

MCA - ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP BOARD

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON:

TUESDAY, 29 NOVEMBER 2022 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 (virtual)	Rotherham MBC
Ian Humphreys	First Yorkshire
Matt Kitchin	Stagecoach Yorkshire
Andrew McGuinness	CPT
Pat Beijer	SYMCA Executive Team

IN ATTENDANCE:

Nikki Belfield	Head of Mayor's Office	SYMCA Executive Team
Nick Brown	Bus Partnerships Project Director	SYMCA Executive Team
Tom Carney	Director of Communications, Engagement and Marketing	SYMCA Executive Team
John Dowie	Interim Executive Director of Infrastructure and Place	SYMCA Executive Team
Tom Finnegan-Smith	Head of Strategic Transport, Sustainability & Infrastructure	Sheffield City Council
John Henshall	General Manager	TravelMaster
Ellen Hinsley	Minute Taker	SYMCA Executive Team
Jordan Kemp	Marketing Manager	SYMCA Executive Team
Eleri Kirkpatrick-Lorente	Mayor's Correspondence Officer	SYMCA Executive Team
Penelope Milner	Student Placement	Fore Consulting
Tim Taylor	Director of Public Transport Operations	SYMCA Executive Team
Daniel Turner	Senior Mayoral Policy Advisor	SYMCA Executive Team

APOLOGIES:

Dawn Badminton-Capps	Public Bus Users
Stephen Edwards	SYMCA Executive Team

28 Chair's Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and apologies were noted as above.

29 **Minutes & Actions of the Previous Meeting**

The Director of Public Transport Operations advised the Board that in relation to Minute No 17, further progress had been made in developing a driver training programme through the Adult Education Budget. A proposal was due to be considered at the Education, Skills and Employability Board on 12 December.

The Executive Director of Infrastructure & Place informed the Board that regarding Minute No 20, a letter had been sent to the Department for Transport (DfT) raising concerns around Government funding and stressing the importance of early communication of plans for the end of the Bus Recovery Grant.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 4 October 2022 be approved.

30 **Change of Agenda Order**

The Chair announced a change of order to the agenda in order to provide context to subsequent discussions. Therefore, agenda item 3.d was to be considered before agenda item 3.a.

31 **Recent Developments**

31a **October Bus Service Change Impacts on Enhanced Partnership Targets**

The Director of Public Transport Operations presented an item on the effects of the reduced bus network introduced in October.

The changes to the network had resulted in a loss of circa 15% of mileage across the region and patronage had decreased by around 3%. While punctuality had improved during peak times, it had unexpectedly worsened prior to 7:30am. Reliability had recovered although it was still below the Enhanced Partnership (EP) target of 99.5%.

Action: The Director of Public Transport Operations to share the ticket types used to demonstrate the different prices across the country with operators.

(The Chief Executive joined the meeting.)

In terms of patronage levels, operators noted that it could be misleading to review the information from a two week period in isolation. Data based over a longer period showed that patronage had rebounded after an initial decline. The treatment of cross-boundary services was also raised. It was suggested that any future reports be shared earlier in the process to enable any relevant context to be provided.

Action: The Executive Director of Infrastructure & Place and operators to work together to understand the discrepancies between operator and MCA data and identify an agreed approach prior to the January meeting.

(The Head of Strategic Transport, Sustainability & Infrastructure joined the meeting.)

Action: Officers and operators to compare current punctuality levels with those in 2019 and explore how this can improved to meet the 95% target. The findings to be presented at the next meeting.

RESOLVED that the October Bus Service Change Impacts on Enhanced Partnership Targets be noted.

31b **£2 Flat Fare**

The Board was updated on the £2 Fare Cap which had been introduced at the start of November, two months ahead of the national scheme.

It was estimated that the scheme would cost around £600k which would be funded through the MCA's revenue budget. It was intended to be straightforward for operators to participate. By the end of the third week a total of 604,000 tickets had been sold.

It was noted that not all marketing materials had been shared with operators prior to their release. Smaller operators had also raised concerns that the complexity of the national scheme may mean they are unable to participate.

Elected Members welcomed the £2 flat fare as a positive step towards fixing public transport in South Yorkshire.

(The Chief Executive left the meeting.)

RESOLVED that the update on the £2 Flat Fare be noted.

31c **2023 Fares Change**

The General Manager of TravelMaster provided an update on the upcoming 2023 Fare Change.

The Mayor and Leader of Rotherham MBC expressed serious concern at the handling of the increase in the context of the cost of living crisis, asking operators to reconsider the fare change.

The Mayor asked operators to consider positive counter actions and measures of benefit to the public of South Yorkshire before pressing on with a fares change. The Board discussed the possibility of simplifying fares by removing single-operator day (and other period) products in favour of multi-operator products. The Director of Public Transport Operations added that this would also provide a means of transition from the fare cap.

Action: A Working Group incorporating operators and MCA officers to be established to investigate how the removal of single-operator day (and other period) products could be delivered at pace.

Action: TravelMaster members to arrange a meeting to discuss the 2023 Fare Change.

RESOLVED that the 2023 Fare Change be noted.

31d **Clean Air Zones Update & Impact**

The Board was informed of the launch of the Clean Air Zone (CAZ) in Sheffield city centre.

Sheffield City Council had confirmed that the CAZ would be imposed from 27 February 2023 as a result of the failure to meet minimum air quality requirements.

Any non-compliant coaches, buses and HGVs would be charged £50 per day from the outset. Light Goods Vehicles and Hackney Carriage taxis would be temporarily exempt from charging until June 2023.

The Head of Strategic Transport, Sustainability & Infrastructure advised that funding was available to continue support. Periods of exemptions could be considered for any operators committed to making appropriate changes to their vehicles.

RESOLVED that the Clean Air Zones Update be noted.

(The Head of Strategic Transport, Sustainability & Infrastructure left the meeting.)

32 **Future of the Enhanced Partnership**

32a **Refreshing the Enhanced Partnership - Emerging Proposals**

The Board considered how the MCA and operators could work together to improve the South Yorkshire bus network.

A number of issues were discussed, including:

- A stable, reliable network;
- A better customer experience;
- Simpler, less complex and better value fares;
- Marketing and brand.

The First representative advised that tap and cap would shortly be available on their buses in Doncaster and Sheffield.

RESOLVED that the item on Refreshing the EP be endorsed.

32b **Debrief from 1 November Forum Meeting & Transport Customer Charter Update**

As the meeting had overrun, the item on Partnership Marketing Budget was prioritised and this item was deferred to the next meeting.

RESOLVED that the Debrief from 1 November Forum Meeting & Transport Customer Charter Update be deferred to the next meeting.

32c **Partnership Marketing Budget**

The Marketing Manager outlined the proposed EP Marketing Agreement.

Prior to the Enhanced Partnership being formed, the MCA, local authorities and private operators contributed funds to be used on agreed marketing. The MCA and operators had an ongoing commitment to supporting marketing activities, but local authorities had not yet committed past the current financial year.

A marketing sub-group had been set up which reported to the development group, however, there was uncertainty on a number of issues.

The proposal was intended to set clear expectations and provide a framework for action so that the EP's schemes could be communicated throughout South Yorkshire efficiently and effectively. Members agreed that this increased visibility would help encourage people to start using buses again.

The Leader of Rotherham MBC confirmed that Rotherham MBC would provide a contribution towards the marketing budget.

Action: The Leader of Rotherham MBC to raise the issue of Rotherham's contribution to the marketing budget internally.

RESOLVED that the Enhanced Partnership should, for each financial year, agree a Partnership Marketing Agreement so that each partner can outline their contributions to the marketing, communications, and promotional activity that will help to promote the schemes and objectives for the 12-months ahead.

32d **Implement Consistent Use of 'South Yorkshire' Brand Across the Network.**

As the meeting had overrun this item was deferred to the next meeting.

RESOLVED that the item on Implement Consistent Use of 'South Yorkshire' Brand Across the Network be deferred to the next meeting.

33 **Items of Confidentiality**

None.

34 **Any Other Business**

The CPT Representative noted his thanks to the MCA for the work to deliver a driver training programme through the AEB. This would deliver tangible benefits for all operators.

The Chair apologised for not being able to cover all items on the agenda but felt that there had been some important discussion to be taken forward.

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

Signed

Name

Position

Date