**TRANSPORT 4 ALL**

**11.07.19**

**Town Hall - Room G42**

1. **Welcomes/Apologies**

**People present**

Shel Turner (MT) – Chair

James Martin (JM)

Craig Williams (CW)

Roy – PA to CW

Councillor Ian Auckland (IA)

Councillor Douglas Johnson (DJ)

Olivia Trevor (OT) – Safe Places Co-ordinator

Lauren Eades (LE) – Stagecoach Supertram

Paula Turner (PT) – SYPTE

Lydia Shapley (LS) – SCC Adult Independent Travel Training Team

Craig Harper (CH) – SCC Licensing

Brian Messider (BM) – SCC Planning, Access Officer

Cate Jockel (CJ) – SCC Transport Planning

Tom Finnegan-Smith (TFS) – SCC Head of Strategic Transport and Infrastructure

**Apologies**

Grace Parry (GP)

Lee Harker (LH)

Stacey Anderson (SA)

Jake Green (JG) – Disability Hub

Alison Bell (AB) – Stakeholder Manager, Northern Trains

Note of previous meeting on 09.05.19 agreed.

**2) T4A input to SCR Mayor’s Bus Review**

Background: the SCR Mayor Dan Jarvis has appointed a Review Panel, chaired by Clive Betts MP, to review the bus service across South Yorkshire. The Panel has launched a survey asking groups and individuals for views. The press release about the review and a link to the survey were sent out with the meeting papers. Some paper copies were available at the meeting.

CJ noted that questions 1 to 20 on the survey are for individual responses, with questions 21 to 27 for group responses. The meeting discussed a response to questions 21 to 27. It was agreed that, after the meeting, CJ would pull this together with MT and JM.

Comments to include in the response:

Frequency & reliability

Any service changes including temporary ones & changes to service numbers: really difficult for people with learning disabilities, poor readers, people who struggle with timetables.

Any disruption including missing buses: communication of these is poor. Really difficult for people with autism – can cause meltdown.

More difficult if have to interchange.

Journey times

Customer care is more important than journey time. Length of journey is what it is. Could have more direct express services for those who want quicker journey times.

Orbital routes are popular.

Value for money

Should have a better relationship to the distance travelled. But note that many disabled people will have a pass.

Quality and condition of vehicles

Broken ramps are not compliant and should be sorted out immediately.

There are a variety of vehicle designs – & it varies as to how easy it is to get into the wheelchair space

New fleet purchases – disabled users should be involved (T4A very happy to be used for this)

Need to ensure and maintain good colour contrast

Passenger safety

Interchanges need to be safe – visible presence of customer service staff 24/07 + should be part of Safe Places scheme.

Useful to have staff on-street at certain times and places – provides reassurance & security.

Useful to have 2 wheelchair spaces (vehicle design) – would reduce conflict on-bus.

Driver training to deal with incidents e.g. disability hate. Should be encouraged to radio-in immediately so operator knows asap & any CCTV can e checked quickly. Newer buses have audio recording: more of this needed.

Driver training to understand situations so that will support & not judge.

Obstruction of bus stops: so more difficult to get on/off. Leads to falls.

Smooth driving also important in reducing number of falls.

NB As quieter buses are introduced, need to consider visual and hearing impaired.

Provision for isolated communities and/or groups

Bus service is often critical in enabling people to get out and about. Not only in rural areas.

Importance of last bus. Communication if missing. Get you home policy/practice.

Why passenger numbers declining over last 10 years

Has it been going down for disabled people? If going down generally but not for disabled, that illustrates how critical it is for them.

Maybe there has been a move to taxis?

Measures to improve use by everyone

Better up-to-the minute information on disruptions, driver changeovers, timing points (e.g. this stop is a timing point for this service – this bus is early – it will leave here in 2 minutes)

Linked to that, AV on all buses could be used for a lot of these messages. Shouldn’t have advertising, just passenger info. And no flashing screens.

New buses to have 2 wheelchair spaces.

1. **Clean Air Zone (CAZ) consultation**

With Tom Finnegan-Smith (TFS)(, SCC Head of Strategic Transport and Infrastructure.

Background to CAZ consultation described by TFS. Parts of Sheffield are in breach of EU threshold levels for pollutants especially nitrogen dioxide. There is a formal Ministerial Direction from the Government to do something about this in the shortest possible time. NO2 + microparticles (PMs) affect health. Road transport is the main source. With 19% of vehicles (buses, taxis, HGVs, LGVs) producing 50% of NO2. Vehicles are generally getting cleaner over time but this isn’t fast enough to be compliant with law.

CAZ proposal covers city centre + inner ring road (IRR), where a standard will be set for engines & vehicles will pay a daily charge if they don’t meet it (£50 bus/HGV; £10 taxi/LGV; not private cars). Alongside this ‘stick’, there will be incentives to support improving vehicles. The charging zone is expected to go live early in 2021. Most buses will be compliant by then through retrofitting. Consultation on the CAZ started 1st July and runs til late August. There are 3 surveys: one for Sheffield citizens; one for taxis & one for organisations & businesses. (Rotherham MBC is also consulting on a CAZ at the same time. And lots of other towns & cities across the UK).

NB There are some nationally proposed exemptions – e.g. emergency services.

Discussion

JM asked about CT operators - will they all have been consulted?

TFS noted that SCT is involved through the Sheffield Bus Partnership. Other CT operators that get any funding from SYPTE will have been involved that way. Some conversations have been had & there will be more.

DJ noted that smaller operators may struggle to access funding (internal or external) for retrofitting. TFS responded that smaller operators were not excluded but there had been very tight deadlines for applications so far and criteria had been applied to address buses operating on routes that were high frequency and in areas of high pollution. Certain vehicles that are older than Euro 5 can become harder to retrofit to Euro 6 standard (which is the minimum standard being used). JM noted that this could knock on to users through service reductions. TFS responded that SCC is aware of the problems for smaller operators and is working to convince Government to provide more funding and support for all operators to make the changes needed.

JM asked about community groups such as SRSB which has is based in the city centre and uses 8-16 seater vans to take clients to/from Mappin St. IA asked whether there could be any exemption by type of organisation. TFS responded that such groups should raise their issues now during the consultation period. We will be considering which vehicles may be provided with either exemptions or ‘sunset periods’. SCC is not proposing significant exemptions at the moment: that may change but then that would influence how quickly air quality targets are reached.

JM asked about displacement of non-compliant vehicles as they avoided the city centre and IRR. TFS noted that this could happen. The air quality impact would be offset by the cleaner vehicles that did meet the standard - & the whole city would benefit from that.

Taxis: concern about how the need for cleaner taxis will impact on the numbers of accessible taxis.

TFS explained that what is being consulted on for taxis is that PHVs should be electric or Euro-4 petrol-hybrid or better. And hackney cabs should be electric or LPG. Taxis drive regularly in the city centre & so are a major area of concern. What is being proposed is what achieves the targets in the timescale. It does involve taxis in significant change. But the evidence is that Euro 6 diesel hackneys are no cleaner than Euro 4 – so something more is needed.

SCC Licensing has promoted vehicles that are 100% accessible & SCC isn’t currently proposing to move away from accessibility standards. However, there are very limited vehicle types that meet the CAZ standards & the accessibility standards. LPG can be retrofitted for c.£10K per vehicle. NB Birmingham has done this very successfully. But there is only 1 model of e-taxi currently suitable.

MT asked what help there might be with costs for taxi drivers/companies. TFS said the consultation results will be used to refine what assistance is being asked of Government and for what, but that packages of financial support to assist drivers upgrade their vehicles will be proposed.

JM asked whether taxi fares could rise – if the right package can’t be found & taxi drivers do incur CAZ charges. TFS noted that Hackney Carriage fares are set through Licensing Committee but increased fares would not be desirable for reasons including that passengers would then be paying more so that the vehicle could pollute.

JM asked about experience from other cities. TFS replied that, although other cities are ahead of Sheffield which wasn’t in the Government’s ‘first wave’, it was still early days for London and both Birmingham & Leeds, where a CAZ was due to be implemented in January 2020, had been delayed due to Government having issues with its national payment portal.

JM also asked about whether private cars might be included later. TFS noted that the Cabinet report in November 2018 included that this might need to be a backstop but that would require more consultation/process. Our current proposals of a CAZ C option achieves significant improvements in AQ and how well it works will need to be monitored and reviewed.

JM concluded by noting that the group would be in favour of maintaining accessibility standards as SCC has now but is concerned what this might mean for availability.

1. **AOB**

**Powells’ X7**

JM had experienced a London-style vehicle on this route with middle door wheelchair access. He had asked the driver how the ramp would be deployed when necessary and the driver didn’t know. PT said that the vehicle would be non-compliant if no ramp. She would check with Powells for the group.

**Taxi issues**

The group queried how many complaints to Licensing about taxis were disability-related. CH estimated it as 5/10%.

**Northern Rail Accessibility User Group**

JM notified the group that this new group was being set up and he intended to join up.

**Bus operator attendance at meetings**

First and Stagecoach haven’t nominated replacements for Andy Metcalfe & David Caton – who were both much appreciated. PT will contact these operators & TM Travel about this.

**Outstanding from the May meeting**

1. Stickers on wheelchair spaces on buses. The group noted that these are often missing. PT reported to operators. PT feedback is that these signs do degrade but they are regularly checked (monthly).
2. MT has proposed that the Group has a second Chair to stand in as necessary: that is deferred for the October meeting.

1. **Next Meetings**

**24th October: 1400-1600 - IN TOWN HALL ROOM G42**

**2020 meetings:** CJ to set up & advise all at October meeting/with papers.