

Item 2

SOUTH YORKSHIRE TRANSPORT USERS GROUP

19 JANUARY 2016

PRESENT: J Hoare (Chair)
L Booth (Rotherham TUG), J Brightmore (Ramblers - Sheffield Group), I Jenkinson (Sheffield TUG), M Payling (Member of the Public), N Spetch (Vice-Chair/Rotherham TUG) (via SKYPE), M Turner (Sheffield Transport For All), M Wilson (Member of the Public) and D Wrottesley (Hope Valley Rail User Group)

C Cocken (SYPTTE), F Johnson (Stagecoach), G Richards (SCR Combined Authority), N Wragg (Stagecoach Supertram), R Allan (Northern Rail) and J Stewart (Supertram)

Apologies for absence were received from R Fieldhouse (Huddersfield-Penistone-Sheffield RUA)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted as above.

2 ELECTION OF CHAIR/DEPUTY CHAIR

The Group agreed that:

- i) John Hoare be elected Chair of the Group for the ensuing year.
- ii) Nigel Spetch be elected Deputy Chair for the ensuing year.

3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20 OCTOBER 2015

The minutes of the meeting of the Group held on 20 October 2015 were agreed as a correct record.

4 NORTHERN RAIL - RICHARD ALLAN

The Chair welcomed Richard Allan from Northern Rail to the meeting.

R Allan informed the Group that it was 73 days until the new franchise would begin when Arriva Rail North would take over.

Northern Rail was awarded the franchise in 2004 as a 'steady state' franchise with no expectation of growth or improvements. Northern Rail own 464 stations, mainly unstaffed, and employ 5,100 people.

Since then there had been a 100% improvement in fleet reliability, the fleet had grown by 30% (to a fleet of 333 trains) and a 50% growth in patronage - there were 99 million passenger journeys in 2015. Statistics taken from the annual Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey show a rise in stakeholder satisfaction from 82% in 2007 to 91% in 2015.

During the franchise, which had been extended four times, further improvements included:

- Customer information screens with real time information.
- Ticket machines were now installed at 150 stations.
- Improved retail facilities.
- More options to buy advance tickets.
- New LED lighting at stations.
- New southern entrance at Leeds station.
- Installation of 'Smart Wall' at Harrogate station.

The 'Smart Wall' was the first to be installed in this country. As well as enabling the rapid purchasing of tickets the wall also displays train information, weather, local area information, social media updates and advertising.

With regard to the new franchise, Arriva will invest £1 billion, with 281 new carriages and all carriages refurbished to an 'as new' standard. There will be an extra 2000 services each week and Pacer trains will be phased out by the end of 2019

All Northern Rail staff who wish to will be TUPE transferred to Arriva, ensuring a smooth transition to the new franchise.

Looking to the future Arriva intend to:

- Continue to support and drive growth in the Northern economy.
- Build new stations and purchase new trains.
- Provide new retailing opportunities.
- Continue to install real-time customer information screens, with the ambition that every station would have one.
- Install more ticket machines on stations.
- Provide better connectivity.

In response to questions from members of the Group regarding timetabling and the availability of paper timetables under the new franchise, R Allan replied that he did not have any information on the new franchise other than what was in the public domain but was happy to attend a future meeting of the Group when more information was available.

The Chair thanked R Allan for an interesting and informative presentation.

5 STAGECOACH SUPERTRAM - NIGEL WRAGG

The Chair welcomed Nigel Wragg and James Stewart from Stagecoach Supertram to the meeting.

The Group were informed that the first tram/train had arrived in Sheffield from Spain and was now undergoing tests.

There would be seven new vehicles in total; three for use on the tram/train network to Rotherham, three for use on the existing tram network and one for use as a tram/train operational spare vehicle.

The new vehicles have the same platform height as the current vehicles, were longer, had more priority seating, more low-floor area and one-step access throughout.

The current testing of the vehicles would be followed by driver training which it was hoped would be completed by April 2016. Invites to view the new vehicle would be issued to interested parties from April onwards.

It was hoped that three tram/trains would enter service later this year, with the remaining services operational in early 2017.

A member queried what would happen to the tram/trains at the conclusion of the 2-year pilot.

Members were reminded that the project had been funded by DfT, if the project was sustainable and commercially viable Stagecoach Supertram could choose to keep the vehicles.

L Booth commented that Rotherham had an excellent bus service and hoped that the tram/train would not disrupt this.

With regard to Bus Rapid Transit, the Group were informed that the tram/train was intended to complement this, not compete with it. It was hoped the tram/train would ease congestion around Parkgate which would assist with the punctuality of buses.

I Jenkinson queried whether tram/train tickets would also be valid for rail travel.

The Group were informed that the tram/train was seen as an extension to the tram system and would use the same fare structure; therefore the tickets would not be valid on rail services.

I Jenkinson commented that this would need good communication to avoid passenger confusion.

The Group indicated they would like an invitation to view the new vehicle when all testing/training had been completed.

6 BUS PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

Sheffield

It was noted that the impact of network changes on 1 November 2015 had been underestimated and had led to capacity issues due to the reduction in services. This was quickly addressed by the Operators with the introduction of more double-decker buses.

Further network improvements in early January had led to a large reduction in problems, it was hoped there would be further improvements in February. The levels of complaints were back down to 'normal' levels.

Doncaster

The consultation regarding the Doncaster Bus Partnership had recently concluded. Meetings with Councillors and operators were now being arranged.

It was intended to submit a report to the meeting of the SCR Combined Authority Transport Committee on 29 February 2016.

Barnsley

Plans were being discussed for a Barnsley Bus Partnership and a network review.

Rotherham

Cheaper tickets had been introduced in Rotherham in November. There would be a further network review in 2017.

7 OPERATORS ITEMS

F Johnson informed the Group that Stagecoach had recently introduced 14 new vehicles in Barnsley and Rotherham.

Further minor timetable changes would be made at the beginning of February.

8 MEMBERS ITEMS

I Jenkinson queried when the decision would be made on the preferred location of the HS2 station in Sheffield.

C Cocken responded that she would investigate and report back.

Members again remarked on the lack of accessibility of paper timetables.

It was noted that this was out of the control of the PTE and the matter would have to be taken up with the Operators.

9 TRANSPORT COMMITTEE BRIEFING

The Group considered an update from meetings of the SCR Combined Authority and its Transport Committee.

10 FORWARD PLANNER

The Group considered the Forward Planner.

C Cocken informed the Group that David Young had now left the PTE. The new Executive Director was Steve Edwards who would be invited to attend a future meeting of the Group.

11 DATES OF 2016 MEETINGS

Future meetings of the South Yorkshire Transport Users group were amended to:

Wednesday 20 April 2016
Wednesday 20 July 2016
Tuesday 18 October 2016

All to commence at 10.30am and to be held at the offices of the PTE, Broad Street West, Sheffield.