

## York Bus Forum

### Minutes of Open Committee Meeting held on 19 February 2019

at 5.30 pm at West Offices, York

**Present:** Graham Collett (chair), John Bibby (vice-chair), Dave Merrett (treasurer & membership secretary), Geoff Beacon, Mary Fairbrother, Jean Hart, Tony Hudson, Stuart Irwin, Brian Nye, Ed Pearson, Alan Robinson, Ray Walker (new member), Roger Pierce (minutes)

**1. Chair's Welcome:** Apologies for absence were reported from Ron Healey.

**2. Minutes** (previously circulated) **of the meeting held on 18 December 2018** were approved as a correct record subject to the deletion of the last sentence of item 10 and insertion of: 'Times were no longer clock-faced'.

**3. Matters Arising.** The chair asked about the access group progress. JB said it was currently in abeyance. TH asked if there would be any change regarding the front of station proposals. AR said not, bar perhaps some signage improvements. TH referenced the overhead electric bus charging arrangement being installed at Harrogate and not missing the opportunity to do that here. It was reported that, in respect of the York Railway Station forecourt proposals, the approval of LNER as landowner was necessary for the alterations to the former parcels office and car parking. That approval would require the firm prospect of additional income to offset lost car parking revenue to satisfy LNER. GC said he'd speak to Luke Richardson at LNER wearing his rail hat. **Action: Chair.**

Roger Pierce reported his discussions with York Hospital Trust managers concerning improved bus services for staff, patients and visitors. They had agreed to include information about existing bus services in their patient information. They had described advanced proposals to operate a new, dedicated P&R service to the hospital from an undisclosed site. This would use the ambulance access to the hospital site. After an initial promotional period, the service would have to be self-funding. The driver for the new service was the need to expand the hospital buildings onto the car parking areas. The non-working bus information screen inside the hospital had been brought to the attention of hospital and council staff. There had been disagreement over who was primarily responsible for ensuring that the equipment was working. The chair and Roger had both written to council officers accordingly.

**4. Communications Protocol:** The interim protocol was approved. It was further agreed that all communication to the managing director of First and other bus operators and council officers would be made via the chair.

**5. Promotional Leaflet:** Alan Robinson was thanked for his industry, graphic design skills and tireless, patient consultation with members. The leaflet was approved. A quotation of

£70 plus VAT for printing 2,000 copies was accepted. Agreement in principle was given to purchasing a banner advertisement incorporating the frontispiece of the leaflet. There was an extensive discussion on its distribution.

**6. Membership & Finance:** Dave Merrett circulated a statement, and reported that 23 members had paid 2019 membership subscriptions (one at the meeting). The bank balance was back over £1,000 too.

**7. York Central:** DM reported that major amendments to the planning application had been made. These increased the business floorspace proposed and the transport section, over a thousand pages had been completely resubmitted. Tony May had looked at and was saying that there'd been no reduction in the likely trip generation, or effort to address the objections re the lack of bus priorities. The submission showed that southbound buses would be delayed 3 minutes southbound in the peak hour at the proposed Marble Arch tunnel one way. Only a thirty day consultation period had been given. He recommended that YBF should reconfirm its objections. He noted that the application was due to be reported for decision by the council's planning committee at its meeting on 14 March to achieve the deadline for WYCA and other finance, which gave no time for officers to properly analyse later objections. Objection agreed. **Action: DM.** A meeting of group objectors had been arranged for the following day (20 February) at which, in DM's absence, it was agreed Roger Pierce would represent YBF. **Action: RP.** RP didn't believe that the York planning committee could objectively decide the matter, given the Council's major involvements, and therefore that there were the necessary exceptional grounds for a call-in by the Secretary of State. RW felt that call ins were not liked, and would particularly listen to the two local MPs views on this.

**8. York Local Plan:** DM reported that initial meetings were likely to be held by the Inspectors with the city council in mid-March to discuss three matters: the council's 'objective assessment of [housing] needs', co-operation with other local planning authorities and government agencies, and the status of the green belt. If the inspectors decided that the plan wasn't compliant on any of these issues, which was clearly possible over the low housing provision, then it could be sent back for amendment. Alternatively it might be chucked out, and then, given the continuing delay, it was possible that the government would take over plan preparation. RW said referral back was the most likely outcome.

**9. Reports: York Environment Forum (YEF) Transport Group.**

DM noted that the new Local Transport Plan would be commenced once the local plan had been resolved. It was currently timetabled for 2019/20 but this would probably slip if the Local Plan does. The (YEF) Transport Group had also received a presentation by council staff on new systems of traffic control and management, and real time traffic data including bus services (STEP) and the Council's Traffic Signals Renewal Programme (TSAR). However there was no current financial allocation for the real time bus info extension – he felt this was something YBF should look to campaign for, which ignore cancelled buses. She supported pursuing this. MF noted problems with the existing displays. RP reported that Connexions had introduced on-line, real-time map displays of bus services on the RYGO

app. RW noted problems regarding info on the No. 25 service. The current reconstruction works to Fossgate and Stonebow were causing disruption to bus services.

**10. Arriva Photo-opportunity 18 March at No 415 stop at 10.30:** We were invited to the unveiling of the new audio- and visual displays on buses. **Action: All to note.**

**11. AGM 19 March at 6.30 at West Offices:**

**11.1** This would be preceded by a guided tour of the council's traffic control room in four, fifteen-minute sessions beginning at 4.30. Refreshments would be provided for members in the interval between the tours and start of AGM.

**11.2 Election of officers:** Both the chair and treasurer & membership records officer were standing down. John Bibby offered to become a joint-chair. Alan Robinson had offered to become subscriptions secretary & treasurer. Roger Pierce was willing to keep minutes of meetings. Ray Walker offered to help.

**12. AOB:**

1. Strong criticism was made of the lack of readily available and legible information on route and stop changes during the Stonebow closure. The chair would speak to council officers. **Action: Chair.**

2. Council elections 2 May: it was agreed to write to the 200-odd candidates standing for the 47 seats on the council. They would be sent our leaflet and a letter drawing their attention to their powers and responsibilities for bus services and their wider opportunities through highways, traffic management, planning and development to improve bus services. In John Bibby's absence, Roger Pierce agreed to draft a letter for consultation with officers. **Action: RP.**

3. Ray Walker reported that the bus service contract for the Derwenthorpe service would expire shortly. He would examine the requirements in the S106 agreement to continue the only service to the new housing. **Action: RW.**

4. Roger Pierce suggested that the forum's support for better physical accessibility of buses to all users meant that it should promote single-deckers for shorter, city services. It was agreed to discuss this proposition at a future meeting. **Action: Chair / Sec to agenda.**