

Minutes of the York Bus Forum Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 16th October 2018 at West Offices

Present: Graham Collett (GC, Chair), Dave Merrett (DM, Treasurer & Membership Secretary), Colin Sherwood (CS), Ron Healey (RH, Vice-Chair), Roger Pierce(RP), Alan Dawes(AD, Rawcliffe PC), Colin Hall(CH), S Irwin (SI), Brian Nye (BN), Andy d’Agorne(Ad’G), John Whitworth(JW), Alan Robinson (AR), Geoff Beacon(GB - minutes), John Bibby (JB)

1. Chair's welcome and apologies

GC welcomed members and visitors to the meeting. He reported that Rosie Baker had resigned as Project Officer and Access Group Leader and acknowledged her fantastic contribution to the Access Group’s work.

JB agreed to contact Eleanor Tew (YBPSS) with regard to the future of the Access Group.

Action: JB.

DM said that there was an outstanding issue concerning the bill for printing the Access Group booklet, which was being chased.

Apologies from the following were noted: Cllr M Cannon, A Miller, D Boyle; G Shuttleworth, T Hudson, N McFarran, C Rutt, D Robinson, M Fairbrother.

2. Minutes of the 17th July committee meeting – approved.

3. Matters Arising

Item 15: Station Front Proposals

GC reported meeting James Gilchrist (JC) and Brendan Murray (BM) of City of York Council (CYC). JC gave an undertaking to improve co-operation between the CYC Transport Team and YBF and to remind the Communications team to keep YBF informed of major projects. AR would also follow up progress on the scheme with Cllr Kallum Taylor. **Action: AR.**

4. Finance and Membership Report

DM reported that YBF had gained one more member; we now had 36 members & 6 affiliates. The only known liabilities were the printing and paper bills for the Access Group report.

JB asked whether the F&M report was necessary at every Committee meeting, as it created work for the treasurer. DM replied that he was able to manage these reports at present.

CH agreed to draft an email to attract more women and young people. **Action: CH.**

GC reminded all members to pay their subscriptions – any paid now would also cover 2019.

5. Report on Liaison Meeting with Mark Bichtemann (MB - MD of First York) - Chair & Treasurer, GC & DM attended.

GC. First York (FY) just wanted through bus routes and rubber stamped the CYC Front of Station proposals. JB asked if there were there regular meetings with FY. GC replied that he would try to arrange these with Brandon Jones (External Relations at First Bus). **Action: GC.**

RP said that the maps of the park on ride routes were not good & people get lost coming back to the return stops.

A d'Ag said that the route maps on the buses are not clear (e.g. No 7 circular – but which way). It was pointed out that visitors on the park and ride services were not always clear which route they were on. SI says the lack of labelling was very unhelpful. GC agreed to follow up the maps issue with FY. **Action: GC.**

Ad'Ag said there were issues about intermediate stops on Park & Ride services. When should they stop? The Council don't seem to have a consistent policy on this issue e.g. the No 7 has extra stops but other routes generally don't. JB said this issue had been raised at the BUUK meeting. JR acknowledged that there was no Council policy on this. GC suggested raising through ward committees. CH suggested writing to Executive members.

GC drew attention to the continued lack of audible and visual announcements on most local services. The new Park & Ride services will have them. Retro fitting of old buses is possible and is being done in Wales. The Bus Services Act contains provision to make fitting of these announcements compulsory, but the implementation timescale is not yet known. MB advised that if the CYC Clean Air Zone proposals go through, then FY would need to get more modern buses which were likely to come already fitted with these announcements. A CYC meeting to approve the zone was expected in late November. RP felt the audio announcements could be an irritant. JB said they could be a problem for some people with mental health issues.

6. York Central (DM)

DM. Reported that there had been lots of objections to the plans. With Professor Tony May's help, a comprehensive response had been drafted by the York Environment Forum Transport Group and submitted in the Environment Forum's name (see https://planningaccess.york.gov.uk/online-applications/files/4009863B0BBE88BCBE77AC2B358CFBA4/pdf/18_01884_OUTM-YORK_ENVIRONMENT_FORUM-2059178.pdf). There was no priority for buses, and no discussion with bus companies according to the devastatingly critical QBP submission (See https://planningaccess.york.gov.uk/online-applications/files/C9101336530103ECCDF0E0184B1B3BA3/pdf/18_01884_OUTM-YORK_QUALITY_BUS_PARTNERSHIP-2060954.pdf). He had gone to several of the Community Partnership meetings on behalf of YBF and had emphasised problems for through buses, but clearly without any effect. Without bus priority York Central will be high car use.

7. Bus Interchange (JB/AR/Chair) JB commented that CYC had given a thoughtful response to our bus interchange plans at the YBF meeting last month, which he and AR had discussed. AR is preparing a report to go to CYC explaining our concerns about their proposals and will coordinate matters while JB is away. **Action: AR.** GC noted that our original proposals didn't meet First's requirements for through stops. RP expressed surprise at the proposal. It would lengthen his journey and he wouldn't support them. CH also supported not forcing the buses to stop / keeping them moving.

DM pointed out that there were a mix of services and a number of terminating services that it would be useful to get to the station (e.g. the Easingwold, Selby local services, the Silver &

Green Line Park & Ride Services, Race Day services) – a mix of through and terminating bay services would be more appropriate if we're to get good interchange. Proper space for rail replacement services could be covered too. He also noted the number of rail passengers using York Station is expected to go up by 2 or 3 times in next 15 to 20 years. We can't fit more cars in – need more bus use, bikes and walking, and that should be factored in.

AR noted that the figures at the back of the Council's report allowed for a one third increase in bus use. He recognised the need to cater for more through service stops and would revise his proposals. AR also referred to JB's wish to stand down as chair of the Bus station working group and that he'd suggested amalgamating it with the York Central group. GC felt we'd need to respond fairly soon whatever. AR agreed to draft a response in the light of the preceding debate. **Action: AR.**

GB referred to a piece he'd written about the Front of Station and the pollution spread all around it. He had put it on his blog site.

8. Local Plan Update (DM)

DM referred to the Planning Inspector's letter of 24th July (see [https://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/file/16579/exins1 - initial observations 24 july 2018](https://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/file/16579/exins1_-_initial_observations_24_july_2018)), and the discussion at the local plan working Group on 20th September (see <https://democracy.york.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=128>). Certainly raised the question as to whether the draft local plan be refused? Council were due a phone conference call with inspectors, before they replied. It should therefore be known in late November if plan is to proceed – it might not. If it does proceed it will be starting after Christmas, into the New Year.

AD. We need local plans which show bus services and stops with leaflets on how to get from each parish to doctors etc. GC suspected the Council wouldn't have the resource to do that – may say use the i-travel website. JB suggested we start with AD's parish. Ad'Ag wondered if it was something parishes could take a lead on. AD agreed to draft a leaflet for Rawcliffe which could be a pilot for producing these across the city. GC commented that the printing costs could be significant, but let's await the pilot. **Action: AD to produce draft leaflett.**

9. Local Bus Route Reps Scheme (DB)

GC introduced the note on Route Reps and Route Champions from Dee Boyle. JB agreed to liaise with Dee over taking forward her proposals, and report back in two months time. **Action JB/DB.**

RP suggested that we start a scheme giving reps badges and authority to talk to passengers and ask the bus operators to support & suggest a pilot.

JW asked who was responsible for the bus stop displays as some aren't working GC advised that CYC is responsible and faulty indicators should be reported to them.

CH said he had been told the displays were inaccurate. GC pointed out that these were dependent on GPS transponders on the buses and estimated times between stops, which can be inaccurate at times of traffic congestion. The accuracy depended on how often they called in which was a cost issue. CH felt the displays were very important. He said he had a conversation with a woman at a city centre bus stop late one night. She'd been very distressed by the surrounding noise and disturbance, and the reassurance of whether her bus was coming was vital. He felt the issue was regulatory – we needed reliability.

10. Communications with External Organisations – Proposed Protocol (Chair)

GC introduced this paper and explained the reasons why a protocol was needed. RP proposed we accept the report . Following a suggestion from Ad'Ag, it was agreed to accept the protocol and review it after 3 months. **Action: Review after 3 months (January 2019).**

11. Major Events – Impact on Bus Services (JB/Chair)

GC. The Balloon Festival at the Knavesmire had caused major traffic congestion across the city, with a very serious impact on bus services. One person had to wait 3 hours for a bus. DM said that CYC should not give a licence to similar events if the organisers cannot produce an acceptable travel plan. GC agreed to write to JC seeking suitable assurances for future events. **Action: GC.**

12. Proposed Taxi-bus Working Group

JB said he discussed this with Julian Ridge at the BUUK event. It was agreed to establish a Demand Responsive Transport Working Group (to include the proposed HOSPI bus), led by JB. RP agreed to join the group and other offers of help were welcomed. **Action: JB to take forward.**

13. Hospibus Update(JB)

To be considered by the DRT WG (see 11 above). **Action: JB.**

14. Proposed Bus Data Working Group (JB)

JB noted all the other pressures – this was less urgent. He'd been in contact with Professor Alistair Boaxall from the University of York's Open date group. It was agreed to defer work on this due to time pressures. A d'G referred to a recent paper on this topic and agreed to scan and circulate it. **Action: Ad'Ag.**

15. Future Meetings (GC/JB)

JB is arranging a continuing programme of meetings every two months, alternating with committee meetings which GC is dealing with.

November – Mental Health and Bus issues

December & February – business meetings

January – Caroline Mullen from Leeds ITS

March AGM – the Council had offered a presentation on the display screens. JB was not keen on this.

AD said the timing of meetings was good for getting back on the park & Rides.

The programme was agreed.

16. AOB

Ad'Ag said he'd asked JR for the business case for the Wigginton Road "Bus" Improvements. JR had also given him a paper copy of his 2017 report evaluating the Better Bus measures , including the bus wardens and the Fulford Road bus improvements. **Action: Ad'Ag to keep Forum updated / circulate copy of the 2017 report.**

It was agreed to congratulate CYC on continuing to produce city-wide printed bus maps; many other councils have discontinued these. **Action: GC.**

GC reported that Bus Users UK (BUUK) had held an event in York on 11th October, but due to the very late confirmation and absence of publicity material, it was not possible to notify all members. The BUUK pre-November meeting was now off. He was following up with BUUK to try and establish better links with them. **Action: GC.**