

TRANSPORT 4 ALL Meeting 20.10.16
Sheffield Town Hall - Room G42
DRAFT MINUTES

1) WELCOME/APOLOGIES/INTROS

People present

Shel Turner (MT) – Chair
Craig Williams (CW)
Grace Parry (GP)
James Martin (JM)
Julie Smethurst (JS)
Paul Savage (PS)
Stacey Anderson (SA)
Councillor George Lindars-Hammond (GLH)
Douglas Johnson (DJ) – Unity Law
Nigel Wragg (NW) – Stagecoach Supertram
Paul Hopkinson (PH) – TM Travel
Val Bowen (VB) and Bessie - student placement – Disability Sheffield
Elsbeth Mallowan – (EM) - SCCCC
John Hudson (JH) – SCC Resources (Transport & Facilities Management)
Paula Turner (PT) – SYPTE
Simon Ovenden (SO) – SCC Planning Service
Cate Jockel (CJ) – SCC Transport, Traffic & Parking Service

Welcome Praveena Mohanamurali (PM) (SYPTE) for item 3 and Alex Forrest (AF) (Sheffield City Region) for item 4

Apologies

Alan Thorpe (AT)
Danny Heffernan (DH)
Councillor Ian Auckland (IA) – Shadow Cabinet Member (Lib Dem)

Other news

Amanda Maybury has moved to a new job so is no longer the group's contact at First Bus. Shel has thanked her for her helpfulness over several years.

2) MINUTES OF JULY 2016

These were approved and will be added to the group's webpage.

**3) INTRODUCTION OF AV ANNOUNCEMENTS ON ROUTE 120 BUSES:
with Praveena Mohanamurali, Project Manager at SYPTE**

PM outlined progress on the project, which PT had introduced to the group in Jan 15. SYPTE has capital funding (called 'Better Bus Area') from the Department for Transport for installation of AV unites on route 120 (both bus operators – First and Stagecoach). The purchase of the equipment is part of a bigger contract and is taking time, but is progressing. The bus operators will maintain the equipment. This will be for a pilot period of 3 years. The wording used will describe this stop and the next stop, using the same names for the stops as on Travel South Yorkshire.

Questions and discussion:

- JM asked where the units would be mounted. They will be behind the driver's seat and, on double deckers, upstairs at the front too. JM noted that, in London, you need to sit near to the unit to hear it well and this isn't always possible. JS noted that, even on Sheffield's trams, there are some "deadish areas" for sound and that, when she used the TM Travel service to Bakewell, she found this problem there too. PM responded that she is looking to ensure speakers are spread around the vehicle. It was suggested that a 'quiet space' might be useful too - but it was generally thought that people will get used to the AV.
- MT noted that it is very important that wheelchair users can hear the AV well as they cannot see it due to being seated facing backwards: could a mirror be provided to help?
- There was a discussion about the kind of preferred voice. One suggestion made was that using different voices for the different operators would be useful – as the routes differ and that would be a prompt to passengers.
- DJ asked what would happen after the 3 year pilot. It was noted that AV on public transport was one of the recommendations of the Select Committee on the Equality Act and Disability – these were circulated after the last meeting. PM responded that the PTE hoped that operators would continue with it and that they will want to expand it to other routes. SYPTTE will be monitoring passenger satisfaction with on-bus surveys by staff. It's harder to monitor any increase in passengers although a very small increase is expected.
- JM asked how route 120 was chosen. PM responded that it would give both operators experience of the units; it was a high frequency route with high passenger numbers; it served the Hallamshire Hospital; and is a route that many people may only use occasionally – people that AV is more useful for. JS noted that the route also serves SRSB and that possibly SRSB might be willing and able to help with evaluation.
- DJ asked what would happen if a bus stop location changed – how is the information in the system managed/updated? PM responded that, if a bus stop moves, then the data in the master stop list is updated to reflect the new location - or stop removal - and this is subsequently fed in to the real time system.
- SA asked whether the AV could be used for providing other information such as on delays. PS suggested that the AV information should be kept simple.
- VB asked when it was expected to start and what promotion there would be: she suggested using the Hospital, Universities and schools along the route. PM responded that she hoped for a start date of summer 2017: it would be promoted and she would take the suggestions made back.

The group thanked PM.

4) INTRODUCTORY BRIEFING: UPCOMING DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION ON THE EAST MIDLANDS RAIL FRANCHISE RENEWAL: with Alex Forrest, Strategic Rail Officer at Sheffield City Region

AF outlined the rail franchise renewal process for the East Midlands Rail (EMR) franchise: this is about to be launched by the DfT – date to be confirmed. The current franchise (operated by Stagecoach as East Midlands Trains (EMT)) commenced in 2007 when Midland Mainline (Sheffield to London services) was amalgamated with some parts of Central, so it also includes services between Norwich and Liverpool; and other local services e.g. to Matlock and Lincoln; as well as managing about 90 stations including Sheffield Midland Station.

The franchise also includes powers to regulate certain fares and procure rolling stock. It could also include accessibility improvements.

Franchises have usually been awarded for 7/8 years but the existing franchise has run from 2007, initially to 2015, but then extended by DfT to March 2018. DfT is expected to launch, within the next month, a 12-week stakeholder consultation on the content of the next EMR franchise. It will assess that and then issue an Invitation to Tender to train operating companies; leading to a short-list; leading to a Contract Award expected to be in Oct 17.

AF noted that SCR will be responding to the DfT's stakeholder consultation. Others, including individuals, can also respond.

Questions and discussion:

- PT noted that mobility scooter users had issues accessing trains as it was necessary to be able to fold up your own scooter and get it on to the train. DJ noted that this did not apply to all operators but did apply to Northern (a different franchise). EMR?
- DJ asked whether all the services AF had listed as EMR would be in one franchise: AF responded that that is what is expected.
- Several group members noted that the question of ticket barriers had been a huge issue when the franchise was last awarded with much opposition from disabled people, tram passengers and local residents, with the backing of the City Council. It would be a huge issue again if it should be proposed.
- JM noted that ticket purchase was a big issue. Touch-screen ticket machines could not be used by visually-impaired people and flat-front machines could not be used by wheelchair users. JS added that this is most important at unstaffed stations: the franchise holder should consider the legal implications of a situation where customers cannot purchase tickets.
- JM noted that ticket types could be improved through the addition of easier means of breaking journeys or making journeys to a number of places – making the train more like a 'virtual car'.
- JS also noted that EMT had improved its Customer Assistance service in recent years and this should be carried forwards.
- AF will let CJ know when the stakeholder consultation is launched: CJ will inform the group: this may be an item to be continued at the January meeting.

The group thanked AF.

5) SPECIAL OLYMPICS 2017

JS highlighted that she had been concerned that this significant event - bringing 7,000 people to Sheffield in August 2017 - had been progressing in 'a bubble', sorting out transport for athletes, but not including any possible longer-term legacy in terms of improved everyday travel for people with learning disabilities – through for example training for bus drivers and taxi drivers on carrying more learning disabled passengers. JS was happy to report that this was now being progressed and an officer forum has been set up which SO is attending: it also has Disability Sheffield representation. **VB added that this is an opportunity for Sheffield to be seen as an accessible city and hopefully this will be part of the legacy.**

6) CITY CENTRE MASTERPLAN REFRESH: TRANSPORT: with Nat Porter, Senior Transport Planner, Sheffield City Council

NP introduced this item: SCC is refreshing its 'City Centre Masterplan', an overview of the planning & development of the City Centre looking forward about 10 years. It is looking further ahead in transport terms as transport infrastructure takes a long time to develop – up to about 20 years – but it is all indicative. The challenge is to have a transport system which meets the aspiration of more homes and jobs in a growing city (so additional journeys) while improving air quality and without worsening congestion. The thinking is to achieve this by separating out different transport modes, which would be co-ordinated in such a way as to minimise conflict between them and attract more people to use public transport, walk and cycle.

NP circulated 3 plans showing car/lorry; bus/tram/public transport and walk/cycle networks. These plans had been used for discussion at ALG and had worked well in aiding that - but there had been more time at that meeting. Here, due to previous items over-running, this item was cut short which presented problems. Also there were some problems with reading the plans and it was pointed out that street names would have been useful.

Main points on the plans:

- Private motor vehicles (including freight): i.e. the main routes for these around and into the city centre – the Inner Ring Road and city centre entries. This would not remove local access but other city centre roads would have lower speed limits and fewer vehicles.
- Public transport (bus, tram, taxi, tram-train ..): i.e. the main routes for public transport with a high degree of priority - the existing tram route + routes such as Arundel Gate etc. The tram route behind the station could be an additional route for buses. This would aim to reduce circuitous bus routes through the city and:
 - o Improve journey times; reliability and air quality;
 - o Implement further improvements to bus priority to increase the attractiveness of bus use;
 - o Increase walking, with attractive routes, for those who are able to walk to reach their final destination in the centre;
 - o Provide a central circular bus to reach all current areas served by buses and linking together all the main public transport routes.
- Walk/cycle.

Questions and discussion:

- JS & JM had been at the ALG discussion where it had been agreed that the accessibility of the central circular bus was critical (boarding/alighting; space on it; frequency including Sundays). PT noted that to be able to carry the potential numbers of wheelchair users, it could need to be a bespoke vehicle. PS asked how any such service would be funded – would it be commercial? It was noted that such a network would potentially mean more journeys requiring two connections.
- CW asked how the tram route behind the station could become a bus route too: NP noted that this would be like West Street but would require a lot of work. MT raised concern that, although this would improve access to the railway station, it could mean that some bus services were routed further away from the city centre? Also, the terrain needs to be taken into account.
- VB asked about taxis & NP responded that taxis have been viewed by SCC as a form of public transport and share in public transport priority. VB noted that more training was required for taxi drivers. MT responded that there are a lot of taxi issues and these will be discussed separately.
- JS summed up that disabled people use cars differently to many others and e.g. need adequate Blue Badge parking and good access to Shopmobility. They also need public transport to go close to their destinations. This would also apply to the frail elderly.
- JS asked about the timescale for input to the 'Masterplan Refresh'. NP noted that it will be going to Cabinet in either Dec 16 or Jan 17.
- It was agreed that MT and CJ will pull together a response based on the above discussion.

7) AOB

1. Disabled Person's Travel Passes: VB noted that there are issues for people with mental health problems about the eligibility criteria and understanding processes: she is meeting officers at SCC to discuss;
2. Wheelchair users on buses: EM asked whether there was any record of user numbers. PT thought not: the pass scheme is a national scheme with various groups of users, but she will check if PTE has any records;
3. 97 timetable: PS complained about the new 97 timetable of one service/hour after 1800. There was no operator rep attending. PT responded that there were some timetable changes in Sept but she would have to check the details of this;

(Post-meeting note from PT: the Sept changes were slight changes to morning timings to improve punctuality, and not cuts or reduction in evening service. NB The service runs, on weekdays, approx. every 20 minutes in the daytime, 30 minutes after 6pm, and hourly after 7pm. So if one is missing, it is a long time until the next on. This should be reported to the operator (First) as it is a commercial service not a tendered service. But issues like this can also be reported to SYPTTE and it will pass it on. As far out as Totlely Brook, the 97 runs with the 98 and the service on week-days should be every 10 minutes daytime, 15 mins after 6pm and half-hourly after 7pm).

4. Combined timetables: SA complained that these were very difficult to understand. CJ noted that the operators were disappointed that these had taken so long to produce as it was not good practice for passengers not to have all timetable info together. PT will take the comment back to the PTE;
5. Journey Cards: PT reported that First has re-launched its safe journey card, which people can use to tell the driver about any disability or health issue they might have, to enable drivers to help them have a better travel experience. The cards are downloadable from First's website and the full information is here:
<https://www.firstgroup.com/about-us/news/first-bus-relaunches-journey-cards-help-customers-use-bus-confidence>
6. **Taxi provision: a number of concerns were raised on behalf of service users and it was suggested that T4A's previous taxi sub-group might be reconvened;**
7. Meeting dates for next year: 19th January; 27th April; 20th July and 19th October

8) MATTERS ARISING: the meeting ran out of time and closed at 16.30.