

**North East Scotland  
Local Authorities Bus Operators Forum**

**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2010**

**Nestrans Board Room,  
27-29 King Street, Aberdeen**

**Minute of Steering Group Meeting**

**In attendance:** Derick Murray (Chair), Kirsty Morrison, Richard Mckenzie, Joanna Murray, George Devine, Bob Dorr.

**1. Welcome and Apologies**

Apologies were received from Iain Gabriel and Maggie Bochel.

**2. Minute of Meeting of 8<sup>th</sup> December 2009**

The minute of the meeting was agreed as accurate.

**3. Matters Arising**

Item 6, Review of QP standards & targets – DM queried whether we now have all the baseline information required. KM confirmed that the missing pieces of information related to punctuality and reliability figures from Stagecoach and that although some data had been provided, it was not quite what was needed. KM will get back to Stagecoach to confirm the data requirements.

***Action: KM***

RM stated Aberdeenshire Council's disappointment that the issue of integrated ticketing was not being progressed in the manner that had been agreed i.e. corporately through LABOF. DM requested that JM speak to Andrew Stokes and Hugh Murdoch about this and explain the approach that LABOF would like to see taken. JM also agreed to re-circulate the committee report that was recently approved.

BD stated that he would prefer integrated ticketing to be something that is operator led.

KM to arrange a meeting on integrated ticketing as a matter of urgency.

***Action: JM and KM***

DM highlighted to the group that Maggie Bochel has now been appointed the Head of Planning and that Hugh Murdoch has been appointed the Head of Asset Management and Operations at the City Council.

#### **4. LABOF Executive Progress**

The Steering Group noted the progress of the LABOF Executive group as outlined in the report.

In relation to the reference to the bus passenger satisfaction surveys being carried out, BD queried if there was duplication in data collection with the City Voice surveys. BD had previously expressed his concerns with this data, via email when the results were initially circulated and re-iterated this by saying that the results paint a different picture to First's own customer satisfaction research. It was highlighted however that First's survey questions bus users only whereas the City Voice questions both users and non-users. BD emphasised that care should be taken on the way results are reported to ensure that they are not mis-represented. JM confirmed that comments on the reporting of the results had been taken on board.

Appendix A item 6.1 – Launch of the BPIP – The Steering Group agreed to invite George Mair from CPT to the launch.

Appendix A item 7.4 Stagecoach “reliability has improved quite a bit” on the Buchan corridor – GD clarified that it is the capacity that has improved rather than the reliability specifically. RM stated concern that capacity issues have however re-emerged in places on the Buchan corridor.

Stagecoach park and ride services to Kingswells – GD reported that take up has been relatively slow however they have not to date done a significant amount of publicity on the change. It was identified that there may be opportunities to link with ARI and that the partners should be doing something about making these services more widely known about at the hospital.

BD stated he is happy to participate in a joint marketing campaign in relation to Kingswells and would also be happy to discuss the routing of the First Park and Ride service. It was highlighted that tentative discussions are already underway with ARI and the University about development of a public transport hub at Foresterhill and GD highlighted that it would be beneficial to involve the operators in these discussions at an early stage.

Nestrans to progress work to promote the park and ride services to Foresterhill staff and explore options for inserting a combined timetable into payslips of NHS staff. JM highlighted that she would like to also see publicity to target the wider public alongside this.

***Action: the Steering Group instructs the Executive group to progress this.***

## **5. Refreshed Quality Partnership and review of QP standards & targets**

The Steering Group noted the launch date for the refreshed Quality Partnership and approved the revised Quality Partnership document with the addition that it should refer to the wider table detailing the standards and targets.

The Steering Group approved the revised standards and targets and noted the work being done on the region wide bus passenger satisfaction survey.

## **6. Bus Action Plan**

The Steering Group noted the progress being made on the Bus Action Plan and had general discussion around the following issues:

Real Time Information – BD highlighted concerns that there are confusing messages emerging on the future of the Real Time Information system in the city and that he fundamentally disagrees that the signs should be switched off.

***Action: Nestrans to speak to Hugh Murdoch to clarify the situation.***

An update was provided on the progress of the planned park and ride site on the A96 and designs were available to view at the meeting. Nestrans are suggesting to the Scottish Government that the Park and Ride on the A96 should be constructed as part of the AWPR contract. The key issue now is to get the planning permission and land purchases complete in order to meet AWPR timescales. It will also be requested that the A96 park and ride site be constructed in the first 6 months of the contract.

## **7. Bus Punctuality and Improvement Partnership**

KM summarised progress on the BPIP launch and the work being carried out by the Executive task group to develop an action plan for the Buchan / King Street corridor.

GD highlighted that Stagecoach are experiencing significant problems turning into the bus station from Market Street. This has also been raised at the LABOF Executive Group and it is being examined as part of the BPIP work.

The Steering Group noted the date for the launch of the BPIP alongside the refreshed Quality Partnership document and noted the progress being made in developing an action plan for the Buchan / King Street corridor.

## **8. Integrated ticketing**

The Steering Group noted the progress being made on Integrated Ticketing and that a LABOF task group meeting would be set up as a matter of priority.

## **9. Report on pre-Christmas public transport task group**

The Steering Group noted the findings from the report.

In relation to the Park and Ride patronage figures shown, BD commented that general passenger numbers for First are down year on year during the Christmas period. Stagecoach reported that they did see an increase in passengers in December but put this down to the opening of Union Square.

The Steering Group requested that the Executive follow up on the patronage figures provided and further examine the reasons behind them.

**Action: Executive Group**

## **10. AOCB**

- a) Steering Group minutes are reported to the Nestrans Board, should the papers be published on the Nestrans website? – It was agreed that the two operators would consider this issue and come back at a later date. It was suggested that to overcome issues of confidentiality, some items could be marked confidential and therefore not posted on the website.
- b) Competition Commission investigation – both operators confirmed that they are working on collating the relevant information requested for this study and that it is proving to be a time / resource intensive task.
- c) BD made the group aware that First Aberdeen has been called to a public inquiry by the Traffic Commissioner which is due to take place on 6<sup>th</sup> April at 10:45 in the Town House. First have been informed that the public inquiry will deal with three points:
  - Following industrial dispute that First did not return to timetable urgently enough;
  - A failure to notify of a change of directorship;
  - That, from information published on their website, that punctuality performance appears to have deteriorated in the last quarter of 2009.

## **11. Date of next meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> June at 10:00am in the Nestrans Board Room.