

TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

07 NOVEMBER 2016

REPORT OF SOUTH YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT EXECUTIVE

BARNSELY BUS SERVICE NETWORK REVIEW (DEVOLUTION DEAL – SYPTE WORK PACKAGE 12)

Summary

Decision required: Ratification of SYPTE's support of proposed bus service changes in the Barnsley area.

Why: Network reviewed to deliver the aims of the Sheffield City Region's Agreement on Devolution (2014). See **Appendix C** for details of proposed changes

When: Implementation January 2017

Impacts:

Operation:

- More stable network encourages modal shift to support patronage growth
- More stable network to help support economic growth
- Co-ordinated services, for better delivery of limited resource
- Integrated services, providing access to other services
- Reinvestment to improve access or reduce fares

Financial

- A more financially sustainable network to both Operators and the taxpayer

Note

Some passengers will:

- Need to interchange to reach a destination currently undertaken on one bus, and if paying a fare may need to pay for more than one journey or a multi-operator ticket.

1. Issue

- 1.1 To seek the Transport Committee's endorsement of SYPTTE's support of proposed changes to bus services in the Barnsley area following a review of the bus network.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Transport Committee endorses SYPTTE's support of proposed bus service changes in the Barnsley area as described in **Appendix C**, having had regard to:

- the consultation process (Section 3.3 and **Appendix A** *please note the appendices to Appendix A (the Topline Summary report) are available on request*)
- compliance with competition law (**Section 4.4**)
- the Equality Act duty (**Section 4.5**)
- the Equality Impact Assessment (**Appendix D**)
- consultation responses (**Appendix A** and **Appendix B**)

3. Background Information

3.1 BACKGROUND

In March 2015 the Sheffield City Region's Devolution Transport Working Group instructed SYPTTE to undertake a program of network reviews to deliver the bus element of Sheffield City Region's Agreement on Devolution (2014).

Under this agreement, the Sheffield City Region (SCR) and central Government agreed to work together to improve local bus services sharing an ambition to deliver a more sustainable, integrated and affordable network. The ambition was to deliver an optimised network which minimised bus congestion and pollution, integrated with other public transport modes, and designed around people's travel patterns. Sheffield City Region's preferred approach was to deliver this through a partnership model.

Contextually this was established in an environment where there was, and continues to be, a real and growing risk that financial, operational and performance pressures on Operators could lead to uncontrolled fare rises, and the withdrawal, reduction or changes to the commercial service network leading to increased pressure on SYPTTE revenue budgets. Commercial services generally represent approximately 90% of all local bus services; the provision of a more sustainable network resulting from a network review would help to alleviate these pressures and is a key driver for the objectives detailed below:

A process for network review and objectives were discussed and agreed with the SCR, the Department for Transport (DfT), Competition and Markets Authority (CMA), Traffic Commissioner (TC) and senior representatives from the main operators and their legal teams.

Objective - to deliver a bus network that:

- is co-ordinated, for better delivery of limited resource;
- is efficient, being more sustainable to both Operators and the taxpayer;
- minimises bus congestion and pollution by avoiding excess duplication;
- has improved performance (reliability & punctuality);
- is integrated, providing access to other services;
- provides a more stable network that will help support economic growth and help reduce worklessness;
- encourages modal shift to support patronage growth; and
- allows reinvestment to improve access or reduce fares.

The following is a brief summary of the network review process:

- 1) Network design - blank page approach (single operator network)
- 2) Stakeholder/public consultation
- 3) Network adjustment following consultation response
- 4) Operators independently and confidentially submit what they would operate commercially
- 5) Services not covered commercially considered for tendering
- 6) Non-commercial routes re-assessed against available funding
- 7) Duplication – services co-ordinated at appropriate frequency under Qualifying Agreements

SYLTE established a programme for delivery as follows:

- Sheffield Bus Network Review
(Work Package 10) – completed November 2015
- Doncaster Bus Network Review
(Work Package 11) – completed May 2016
- Barnsley Bus Network Review
(Work Package 12) – completion due January 2017
- Rotherham Bus Network Review
(Work Package 13) – completion due September 2017

3.2 BARNSELY BUS NETWORK REVIEW (WORK PACKAGE 12)

This report pertains to the delivery of the Barnsley element of the network review program, and seeks approval from the Transport Committee for SYLTE to support the proposed changes to bus services in the Barnsley area following a review of the bus network.

The review of bus services was undertaken by the following organisations which deliver over 90% of the registered local bus service mileage operated in the Barnsley area:

- BMBC
- Globe Coaches
- Stagecoach Yorkshire
- SYPTE
- TM Travel
- Waterson's

Each party (listed above) is required to seek its own approval in line with its own governance arrangements. It should be noted that operators of commercial services are not bound by any decision arising from this report; however, operators have maintained a Partnership approach with SYPTE and BMBC to date.

The network is a mixture of commercial and tendered services.

3.3 CONSULTATION

The Consultation

The network consultation was undertaken by SYPTE from 13 June - 31 July 2016.

The consultation focused on three primary areas in order to understand individual travel needs and how the proposals would impact on their bus journey – About You, Your Travel, Your Ticket.

People could take part in the consultation online at **travelsouthyorkshire.com/bbp**, by completing a paper feedback form available from Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham, Meadowhall and Sheffield Interchanges or by attending any of the consultation drop-in sessions held across Barnsley.

Consultation Methodology

The following section lists activities undertaken as part of the consultation process.

Online

The consultation was hosted on a dedicated webpage on the Travel South Yorkshire (TSY) website (travelsouthyorkshire.com/bbp). A 'coming soon' news story and banner on the TSY website raised awareness of the consultation before it started between 1 June and 12 June. A 'take part now' news story and banner publicised the consultation when it was live, 13 June – 31 July.

A direct link to the consultation webpage was supplied on all forms of communication. The consultation was also promoted via a banner on operator websites.

Paper copies of the consultation questionnaire and Barnsley Network Map and Guide were available from the Customer Service Desks at Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham, Meadowhall and Sheffield Interchanges and at the consultation drop-in events. 10,000 copies of the Network Maps were produced and distributed, including consultation packs, which were sent to Parish Councils who took up the offer of more materials. People could contact Traveline or e-mail the dedicated consultation e-mail address barnsleybuspartnership@sypte.co.uk if they had any questions or if they required information in an alternative format.

Drop-in Events

Thirteen drop-in consultation events staffed by BBP representatives were held at Barnsley Interchange and community venues across Barnsley between 15 June and 27 July. The drop-in events provided people with the opportunity to ask questions about the consultation, receive assistance in completing the consultation questionnaire, or take away information in paper format.

Approximately 529 people attended the drop-ins in total with the highest number of people attending the Penistone sessions with over 250 (47%) of people dropping in.

| Venue | Date | Time |
|-----------------------------------|---------|------------|
| Barnsley Interchange, S70 1SE | 15 June | 8 - 11am |
| Barnsley Central Library, S70 1WA | 17 June | 2 - 5pm |
| Royston Library, S71 4EP | 22 June | 9am - 12pm |
| Grimethorpe Library, S72 7BB | 24 June | 9am - 12pm |
| Barnsley Interchange, S70 1SE | 27 June | 3 - 6pm |
| Hoyland Library, S74 9AF | 29 June | 2 - 5pm |
| Wombwell Library, S73 0BA | 5 July | 2 - 5pm |
| Penistone Library, S36 6BR | 7 July | 3 - 6pm |
| Barnsley Interchange, S70 1SE | 11 July | 3 - 6pm |
| Goldthorpe Library | 14 July | 3 - 6pm |
| Barnsley Interchange, S70 1SE | 19 July | 3 - 6pm |
| Penistone Library, S36 6BR | 21 July | 9am - 12pm |
| The Darton Centre, S75 5NB | 27 July | 2 - 5pm |

In addition to the above 2 Further drop-in events were arranged at Penistone Library to present proposals for the Wortley, Green Moor, Penistone, Thurgoland, Thurlstone, Ingbirchworth and Oxspring areas following discussions with Penistone ward and local Parish Councils in July and August.

| Venue | Date | Time |
|----------------------------|--------------|------------|
| Penistone Library, S36 6BR | 15 September | 9am - 12pm |
| Penistone Library, S36 6BR | 22 September | 9am - 12pm |

Media

Four news releases were issued regarding the consultation on 8 June, 4 July, 28 July and 22 August. Extensive print coverage in local newspapers, including Barnsley Chronicle Penistone edition and Town - Main edition which had an article reach of 33,888 people and an Advertising Value Equivalency (AVE) of £287.92 and the Sheffield Star which had an article reach of 20,305 people and an Advertising Value Equivalency (AVE) of £287.92.

Social Media

TSY Twitter and Facebook accounts were used throughout the consultation to promote participation. 68 Tweets signposting to the consultation from the @TravelSYorks Twitter account were seen by 79,723 people (referred to as Tweet 'impressions'), 552 people engaged with the Tweets with 43 retweet, including Barnsley Council (9998 followers), allowing the Tweets to be viewed by a further 33,976 people. 86 clicked through to the consultation webpage (travelsouthyorkshire.com/bbp).

Seventeen TSY Facebook posts promoting the consultation reached 32,527 people and achieved 224 clicks. 30 clicked through to the consultation webpage (travelsouthyorkshire.com/bbp).

E-marketing

A dedicated TSY e-mail newsletter regarding the consultation was delivered to 2963 contacts via SYPTE's customer relationship management (CRM) system on 17 June and had an open rate of 1751 (27%) and a click through rate of 214 (5.26%), achieving above average e-mail marketing standards.

A reminder e-mail was also sent to 3161 contacts via the CRM system on 21 July and had an open rate of 1717 (28.38%) and a click through rate of 125 (3.23%).

Posters

Posters were displayed in Barnsley Interchange, on board Stagecoach, and TM Travel, services operating in Barnsley and at each drop-in venue. Posters were designed to encourage people to take part in the consultation via the Travel South Yorkshire website, by completing a paper questionnaire or by attending a drop-in event and denoted details of each drop in event.

Passenger Information Displays

Real Time Information displays at bus stops/shelters across Barnsley displayed a message encouraging people to take part in the consultation.

Additionally the consultation was promoted on the screens at Barnsley Interchange throughout the consultation.

Disability Groups

33 e-mails or letters were sent out to a variety of disability groups across Barnsley, including Barnsley Blind and Partially Sighted Association and Barnsley MS Society. The letter asked the groups to share the consultation with their members, encouraged them to take part and advised them to contact barnsleybuspartnership@sypte.co.uk if they wished to receive any paper copies of the feedback form to share with their members.

Representatives of the Barnsley Bus Partnership also attended the 'My Barnsley Too' Disability Forum Annual General Meet (AGM) on 29 June to present the proposals and assist members of the group in completing the questionnaires and answering any queries.

Community Groups

60 e-mails and letters were sent to various community groups, and touch points across Barnsley, including, Age UK Barnsley, Barnsley Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Community Forum, Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council (BMBC) South Area Partnership Team and Barnsley Federation of Tenants and Residents Association (TARA). Contacts within the local authority were also asked to promote the consultation through their community links. A number of these groups included people with protected characteristics such as Age.

Posters and consultation packs were also posted out to libraries in Barnsley asking them to help us publicise the consultation by displaying the information included in the consultation packs.

A total of 50 additional maps and questionnaires were also issued on request to Barnsley LGBT Forum and Wortley Post Office for distribution in the community.

Transport User Groups

7 e-mails and letters were sent to the Barnsley Transport User Group, which was set up at the start of the consultation. The members of this group represent various community groups and disabled, young and older people. The group were asked to respond to the consultation and to help promote it within the wider community.

MPs, Councillors and Parish Councillors

98 e-mails or letters were sent to all Barnsley MPs, Councillors and Parish Councillors asking them to take part and to encourage their constituents or Parish members to give their views.

A members briefing session was also held at the Town Hall on Wednesday 25 May and councillors were invited to drop in at any time during the session to ask questions and discuss the proposed changes with the South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYLTE) and bus operator representatives in attendance.

A total of 1,620 additional questionnaires and maps were issued on request to Penistone West Councillors and Thurgoland, Thurnscoe, Worsborough, Stainborough and Dunford Parish councils for distribution in their communities.

Representatives of the Barnsley Bus Partnership also attended 2 meetings with Penistone ward councillors and local Parish councillors, at Thurgoland Village Hall on 18 July and 11 August to discuss proposals for tendered bus services in Wortley, Green Moor, Penistone, Thurgoland, Thurlstone, Ingbirchworth and Oxspring.

The Respondents

A total of 1,162 respondents took part in the Barnsley Bus Partnership network consultation. This was 1,098 responses from individuals/households/families and 39 responses from groups/organisations. 25 respondents did not state.

609 of the overall submissions were via the online survey and 553 in paper format. Two petitions were also received which has been considered alongside the individual consultation responses.

| Petitions | |
|---|-------------------|
| Reason | Signatures |
| Save service 300 | 290 |
| Request Barnsley council intervene to ensure funding is available for Penistone area bus services | 242 |

The consultation was a crucial part of the network review process allowing informed decisions to be made in developing the final proposed network. **Appendix B** summaries the respondents feedback against the original proposals and shows how, if possible, the proposals were changed accordingly.

3.4 ISSUES

The collapse of Tates Travel in February 2016 which had operated primarily in the Barnsley area necessitated the emergency re-tender of their contracts and procurement of some services which had previously been operated commercially. Costs for tendered services serving Penistone increased to £1.038m per annum or 20.34% of the £5.104m forecasted spend on social inclusion services for South Yorkshire in 2016/17.

As part of the review process, Operators declined to deliver these services commercially; consequently SYPTE was obliged to rationalise the network in this area in consideration of tendered service criteria, the budget available, value for money and frequency of service appropriate to level of use. This has enabled SYPTE to maintain a broader range of service for Penistone that retains some services that would not otherwise have been provided.

Initial proposals invigorated consultation reaction as anticipated, accounting for over one third of consultation responses, allowing the PTE to be better informed about impacts and need when developing proposals. (See **Appendix C** for details of final proposals).

Several drop-in sessions were scheduled for the Penistone area post consultation following further engagement with Councillors to help further develop plans. This included two meetings with Members and Parish Councils, and two additional public drop-in sessions.

In the circumstances stakeholders were broadly accepting of the recommendations compared to original proposals.

3.5 SUMMARY OF PROPOSED CHANGES

The proposed network changes detailed in **Appendix C** have been developed in consideration of:

- the consultation process (**Section 3.3** and **Appendix A**)
- compliance with competition law (**Section 4.4**)
- the Equality Act duty (**Section 4.5**)
- the Equality Impact Assessment (**Appendix D**)
- consultation responses (**Appendix A** and **Appendix B**)

Appendix A provides an analysis of responses to consultation on original proposals

Appendix B matches comments against original proposals, and describes resulting changes to plans

Appendix C details the **final proposed changes**, the reasons why, and the resulting impacts

Appendix D is an Equality Impact assessment describing potential impacts resulting from implementation of the final proposed network

The following is a summary of impacts:

- environmental
 - reducing the number of buses delivering the network by about 4%

- co-ordinated services, for better delivery of limited resource
 - Revised contracted services in the Penistone East and West Wards with services coordinated between Penistone and Thurgoland to maximise the service availability with limited funding
 - Services 20/21/22 will provide a co-ordinated 15 minute service.
 - Introduction of daytime service 67a, partially replacing tendered journeys on the 7/7a and 8/8a, and coordinated with service 67 to provide half hourly service along common sections.
 - Maintaining coordination of services along key corridors including Pontefract Road, Wombwell, Royston and Barnsley Hospital

- efficient sustainable services for both Operators and the taxpayer
 - Rationalisation of tendered services in the Penistone East and West wards in consideration of tendered service criteria, the budget available, value for money, and provision of service appropriate to level of use.
 - Commercial routes introduced partially replacing current tendered services with the use of reduced levels of funding to pay for additional mileage rather than stand-alone services.
 - Reallocation of tendered service resource elsewhere on the network by introducing interchange at key locations onto high frequency routes e.g. Service 29 at Chapeltown connecting with Service 1/1a every 6 minutes and Service 203 at Wombwell connecting with a 7/8 minute coordinated corridor.
 - Some Saturday frequencies will be reduced due to changes in demand, i.e. services 1, 11 and 66 reduce from 10 minutes to 12 minutes and services 93/93a/95 reduce from a combined 10 minute to a combined 15 minute frequency.

- integrated services, providing access to other services
 - Coordination of timetables to allow easy interchange between different services at key interchange points such as Barnsley centre, Hoyland and Wombwell.

- stable network that will help support economic growth
 - The agreed network will be less prone to further shrinkage, being more efficient and economically viable.

- encourages modal shift to support patronage growth
 - Stable network with continually improving performance.
 - Agreement to introduce a reduced cost ticket for any bus operator.

- reinvestment to improve access or reduce fares
 - The Network proposals have enabled Operators to offer an attractively priced Barnsley Connect ticket. It should be noted that this is subject to acceptance of the revised Network and final approval at the Travelmaster Board.

| | Proposed multi-operator BConnect Bus only (Barnsley) | Current multi-operator option Gold Travelmaster Bus & Train (Barnsley) |
|---------------|--|--|
| Day | £4.50 | £7.70 |
| 7 Day | £15.50 | £27.60 |
| 28 Day | £54.00 | £96.50 |

Negative impacts:

It is acknowledged that there will be a negative impact for some bus users with Protected Characteristics (See **Section 4.5 and Appendices C & D** for more details) due to changes in SYPTTE tendered services.

Some passengers losing direct links to some destinations would be required to interchange. However, waiting times are generally reasonably short, and in most cases shelters and seating are available to provide comfort when waiting. 41.2% of all respondents were aged 65 or over, and 23.4% of all respondents considered themselves to have mobility issues.

For those that are required to pay fares, multi journey ticket options will reduce the impact but it is understood that there is likely to be a financial disbenefit. Of those who responded to the consultation, 7.6% of bus users were aged 16-24.

3.6 RISK

There is a risk that failure to reach a satisfactory agreement on the proposed changes, may lead to a less stable Network, leading to an increased call on SYPTTE revenue budgets and larger impacts on passengers through withdrawal of commercial services, particularly affecting the more vulnerable groups.

4. Implications

i. Financial

The revised network proposals and particularly the changes to contracted bus services, as detailed in the body of the report, represent a saving of circa £94,265 or 15.69% per annum against the costs of the services previously operated by Tates (23/23a, 24, 72, 92, 203 and 300). Whilst there has been some reduction in provision in some areas, the revised costs represent value

for money and maintain a tendered bus network that is more sustainable going forward.

The package of tenders proposed for January 2017 represents a full years reduction in costs of £849,950 or 63%, against the cost of the current provision including the emergency re-tender of the Tates contracts.

ii. Legal

In making its decision, the Transport Committee should have regard to the arrangements they are party to (or entering into), and whether they comply with competition law.

The Combined Authority Transport Committee meeting on 11 April 2016 approved that SYPTE enter into a Voluntary Partnership Agreement for the Barnsley area, the decision being made in consideration of a Competition Test which was judged to have been satisfied.

The work undertaken as part of the network review continues to satisfy the finding of the Competition Test, and the review process agreed with the SCR, DfT, CMA, TC, and senior representatives from the main operators and their legal councils.

iii. Diversity

Equality Implications

The decision the Transport Committee is being asked to consider is not a decision solely of SYPTE, as the commercial elements of the Network proposals are matters that the Operators control, albeit influenced by SYPTE in negotiations. However, regardless of the degree of control, SYPTE has determined to consider the Equality Implications of the changes proposed in order to ascertain the impacts on persons with Protected Characteristics. An Equality Impact Assessment is attached as **Appendix D** to this report, detailing identified impacts resulting from implementation of the proposed network; this will enable Transport Committee to give due consideration when deciding to approve or endorse the recommendations.

By the nature of the decision to be taken (i.e. to agree changes to the level of bus services being operated), it is likely that the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010 is engaged, and even if not engaged, it would be good practice to ensure equality considerations are fully captured and taken into account. Therefore in making the decisions contained in this report, Transport Committee are reminded of their legal duty under section 149 of the Equality Act (set out in full in the legal implications section (see section 4.2.2 below, which Transport Committee should ensure they read and understand)) to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;

- advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Relevant 'protected characteristics' under the Equality Act include, for example, age, disability, race and sex.

In having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not, Transport Committee should have due regard to the need to:

- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

As the changes relate to the level of bus services being delivered, the protected characteristics relevant to this report are specifically disability, sex and age, being the groups most reliant on public transport and as such impacted by any changes.

As decision makers, Transport Committee must know and understand the legal duties in relation to the public sector equality duty and consciously apply the law to the facts when considering and reaching decisions where equality issues arise. In particular Transport Committee:

- must be aware of their responsibilities under the duty (**knowledge**)
- must ensure adequate evidence has been considered to understand the effects of the decision to be made (**sufficient information**)
- must consciously and actively consider the relevant matters – in particular by rigorously considering the identified adverse impacts and the way in which they can be mitigated – in such a way that they influence decision-making (**real consideration**)
- must consider the matters before and at the time a decision is taken and not simply after the event, and must keep matters under review (**timely and under review**)
- must not delegate to third parties who are carrying out functions on the authority's behalf (**no delegation**)

- should ensure that there is a **record/audit trail** of how due regard has been shown.

Transport Committee should consciously consider with an open mind the impacts and benefits on the persons with the protected characteristic as set out in this report, the impact of the decision on the equality objectives set out above and the desirability of promoting them. It is for Transport Committee to determine the weight to be given to the various factors that inform the decision, including the equality impacts and the legal duty to have due regard under section 149 and such countervailing factors as are relevant to the decision, including the financial constraints. Transport Committee are reminded that section 149 does not compel them to any particular policy decision, but that its intention is to influence the process by which the decision is reached.

Appendix A - Consultation Topline Summary Report (copies of appendices available on request)

Appendix B - Recommended network amendments following consultation feedback

Appendix C - Proposed network changes by ward

Appendix D - Equality Impact Assessments

REPORT AUTHOR: Chris Roberts
POST: Principal Public Transport Manager

Background papers used in the preparation of this report are available for inspection at:

SYLTE
11 Broad Street West
Sheffield
S1 2BQ

Other sources and references: