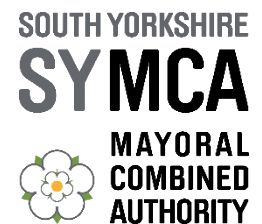


# South Yorkshire Transport User Group

## Minutes

18 October 2023



Present:

I. Jenkinson	Chair/Sheffield TUG
J. Brightmore	Sheffield TUG
J. Hoare	Doncaster TUG
N. Spetch	Vice Chair/Rotherham TUG
G. Arthur	Barnsley TUG
R. Morris	Sheffield TUG
M. Wilson	Sheffield TUG
J. Morton	Sheffield TUG

Guests:

J. Young	Stagecoach Yorkshire
P. Hopkinson	First South Yorkshire
N. Wragg	Supertram
A. Bray	CrossCountry
D. Clarkson	Northern
L. Etheridge	East Midlands Rail
G. Selby	East Midlands Rail
K. Jaswal	SYMCA
R. Cowling	SYMCA

### 1. **Open and welcome**

The meeting was opened, and all were welcomed.

### 2. **Apologies for absence**

D. Wrottersley, D. Fletcher, F. Postlethwaite

### 3. **Minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes of 19 July 2023 were accepted as a true record.

### 4. **Update from operators**

**Tram:**

N. Wragg updated the group on performance advising punctuality generally good with patronage around 75-80% of pre-Covid levels.

Fare changes to be introduced from 1 November and Rail replacement works in November affecting rail services – details on Supertram and TSY websites.

**Train:**

Northern – D. Clarkson updated the group on performance, advising that cancellations have been higher due to the availability of train crew as a result of long-term sickness. Shift patterns are being implemented to improve service delivery. Train and signal failures can also affect performance.

Autumn leaf fall is expected to cause issues over the coming weeks.

Cross Country – A. Bray advised of a national dispute around seven day working week. RMT ballot closed today, 18n October, so details of any strike action awaited.

Patronage is around 70% of pre-Covid levels and cancellations and performance are generally good. Options are being considered to address crowding issues.

Fleet – a number of Avanti Voyagers to be introduced. Longer term plans to be released shortly.

J. Brightmore expressed disappointment over the continuation of Voyagers due to capacity issues.

A. Bray advised general capacity is not much different to previous vehicles but they are working hard to address capacity issues, where possible and refreshing vehicles to make them more comfortable. Whoever won the contract would have Voyagers. Previous vehicles were costly and difficult to maintain.

**EMR**

G. Selby echoed other TOC's report on patronage and advised that they have seen a change in dynamic.

Timetable changes in December will see the reintroduction of some services and increase in the number of carriages.

Working with DfT on timetable changes.

Discussions were held around the similarities of vehicles used by other operators such as LNER and praise given to EMR for their response to peaks in demand.

J. Brightmore asked how many coaches the 810's will have, and G. Selby advised there will be 33, five car trains. They will be adaptable to change and be more balanced between first class and economy.

**Bus:**

First – P. Hopkinson updated the group on patronage which is steady at around 80% of pre-Covid levels. Punctuality has improved but they are still working on improving further.

Changes to evening and Sunday services will be introduced from Sunday 29 October.

### Stagecoach

J. Young advised of Stagecoach minor service changes from 29 October to address punctuality issues and of changes to tendered services as a result of reduced budget.

Service 80 – Sheffield – Killamarsh will be withdrawn, and a revised tendered route will be operated by Hulleys of Baslow. SYMCA doesn't have the funding to provide a like for like replacement and alternative journeys exist, even if interchange is required.

Community Transport is available to those who struggle to access the general network.

Network changes in Barnsley will mean improved links to the hospital and ensure areas retain a service.

New double decker buses introduced in Sheffield with 10 in stock and 10 still in build. Euro 6 maintained in the region.

Visit operator websites or [travelsouthyorkshire.com/service-changes](https://travelsouthyorkshire.com/service-changes) for details of 29 October changes.

Zoom Beyond (18-21) 80p fare withdrawn but pass holders can now travel on First, Stagecoach and TM Travel services for £1.50 (single journeys) thanks to a commercially capped fare.

Government extension of single journey £2 bus fare cap until end December 2024.

Continuation of the fare cap on tram services in South Yorkshire (funded locally by the MCA) through to 31 Oct at £2.00, rising to £2.80 from 1 Nov 2023 until the end of Nov 2024. Zoom beyond 18-21 pass holders - single fare £2 and £4 return on tram.

G. Arthur praised Stagecoach for the increased frequency on service 66 to Jump. However, concern raised over reduced evening and Sunday services to two-hourly.

J. Hoare asked where the decline in patronage was  
Operators advised it was in work journeys – most likely due to hybrid working.  
Concessionary market is also slow to return and can also be impacted by the weather but the leisure market is the strongest to return except for evening journeys.

J. Morton raised concerns re service 57 and 57a.

## **5. Concessionary fare changes**

Covered above.

## **6. Mayor's campaign for a fair bus deal**

R. Cowling advised the group of the Mayor's campaign and the petition from Better Buses in South Yorkshire and encouraged them to help raise awareness of the campaign and attend the public events.

G. Arthur advised he was pleased the Mayor was working with Better Buses with the petition asking the Government for more funding and asked for his involvement with issuing the petition.

N. Spetch asked for pressure to be put on Government for a capped fare on tram services.

N. Wragg advised Supertram and SYMCA have been lobbying Government since Covid and continue to do so.

## **7. Feedback from EP Forum**

G. Arthur provided an update on recent discussions at the forum on behalf of F. Postlethwaite:

1. Concern re delay in 'Bus Promise' which has been delayed.
2. Concern at Zoom Beyond fare increase, which has been escalated to the EP Board for discussion.
3. Concern over how consultations are organised
4. Citizen's Assembly – Net Zero – buses should be included within this

## **8. Franchising**

No further update at this time.

## **9. Tram – SYMCA ownership and operation**

K. Jaswal introduced himself to the group and talked them through the current position:

- 22 weeks to public control
- 22/23 March will see the start of the new operation
- Working on a business plan
- 1 year and 5-year plan - bolstering timetables etc.
- Desire to see the tram as part of an integrated transport network
- Ensuring the 350 staff are looked after

G. Arthur stated he would like to see an improvement in evening services provision and extension to other parts of South Yorkshire.

K. Jaswal discussed plans to drive up resources to allow expansion. Access renewal is underway and currently resources are geared around that. Timetable improvements will be looked at as works progress.

## **10. Members items**

Concerns were raised about the interface between the tram platform and the tram vehicle and the difficulty this can cause for wheelchair users.

N. Wragg advised that works are carried out to ensure trams are compliant and within accepted tolerance. Specific details will be required to investigate the issue.

**11. Any other business**

No items raised

**12. Date of next meetings:**

Thursday 18 January 2024, 10.30am

Thursday 18 April 2024, 10.30am

Thursday 18 July 2024, 10.30am

Thursday 17 October 2024, 10.30am