

### Minutes of the 13<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Forum held on Wednesday 3 October 2007 at the Mechanics Institute, Manchester.

Peter Robinson in the Chair

#### 07/3/1F INTRODUCTION

The Chairman welcomed delegates and members of the public. He explained that, as an experiment, this Forum was being held on a weekday rather than a Saturday to establish whether better representation from the industry can be achieved. He indicated that he would be inviting comments as to delegates' preference for future meetings. By show of hands a majority indicated preference for a weekday event.

Trans Pennine Express was thanked for sponsoring the meeting.

#### 07/3/2F ATTENDEES AND APOLOGIES

Those attending and those who tendered their apologies are listed at the end of these minutes.

#### 07/3/3F MINUTES OF THE FORUM HELD ON 9<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2007 IN PRESTON

These were accepted as a true and correct record.

#### 07/3/4F MATTERS ARISING

An update was requested item 07/2/8F referring to potential station closures at Ardwick, Denton and Reddish South under the RUS recommendations. Passenger Focus representatives offered to follow this up and report back.

#### 07/3/5F INTER REGIONAL LINKS

1. **Trans Pennine Express.** David Mallender, Public Relations manager for Trans Pennine Express (TPE) gave a presentation about the train operators services and performance in the provision of train services in the North of England. The salient points within the comprehensive presentation were:

- TPE was responding to the Northern Way transport priorities to:
  - Improve links between city regions in the North of England
  - Improve links within city regions in the North of England and
  - Improve links with airports in the North of England
- TPE catchment area has a population of 14.3 million people
- TPE is currently operating slightly above the growth levels of the rail industry. At the commencement of its franchise it was carrying 13.5 million passengers per annum compared with 18.5 million now and a target of 20 million in 2008.
- Growth has been identified as a consequence of a good economy, increased frequency and faster journeys and a reliable alternative to road travel leading to confidence of passengers.
- Some airports are well served, particularly Manchester, whilst others are less so due to locations. However there is hope that a station may be built in the future to serve Doncaster/Sheffield airport. There was still a challenge to convince potential customers that Manchester Airport station was actually located within the airport rather than a taxi/ bus ride away.

- The new 185 trains had proved popular achieving 95% appreciation in a Passenger Focus survey.
- TPE is in discussion with the Dept for Transport (DfT) to increase its sets to 4 car trains.
- £30 million had been spent on station improvements.
- Further growth will bring many new challenges.

In the subsequent discussion the following points were raised:

- The DfT had invited TPE to provide the Manchester – Scotland services. TPE was confident that the 185 trains would provide sufficient accommodation and would operate a trolley service rather than a shop, similar to Arriva proposals for new Cross Country. The service will be carefully monitored.
- The new timetable will offer a few less services to/from Barrow and Windermere to allow units to be used on Scottish services and Lockerbie will also see a reduction in services. The service pattern is designed to fit with the new WCML timetable and some compensating services are being put in.
- It was noted that the original TPE network had now expanded so much that the branding might now be inappropriate.
- TPE has an aspiration with Network Rail to operate a consistent 7-day railway. This would include enhanced station facilities and it had already extended booking office opening hours at a number of stations. Continual monitoring would be in place to respond to demand.
- Timetable patterns on the Manchester - Blackpool services may result in migration of passengers from Northern to the TPE service thus causing greater congestion problems. Service will be monitored and dialogue with stakeholders will continue.

2. **VLM Airlines.** Tim Gresty (Managing Director, Cognitio) spoke on the relationship between airline operators and ground transport providers. He explained that he is in charge of marketing support to VLM, a Belgian owned airline providing services for the Business traveller. The main points made were:

- VLM was founded in 1992 and had started by linking Benelux regions with the UK. It had been profitable every year for the last 10 years without any subsidy.
- At the start of operations the train companies had not been interested in or appreciative of the needs of air travellers. Things were getting better but still had a distance to go.
- Rail links to airports are much better on the European mainland than in the UK. On the European mainland a different mind-set exists in attitude to public transport where it is seen as the most efficient transit system and people have no complexes about using it.
- VLM seeks to operate to and from airports for ease of access, offering speed of embarkation and disembarkation and good ground transport links. Its main airports are:
  - London City airport with 30% of its flights. Docklands Light Railway provides excellent links.
  - Antwerp offers frequent bus service taking 3 minutes from arrivals hall to rail-head.
  - Brussels offers direct intercity rail access within the airport complex.
- VLM offers 7 daily flights from Manchester to London City and 2 to Antwerp/ Rotterdam/ Luxembourg and provides links to long haul destinations via Brussels.
- VLM seeks to maximise usage of facilities at airports, to provide the fastest possible links for its travellers, even offering a 10 minute check-in at some airports.
- VLM is frustrated that seamless ticketing is not progressing well, despite the technology to achieve it being in place for some time and equivalent systems operating successfully in other industries.

In the subsequent discussion the following points were raised:

- It was felt that the Office of Fair Trading might be a barrier to integrated ticketing between rail and air services. However it works well on the Europe mainland so why not in the UK? The technology exists.
- Rail ticketing is still in the dark ages compared with air travel.
- There is no prospect of VLM flying out of Blackpool as the business case to locate an aircraft there would not be economical.

- Car park costs at airports can seem very high and may subsidise ground costs. However it was believed that this was not economically sustainable in the long run and, on the Europe mainland, car park income was not viewed as a revenue generator.
- Ground public transport ticketing for arriving airline passengers must embrace the whole region served by the airport as passengers will not respond to partial coverage.
- Claims about the carbon emissions of aircraft can be misleading. DefRA statistics are based on aircraft that were prevalent in the 1980's and do not take into account modern aircraft with more controlled emissions. Consequently the comparisons made between air and train travel are misleading.

#### **07/3/6F PASSENGER FOCUS UPDATE**

David Sidebottom, Passenger Link Manager described the background of Passenger Focus (PF) and indicated that it was working to its Business Plan for 2007 – 2008. It is currently engaged in the following issues:

- Fares & Ticketing - Ongoing work with ATOC/NRES and DfT to simplify structure. Research with passengers and research in to ticketing technology.
- Response to Select Committee on HLOS/White Paper.
- Work with ATOC – passenger information around disruptions.
- Using NPS to deliver improvements...Northern Rail stations, customer service...TPE improvements.
- Work with TPE on new fares proposals for Scotland services.
- Consultation on Northern's plans to alter ticket-office hours in Manchester.
- Northern Rail rolling stock.
- TPE issues with reservations and queuing at Huddersfield...also work on mini-timetables.
- Liaison with Arriva re. new Cross Country franchise including involvement on Disabled People's Protection Policy (DPPP); Charter and Complaints Handling Policy; Tickets launch (11 Nov); encouragement to provide detailed information via website; meetings regarding rolling stock layout.
- Liaison with Virgin WC re. Significant management team restructure and re-introduction of unreserved carriage.
- 2009 West Coast timetable Stakeholder briefings in Birmingham and Manchester; response to impact on long distance and local services.

Points raised following the presentation:

- DfT Website West Coast 2008 timetable does not currently include Northern Trains information but this is expected by Christmas as it was still under construction.
- Poor local services from north west Manchester to city and Airport (hourly) need upgrading to 30 minutes if business is to be attracted.

#### **07/3/7F LOCAL TRANSPORT BILL UPDATE**

John Moorhouse and Paul Fawcett provided an update on the situation regarding the above. The main points of the presentation were:

- TWNW had responded to the White Paper and provided a written response to Transport Select Committee on the Bill. As a result TWNN had been invited to present evidence to the Select Committee.
- It was noted that the Bill was concerning itself mainly with Bus services.

- HOCTC accepted that bus users in England (outside London) have no statutory voice and recommended the Bill should establish a statutory BUCC for England but stopped short of recommending a multi-modal Transport UCC.
- However there exists a parallel Government cross departmental review of all statutory consumer representation and Utility regulation but the supplementary DfT consultation on the role of the Traffic Commissioners suggests that (together with the non statutory BUUK and the BAB) they are well placed to handle passenger representation and complaints. TWNW has some concerns with this as there appears to be insufficient resources and a large degree of self-regulation.
- Quality contracts were important and necessary everywhere. Local Transport Authorities should be able to manage their own Quality Contracts.

In subsequent discussion points were made that GMPTC's 30 year strategy was welcomed and more local emphasis was required in transport planning.

A full copy of the detail is available to view on the TWNW web site.

### **07/3/8F GREATER MANCHESTER TRANSPORT INNOVATION FUND BID**

Simon Warburton, GMPTA Policy Team Leader, presented on the above. This is a fund provided under the 2004 White Paper. One of its main priorities is to drive road charging policies but later invited local authorities to bid for funds for transport schemes between 2008 and 2013. GMPTC is bidding for funding to tackle congestion by a series of measures, the main item being a road charging scheme but before this is implemented 80% of the following measures, which form part of the bid, are required to be in place:

- Metrolink expansions as originally proposed.
- Additional rolling stock for inter-urban rail services.
- Improvements to rail station infra-structure and interchange facilities.
- Leigh Guided Busway.
- New buses – faster services.
- Significant expansion of Yellow School Bus provision.
- 100% increase in Park and Ride spaces.
- Integrated ticketing.

The proposals for a road charging scheme followed a consultation with residents of Greater Manchester that a majority supported in principle. The scheme would levy road charges on in-bound traffic during morning peak hours and out-bound traffic in peak evening hours. The bid is now with the DfT and if acceptable will qualify for "Programme Entry" status during the first part of 2008.

In discussion the following points were made:

- Assurance that public transport is high on the agenda as part of the whole plan.
- There is need to communicate the details of the scheme to the wider NW region and this will occur at Programme Entry stage.
- The Wigan relief road is an element of the scheme as this has been identified as a major need. The SE Manchester relief road is deemed to be longer term and will be in line with other subsequent development post 2013.
- Timescale of the total scheme envisages that 80% will be complete by 2013 and full completion by 2014.

- It was confirmed that the scheme will not address congestion on M60 as this is not in the jurisdiction of local authorities, but the Highways Agency is observing with interest.
- A fraction of the bid will be for the cost of implementing road charging. Operational costs of road charging will be negotiated with tenderers and selected suppliers.
- GMPTE will discuss additional rolling stock and station improvements with operators and Network Rail as its remit is only for PTE area but there may need to be some trade off in respect of trains starting and completing journeys at points remote from Manchester.
- Every road junction into the city area will have charging points to eradicate any "rat runs".
- Improvement to the Irlam – Manchester corridor needs more liaison and maybe enhanced signalling.
- A package as part of the bid will resolve real time information issues.
- GM is the only Metropolitan area bidding for TIF funds at the moment. It has been warmly welcomed by DfT. No alternative funding pots exist so it is in government's interest, in partnership with GMPTE, to avoid any failure. Confidence in the success of the bid is high.

### 07/3/9F OPEN FORUM

The following points were made by delegates during this session.

- **Hindley** – Call for better train services. PF in dialogue with Northern Trains.
- **TPE Seat Reservations** – Should be placed at journey originating station. Need to complain to train conductor for resolution if not in place.
- **TPE Anglo - Scots** – 185 trains have similar capacity than 4-car Voyagers. Concern was expressed in respect of that they have less luggage capacity. Loadings will be monitored by company.
- **New Cross Country** – Timetable pamphlets required at West Coast stations. Will be highlighted during briefings.
- **Cumbria Services** - Journey opportunities will be reduced in new timetables. To be monitored and highlighted with regularity.
- **Cross Country** – Decision to change NW direct services was by DfT, not operators. All consultations were consistent in opposing decision but this and subsequent lobbying were rejected by DfT.
- **Birmingham New Street** – Concern that station will be undergoing extensive re-building during the life of new Cross Country franchise and passengers will be heavily inconvenienced. It was also noted that Wolverhampton will also be the subject of redevelopment during this time.
- **Liverpool – Scotland** – Call for direct through services.
- **National Rail/Metrolink** – Call for more extensive combined and integrated ticketing.
- **Todmorden Curve** – Call for reinstatement to allow direct trains to operate via Burnley to Manchester.

### Rossendale Transport

Barry Drelincourt made a short presentation on behalf of Rossendale Transport – a municipally owned community based operator. He drew attention to the company's smart card fare operation and the new X46 hourly service from Weir via Bacup Rochdale and Manchester. The company was profitable and had been successful by concentrating on quality issues rather than network growth.

### CPRE

Attention was drawn to the recently published Lancashire/CPRE/GMTAG Cross Border Transport Study by Lancashire CPRE for Lancashire and Greater Manchester, available from CPRE.

07/3/10F NEXT FORUM To be held in Liverpool, late February 2008, at the invitation of Merseytravel.

## ATTENDANCE LIST

<i>Name</i>	<i>Representing/Location</i>
Peter Robinson	Chair TWNW
John Moorhouse	Co Sec, TWNW
Paul Fawcett	TWNW
John Owen	TWNW
David Mallender	First TPE
Tim Gresty	Cognitio
David Sidebottom	Passenger Focus
Sue Tibbett	Passenger Focus
Simon Warburton	GMPTA
Rita Quinn	GMPTE
Chris Dale	TWNW
Ian Watson	TWNW
Stephen Clapham	Friends of Eccles Stn
Lillian Burns	TWNW / NW TAR
Matthew Goggins	National Express
David Wilson	TransDev Lancashire
Emma Gilpin	Halton BC
Michael Wrigley	Support the Oldham Rochdale Manchester Line
Ian McDermott	North Trafford RUG
David Burton	SE Lancs Rail Action Partnership
JF Aaron	Crewe
John Murray	Rochdale Transport Partnership
Keith Pennyfather	Macclesfield PT Liaison Committee
Colin Barnett	Bus Users UK
Philip Harrison	Marple Bridge
Steven Jones	Lancashire CPRE
Charles Agate	Southport
Malcolm Richardson	Blackpool & Fylde RUA
Peter Lamkin	Wrexham - Birkenhead RUA
Janet Briggs	North Cheshire RUG
Paul Brent	National Taxi Association
Dave Davenport	Merseytravel
Bruce Allan	Blackpool BC
Eoan Edwards	Friends of Eccles Stn
Paul Lucas	Cheadle
Ken Swallow	CILT
Ronald Schwarz	Railfuture NW
Aidan Turner Bishop	Campaign for Better Transport Lancs
Tom Lunt	Maghull, Liverpool
Richard Rollins	Lancaster & Skipton RUG
Brian Johnson	Virgin Trains
Steve Leyland	Virgin Trains
Bill Harrop	CN4M Transport Pool

Graham Price	North Cheshire RUG
Peter Johnston	Bolton
Preva Crossley	Friends of Hindley Stn
Chris Holmes	Radcliffe, Manchester
David Evans	Blackpool & Fylde RUA
Janet Cuff	Rambler's Assoc. Manchester & High Peak
Leonard Green	CPT North Western
Barry Drelincourt	Rossendale Transport / CPT
Phil Edwards	North Cheshire RUG
Tony Williams	Light Rail Transit Association
MJ Mahon	Blackpool & Fylde RUA
Alan Pettener	East Cheshire RUG
Mary Diedd Rayner	Heywood
Chris Laycock	Support the East Lancs Line
Neil Roberts	Cheshire County Council
Robert Talbot	Lakes Line RUG
John Ryan	Wirral Transport Users Association
Paul Elliott	Runcorn
David Yates	Friends of Eccles Stn

#### **APOLOGIES**

David Butterworth	TravelWatch North West
David Robinson	TravelWatch North West
Steve McCulley	Railfuture
Maxine Myers	First TPE
Alan Scoles	Coach Commission
Cedric Green	North Cheshire RUG
Alan Meredith	TravelWatch E Midlands
Peter Bell	Preston Bus
Martin Bright	Sustrans
Denis Knowles	Liverpool Airport Consultative Committee
Jo Lappin	Government Office NW
JM Warner	Kendal Bus Users
Mark Barker	Northern Rail
Steve Pearse	Liverpool Chamber of Commerce
Jim Trotman	Lancaster City Council
David Miller	Mid Cheshire RUA
Peter Colley	Friends of the Lake District
Bill Oakes	CILT
Russell Oakes	
Dave Whyte	NWRA
Roland Graham	Cycling Projects NW
Peter Garvey	Greater Manchester Transport Campaign
Peter Davies	Railfuture