

Transport Delivery Committee

Date	20 May 2019
Report Title	Putting Passengers First Lead Members Report
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Report has been considered by	Putting Passengers First Lead Members

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

- To note the contents of this report.

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To report on the Lead Member and Lead Member Group for the Putting Passengers First (PPF) portfolio since the start of the 2018/19 municipal year.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 In July 2018, Cllr. Hartley was reappointed as the Transport Delivery Committee (TDC) Lead Member for PPF. The following TDC members are part of the wider Lead Member Group for PPF.

- Cllr. Ditta (Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council)
- Cllr. Hanif (Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council)
- Cllr. Fazal (Birmingham City Council)
- Cllr. Celia Hibbert (Wolverhampton City Council)
- Cllr. Andrew (Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council)

- 2.2 Following a mid-year change of TDC members from Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council, Cllr. Stanley was replaced on PPF Lead Members by Cllr. Hanif. The Chair also requested that the Conservative Group nominate a representative to join PPF Lead Members. The Conservative nominated Cllr. Andrew in January 2019 to join.

3.0 Key Initiatives

- 3.1 Section 3 of this report highlights initiatives that the PPF Lead Member Group has been involved in since the start of the 2018/19 municipal year.

3.2 Customer Services

PPF has been involved in discussions regarding a wide range of customer driven initiatives to improve the service provided to customers by TfWM. These include the deployment of Live Chat service, customer self service functions and a new telephony system with improved analytics and functions for customers

3.2.1 Member Enquiries

PPF have continued to support members of the community by raising their individual transport related issues via the TfWM Customer Relations Team. TDC Members are reminded of the dedicated email inbox that is place to help all TDC Members do this on behalf of their constituents.

3.2.2 Review of Petitions Appeals Process.

Customer Relations have worked with the Lead Member Group to review existing processes and understand if they are fit for purpose. This involved research of other local authorities, breaking down all action points in the process and a review of customer documentation. The current process was deemed fit for purpose by PPF following this review.

3.2.3 Review of TfWM Petitions Process

PPF are involved in an ongoing review of the TfWM Petitions process. This has involved liaising with the local authorities and other combined authorities, wider TfWM Directorate engagement including Midland Metro to understand requirements and a review of customer information.

3.3 Bus Matters

3.3.1 Petitions

TfWM have taken recommendations on 14 petitions to the PPF Lead Member's during 2018/19, which have all been approved by the Group and subsequent responses issued to customers.

- Service X70 – request to re-instate bus service X70 – Chelmunds Cross
- Service 228 – request to change route
- Service 66 – request to keep diversion permanent
- Service 5 – bus route, Springfield Road. Wake Green Road and Sparkhill
- Service 336 – request to change route
- South Birmingham Bus review – objection to proposed bus stop Dwellings lane
- Service 59 and service 71
- Service X20 – request to change route
- Solihull network changes
- Darby's Hill Road – request for removal of a temporary bus stop
- Service S2 – bus route change
- Request for new bus service from Hampstead
- Service 39A and Service 48 changes
- Bus shelter request in Bartley Green

Non-bus network related Petitions included a Petition objecting to proposals to introduce Sprint on the A34 corridor. Objections covered a range of factors including the consultation process itself, safety, loss of parking. PPF confirmed that the views

of local people expressed via the Petition should be considered as part of the ongoing engagement process.

3.3.2 Bus Shelter Appeals

TfWM have taken 1 shelter appeal to the Bus Shelter Appeals Decision Group, chaired by the PPF Lead Member, Cllr Hartley and involving other PPF members of Cllr Hibbert and Cllr Hanif during 2018/19. A solution to the site was determined by this group and officers are currently arranging for the required works to take place.

3.3.3 Solihull Subsidised Bus Network

PPF have been involved in the consultation and re-tender of the Solihull subsidised bus network. The new network, all with Euro VI vehicle specification, went live in February 2019, following a three-week public consultation exercise in late 2018, which saw over 1,300 individual customer comments made. Initial operations within the network have been very positive, with a reduction in 'missing trips', although work does continue to tweak elements of the network to ensure that the timetables cover as many of our passenger expectations as possible, with PPF playing a key role in ensuring the network is reviewed and improved as necessary.

3.3.4 Wolverhampton City Centre Advanced Quality Partnership Scheme (AQPS)

PPF input and oversaw the formal consultation and subsequent approval by Transport Delivery Committee on the 16th July 2018 of the Wolverhampton City Centre AQPS, which was made on the 14th August 2018. The Wolverhampton City Centre AQPS became operational from the 25th November 2018, covering 71 bus stops/stands and shelters (including the stands in the West Midlands Combined Authority owned Wolverhampton Bus Station) that are within the city centre Ring Road, and will improve bus standards in the scheme area for passengers.

3.3.5 Vision for Bus

PPF input to the shaping of a strategic Vision for Bus in the West Midlands to ensure that bus continues to be able to deliver the current and future economic and inclusive growth and prosperity of the WMCA. This Vision was approved by the WMCA Board on the 9th November 2018. The Vision for Bus in the West Midlands is; *"A world-class integrated, reliable, zero emission transport system providing inclusive travel for all across the West Midlands. With excellent customer service and simple payment and ticketing options. Customers will be able to make easy and safe door-to-door journeys, benefitting from new innovative transport solutions that meets the needs of a modern and diverse 21st Century economy, reducing the reliance on private single occupancy car journeys"*

3.3.6 Bus Partnership Routes

PPF jointly oversaw the development with TfWM of 2 shared service partnership routes between National Express and Diamond bus on services 31/32 and 42/43 in the Black Country. The shared operation commenced on Sunday 19th August 2018 on service 42/43 and was quickly followed by service 31/32 on Sunday 2nd September 2018. These services are the first of their kind in the West Midlands. This innovative partnership aspires to deliver bus services on this route in a different way to make it easier for passengers to travel on the services, providing more journeys and reducing the number of vehicles required to operate the service. This is a commitment from both operators under the West Midlands Bus Alliance. Services 31/32 and 42/43 were previously both operated independently by both National Express and Diamond Bus. The introduction of the shared service saw the two bus

companies operating alternate journeys with acceptance and sale of both operators' tickets on all buses.

3.3.7 Bus Stop Rationalisation

A 6-month trial of rationalising bus stops within South Birmingham commenced in October 2017. The trial has positive effects on bus performance including patronage, journey times, reliability and variability. PPF had an active role during the trial and continued to ensure positive outcomes, with responsibility for the final decision relating to each closed stop delegated to the Director of Integrated Network Services in consultation with the PPF Lead Members Group. Beyond the trial, PPF will continue to play an important role representing passengers as any future decisions on further pilots are delegated to the Director of Integrated Services in consultation with the PPF Lead Members Group and TDC.

3.4 Bus Stations and Travel Shops

PPF have assisted TfWM during the year with consultation and feedback on the development of refurbishment projects to bus stations and travel shops. This regular challenge has focussed on the customer impact and PPF have enabled involvement and improvement of the following projects; Walsall mid-life refurbishment, Coventry Interchange and Pool Meadow; Dudley Interchange and the New Street Travel Shop.

3.5 Member Tours

PPF have undertaken a range of tours across different aspects of transport and the TfWM business in 2018/19. These have included a visit to see and input to the prototype Sprint shelter, tour of customer services and the Black Country bus network and bus stations

3.5.1 Prototype Sprint Shelter

In October 2018, the PPF members visited Bus Shelters Limited's Cradley Heath depot to view the prototype Sprint shelter. Feedback was given on the shelter prototype, which is expected to be installed on the network for public transport users' feedback in Spring 2019.

3.5.2 PPF arranged a TDC Member tour of Customer Services on the 7th January 2019. The aim was to show how TfWM serve the customer in both Ticketing Services and Customer Relations. The tour involved an overview of services offered including telephone, email and social media. PPF and TDC Members were invited to come back to see new technology

3.5.3 PPF have carried out a network tour across the Black Country bus stations and assets, meeting the customer-facing bus station staff, challenging current processes and improving the customer offer through subtle changes that have made a big difference for the passengers.

3.5.4 UK Bus Summit 2019

PPF members Cllr. K Hartley and Cllr. C. Hibbert attend the 5th annual UK Bus Summit on Wednesday 7th February 2019. Held at the QEII Centre, London, the conference brought together key industry professionals and stakeholders, bus operators and authorities to discuss the current status of the bus industry, what has and is being done to improve it, and what must be done to ensure a fruitful future. The focus of this year's *UK Bus Summit* was the future of mobility, why we need a

long term bus investment strategy, air quality and also how to get passengers on-board buses. A key theme of the Summit was that the bus industry can only continue to thrive through meaningful partnership. There were four presentations made by local representatives from the West Midlands including:

- Councillor Roger Lawrence, Leader, Wolverhampton City Council
- David Bradford, Managing Director – Bus Division, National Express West Midlands
- Pete Bond, Director Integrated Network Services, TfWM
- Councillor Waseem Zaffar, Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment, Birmingham City Council.

4.0 Wider Engagement

4.1 PPF has played a key role this year with engagement across many different passenger transport groups including the Metro Passenger Panel and Bus Satisfaction Task & Finish Group. PPF has played a key role in the Passenger Champion scheme attending quarterly meetings and contributing to a refresh of quality audits undertaken by these volunteers.

5.0 Forward Plan

5.1 PPF Lead Member Group meetings are in place for the remainder of the municipal year (15th May and 12th June 2019), with further progress to be reported to TDC via formal business updates in TDC's Forward Plan.

5.2 Further tours planned by PPF members a site visit to Nottingham City Transport in June 2019, organised by the Air Quality Lead Member Group. The site visit will involve presentations from Nottingham City Council officers, a visit to the biogas bus depot and ride on the Nottingham tram.

6.0 Financial Implications

6.1 There are no direct financial implications as a result of this update report. Costs incurred or support provided by TfWM from undertaking activity referred to in this report will be from within agreed overall budgets and resources informed from previous decisions.

7.0 Legal Implications

7.1 This report is for information only and there are no new direct legal implications arising.

8.0 Equality Implications

8.1. This report is for information only and there are no new equality implications.

9.0 Inclusive Growth Implications

9.1 This report is for information only; however bus is a vital component to inclusive growth as it directly supports access to the labour market, and allows people to access education, employment and services. The flexibility of the bus network also makes bus the perfect means of providing public transport options in areas of

growth, changing travel demand and new housing; directly supporting our West Midlands Housing Deal and Local Industrial Strategy. This means that buses are central to supporting regeneration, inclusive growth and social integration. Where there may not be a case for investing in permanent rail and light rail infrastructure, new bus infrastructure can be planned to connect new communities and support housing and jobs growth.

10.0 Geographical Area of Report's Implications

- 10.1 This report covers the constituent area of the Combined Authority but due to the importance of cross boundary services – into and out of the constituent area – partnership working with non-constituent and shire authorities is crucial in undertaking activities referred to in this report.