

RMBC TRANSPORT LIAISON GROUP
Wednesday, 24th September, 2014

Present:- Councillor Godfrey (in the Chair); Councillors Atkin, Burton, Cutts, Sansome, Sharman, Swift, Whelbourn, Whysall and Wootton.

Apologies for absence were received from The Mayor (Councillor Foden) and from Councillors Ahmed, Beaumont, J. Hamilton, Hoddinott, Lakin and M. Vines.

5. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 25TH JUNE, 2014

Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous meeting of the Transport Liaison Group, held on 25th June, 2014.

Agreed:- That the minutes of the previous meeting be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

With regard to Minute No. 2(4) – Ward Members asked to be informed of progress with the feasibility study of bus services for the Wentworth Parks housing estate (Swinton); it was noted that some preliminary discussions had been held with various bus operators.

7. UPDATES FROM THE TRANSPORT OPERATORS

(1) First Group - The Rotherham Bus Partnership has had a successful beginning – there will be continuing analysis of the service changes which have taken place, examination of customer/passenger feedback, any successes and failures, so as to form recommendation for future service changes.

The First Group (and other operators) has faced problems in trying to manage services which have to travel along the Centenary Way road network in Rotherham, through the roadworks there (principally the Pool Green crossroads scheme). The effect on service punctuality has been fairly severe and alternative routes are being assessed.

Members questioned the direct service between Todwick and Dinnington, which was removed and later reviewed, but ultimately will not be reinstated. Some direct services to the Rotherham hospital were to be reduced in number, yet they were eventually reinstated. Overall, however, the Todwick to Dinnington bus service has been made worse. No solution has yet been found in order to restore the service link between Todwick and Dinnington and also to retain the main link to Rotherham (via the hospital) and to Sheffield. There will be a further review of this service, by the Rotherham Bus Partnership, although any future changes would not take effect until September 2015. It was noted that the bus services to Todwick already receive considerable subsidy from the South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive. Sir Kevin Barron MP and the Todwick

community group have been informed of these issues (the Chair asked to be provided with a summary briefing note of this issue). Members commented that Todwick village was not particularly well served by the bus services.

Further reference was made to the disruption caused by the Centenary Way roadworks, near to the Rotherham town centre.

Members questioned the Rotherham to Ravenfield service number 3, which had been withdrawn and replaced by service 37, although the link from Ravenfield to Wickersley has been severed. The bus partners (operators and the SYPTE), John Healey MP and Ward Councillors will meet soon to discuss these issues and whether any service improvements are possible.

(2) Stagecoach East Midlands – no report.

(3) Stagecoach Yorkshire – A number of minor changes to services had been introduced to coincide with the launch of the Rotherham Bus Partnership, mostly to adjust timings to improve punctuality, or responding to customer requests (customer feedback has been 99% positive).

The 108 and 109 services (Rawmarsh) have been restored to the routes operating during 2012, in response to customer feedback. This service change has been very well received and passenger numbers were increasing year-on-year. The September to December period is challenging in terms of maintaining service punctuality. Services operating along the Parkgate corridor are sometimes delayed because of the severe traffic congestion in that area.

It was noted that a development scheme at the Stairfoot roundabout (Barnsley area) will impact upon services 22X and 218. This new development will not include priority lanes for buses and there will necessarily be a detrimental impact upon the services travelling into the Rotherham Borough area.

(4) South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYPTE) – a public consultation exercise, entitled “have your say,” is taking place to find out customer priorities in terms of passenger transport provision, the impact of future budget changes, etc. To date, there has been a low response from residents of the Rotherham Borough area. The SYPTE is trying to encourage more people to respond. There are both paper-based and Internet web-based means of responding to the consultation.

Requests for new bus shelters – there are none being provided, because of budget and funding limitations. There is also limited funding for bus shelter maintenance, although vandal-damage is being repaired. A number of shelters which suffer severe and repeated damage have had to be removed altogether.

Members questioned the safety of the travelling public within the Rotherham Transport Interchange: issues of both public safety and specifically the safety of children and young people. It was noted that there are initial discussions about the potential for redevelopment of the bus station and car park site. These discussions may eventually result in the re-design of the bus station (using the Barnsley interchange as an example). There is regular liaison with the South Yorkshire Police and problems are investigated. There is also a need to challenge the public perception of threats to safety within the interchange. Reference was made to the Rotherham Youth Cabinet study of the safety of young people using public transport. Dialogue continues between the SYPT and the Rotherham Youth Cabinet, with representation on the Transport User Group.

(5) Rotherham Community Transport – Members noted that Stephen Hewitson retired from the Community Transport Service during the Summer 2014. Stephen was thanked for his contributions to the Transport Liaison Group.

(6) Robin Hood Airport – consideration was given to the minutes of the most recent meeting of the Robin Hood Airport Consultative Committee, held on 17th July, 2014. The contents of these minutes were noted.

(7) Northern Rail – it was agreed that the Chair send a letter to Northern Rail encouraging a representative to attend future meetings of the Transport Liaison Group.

8. UPDATES FROM RMBC TRANSPORTATION UNIT

Members were informed of details of the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF), which was entering the third round of bidding for funding by local authorities, with the funding to be spent entirely in the 2015/2016 financial year. Priority would be given to projects which would boost economic growth and reduce carbon emissions. The focus of the funding will be on public transport, walking and cycling. The South Yorkshire Integrated Transport Authority had submitted its bid to the LSTF during March 2014. The full amount of £4.8 millions has been awarded over the lifetime of the LSTF (Rotherham has received £3.5 to £4 millions of capital funding, with the addition of £700,000 of revenue funding).

Rotherham's funding will be concentrated on the two main LSTF corridors (Rotherham to the Dearne Valley and Rotherham to Sheffield). There may also be some funding available for schemes in a number of district centres (eg: Aston, Dinnington and Maltby).

Projects to be funded are:-

: cycling related schemes (eg: mobile cycling hub to visit businesses and district centres; cycle training and bike hire);

- : Eco-stars and Eco-driving – to reduce vehicle emissions;
- : Safe and sustainable travelling;
- : Wheels to work (motor cycle hire);
- : helping vulnerable people to use public transport;
- : South Yorkshire intelligent transport scheme;
- : Plugged in Places (electric vehicles);
- : a marketing programme to support the whole package of schemes.

To demonstrate the impact of LSTF, Members were informed of the following list of schemes funded from revenue and capital LSTF strands:-

- : Main Street, Rotherham – pedestrian crossing (adjacent Riverside House);
- : Centenary Way, Rotherham – pedestrian/cycle crossing near to Bailey House;
- : surfacing of path alongside the canal (town centre, Holmes, towards Meadowhall);
- : A633 cycle route (between Rotherham and Parkgate);
- : South Yorkshire intelligent transport;
- : Common Lane, Wath upon Dearne – footpath improvements;
- : cycle training for commuters;
- : Doctor Bike – cycle maintenance sessions;
- : Cycle parking in businesses;
- : Provision of monthly bus passes.

Members also heard that new projects will begin during 2015/2016, with the aim of encouraging the private sector to contribute funding to schemes which will provide direct benefit their businesses.

Ward Members asked to be provided with details of the schemes to improve the bus corridor and to construct a cycle route between Rotherham, Parkgate and Rawmarsh.

Reference was made to the provision of charging points for electric vehicles (eg: at the Council's Riverside House building). It was noted that some may in future be positioned in car parks, with fees being payable. Businesses are able to lease the devices, in order to provide charging points (at no cost) for their employees.

Agreed:- That the information be noted.

9. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

Agreed:- (1) That the next meeting of the RMBC Transport Liaison Group

be held at the Town Hall, Rotherham on Wednesday, 3rd December, 2014, commencing at 2.00 p.m.

(2) That future meetings of the Transport Liaison Group take place on:-

- Wednesday 18th March, 2015
- Wednesday 24th June, 2015