

# South Yorkshire Transport User Group

## Minutes

18 January 2024



Present:

<b>I. Jenkinson</b>	Chair/Sheffield TUG
<b>J. Brightmore</b>	Sheffield TUG
<b>N. Spetch</b>	Vice Chair/Rotherham TUG
<b>G. Arthur</b>	Barnsley TUG
<b>F. Postlethwaite</b>	Barnsley TUG
<b>J. Morton</b>	Sheffield TUG
<b>D. Wrottersley</b>	Sheffield TUG

Guests:

<b>G. Roome</b>	Stagecoach Yorkshire
<b>P. Hopkinson</b>	First South Yorkshire
<b>N. Wragg</b>	Supertram
<b>L. Etheridge</b>	East Midlands Rail
<b>G. Selby</b>	East Midlands Rail
<b>R. Cowling</b>	SYMCA

1. **Open and welcome**

The meeting was opened, and all were welcomed.

2. **Apologies for absence**

Cllr J. Higginbottom, D. Fletcher

3. **Minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes of 18 October 2023 were accepted as a true record.

4. **Update from operators**

**Tram:**

N. Wragg updated the group on:

- Network Rail works affecting Tram Train services on 22 and 23 March

- Transition to the tram system being in public control and operation from Friday 22 March.

Questions were asked around changes to prices and ticketing and N. Wragg advised that customer comms would be issued in due course on ticketing and pricing.

### **Train:**

Northern – no update due to no representative in attendance.

Northern services affected by ASLEF strike action on 31 January.

Cross Country – no update due to no representative in attendance.

Cross Country services affected by ASLEF strike action on 5 February.

EMR - G. Selby advised that ASLEF strikes will be taking place between 30 January and 5 February as well as action short of a strike (overtime ban) 29 January to 6 February.

EMR services affected by strike action on 3 February affecting services in the region.

EMR are trialling services.

J. Brightmore raised concerns about five car trains between London and Sheffield, and the risk of overcrowding and inability to walk the full length of the train.

G. Selby advised trains can be doubled up to 10 cars where required. They are self-contained units so there shouldn't be a requirement to walk the full length of the train.

Discussions were held around luggage storage. G. Selby advised airline style luggage racks will be provided with further racks at the end of each unit for larger suitcases.

### **Bus:**

First – P. Hopkinson updated the group on patronage which is steady at around 80% of pre-Covid levels. Staffing levels are also steady improving services. He provided a summary of service changes proposed from 6 April.

Public engagement exercise planned ahead of April service changes to seek views on some specific proposals. Also, some minor timetable changes to address punctuality issues. Some Doncaster services will be renumbered with a '3' prefix to help them work better on apps, e.g. service 64 will become service 364.

The group were please enhancements were being proposed.

***Post meeting note: Consultation held Monday 5 February – Thursday 15 February. Included stakeholder communications with Councillors and MPs, social media posts and posters within Interchanges and on buses. Details of the changes were hosted on First South Yorkshire and TSY websites.***

***First also held public drop-in events post consultation, handing out leaflets and allowing members of the public discuss the service changes with the operator.***

Stagecoach

G Roome advised that patronage is steady at 75-80% pre-Covid levels and staffing levels are improving.

Stagecoach is working on proposed April service changes, primarily to address punctuality issues in Barnsley and the Dearne Valley.

Electric buses are hoped to be introduced in spring.

A discussion was held around the rerouting of a service in Broadway, which isolated some members of the local community, and Stagecoach's lack of attendance at a public meeting. G. Roome advised Stagecoach were discussing internally how they could improve public engagement and advised that SYMCA was investigated whether they could provide an alternative service.

#### **5. TravelMaster and Stagecoach fare changes from 7 January**

R. Cowling reminded the group of the recently introduced TravelMaster and Stagecoach fare changes and that details were on the operators websites and on TSY.

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

R. Cowling advised that the Mayor held nearly 30 public meetings as part of the campaign and continues to be committed to bus reform.

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

F. Postlethwaite provided an update on recent discussions at the forum:

1. Concern re delay in 'Bus Promise' - A bus promise was created to hold operators to account and provide details of how to complain. This still has not been published despite being agreed at the EP Board in May.
2. Reliability and punctuality issues
3. Sharing of issues from representatives about issues encountered with bus services and looking for improvements.

#### **8. Franchising**

R. Cowling advised that work continues on franchising assessment and further information will be issued shortly.

***Post meeting note: 4 March - Oliver Coppard announced conclusion of Franchising Assessment and submission of report to MCA Board meeting on 12 March. This report was approved subject to minor amendments and will soon progress to Independent Audit in order to proceed with the Franchising Scheme. Then a 12-week public consultation must be run ensure that local passengers, businesses and transport providers can have their say before the MCA takes the decision as to whether to implement the Scheme.***

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

R. Cowling advised the group that from Friday 22 March South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) will take over running Supertram services from Stagecoach when its operating contract ends.

The change in ownership forms part of our wider ambitions to position Supertram as part of a fully integrated public transport network for South Yorkshire.

## **10. Members items**

Escalated items were discussed under item 4 above.

## **11. Any other business**

No items raised.

### **1. Date of next meetings:**

Thursday 18 April 2024, 10.30am

Thursday 18 July 2024, 10.30am

Thursday 17 October 2024, 10.30am