

WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

TENDERED SERVICES WORKING GROUP

DATE: 5 JULY 2007

AGENDA ITEM NO: 6

TENDERED BUS SERVICES – WAKEFIELD AND SOUTH KIRKLEES

Report of the Passenger Transport Executive

1. MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION

- 1.1. The adjustment of tendered bus service contracts in response to Arriva service changes planned for July 2007.

2. INFORMATION

- 2.1. Earlier in 2007, Arriva approached Metro to discuss service change proposals planned for April. Most of these were agreed and implemented following wider consultation with Wakefield members.
- 2.2. At the time, Arriva identified that they wished to review their South West Wakefield network following the closure of Bretton College and that service 147 (Wakefield – Pinderfields Hospital – Normanton – North Featherstone – Pontefract) was performing poorly and was at risk of withdrawal. It was agreed that further consideration and consultation necessitated the deferral of any changes in these areas until July 2007.
- 2.3. The following proposals have been drawn up following detailed appraisal of options. Prior to the submission of bus service registrations for these changes, Arriva issued consultation materials to ward members detailing the changes proposed making minor amendments in the light of feedback received.
- 2.4. The proposals alter current contracts for the operation of tendered bus services and require Metro's agreement to proceed.

Wakefield – Denby Dale – Holmfirth Corridor

- 2.5. The University of Leeds are closing their Bretton Hall campus south east of Wakefield in June 2007. The campus has been both a teaching and residential satellite to the main Leeds campus and has been a major generator of bus travel in the area. The University also financially supported the local service network. Arriva have stated that reduced fare revenue and contract income arising from the closure of the campus necessitated a review of the current bus network in the area.

- 2.6. There are currently three hourly bus services in the area together with additional peak only services
- 444 – Leeds – Wakefield – Bretton Hall – Barnsley , wholly commercial during the day
 - 448 – Leeds- Wakefield – Bretton Hall - Skelmanthorpe - Denby Dale, Metro fund the section of route between Skelmanthorpe and Denby Dale
 - 935 – Wakefield – Denby Dale – Holmfirth, wholly funded by Metro. This service was developed as part of the Rural Bus Challenge project in 2000 providing more direct links from the area to Wakefield Westgate station
- 2.7. Discussions have been held with Arriva to agree a revised network for the area which best reflects known demand and maintains local links where possible. This will be achieved by
- Service 444 – Leeds – Wakefield – West Bretton – Barnsley operating wholly on a commercial basis
 - A new service “435” consolidating services 448 and 935 to run from Leeds- Wakefield – West Bretton - Skelmanthorpe - Denby Dale - Holmfirth, funded by Metro
- 2.8. The following travel demands will be safeguarded in the revised option
- Bus / rail interchange – a major feature of service 935 has been its connectivity to rail services at Wakefield Westgate station. The new consolidated service 435 will access Wakefield City Centre via Westgate and coordination with train times has been incorporated into the timetable where possible. The service will however utilise a full length bus which will not be able to serve the station forecourt due to space constraints. Alternative stops are available immediately adjacent to the station in Westgate.
 - Commuter links- in addition to the hourly service, a supplementary service X41 will provide a limited stop service of three trips per day in each direction for residents of the Denby Dale area to travel to Leeds and Wakefield. This service will also link to Westgate rail station.
 - School Links – the network of services will maintain links pupils to Shelley Community College and Scissett Middle School
- 2.9. The hourly daytime pattern will extend into the evening on Sundays providing a consistent standard of services throughout. This will also require adjustment of tendered services contracts.

2.10. The implementation of the proposed new network will therefore require the withdrawal of the following contracts.

- 349/k/w/935/msd - £176,732 pa
- 349/k/w/935/mse -£53,204 pa
- 349/k/447/448/X48/msd - £61,652 pa
- 349/k/w/447/X48/mse - £60,278 pa
- 349/k/w/935/su - £17,710 pa
- 349/k/w/447/su - £15,139 pa

The total annual value of withdrawn contracts is £384,715

2.11. In their place, it is proposed to award the following contracts on a de minimis basis at the prices stated

- New hourly daytime 435 service - £156,393 pa
- New peak X41 service - £37,307 pa
- New hourly evening 435 service - £53,204 pa
- New hourly Sunday 435 service - £25,710 pa

The total annual value of the new contracts is £272,614 , a saving of £112,101

2.12. In order that service stability can be maintained in this area, it is proposed that the contracts be awarded for three years until July 2010.

2.13. Arriva are planning to utilise the resources saved from this service change to enhance the frequency of their services between Rothwell and Leeds from September 2007.

Normanton Area

2.14. Arriva have identified that their commercial service 147 is running at a significant loss. The service provides an hourly link between Wakefield – Pinderfields Hospital – Normanton – North Featherstone – Pontefract. Metro fund the operation of this service in an evening as service 157 under a revised route in Featherstone.

2.15. The withdrawal of this service would reduce connectivity to Wakefield and Pontefract from the Normanton area and would particularly affect links to local hospitals in both Wakefield and Pontefract.

2.16. Metro fund the operation of services 180/181 linking Normanton with Featherstone, Streethouse, Charlston and Snydale. The service was originally introduced to link several colliery communities. It operates on a circular basis every two hours providing an hourly link in alternate directions. The service is marginal when considered against Metro's criteria for support averaging 6 passengers per trip overall. There are however alternative services available for some of these passengers where the route intersects with more frequent services. An assessment of the service on this basis indicates that it would no longer meet Metro's criteria for support.

- 2.17. It is therefore proposed to withdraw service 180/181 and amend service 147 to maintain a service which would cater for most 180/181 passengers.
- 2.18. This can be achieved by adapting service 147 to follow the evening route of service 157 through the centre of Featherstone. The service would also include the Newfields area of Normanton.
- 2.19. The withdrawal of service 180/181 will however have the effect of removing the links to Normanton from Streethouse and Sharlston. Analysis of the current use of this service has identified no more than 7 passengers per day board the service in this area which will continue to be served by regular buses to Wakefield and Pontefract.
- 2.20. This proposal would therefore require the withdrawal of the following tendered service contract
- 349/w/180/181/ms - £100,908 pa
- 2.21. A de minimis contract would be issued to Arriva to cover the operation of service 147 between Normanton Market Place and Featherstone Rail Station. An annual price of £75,592 has been agreed with Arriva for this contract based upon the current cost per mile of the 180/181 contract. In order that service stability can be maintained in this area, it is proposed that the contracts be awarded for three years until July 2010

3. FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1. The overall impact of these contract changes will be to reduce annual expenditure by £137,400. These savings will contribute towards the achievement of required budget economies.
- 3.2. The provision of a de minimis contract for the services proposed is permissible under the Tendering Regulations which allow up to 25% of total budget to be spent in this way. At present 12% of Metro's service payment budget is committed to de minimis contracts.

4. STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. There are no staffing issues arising directly as a result of this report.

5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. There are no equal opportunity issues arising directly as a result of this report.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1. That the withdrawal of tendered service contracts detailed in this report are noted.

6.2. That the award of de minimis contracts as detailed in this report be noted.

Director General
West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive