

## MCA - ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP BOARD

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON:

TUESDAY, 9 MAY 2023 AT 2.00 PM

SOUTH YORKSHIRE MCA, 11 BROAD STREET WEST,  
SHEFFIELD, S1 2BQ



### PRESENT:

Mayor Oliver Coppard (Chair)	South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority
Councillor Chris Read	Rotherham MBC
Dawn Badminton-Capps	Public Bus Users
Ross Hitchcock	TM Travel (and other small operators)
Ian Humphreys	First Yorkshire
Matt Kitchin	Stagecoach Yorkshire
Andrew McGuinness	CPT
Mike Watson	First South Yorkshire
Pat Beijer	SYMCA Executive Team
John Dowie	SYMCA Executive Team

### IN ATTENDANCE:

Nick Brown	Bus Partnerships Project Director	SYMCA Executive Team
Tim Taylor	Director of Public Transport Operations	SYMCA Executive Team
Ellen Hinsley	Minute Taker	SYMCA Executive Team

### APOLOGIES:

None.

#### 51 **Chair's Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, in particular Ross Hitchcock from TM Travel who had been invited to attend future meetings and Mike Watson who would be acting as the First Representative going forward.

#### 52 **Minutes & actions of the previous meeting**

The Bus Partnerships Project Director provided an update on the progress of a number of actions.

It was planned to update the Enhanced Partnership (EP) Forum of any upcoming service changes at either the June or August meeting of the Forum (Minute No. 47a).

A Working Group comprising of senior operator and MCA representatives had been convened to focus on progressing agreed actions. The Group had met twice since the previous EP Board meeting (Minute No. 44(iii)).

The Stagecoach Representative advised that the Mayor would shortly receive a letter setting out the plan for the delivery of 'tap and cap' within Stagecoach (Minute No.44(ii)).

The Director of Public Transport Operations commented that there were indications that the Department for Transport (DfT) was considering a further extension of Bus Recovery Grant (BRG) funding. This could potentially supplement the core 3-year tendered services budget with additional shorter term contracts.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 21 March be approved.

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### **Enhanced Partnership Programme Delivery Update**

The Board was informed of progress against agreed targets and deliverables and targets. Patronage was continuing to grow slowly, and reliability had almost reached the target of 99.5%. Concerningly, punctuality remained low.

6 key areas had been identified where progress was behind schedule:

- Bus priority
- New service trials
- Demand response transport (DRT) trial
- Identification of new park and ride sites and transport hubs
- Ticket simplification
- Introduction of multi-operator tap and cap electronic payment systems.

In terms of bus priority, Members considered that, where possible, the inclusion of benefits for non-bus users should also be explored to engender local support.

**ACTION: Operators to share case studies of successful bus priority programmes from other areas with the MCA and local authorities, including sharing comparative data to demonstrate positive impact on services.**

The Executive Director of Infrastructure & Place stated that trialling new services at operators' financial risk could start to change the negative public perception of bus operators in South Yorkshire. Operators advised that they were now exploring possible network enhancements following 12 months focussed on recovery and ensuring that they had a good foundation on which to build.

**ACTION: The Bus Partnerships Project Director to investigate areas where park and ride sites have been successful.**

**ACTION: Operators to share information on park and ride sites in other areas with the MCA.**

Discussions around ticket simplification were ongoing. Operators were each independently working on modelling a potential simple fare structure for when the national fare cap came to an end. The structure and price points of period

products were being assessed. This work would also affect the TravelMaster multi-operator tickets.

The Chair observed that the complex ticketing structure in the region was a barrier to people using public transport. He emphasised that ticket simplification should be a priority.

**RESOLVED** that Members:

1. Note the updates on the delivery of specific commitments in the EP programme and performance against agreed network targets.
2. In relation to the 6 key areas of delayed delivery highlighted, agree any additional actions required over and above those set out in the paper.

#### 54 **Enhanced Partnership Forum Update / Approval of Customer Charter**

The Bus Partnership Project Director presented the South Yorkshire Bus Promise for the Board's consideration.

The South Yorkshire Bus Promise expressed the standards that users should expect and the best endeavours of partners to deliver these. The Promise was set out in four stages:

- Before your journey
- Waiting for your bus
- On the bus
- After your journey.

It was also proposed to develop an interactive tool on the Travel South Yorkshire website to communicate the content in an engaging, customer-focused way. A coordinated approach to training customer facing staff would also reduce any confusion and ensure a consistent message to the public.

It was confirmed that, following discussions at previous meetings, First would agree to the wheelchair promise.

**RESOLVED** that Members:

1. Approve the draft South Yorkshire Bus Promise attached as Appendix 1.
2. Agree to publish the Bus Promise within around 6 weeks, to coincide with the launch of a proposed interactive tool on the Travel South Yorkshire website that communicates the content in an engaging, customer-focused way.

#### 55 **Items of Confidentiality**

None.

#### 56 **Any Other Business**

The Executive Director of Infrastructure & Place advised the Board that following lobbying of Government, DfT had confirmed it may be able to consider funding a locally agreed proposition for bus service improvements, albeit landing this in practice is likely to be challenging.

I, the undersigned, confirm that this is a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Signed .....

Name .....

Position .....

Date .....