

York Bus Forum AGM and Members Meeting Tuesday 18th April 2023 17.30 by Zoom

AGM

Attending; Doreen Magill (Chair), Graham Collett (Vice Chair), Niall McFerran (Secretary) Dave Merrett, Roger French (Finance and Membership), Terry French, Kevin Fradley, Elanor Tew, Jason Murgatroyd, David Stuart, Ian Anderson, Diana Robinson, Tony Hudson, John Bibby, Alan Robinson, Richard Byron, Duncan Millar and George Wood.

1. Chair welcomed delegates and reported apologies from; Iris Wells (For AGM and Meeting), Gail Shuttleworth (For AGM and Meeting), Colin Fletcher (AGM and Meeting), Robin Jorriman (AGM and Meeting), Mary Cannon (AGM and Meeting), Catherine Odell (AGM only), Eden Blyth (AGM only), Jim from Harbus (AGM and Meeting), Barry Connor (AGM and Meeting), Tom Bridge (Meeting only), Dave Merrett (Meeting only)
2. Minutes of the last AGM were approved.
3. The Chairs report was approved.
4. The Secretary's Report was approved.
5. The Annual Accounts were approved. RF reported that membership was stable and that the number of affiliated organisations had grown from four to twelve.
6. The Election of the current officers was agreed without a vote. GC announced that he will be standing down at the end of next year, DMag thanked him for his outstanding contribution. The election of Tony Hudson to the Committee was confirmed.
7. The re-election of the independent auditor was approved.
8. AOB - DM suggested that the members of the Committee should be thanked for their efforts, DR agreed with this.

Members Meeting

Attending: in addition to the attendees of the AGM the meeting was joined by, Toby Hart, Duncan Millar, Eden Blyth, Cllr. D'Agorne, Flick Williams, Julian Ridge, Carol Green, Mary Fairbrother and Catherine Odell.

1. DMag. welcomed participants and introduced today's speaker.
2. Richard Wellings of Nottingham City Council gave a talk on the current developments within the bus service in the city. He commented that his only experience of bus travel in York had been a poor one when he used the service to the Community Stadium. He reported that the key drivers in Nottingham was the need to provide a sustainable transport service. The main bus operator in the city is owned by the Council as a historic legacy from the pre-privatisation days, he anticipated this would remain as there is a high level of satisfaction and usage of the service. The other main aim of the bus services in the city was to provide a contribution towards de-carbonisation. The city has a poor rail infrastructure but good tram facility. The Nottingham Council have set a target to become net-zero by 2028, he concluded that the best way to achieve this is to increase bus passenger journeys in low or zero emission vehicles. He also said that they were implementing other tactics, such as the 'Workplace Parking Levy' (which nets around £8-9M per year) in order to discourage unnecessary car journeys. They are investing

heavily in the charging infrastructure but expressed concerns over having electric vehicles stuck in traffic congestion as this would not achieve their target, so road space reallocation will need to happen.

Better buses – having a high-quality operator in the city raises the bar for other suppliers. There is very little activity from the major bus service suppliers in the city, it is primarily local companies. Current patronage is around 86-90% of pre-Covid levels and is growing which puts Nottingham ahead of similar cities.

All arterial routes into the city have bus priority lanes with a further 2-3km planned. There is a system of bus priority traffic lights and an extensive network of real time passenger information displays.

The city has a travel card, known as the 'Robin Hood Smart Card' which is similar to London's Oyster system, which allows journeys across different modes of Public Transport. He felt that another key factor in the services success was the sense of emotional connection in the city's own service and the significant political support.

Bus strategy – Nottingham was awarded £13M for BSIP to improve system, they are now collaborating with the County Council to provide a regional network ahead of new combined authority. Some of the money will be spent improving bus priority lanes and extra camera control to reduce car parking in bus areas.

He suggested that strong branding at bus stops with up-to-date accurate passenger information is key, along the lines of the TfL approach.

Bus decarbonisation – zero emission vehicles are becoming the norm. They have a strategy of purchasing UK manufactured buses, but new models coming out of China have advantages.

They are currently spending £15.2M on 78 new buses and infrastructure improvements. For future new developments there will be a need to adopt a transport-oriented focus to ensure targets are achieved.

DMag. thanked Mr. Wellings for his thought-provoking talk and asked how the relationship between the City and County Council authorities was working? He replies that it is productive as many of the city's experiences are transferrable to the rural services and so can be scaled up for the future. He particularly commented on the use of better branded bus stops.

NM asked how well the real time information boards worked? He replied that there had been a development period, but they have seen significant improvements in accuracy.

FW asked if Mr. Wellings thought hydrogen powered buses would have a role in Nottingham? He replied that there had been teething issues with the original pioneer vehicles, but the electric buses were improving rapidly.

CllrD'A commented that the information in the presentation was very useful and felt that York needed better levels of interconnections between transport types and also capped fares.

JR commented that York is very envious of Nottingham's high trip rate.

DMag. asked about the level of public consultation within the city. He advised that the statutory processes had been carried out, but a wider cohort of bus users would improve input.

NM asked if they had user participation on the EP Board, the reply was no as it is not required by DfT Guidelines.

DMag. thanked Mr. Wellings for his contribution.

3. Minutes of last meeting were approved. NM asked about the Tower Street Flood barrier as this will block a major bus route. JR responded that this would only be employed in extremis and at a time when it was important to discourage people from entering the city. KF reported that the so-called improvements to the EYMS service were not in reality and the service from York to Bridlington is still very difficult to use as it is not direct.
4. Local Transport Plan input – JR suggested that we might like to make a submission along the lines of the BSIP suggestions, this could be done over the summer. DMag. advised that the Committee would draw up the list of suggestions and submit to the membership for approval.
5. Piccadilly Bus Stop – DMag advised that a small shelter had been erected directly in front of the demolition area! TH advised that a letter had gone from Dunnington and Stamford Bridge Councils to CYC and the reply had suggested that the situation will be reviewed. Concerns have also been raised about the presence of asbestos in the demolished building. JR advised that this would have been dealt with by the relevant authorities. DMag. again, raised the issue of user data for this area and the difficulty of addressing this issue without it.
NM expressed the condemnation of all that this entirely unacceptable situation had been allowed to develop when the Council have committed to increasing bus patronage. CllrD'A agreed that this must be attended to urgently.
6. Transdev performance – RF reported that the number of cancellations in April had reduced, and these were mainly on the 25/26 routes.
DMag. asked how well the new operator of the 12 route was performing? There was some approval, but the service is only hourly, and the buses are very full as the single deck vehicles are small. The evening service is still run by Transdev, and this is successful although the quality of the buses was concerning. It was agreed that we should encourage the return of the half hour service.
7. AOB – DMag reminded meeting about the Bus user Groups meeting at the Friends meeting House, Friargate on the 17th of June. Also, there is an election husting meeting at the city library on 24th April.
NM reminded delegates that the Poppleton P&R site has re-opened, but was concerned about the lack of publicity, particularly on the roadside information boards.
RP asked if we should be moving to paperless timetables? It was felt that some communities preferred the paper option.
8. Date of next meeting is Tuesday 16th May