

York Bus Forum AGM and Meeting Tuesday 19th April 2022 17.30 by Zoom

Attending; Doreen Magill (Chair), Graham Collett (Vice Chair), Niall McFerran (Secretary), Dave Merrett, Roger French (Finance and Membership), Jim Harbus, Ian Anderson, Tony Hudson, George Wood, Richard Parker, Iris Wells, David Stuart, Mary Fairbrother, Cllr. D'Agorne, Duncan Millar, John Bibby, Julian Ridge.

DMag. Welcomed delegates to the AGM and reported apologies from; Alan Robinson, Gail Shuttleworth, Lionel Lennox, Michael Howard, Brandon Jones, Cathy Croston, Mary Cannon, Barry Connor and Flick Williams.

AGM

The minutes of the last AGM were accepted.

The Chairs report was offered without comment. GC proposed and IA seconded acceptance.

The Secretary's report was offered with NM saying this had been a key year for the YBF. It was proposed by DMag. and seconded by GC.

The Accounts were approved and DMag offered her thanks for the work done by RF.

The officers were re-appointed.

DMag as Chair NM proposed, GC seconded.

GC as Vice Chair, DMag proposed and IA seconded.

NM as Secretary, GC proposed and DMag Seconded.

RF was elected to be responsible for Finance and Membership issues. IA proposed and GC seconded.

The other committee members were re-elected, and no volunteers offered to serve.

Richard Gray was proposed by RF to be our independent auditor, GC approved and IA seconded.

AOB- GC thanked DMag for work on the website and NM for arranging meetings with key parties. JB thanked committee members for hard work. IA asked whether we are in a position to hold hybrid meetings yet? DMag suggested that we still do not have agreement on equipment use from CYC.

The AGM ended.

April Meeting

1. DMag welcomed members
2. Minutes of March meeting accepted. GC reported that the response to the Parliamentary Select Committee had been received. KF updated on the issue of bus services between Bridlington and York which are still unsatisfactory. NM asked if we could get access to passenger numbers prior to the change so that comparisons could be made throughout the year.

3. Julian Ridge gave a presentation updating progress in York on bus issues. The last two years had been the most difficult in memory with falls in use of up to 95% on some routes! Some operators faced the challenge of having to close until support funding made available. Government measures encouraging travel then restricting it again also added to the challenge. The need to expand use of electric buses, the shortage of drivers and higher fuel costs had also presented demands on the network. It is still unclear how devolution changes to government in North Yorks. Will impact bus services in York.

The market has largely recovered to around 90% of patronage levels pre-Covid with the leisure market showing growth but commuting still down. There has also been a fall of in concessionary travel use which requires more investigation.

Julian' goal is to provide a 'London style' bus network with, reasonably priced, frequent, easy ticketing and good passenger information. This is required under the provisions of the new Local Plan which envisages a 15% growth in bus use.

The new Local Transport Plan- is coming, but we are still waiting for DfT guidance on the levels of carbon reduction. Electrification of bus network will make a significant contribution to this.

Julian made the point that the only real option for public transport within the city is the bus, electric vehicles were the logical route within York possible other technologies outside the city and rapid transit routes for high volume areas will be considered.

BSIP and ZEBRA

The successful ZEBRA bid will allow CYC and First York to acquire 44 new single deck buses. The buses are a new type provided by Arrival with a 16year battery guarantee. JR pointed out that some of the electric P&R buses have already had to have their batteries replaced at a significant cost.

JR calculations that this, when complete will mean that 60% of buses in York are electric replacing the pollution caused by 2,000 cars.

The CYC funding will be matched by £10.2M from First York.

The buses to complete the electric network will be subject of future funding bids to cover longer services such as 10,11 and 12. As they will also need further re-charging points.

The new buses, which have improved customer information displays, will enter service in the next three years. They have flat floors and represent a significant improvement on the ones they replace.

The BSIP award represents 87% of the monies asked for in the bid. Significant result is that this maintains investment alongside the other activities CYC are engaged in, so this is additional expenditure.

The award is conditional on CYC providing further details of spending plans, which will require some element of choosing priorities. The funding runs up to 2025 so we will need to prepare ground for post that date.

In capital expenditure, this will provide expansion of use of P&R sites to become hubs, increased amount of bus priority lane space to improve reliability and improved passenger information outlets.

On the revenue side it will support young person travel schemes and standardised fares, better service support and marketing to encourage use.

Also, extra staff could be recruited, an intra-city shuttle bus and improved services could be expected.

Enhanced Partnership- work still proceeding here on the details of the plan and operation for this as it will need to include stakeholder involvement which may require compromise.

Next steps – to prepare BSIP plan by May! With funding to be in place by July ZEBRA buses delivery schedule to be finalised. Finalise the improved solutions offered by expanded Railway Station facilities. LTP, will it be York only or part of NYC? And Local Plan Report by autumn.

DMag. thanked JR for his presentation and congratulated him on the success of his work. She asked about the flexibility of accommodation on the new buses, would they be able to carry bikes at the rear? JR replied this was to be decided.

DM asked if concessionary fare journeys are down does this mean that overall leisure travel is up? Yes

GW asked about the drop in Concessionary travel and suggested he could have York Older Peoples Assembly provide research. JR accepted offer with thanks.

NM suggested that the bus drivers of the city required special recognition for their work during the pandemic. JR pointed out that the Lord mayor had written to all key workers with thanks. He also asked if there are sufficient staff to carry out the programmes currently envisaged? JR suggested further staff will be required. NM also asked the position of the City Centre Bus Study? JR replied that it is still in procurement 12 months late.

KF asked how safe the Concessionary Fares Scheme is beyond next year? JR suggested he was not aware of suggested changes to the national scheme.

RP asked if the bus service improvements to the new developments, such as Langwith, could be installed before the houses were built to establish integrated approach?

MF asked if new buses would include audio visual aids and clearer signs? JR responded yes but would welcome input from impaired vision groups to advise requirements.

GC asked if the capacity of the new buses would accommodate needs? JR to respond.

DM asked that the young travellers' schemes could include under 25's and that the new buses would have good mechanical ventilation. JR will advise.

DMag thanked Julian again for his time and input.

4. Local Plan inquiry

DM reported revised dates for the hearings and confirmed the written submission has been made.

5. AOB

Hybrid meetings – DMag to send to Cllr. D'Agorne our requirements for this type of meeting. A straw poll suggested that we will have to offer online and in person meetings as speakers often can't get easily to York.

DM asked about the position of public consultation on outlined issues. JR responded he is currently working on LP issues and Sam Fryers will respond.

6. Date of next meeting Tuesday 16th May