**York Bus Forum – Members Monthly Meeting 17.30-19.00 Tuesday 17th June 2025, by Zoom**

Attending: Doreen Magill (Chair), Roger French (Membership Secretary and Treasurer), Lydia Horbury (Bus Users UK), Niall McFerran, Graham Collett, Ian Anderson, Wayne Blackburn, Joel Bradley (First Bus), Anna Courtier (First Bus), Iris Wells, Stuart Fillingham (EY Buses), David Stuart, Duncan Miller, Gordon Campbell-Thomas, Richard Parker, Catherine Odell, Peter Monk-Steel, Chris Thompson (Pullman), George Wood, Terry French, Dee Boyle, Peggy (Cirencester Action on Buses), Eleanor Tew, Andy D’Agorne (Vice Chair), Lionel Lennox, Glen Simpson, Cllr Robert West (Copmanthorpe Parish Council), Flick Williams and Diana Robinson.

The meeting started with a talk by Lydia Horbury, Director for England, Bus Users U.K.

Lydia explained that the role of Bus Users UK as an alternative dispute resolution body for the bus and coach industry. They become involved if a passenger has raised issues with an operator, if they are not satisfied with the outcome, they can take the issue to Bus Users UK who act in a neutral manner but do adjudicate in the final instance.

If it becomes apparent to Bus Users UK, in carrying out their role, that there are particular issues in one region of the country, or with certain operators, then they will reach out to the operators to try and resolve the issues.

On occasion, they will need to escalate issues to other more appropriate bodies e.g. if a bus operator were using vehicles that Bus Users UK deemed dangerous or unsafe they would refer to the Traffic Commissioners who have the power to act in such cases.

Bus Users UK work with a number of Bus User Groups in England and sit on a number of Enhanced Partnership (EP) Boards and Lydia is a member of the Department for Transport (DFT) E.P. Group.

Lydia said that Bus Users UK had been concerned on a number of Accessibility issues – such as Disabled passes not being valid until 9.30 which was contradictory to the Government’s desire to increase the number of disabled persons in work. Bus Users UK had raised with relevant government ministers only to receive a lukewarm reaction and had as a result decided to set up the Accessible Transport Alliance whose initial meeting is planned for July.

They had also been concerned at the difficulties that Disabled people were having, in various areas, in applying for and obtaining Disabled passes.

In response to a query from Doreen Magill, Lydia expanded further on the background and said that a number of Charities, Disabled Groups and other bodies had been looking at specific issues of disability and the aim of the proposed Alliance was to bring the initiatives together with a common aim and form a united campaign on disabled issues.

Peter Monk- Steel, speaking as the YBF Disability representative and being partially sighted and a wheelchair user, queried why there were no announcements at major bus stops , as at railway stations, to supplement the Information Screens. He acknowledged that some stops have buttons to press for information but often these are not functioning. He also raised the possibility of customer service officers being present at major stops, as on the railways.

Lydia responded that it is a difficult area as repeated announcements, such as those on trains, can impact adversely on those with autistism but she offered to put Peter in contact with Robert Johnson the DfT Head of Disability to discuss further.

From the bus drivers’ perspective, Wayne Blackburn commented that all drivers have annual continuing professional development training including on wheelchair access to and from the vehicle. He pointed out that in York and North Yorkshire disability passes can be used from 9.00 a.m. rather than 9.30 a.m. in many parts of the country. Further in York on First Bus if passengers provide to the driver evidence of hospital or medical appointments then they can access the bus with their passes before 9.00 a.m.

In addition, First Bus allow travel cards and passes to be used for users to go to specific sites before 9.00 a.m. e.g. the Brunswick organic nurseries in Bishopthorpe which is a sheltered workplace for people with learning difficulties.

Lydia thanked Wayne for the information which she would feed into discussions.

Richard Parker asked Lydia whether there was a National Standard for bus timetables, information screens and displays. Lydia responded no and noted there were often local disconnects between operators and local authorities on timetables. Lydia emphasised the importance of paper timetables in order not to exclude those who were not digitally aware.

Terry French asked if Bus Users UK is a feeder organisation to Transport Focus. Lydia explained that Transport Focus are a separate organisation and have a specific role, undertaking research and the annual passenger survey. Whilst there are no formal links Bus Users UK and Transport Focus do meet monthly.

Doreen thanked Lydia for an enlightening talk which was much appreciated by members.

1. Welcome and Apologies

Doreen Magill welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies had been received from Mary Cannon, Jason Murgatroyd, John Hart, Tony Hudson, Eden Blyth, Robin Jorimann, Dave Merrett, Gail Shuttleworth, Kel Pizzuti (Transdev), and Adam Emmott (Transdev) .

1. Minutes of the 20th May meeting and matters arising not elsewhere on the Agenda

The Minutes were approved.
Matters arising: from 15th April meeting

1. Minute 8 Wigginton Road congestion- Ian Anderson reported that Claire Douglas, leader of City of York Council (CYC) had responded in comprehensive detail to his email. The Hospital has changed it taxi access points to seek to reduce congestion and offers staff incentives to use buses to travel to work. Given the importance of car parking income to the Hospital trust finances it was understandable that there were conflicts regarding encouraging visitors to the hospital to use buses but Claire Douglas recognised that the congestion on Wigginton Road cannot be ignored whilst acknowledging that there were no quick fixes.

CYC are also looking at options to reduce congestion at Hazel Court recycling centre though again no quick fixes are available.

Ian was thanked for taking the matter up with CYC.

1. Minute 8 Draft template letter for Town and Parish Councils

Andy D’Agorne had not yet drafted the letter as the options, and timescales for the consultation, had not yet been issued.

Matters arising from 20th May meeting- there were no issues raised.

1. Enhanced Partnership Meeting- 27 May 2025

Doreen reported that the meeting had not been a formal meeting but mainly an informal discussion on accessibility issues, albeit without resolving the issue of the number of wheelchair spaces on buses.

CYC are still considering reducing the number of formal meetings and Doreen felt that as the meetings sadly seemed to achieve little it would save wasted time.

1. Public Meeting Leeman Road 7th May

Andy reported buses would divert to the spine road to allow the construction of Central Square. Joel Bradley said that test drives on the diversionary route would occur on 18th June with likely implementation within a week to allow works to start.

1. Accessibility Issues

a) Proposed Accessible Transport Alliance – had been discussed previously

Peter Monk –Steel had also raised the issue of information buttons at stops not being operational, both at his local stop in New Earswick and in the City Centre and not being able to get a disabled taxi if the wheelchair space on the bus was occupied. York’s lack of disabled taxis was acknowledged as a long standing issue.

Peter asked when diversions were in place if on board announcements could be made. Joel noted that First Bus does not have in cab technology to allow this nor the technology to allow diversions to be shown on the bus information screens.

Stuart Fillingham reported that East Yorkshire buses have a button in the cab which allows diversions to be announced and also updated on the bus information screens.

1. City of York Council issues
2. City Centre Bus Corridor Consultation Process- no update but it was noted that Tom Horner was to attend the July Bus Forum meeting to update on this issue.
3. Dial a Ride Progress report- no update available but would go on the July agenda
4. Bus stop information and information screens list of new locations- Andy noted that there were still no information screens at the railway station bus stops, believed to be due to power supply issues, and Roger French undertook to contact CYC for an updated spreadsheet to discuss at the July meeting.
5. Service 412 – service extension and access for Knapton residents- no update.
6. Roadwork’s issues
7. Malton Road between Monks Cross and Hopgrove- on-going as of last week.
8. At St. Leonard’s Place, Information to passengers on buses and at stops- works now completed
9. Railway station- 24th May to 27th May- works completed on time.

Niall McFerran asked whether any retrospective analysis of lessons learnt and updated contingency plans took place so that disruption to passengers was minimised and information to passengers both in advance of works, where possible, and during works, was maximised. Niall asked in the context of the work planned for Lendal Bridge. Joel said that First receive good notice from CYC Transport officers who liaise with First to agree diversionary routes.

Andy noted that the Lendal works were not due to take place until early 2026 though the exact dates were not yet known.

1. Clifton Green stop for the Nos 2 and 30 services- no update available.
2. Clifford Street bus stops- services 6 and 11 notification to passengers- Joel said that the onboard bus information screens would be updated in July and there would be door drop notifications to premises on the route to publicise.
3. First Bus
4. No 1 A service to improve early morning reliability- Joel reported that the service is being retimed from September to alleviate the issues of reliability, primarily between 7.30am. and 9.30a.m.
5. Nos 10 and 11 improvements in service reliability- Joel confirmed that the no 11 service will become an hourly service from July, with a clock face timetable between 9.0 a.m. and 4 p.m. First plan leaflet drops on the route to publicise the changes.
6. Extended layovers at Railway station University buses-potential to layover at the University? Joel confirmed plans to layover at Merchantgate from September. He confirmed that the University contract bars layovers at the University site.

A number of members pointed out that sites on Piccadilly such as Ryedale Building may be better stops and Stuart Fillingham expressed concern as the X45, X46 and X47 services were to be re-routed via Walmgate and Piccadilly.

Joel undertook to report back these views to the First Bus network team.

Peter Monk- Steel offered the opinion that the number of University buses to the City Centre could be reduced and redeployed to provide a service to from other areas of the City to the University to provide a service to students in those areas.

Joel would discuss this with the University.

1. Paper timetables – First Commercial team are discussing with CYC.

Re the onboard bus information screens a number of members reported issues.

Graham Collett cited an issue on 13th June where the 10.10 a.m. Askham Bar Park and Ride service was showing 0.73 as the time on the screen- Wayne Blackburn said that circumstance would be driver error.

Flick Williams had travelled on the Askham Bar Park and Ride on 16th June and the screen was blank and no announcements.

Joel acknowledged that the issues were still not resolved and said he was going to undertake a full audit on all routes within the next week to log all the issues so he had evidence to present to the contractors to First Bus for this technology.

1. Transdev

Doreen reported that Adam Emmott has offered a meeting with YBF Committee members to discuss issues and a suitable date would be sought.

1. Extended layovers- Stonebow and Rail station causing congestion- no progress
2. Extended layovers –Service 30 at Exhibition Square- no progress to report

Richard Parker noted that the X30 timetable allowed 8 minutes to travel from Station Avenue to Exhibition Square for northbound journeys.

1. Overcrowding single decker Coastliner service- no progress to report.

Doreen commented that the high number of cancellations would be a factor. Members also noted that single deckers had occasionally been used on the Leeds to Scarborough, probably due to the Transdev York’s ageing fleet.

1. East Yorkshire
2. Changes to improve service reliability- re-routing of services to avoid James Street- as per 7c) above the X45, X46 and X47 are to be re-routed from 20th July.

Stuart reported that East Yorkshire would put leaflets on buses advertising the changes and also have staff on the ground as the changes came into effect.

Four new brand buses are to be deployed on the X45 route.

1. Service X45 to be shown on bus stops in York- now believed to be resolved.
2. Service to Full Sutton- Stuart reported that an exploratory meeting is to be held by Full Sutton Prison, East Yorkshire buses and East Riding Council on 19th June.
3. My service 16
4. Service My16 Revised service –timetable change or potential re-routing? Chris Thompson said that the issues of achieving timetable were particularly acute on Friday and Saturday daytimes. Meetings had been held with CYC with the likely option being a 70 minute frequency as there was no funding for a second vehicle.

Gordon Campbell- Thomas undertook to consult with local bus users on the route once CYC decided on their preferred option.

1. Moorsbus- marketing in York

Doreen reported on the distribution of maps with timetables provided by Moorsbus.

Diana Robinson commented that a probable reason for the low take up of the early buses from York was the 8.30 a.m. start times from the Railway station. Many potential users, both residents and visitors, would not be able to access the station by that time on local services and David Stuart concurred. In the past, timetables had been more compatible with local services and alternative joining points could be accessed using local buses but again timetable changes made this unfeasible.

1. Any other business

There was no other business.

1. Date of next meeting- 15th July 2025 5.30 p.m. by Zoom