuality hit 90%. The target was 95% of all journeys to run on time (up to 5 minutes late); managed to achieve 90%. In the following 3 periods (12 weeks), punctuality was around 88% and for period 8 (which is now) the situation was 85%.

The 23 new electric buses were now well established and on the road (routes 22X and 221). They had been extremely well received by customers and staff/drivers/engineers. Their performance was excellent.

There were no planned significant changes until Easter which would also coincide with some tender renewals.

The 22X and 221 had had enhanced frequency. The 221 service had been improved from every 60 minutes to every 20 minutes during day times and improved evening time and Sunday provision from 60 minutes to 30 minutes. This was working well. The 22X day times service was already every 15 minutes but had doubled the frequency in the evening and Sundays. Early indications were that this was not working as well so would be given time to be established and then reviewed.

A few adjustments had been made on the announcement system on the buses as result of feedback.

It was early days with regard to the costs of running electric vehicles. Early indications were positive.

A specially liveried Christmas bus was doing its rounds at the moment spending a week at each of the depots. It had just moved to Rawmarsh and was on the road currently. It would be operating a selection of routes for the next week or so.

Rotherham Community Transport

Adrian Parkinson reported that 2 electric vehicles had recently been introduced to the fleet which had been well received by passengers and staff. The Service continued with the shop-a-buses to local supermarkets.

Currently looking at activities and day trips out for next year.

14. RAILWAY OPERATORS - UPDATE

Richard Isaac, Northern Rail, gave the following update:-

Performance – from 13th October-9th December

- short formation 2% resulting in short formation of 90 services
- 9.5% cancellations
- Performance on time – 49.4%
- Time to 3 – 70.9%
- Time to 15 – 96%
- Performance was not where wanted to be and significant improvements had hoped to see

Industrial Relations

Northern was an amalgamation resulting in 6 different Terms and Conditions for employees which presented significant challenges.

Although there had been the very welcome recent pay award from Government, weekend working had not been addressed. Currently working on the weekend in the rail industry was voluntary and not in the majority of Terms and Conditions. There was a move to improve that and there was a vote at the Conductor Employee Council today to put a temporary fix in until March 2025 to encourage weekend and Sunday working; it was hoped to get the result of the vote on 28th November. It would be a significant impact for colleagues to change their Terms and Conditions to work a weekend when they had never had to do so before. The Trade Unions had endorsed it but it was not known whether their members would agree. That would significantly improve the service offer at the weekend which was the major source of poor performance. As an operator working volunteers at a weekend was challenging to deliver the rail service to the community.

Further discussion would take place in March around modernisation.

Community Activity

There had been significant work with Rotherham College who had produced a fantastic display on Rotherham Station. Northern Rail was launching it again under the umbrella of "Rail 200" which celebrated the 200th anniversary of the first rail passenger service in the world (which was in Great Britain).

Rotherham College were working with Northern Rail to promote tourist opportunities on the East coast. 50+ students were producing a series of poster displays to promote the East coast as a tourist destination. There was a reciprocal arrangement with East Riding College who were promoting Rotherham and South Yorkshire to the residents of the East Riding area.

Employment Opportunities

Northern Rail was still promoting its vacancies as a result of the railway investment. There were a significant amount of employment opportunities within the rail industry over the next 10-15 years and sharing that directly with Rotherham College to reach the young people in Rotherham to highlight the opportunities within the rail sector.

Rotherham College was involved in a joint rail project with the UK Youth Parliament Engagement Team for the recent Parliament Week. It was hoped that some of the students on the Rail 200 project would present to Sarah Champion MP in Parliament with some other students on some of the partnership work that been doing with them.

Northern Rail had also linked up this year with the Sheffield City of Sanctuary and colleagues from Rotherham. Trips had taken place for some of those affected by the riots in Rotherham and 7 members of the community that were in the hotels during the riots taken to Leeds to attend a joint event with other refugee groups in Leeds.

Richard also introduced Jessica Clarke who would be helping to support South Yorkshire communities.

15. **RMBC TRANSPORTATION UNIT - UPDATES**

Matt Reynolds, Head of Transportation Infrastructure, gave the following powerpoint presentation on the Transport Infrastructure Service:-

Recently Completed Projects

- Centenary Way Bridge Repairs
- Traffic Management Act Part 6
- Motorway Service Area M1 J33
- Swallownest and Cortonwood Crossings
- Packman Road Retaining Wall
- Traffic Signal Obsolece Grant
- M1 Smart Motorway Retrofit Programme

Current Projects

- DfT Funded A6022 Scheme to reduce road traffic Collisions in Swinton
Delay – not delivering and overscoped
£0.75M
Considerations – utilities, resources, resurfacing
- Fitzwilliam Road
St. Ann's Roundabout, cycle and bus lands on Fitzwilliam Road and neighbourhood improvements
Circa £16M allocation
Completion March 2027
Considerations – utilities, consultation and strategic acceptance, drainage and construction
- Broom Road
Extension of Broom Cycle Lane, Stag Roundabout and Wickersley Road
Circa £10M allocation
Completion January 2025
Considerations – trees and verges, strategic acceptance and construction

Other Projects

- Magna Tram Train
- Parkgate Link Road
- Rotherham Mainline Station
- Waverley Station
- LNRS1 and LNRS2

Autumn Budget - Headlines

- Programme Review
- 10 Year Investment Plan
- Bus Fare Cap at £3

- Investment in Buses
- Walking and Cycling
- National Rail – GBR
- Electric Vehicle Investment
- Fuel Duty Freeze

John Young, Stagecoach, requested that they be included in the consultation on St. Ann's roundabout as it was an accident blackspot from their perspective.

It was also noted that the £3 fare cap was not a flat fare as some incorrectly thought. Some fares would not be £3 with some being cheaper and also consideration should be given to the day/week ticket price options as they would become more important as they were pre-fare cap.

Stagecoach was also looking at simplification of fares as it had done at the start of 2020 and keen to see what could be done again as the next step in delivering that.

Councillor McKiernan thanked officers for the work on Centenary Way being completed ahead of schedule.

There was so much need for better connections at Waverley particularly with the advanced manufacturing element. Investors were asking about the green credentials etc. which all gave weight to a strong case for a train station. Work was continuing on the business case and making it known to SYMCA.

**Questions to Transport Advisory Group
19th March, 2025**

Question 1 – From Councillor Baker-Rogers

On a recent journey from Rawmarsh to Sheffield by bus and train, I experienced substantial delays and was appalled by the swearing and conversations about inappropriate content on all the buses and trains I travelled on. If we have announcements about not putting feet on seats, and no smoking or vaping, please, can we have one about no swearing and inappropriate conversations?

Answer:- Northern Rail

Train crew regularly patrol our trains and will challenge poor behaviour.

In addition, I would draw you attention to BTP guidance and UK Governments Safer Streets

BTP

<https://www.btp.police.uk/cp/crime-prevention/personal-safety-how-to-stay-safe/tips-making-other-people-feel-safer-on-the-streets/>

UK Governments Safer Streets agenda.

<https://www.gov.uk/missions/safer-streets>

Question 2 – From Councillor Baker-Rogers

The state of the ladies toilets at Rotherham Train Station are appalling. Please, can cleaning be carried out on a regular basis?

Answer:- Northern Rail

The Toilets are regularly cleaned at lunch time and at the end of the day. If the toilets are not in clean and fit state, please report to the Station Team and we will lock out of service until the next scheduled clean. We are currently looking at refurbishing the toilets later this year to improve the offer to our customer.

Question 3 – From Councillor Bacon

I am submitting this on behalf of a local resident who tells me of her experience on the No. 21 bus from Rotherham to Harthill (11th February not long before 16:30), getting off at Swallownest. She tells me the bus was busy as she got on, which meant she stood with her little boy holding onto a bar at the front of the bus. The driver kept letting ever more passengers on to the bus, to the point she was terrified that her child would be crushed. She noted that if the bus had to suddenly brake any standing passengers could have easily fell onto her son. As a result, she had to contemplate leaving the bus and waiting for the next in the rain. This of course would be a gamble as that bus may too be packed. A taxi for her was not on the cards and so she sat her child on the space made for bags and stood in front of him. Her son was crying and said how scared he was; she had to tell her son that he was safe despite being scared herself.

Clearly more buses on this route would be great, but I suspect that is not an option for Stagecoach. Could Stagecoach provide a response on their safety policy to ensure buses are not overcrowded, ensuring the safety of all passengers, including children. Would Stagecoach be willing to review this situation and respond back to the resident to mitigate this from happening again and give assurance to their passenger.

Answer:- Stagecoach

The timetable and frequency for service 21 is determined by SYMCA who fund the service. All our buses are certified to carry standing passengers. Drivers record the number of passengers on board and will not overload the vehicle.

Question 4 – From Councillor Thorp

Can RMBC apply for funds from CRSTS funding to create safer school routes crossings even if it doesn't include cycle lanes?

Answer:- RMBC

Taking this to refer to the major schemes element of CRSTS funding, no.

The only schemes that can be delivered with that funding are those agreed to be entered into the programme with the DfT. Whilst it is possible to reallocate money between those projects, or to withdraw projects, it is not possible to enter new projects into the CRSTS programme. In any event, any scheme would mean meeting the DfT's requirements in respect of provisions for cyclists which would include provision of cycleways where traffic speeds or volumes warrant it.

It would be possible to reallocate the monies from the Local Neighbourhood Complementary Programme part of CRSTS i.e. that used predominantly to fund the Local Neighbourhood and Road Safety and Pedestrian Crossings programmes although this would come at the expense of other local priorities.

Question 5 – From Councillor Thorp

If yes for question 1, does it have to be for a specific school or area or could this be used to create active travel for children to walk to school instead of drop off by car outside school and could this include purchasing of land to create a school safe drop off with safe onward active travel to school.

Answer:- RMBC

Not applicable in in light of answer to Question 4.

Question 6 – From Councillor Thorp

What are the quickest actions we can take to try to make Broom Lane School crossing safer even if it's a temporary fix until a better solution can be found.

Answer:- RMBC

RMBC Officers are working with the Neighbourhood Policing Team who are prepared to deploy their team to this location for some limited periods. This may assist in providing some community confidence and a short-term improvement in driving standards.

However, we would both view that police enforcement will not be an effective way to provide a long-term solution to this problem, and we would expect a quick decline in driver standards after police attendance. Driver behaviour is likely to revert once officers are no longer present and a long-term commitment from the Police would only come at the detriment of other policing activity. We would therefore view that a sustained improvement will only be achievable with

physical intervention. This is under consideration as part of the Neighbourhood Streets element of the CRSTS Broom Road cycleways extension project.

Question 7 – From Bob Croxton, Treeton Parish Council

This is with regard to First Bus No. 73 Sheffield to Rotherham. Since last October this route has become a long convoluted route. Once a month I catch the last bus of the day from Sheffield 23:12 to Treeton 23:58. This journey takes around 50 minutes. 15 minutes in a car/taxi. The timings at this late time of night are too long with the bus making regular long waits to keep to the timetable! I can understand during the daytime when there is a lot of traffic but at this time of night.

Answer:- First Bus

We changed the service pattern for Waverley, Catcliffe, Treeton and Brinsworth areas in September to provide a number of improvements including a 30 minute faster daytime journey to Sheffield, which also extends to Sheffield University (service 95). This also provides a direct link from the AMRC site at Waverley to the main Sheffield University sites at Western Bank and was an aspiration of some transport leaders. Also, a new service 70 was introduced between Sheffield and Meadowhall via Arbourthorne, Richmond, Handsworth, Waverley and Sheffield Business Park connecting many areas with a direct link to employment sites at Waverley and Sheffield Business Park and onwards to Meadowhall. During the evenings and Sundays, the 73 was re-routed to follow a similar route to the new 70 between Sheffield and Waverley before continuing onto Rotherham via the same route of the new 95. This has made the journey longer but by running this way it covers the daytime 70 and the 95 (i.e. two routes with just one). This is a cheaper option for SYMCA who support the 73 during the evenings and Sundays rather than having to support additional evening journeys on service 70 plus service 95. If additional funding was to become available (I believe Section 106 money from the Waverley development has still not been allocated) then it would make more sense to operate the daytime service pattern in the evenings and on Sundays as it would be a simpler message to customers. Without any additional funding it would not be commercially viable for First to commit to this.

Question 8 – From Bob Croxton, Treeton Parish Council

As someone with senior citizen bus pass, it is disappointing that I cannot use the pass after 23:00. There was a time many years ago when the last buses in the evening were very busy with revellers leaving town centres when pubs closed at 22:30/23:00. This is no longer the case with the younger generation getting taxis home and the older generation going home earlier using their passes. Some other areas such as Manchester allow the use of bus passes until midnight. Given the big 50% increase £2.00 to £3.00 Sheffield to Treeton, it hardly encourages bus pass holders to go out by public transport in the evenings. If not allowing free transport after 23:00 what about considering reduced prices for bus pass holders as under 21s have?

Question 9 – From Bob Croxton, Treeton Parish Council

I would love to go out to the Peak District early morning, but cannot use my pass until after 09:30. This means I cannot get anywhere until late morning unless I pay £6 for two bus journeys £12 if my partner goes. Therefore I use my car. Consideration for reduced fares before 09:30?

Answer to Questions 8 and 9:- SYMCA

Concessionary travel is provided by SYMCA under the Transport Act 2000 (as amended). This requires that travel concessions authorities fund free travel for ENCTS pass holders from 9:30 until 23:00 on weekdays; all times at weekends. Discretionary extensions to this concession can be offered, however these must be funded locally and SYMCA has to make difficult decisions on where to invest its funds in terms of both other possible fares initiatives and the wider support of local bus services. These concessions are reviewed regularly.

In terms of discounted fares for travel outside the standard ENCTS free-travel times, this is something that bus operators can also provide should they wish. It can be raised with them as part of our Enhanced Partnership discussions.

Question 10 – From Councillor Bennett-Sylvester

Individuals and groups looking to access Thrybergh Country Park report that they sometimes have difficulty finding the park on public transport in part due to the local stops not naming the Park. Can the stops serving the Park, both east and west bound, have their names changed from Doncaster Road/Carr Lane to Thrybergh Country Park please? Similarly, the Park is not listed on the route map in the interchange - can this be changed please?

Answer:- SYMCA

The west bound stop is already called Doncaster Road/Thrybergh Country Park. Regarding the east bound stop, we note the benefit of amending and can look to action a change on this in due course. The park is indicated on our Rotherham Network Map. Clarification is therefore requested please as to where at Rotherham Interchange the information is lacking.

Question 11 – From Councillor Bennett-Sylvester

My Ward has a considerable number of Roman Catholic families whose children attend St Bernard's School. They report increasing difficulties for their children having to travel into Rotherham and out again to attend school. They ask if there is the possibility of amending any existing service such as the 116 or 616 to run up Herringthorpe Valley Road at school times to provide a school service?

Answer:- First Bus

This is something we could consider and would be best to look at options for the start of the new school year in September. It would be nice to get some numbers of possible students who would use the service. However, we would also need to look at existing customers who are travelling at this time to ensure their current journeys are not inconvenienced. We would not want to divert a journey on the 116 for a few children only for then more people be put off travelling because of the lengthy diversion.