

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY GROUP
Thursday 30 September 2021

Present:- Councillor Beck (in the Chair); Councillors Aveyard, Browne, Castledine-Dack, R. Elliott, Griffin, McNeely, Pitchley, Reynolds, Sheppard, Singleton and Parish Councillor Jepson.

6. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Atkin, Cusworth, Bennett-Sylvester, Whomersley and Parish Councillor Deborah Fenwick-Green.

7. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 27 JULY 2021

Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous meeting of the Transportation Advisory Group that had been held on 27 July 2021.

Agreed: - That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 July 2021 be approved as a true record.

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

There were no matters arising.

9. QUESTIONS ON TRANSPORT ISSUES

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

The Chair requested that the response to the question that had been submitted by Councillor Tinsley be sent directly to him as he was not in attendance at the meeting.

10. SOUTH YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT EXECUTIVE - UPDATE

Nathan Broadhead of the South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYLTE) noted that that the SYLTE would start to conduct business under the name of South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) as the formal integration of SYLTE and the Mayoral Combined Authority continued to progress. It was noted that the remit and work carried out by the SYMCA would be unchanged from that of the SYLTE.

Nathan Broadhead advised that in addition to submitting questions on

transport matters in advance of meetings of the Transportation Advisory Group members could email questions on transport matters to communications@sypte.co.uk where enquiries would receive a prompt response.

In the update information was provided on:

- The operation of bus services in Rotherham and the impact of the shortage of drivers on the provision of services.
- The delay of planned timetable to changes in order to assist with the problems caused to the operation of services caused by the shortages of drivers.
- Work that had been carried out with transport operators to try and mitigate the impact of driver shortage on passengers.
- The ongoing activity around bus improvement plans.
- Christmas timetables and services for 2021.

Members asked if there was any activity currently being carried out regarding the introduction of electric buses in Rotherham. Nathan Broadhead advised that discussions with operators were ongoing regarding this matter and advised that a joint bid with Stagecoach had been submitted to Government for 28 electric buses on Rotherham/Barnsley routes. It was noted that discussions were ongoing regarding the potential for electric buses on Sheffield routes.

Members noted their concern regarding the impact on services of driver shortages. Nathan Broadhead detailed the mitigating activities that were being carried out to reduce the impact on passengers and to also improve the situation including the reduction of high frequency services to enable the running of less frequent services. It was noted that despite these efforts that there would still be cancellations of services at times.

Members requested that the SYMCA gave consideration to how changes and cancellations to services, along with information on the current pressures facing transport providers could be most effectively communicated to passengers.

The Chair thanked Nathan Broadhead for attending the meeting and for providing the update.

Agreed: - That the update be noted.

11. BUS OPERATORS - UPDATE

First Group

Paul Hopkinson provided an update on First Group services including:

- The challenges faced regarding improving service reliability due to the shortage of drivers and other factors. It was noted that everything possible had been done to maximise reliability and service coverage with the resources that were presently available.

Stagecoach

David Rich provided an update on Stagecoach services including:

- Services were operating at between 65% and 70% of pre-pandemic levels.
- The impact on the provision of services due to the shortage of drivers.
- Recruitment activity to fill driver vacancies.
- The work that was continuing with South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority around timetabling and increasing the reliability of services.

Community Transport

Nathan Broadhead provided an update on Community Transport including:

- After a phased resumption Community Transport services were now running a normal service.
- Free transport would continue to be provided for those passengers attending vaccination appointments.

The Chair thanked the representatives of the bus operators for attending the meeting and providing the updates.

Agreed: - That the updates be noted.

12. RAILWAY OPERATORS - UPDATE

There were no representatives of the rail operators present at the meeting.

Nathan Broadhead advised he would contact the rail operators to request

representation at future meetings. Members requested that a representative of the Tram-Train be invited to attend future meetings of the Transportation Advisory Group.

13. DONCASTER SHEFFIELD AIRPORT - UPDATE

It was noted that Councillor Lelliott would continue to be the Council's representative on the Doncaster Sheffield Airport Consultative Committee.

Agreed: - That the Minutes of the meetings of the Doncaster Sheffield Airport Consultative Committee included in the agenda pack be noted.

14. RMBC TRANSPORTATION UNIT - UPDATES

Andrew Moss, Interim Head of Transport Infrastructure, attended the meeting to provide a progress report and give a presentation on:

- **the Current government position.**
- **Public Transport**, including:
 - Integrated Rail Plan (IRP) TfN/NPR
 - Budget and Spending Review
 - Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP)
 - Bus Recovery
 - Enhanced Partnership (EP)
 - Funding update
- **Roads**, including:
 - **Roads management** -Traffic Management Act, Pavement Parking and Key Route Networks
 - **Funding** - City Regions Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS)
 - **Road schemes** - the Parkway Widening and Greasbrough Coach Road
- **Active Travel**, including
 - **TCF** - Sheffield Road, Maltby Bus Corridor, Doncaster Road and Manvers Way
 - **ATF** - Broom Road AT Scheme and the pending tranche three bid.
- **Clean Air Zone programme**, including:
 - That the submission of the full business case was expected to be made in February 2022.
 - Liaison activity with government.
 - The good levels of support shown for the three proposed Rotherham schemes.

Members asked that as the purchase of electric buses would be a capital spend whether it would be possible to use Clean Air Zone funding to purchase electric buses that would reduce air pollution. Andrew Moss advised that this was not possible due to how the funding had been provided and also due to laws surrounding state aid of commercial companies. Andrew Moss noted that the Clean Air Zone funding had been provided in order to enable the delivery of infrastructure projects, such as weight restrictions on roads and the introduction of speed limits that would promote changes in behaviour that would have positive impacts on air quality. It was noted however that the funding could be used to fund activity to encourage transport providers to switch to electric and other cleaner options. Nathan Broadhead of SYMCA advised that the bid that had been made to the Government for electric buses would enable the SYMCA to provide a subsidy of 70% to transport providers regarding the provision of electric buses. Nathan Broadhead assured members that everything possible was being done to increase the number of non-diesel buses that were in operation.

Members sought assurance that the Council's Transportation Unit had the resilience in staffing in order to manage and deliver on the various schemes currently being worked on. Andrew Moss advised that following a restructure that had created additional posts in the Transportation Unit there was sufficient capacity to deliver on the schemes as required.

The Chair thanked Andrew Moss for attending the meeting and providing the update.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no further business items for consideration.

16. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

Agreed: - That the next meeting of the Transportation Advisory Group be held on Wednesday 15 December 2021 at 10am as a Microsoft Teams meeting.