

**TravelWatch**  
**NORTHWEST**

*promoting quality public transport.....*

# **Business Plan 2012-2014**

## **Incorporating Annual Review 2010-2011**



*Working for an integrated and  
seamless public transport network  
across the North West of England*

# ***TravelWatch NorthWest Business Plan 2012-2014*** ***(incorporating Annual Review 2010-2011)***

## **Contents**

|   | <b>page</b> |
|---|-------------|
| • Chair's Foreword  | 2           |
| 1. Introduction & Background                              | 3           |
| 2. Merseytravel   | 4           |
| 3. Annual Review 2010/11                                  | 5           |
| 4. Current Workstreams (2011/12)                          | 10          |
| 5. Plans for 2012/14                                      | 11          |
| • Appendices –  |             |
| <b><i>Appendix A</i></b> – Administration                 | 13          |
| <b><i>Appendix B</i></b> – Principal Persona and Contacts | 14          |
| <b><i>Appendix C</i></b> – Previous Activities            | 15          |
| <b><i>Appendix D</i></b> – Accounts 2010/11               | 18          |
| <b><i>Appendix E</i></b> - Forecast Expenditure           | 19          |
| <b><i>Appendix F</i></b> – Membership                     | 20          |

*(Cover Photo Chris Dale)*

North West Public Transport Users' Forum Community Interest Company trading as TravelWatch NorthWest  
Company No. 6181713

Registered Office: 2 Park House Drive, Heversham, Cumbria LA7 7EG

## ***Chair's Foreword***

This Business Plan comes at a time of upheaval both in the transport industry and TravelWatch NorthWest.

The industry has had a year of differing fortunes. The railways in the North West now have the prospect of investment in the network after announcements confirming the electrification of the "Lancashire Triangle" and the building of the Ordsall curve. There are signs that extra rolling stock will finally be arriving in the region, although this consists of old Pacers and Sprinters from other parts of the country.

In contrast the bus industry is coming to terms with a series of funding cuts which will have an impact across the region. These cuts range from a reduction in Local Authority funding for socially necessary services and the concessionary pass to next year's reduction in Bus Service Operators Grant.

Light Rail in the North West has seen the upgrade to the Blackpool network nearing completion with the first new tram arriving recently, whilst the expansion of the Manchester Metrolink continues.

TravelWatch NorthWest has also had to adapt to the changing political world following the demise of the North West Regional Development Agency. The Agency had provided office accommodation for several years and we are very grateful for this and other assistance they have provided. We have managed to secure accommodation in the same building but this has come at a price. As with many organisations we have had to make savings in some areas to fund this change in circumstances.

Despite these problems we have continued to represent the views of passengers throughout the year. This has included responses to many consultations and being represented on several regional bodies. Our conferences have continued to be well attended and have covered varying aspects of public transport provision.

Our funding will continue to be an area of concern, but I must thank everyone who has made a contribution during the last year. Special thanks go to Merseytravel for their continued support. I also thank all those who have contributed to the work of TravelWatch NorthWest and would especially thank our Company Secretary John Moorhouse for his hard work and dedication throughout the year.

Finally, looking ahead, we must be prepared to continue our work despite the obvious problems. We will continue to work with other organisations such as Passenger Focus to fully represent passengers' views. .



*Chris Dale, Chairman*  
*October 2011.*

## 1. Introduction & Background

1.1 TravelWatch NorthWest (TWNW) was formerly known as the North West Public Transport Users Forum (NWPTUF). The NWPTUF was formed in October 2003 and was named TravelWatch NorthWest in 2006. It is an independent organisation representing all users of public transport in the North West. Membership is open to any not for profit organisation representing the interests of users or potential users of public transport. TravelWatch holds regular conferences open to the public at various locations in the North West where public transport issues are debated. TravelWatches have also been established in South West England, the West Midlands, the East Midlands and Southern England.

1.2 TWNW's chief purpose is to influence, by research and campaigning, public transport policy in the North West always with passengers' interests foremost.

1.3 TWNW's mission statement is :-

***Facilitating an integrated and seamless quality public transport network for North West England.***

1.4 The vision of TWNW is to champion the interests of public transport users in the North West so the network can become:-

- § Accessible to everyone
- § Affordable and socially inclusive
- § Available where and when it is needed
- § Acceptable to all
- § Attractive to users

1.5 The key objectives of TWNW are to:-

- § Give users a platform to express their concerns and needs
- § Promote the use of public transport in the North West
- § Contribute to the development of regional transport strategies
- § Produce influential best practice reports based on evidence

1.6 TWNW has established a relationship with a wide range of stakeholders, and has addressed a number of key issues within the transport agenda in the region. It is increasingly being seen as an important sounding board for consultation on regional transport policies.

1.7 TravelWatch NorthWest was formally incorporated as a Community Interest Company in March 2007. The Company is made up of members who each agree to a liability of £1 and is run by a Board of Directors (***see Appendices B and F***).

## 2. Merseytravel

2.1 TOWN welcomes the generous support it receives from Merseytravel. Merseytravel has made great strides in improving the public transport network in Merseyside and continues to be forward looking and inventive. There have been many frustrations but there is much to applaud.

2.2 In November 2010 we responded to the Merseyside draft third local transport plan. We supported the vision and goals as expressed in the plan and trusted that funding constraints would not impair this vision too radically.

2.3 We particularly appreciated the realism about the likelihood of reduced funding because of the government spending review but also the commitment to greater emphasis on public transport as an intrinsic part of the vision, mobility culture and six goals set out in the plan –

- Supporting the priorities of the Liverpool City Region, the proposed Local Enterprise Partnership and the Local Strategic Partnerships.
- Providing and promoting a clean and low carbon transport system.
- Ensuring the transport system promotes and enables improved health and wellbeing.
- Ensuring the transport system supports equality of travel opportunity by enabling people to connect easily with employment, services and social activities.
- Ensuring the transport network supports the economic success of the city region by the efficient movement of people and goods.
- Maintaining assets to a high standard.

2.4 We expressed our support of measures included in the Plan which would be of benefit to passengers. For example –

- Statutory Quality Bus Partnerships.
- Bus Priority Measures
- Capacity improvements on local rail services especially in the peak
- Rail electrification – Liverpool to Manchester
- The development of Merseytram

2.5 The Plan was published in April 2011 ([www.letstravelwise.org/ltp](http://www.letstravelwise.org/ltp))

2.6 The proper management of Transport can play a large part in improving the environment, well-being and attractiveness of city and other communities. Merseytravel's approach in seeking to create a new mobility culture is laudable and an example to others.

### **3. Annual Review 2010/11**

#### **3.1 Conferences**

3.1.1 TOWN held 3 conferences during the year to debate issues of concern in the North West, to promote best practice to operators and local authorities and to promote the development of forward-looking public transport policies across the region. As well as users, representatives of local transport authorities and public transport providers across the region attended the conferences. At each conference an "Open Forum" session gave the opportunity for delegates to ask a question or make short statement on any public transport issue of concern.

3.1.2 The conferences were held in Lancaster on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2010, Liverpool on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2010 and Manchester on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2011.

3.1.3 At Lancaster (where the conference was held on a Saturday) presentations were made by Mrs Beverley Bell, Traffic Commissioner North Western Area, Keith Halstead, Chief Executive, Community Transport Association and Superintendent Peter Mason, British Transport Police, North Western Area. Mrs Bell welcomed the opportunity to speak to passenger representatives an area which she saw as vital. 57 delegates attended.

3.1.5 The conference held in Liverpool was preceded by the Company's second AGM. The keynote presentation was made by Mrs Louise Ellman MP Chair of the House of Commons Transport Committee. She emphasised the importance of the work of TravelWatch for regional feedback on transport matters. Other speakers were Alan Stilwell, Director of Integrated Transport, Merseytravel (see also item 2 above) and Julie Warburton from Passenger Focus. In the afternoon delegates visited the Mersey Tunnel and Ferries (also see above). Attendance at the conference was a record 80.

3.1.6 In Manchester the opening address was given by Councillor Keith Whitmore, Vice Chair, Greater Manchester Integrated Transport Authority. He outlined the many positive steps that were being taken to improve public transport in spite of difficult economic times. These included Metrolink extension, rail electrification and improvements to the Metro City Link free bus shuttle service. Other speakers were -

- Melanie Watson, Head of Bus Network Performance, Greater Manchester PTE,
- Barry Graham, Business Development Manager and Phil Davenport, District Maintenance Manager North West, Northern Rail.
- Maurice Duckworth, Managing Director, First Rail Support Ltd. (on rail replacement bus services)
- Alexandra Woodsworth, Campaign for Better Transport (on "Fair Fares Now & Save our Buses" campaigns)

79 delegates attended.

3.1.7 Thanks are due to First/Keolis TransPennine Ltd., Merseytravel and First Rail Support Ltd. for their support for the conferences.

## **3.2 First Transpennine Express**

3.2.1 TOWNW has continued to assist TPE in a number of customer service initiatives.

## **3.3 Bus Observers and Mystery Travellers**

3.3.1 TOWNW is conscious that it requires information from the ground floor on bus service issues especially with the threat of cuts to bus services because of spending restrictions. A network of people who use buses was set up to feed back day to day issues, changes to services and other developments. Results have been mixed with much to commend in terms of quality of service and we are reviewing the way forward.

3.3.2 During the winter of 2010/11 we undertook some bus survey work in conjunction with Passenger Focus. This involved carrying out observations at a number of bus stop locations with frequent services to monitor reliability and service gaps/ bunching. Passenger facilities at bus stops were also recorded and some on-bus travel was carried out. There was much of interest in individual experiences and much to commend. Chief overriding themes were of the need for more real time information at bus stops and the effects of road traffic congestion and disruption on service reliability.

## **3.4 Bus Services**

3.4.1 In December 2010 we responded to the House of Commons Transport Committee's enquiry into Bus Services after the Spending Review. The general theme of our responses was to caution against reducing the overall level of support for unremunerative but socially desirable registered local bus services arising from the following –

- Planned reductions in Bus Service Operators Grant.
- Reduction in local authority grant support to bus services.
- Any reduction, either intended or consequential, in funding LTAs and through them operators for their statutory requirement to offer free concessionary bus travel.

3.4.2 In February 2011 TOWNW published a report on Bus Services and facilities in the more rural parts of the region, resulting from a survey carried out in the Autumn of 2010 by mystery shoppers who had travelled on 105 bus journeys in various parts of the region.

3.4.3 The report revealed that bus services varied considerably but in general the standards of buses and bus driving were relatively good. However in rural areas many bus stops lacked basic facilities and exhibit inadequate information.

3.4.4 Much of the responsibility for local rural bus services, which perform a useful social service, falls on Local Transport Authorities who of necessity contribute funding and specify service quality as well as being responsible for bus stop and station facilities. Their resources are limited and we again expressed concerns at cut-backs in rural bus service provision resulting from the spending constraints.

### **3.5 Traffic Commissioner**

3.5.1 A useful meeting took place with Mrs Beverley Bell, the North West Traffic Commissioner, in February 2011. It was agreed that a closer relationship would be fostered, including sharing information about bus service issues that come to the attention of either organisation.

### **3.6 Taxis**

3.6.1 In December 2010 TWNW responded to consultation by the House of Commons Transport Committee on the Licensing of Taxis and Private Hire vehicles. We stressed our view that hackney carriage vehicles (taxis) and private hire vehicles (PHVs) are integral components of public transport provision and also pointed out that passengers have difficulty in distinguishing between the two. We also commented on the potential of taxi buses - made possible by the availability of a Special Restricted PSV Operator Licence, allowing the charging of separate fares.

3.6.2 We gave oral evidence to the Committee in March 2011 in company with the National Association of Taxi Users, a new organisation. We stressed the above points and also commented on the lack of consumer representation for taxi users, the need for wider licensing areas and the potential for taxi buses to operate in (rural) areas where conventional buses are usually uneconomic.

### **3.7 Metrolink Mosley Street Stop**

3.7.1 In November 2010 the DfT instituted a consultation on a proposal by Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive (now Transport for Greater Manchester) to discontinue passenger services at Mosley Street station on the Manchester Metrolink light rail network.

3.7.2 TWNW objected to the proposed closure on a number of grounds. Mosley Street is one of the busiest stations on the network. Obliging passengers to divert to Market Street or Piccadilly Gardens stations both of which are island platforms that cannot be widened and are already heavily used would have serious safety consequences as well as being inconvenient. These stations will become more crowded anyway as the Metrolink network expands.

3.7.3 The primary justification for closure appeared to be a reliance on the benefits to through passengers being substantially higher than the disbenefits to boarding passengers. This is completely contrary to any historical or indeed ethical principles surrounding passenger railway closures. Indeed it could be applied to justify the closure of most stations on the rail or light rail network as the numbers of through passengers will almost always be higher than the numbers boarding. This raises very serious questions about the form of the evaluation as it could be used as a precedent elsewhere to give serious effects on passenger services.

### **3.8 Disruption arising from rail engineering work.**

3.8.1 TWNW addressed the issues arising from this, particularly replacement bus services in June 2006, with the publication of the report "Disrupted Rail Journeys". That report emphasised the need to keep trains running during such work as much

as possible and keep the need for replacement bus services at a minimum.

3.8.2 During the year we commenced some survey work to review how rail passengers in the NW are being treated at times of disruption and the extent to which our recommendations have been acted on.

### **3.9 Futures NW**

3.9.1 TWNW has welcomed the opportunity to serve on regional bodies with an interest in transport planning. In October 2010 we responded to consultation by the North West Regional Development Agency (NWDA) in which we said that a real vacuum has been created by the dismantling of the NW Regional Assembly (NWRA with its Rail Transport Advisory Group and the 4NW leaders' Forum) and the NWDA (which had been so supportive of TWNW).

3.9.2 We trust that the new Local Enterprise Partnerships will furnish the means to deal with transport planning and promote the use of public transport when determining local economic priorities. We will be seeking to represent passengers views with such bodies.

### **3.10 Consultation**

3.10.1 TWNW responded to various consultations throughout the year. These were –

- The Future of Rail Franchising (Department for Transport) – generally agreeing with longer term franchises, with the need to protect passengers interests in terms of protecting fares levels, stipulating full consultation on timetable changes and taking action to mitigate overcrowding and encourage modal shift from the car.
- Improving Bus Passenger Services through the Regulatory Framework (DfT)\* - emphasising the need to promote passengers interests, e.g. with regard to information, fares and how to complain.
- Transport and the Economy (House of Commons Transport Committee)\* - in which we emphasised that social and environmental factors should be considered as well as economic growth. We advocated that priority for Transport Funding should be given to mainly revenue support for low cost projects with predictable high value outcomes. There should also be mechanisms created for capturing cross sector benefits
- Local Transport Funding (DfT)\* - focussing on the need for LTA's to be able to provide sufficient revenue funding to secure the public transport use of the capital intensive infrastructure which they have been encouraged to provide.
- Futures NW (4NW/NWDA)\* (see 3.9 above)
- Reforming Rail Franchising (DfT) – we argued that franchises should be constructed around the need to encourage modal shift, from cars in particular, to rail as a step towards improving environmental performance. To achieve this rail has to be far more attractive to potential passengers than it is now in many parts of the North West.
- Public Transport Ticketing Schemes Block Exemption (Office for Fair Trading)\* - in which we pointed to the difficulty of obtaining information about bus fares and emphasised the benefits of integrated ticketing schemes.
- Reimbursement Arrangements for the Concessionary Bus Travel Scheme in England (DfT)\* - in which we said that a single national reimbursement rate

would be TOWNW 's preference in the short term until the wider question of bus subsidies is decided.

- Merseyside LTP3 (Merseytravel) (see Section 2 above)
- Licensing of Taxis & Private Hire Vehicles (House of Commons Transport Committee)\* ( see 3.6 above)
- West Coast Track Access (Office of Rail Regulation) – we welcomed the potential to allow enhanced track access for new services to the towns and cities along the present route. The ORR did not give the go-ahead to plans for services by new 'open access' operators on the route but did give more flexible access rights for the new franchise.
- Bus Services after the Spending Review (HOCTC)\* (see 3.4 above)
- Northern RUS (Network Rail) – we supported the Northern Hub and the need to relieve overcrowding.
- Proposed closure of Mosley St Tram stop (DfT) (see 3.7 above)
- West Coast RUS (Network Rail)\* - we welcomed many of the changes contemplated but emphasised that there should be no detriment to local services.

(\*available on website [www.travelwatch-northwest.org.uk](http://www.travelwatch-northwest.org.uk))

## **4. Current Workstreams (2011/12)**

### **4.1 Conferences**

4.1.1 Southport 16<sup>th</sup> June 2011 – presentations from Beverley Bell, NW Traffic Commissioner, Les Burton, Operations Director, Stagecoach Merseyside, Rudi Boersma, Media & Corporate Affairs Manager, Merseyrail, Steve Christian, Tourism Marketing & Visitor Services Manager, Sefton MBC and John Austin, Vice Chair, National Association of Taxi Users.

4.1.2 Lancaster 13<sup>th</sup> October 2011 – also the fourth AGM. This conference is planned to include presentations on HS2, rural bus service provision, the work of Passenger Focus and TransPennine Express.

4.1.3 Feb 2012 – planned to be held in Wigan.

### **4.2 Engineering Work disruption**

4.2.1 The survey work is ongoing and a report will be published later in the year.

### **4.3 Bus users representation**

4.3.1 Work is ongoing. Threats to the level of bus services due to funding constraints continue to cause concern, especially in rural areas. A particular added feature is the plan to significantly reduce Bus Service Operators Grant (a scheme that refunds some of the fuel duty incurred by bus operators) by 20% from 2012/13. This, coupled with local authority spending cuts, could result in a further round of service reductions with very serious effects especially for those in the more rural areas of our region where bus services are already sparse, but are relied upon by a significant number of people without access to a car.

4.3.2 The House of Commons Transport Committee has also commented on the effects of extensive cuts to rural, evening and weekend bus services in its report on Bus Services after the Spending Review published in August 2011. We have made clear that we want to see full consultation with bus users and representative organisations before any such cuts are made and that alternatives such as the use of Community Transport and taxibuses are fully considered

### **4.4 Taxis**

4.4.1 TOWNW is continuing its links with the National Association of Taxi Users. We are particularly interested in exploring the feasibility of trialling more taxi bus services to help to alleviate the difficulties that will be caused by bus service cuts.

### **4.5 High Speed Rail (HSR)**

4.5.1 TOWNW supports the concept of a high speed railway to connect London with the North West of England. In May this year we updated a position paper on High Speed rail which had originally been published two years previously. In the same month we responded to the HOCTC on its enquiry into HSR and in July to the DfT on its consultation on HSR proposals.

4.5.2 In summary we believe –

- The main argument for HSR is primarily an increase in capacity to meet growth beyond the capacity of the existing system.
- We have always advocated that any HSR proposals are seen as logical parts of a much longer term strategy for the provision of a network of new lines to connect the various nations and regions of the UK with London and each other. In particular, at least, the routes north of Birmingham to Leeds and Manchester should be planned as an integral part of the network. It is crucial that the network is planned and approved as whole system and built as a rolling programme, not separately funded and approved sections
- It is vitally important that concentration on HSR does not deprive the existing route network of investment or continuing development. HSR expenditure must be in addition to ongoing spending on rail. In addition the spin-off benefits of HSR on other parts of the rail network must be fully exploited.

*(position paper and consultation responses available on website [www.travelwatch-northwest.org.uk](http://www.travelwatch-northwest.org.uk))*

## **4.6 Consultation**

4.6.1 Responses made and in process include –

New West Coast Franchise (DfT)  
High Speed Rail (TWNW position paper)  
The Strategic Case for High Speed Rail (HOCTC)\*  
Competition in the bus industry (Competition Commission)\*  
Passenger information (ORR)\*  
Air Passenger Representation (Civil Airports Authority)  
Role of Traffic Commissioners (DfT)  
High Speed Rail (DfT)\*  
Metrolink 2<sup>nd</sup> City Crossing (Transport for Greater Manchester)\*

*\*on website [www.travelwatch-northwest.org.uk](http://www.travelwatch-northwest.org.uk))*

## **5. Plans for 2012/14**

### **Conferences**

5.1 Continuation of the pattern of 3 conferences per year at locations in the North West. Operators and procurers will also be invited. Conferences will feature presentations, discussion and input into the planned workstreams as well as on the subject of specific consultations. Opportunities will also be presented for users to make representations on any public transport issue at the forums.

### **Projects**

5.2 TWNW is considering a number of areas of proactive work on behalf of public transport users and these are listed below. However, in addition TWNW appreciates that it must have the capacity to react to issues as they arise and in particular to

matters on which it may be consulted.

5.3 Also TOWNW is keen to continue with its growing track record of project/consultancy work. TOWNW has within its membership a considerable depth of resource of experienced public transport users together with professional transport expertise. This makes the organisation well capable of carrying out passenger based research to inform and assist Regional and Local Authorities, PTEs and Operators in their transport planning and operational functions.

5.4 As well as working with other TravelWatches on interregional issues, TOWNW is committed to work in partnership with other user bodies including Passenger Focus, Bus Users UK, the Campaign for Better Transport and Railfuture.

***The following areas of work are being considered for 2012/14 -***

### ***5.5 Buses/ Coaches***

- Further work on monitoring passenger travel experience on buses, potentially in conjunction with Passenger Focus.
- Encourage the creation and sustainability of local passenger groups

### ***5.6 Rail***

- Further monitoring of the passenger experience including overcrowding and station facilities.
- Value for money of rail fares and anomalies in fares structures

### ***5.7 Multi modal issues***

- A review of progress with multi modal ticketing (including PLUSBUS) since the publication of TOWNW's report on this subject in December 2005
- Information – the availability of multi modal information on transport websites and at rail/ bus stations and transport interchanges.

### ***5.8 Consultation***

- TOWNW will respond to consultation on public transport developments on behalf of users. In determining its responses TOWNW has the capacity to conduct independent passenger based research as appropriate, subject to the availability of funding.

### ***5.9 Passenger Transport User Representation***

- TOWNW will continue to be well placed to feed user input into consultations on regional and local government planning issues
- TOWNW will continue to strive to bring forward passenger concerns to the attention of the appropriate providers and procurers and to achieve improvements on their behalf

# **Appendix A Administration**

TWNW is managed by a Board of Directors. The Board considers topical issues for debate at the forum, manages the actions arising from each forum. It also considers and determines the issues that the company should give its attention to.

The work of the Company is administered by a part-time Company Secretary, with other support.

A National Liaison Group comprising TravelWatch Chairs has also been established to promote TravelWatch nationally and to co-ordinate work on national issues.

*TravelWatch NorthWest is most grateful for the generous support it has received and receives from various sponsors as follows-*

- Merseytravel, North West Development Agency, National Express, First TransPennine Express, Cheshire County Council, Stagecoach NW, Passenger Focus, Greater Manchester ITA.

More information can be found on our website [www.travelwatch-northwest.org.uk](http://www.travelwatch-northwest.org.uk). This website has links into the other websites so far established in the other regions which have TravelWatch organisations.

The registered title, company no. and registered address of the Company is -

***North West Public Transport Users Forum Community Interest Company  
trading as TravelWatch NorthWest Company No. 6181713  
Registered Office: 2 Park House Drive, Heversham, Cumbria LA7 7EG***

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## **Appendix B Principal Persona and Contacts**

TravelWatch NorthWest is chaired by **Chris Dale**. A retired hospital theatre technician, living in Macclesfield, he has been actively involved in public transport campaigning for over 25 years and is a dedicated user of public transport. Chris chairs the East Cheshire Lines Rail Users Group, the Crewe to Manchester Community Rail Partnership and the Cheshire local group of the Campaign for Better Transport. He is also involved with the Campaign for Better Transport at a national level and is a member of their Board of Directors.

The Company Secretary is **John Moorhouse**. John was Secretary of the Rail Passengers Committee for North West England from 1985 until 2004. He is also a Director of the Settle-Carlisle Railway Development Company. See contact details below.

Advisory and Research Consultant **Paul Fawcett** is a semi-retired University lecturer in transport studies, now Honorary Visiting Fellow at Sheffield Hallam University. He is a former transport adviser (Northern England) to the Countryside Agency and the author of over 20 transport text books, papers and monograms.

Current members of the Board are –

Chris Dale (Chair)  
Alan Pettener  
David Butterworth  
Lillian Burns  
John Hart  
John Murray

John Owen  
Leonard Green  
Peter Robinson  
Richard Rollins  
Robert Talbot  
Tony Young

For further details about the work of TravelWatch NorthWest or about this Business Plan, please contact:-

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# **Appendix C Previous Activities**

2008-09

## **Conferences**

Conferences were held at Blackpool in June 2008, Manchester in October 2008 and Preston in February 2009. At Blackpool the main theme was public transport in Blackpool with presentations from Blackpool Council and Blackpool Transport Services Ltd. (BTS). The conference held in Manchester featured presentations on Land Value Capture, the Future of Rail Travel in Britain and from Passenger Focus. At Preston there were presentations from the Campaign for Better Transport, the North West Rail Investment Campaign and Stagecoach North West.

## **Bus Travel Survey**

Following a number of pilot surveys TWNW decided to carry out a comprehensive quality of service survey of bus services and terminals throughout the North West. Almost 300 journeys were made (involving 37 separate operators) and 124 bus stops and 49 bus stations assessed. The results showed a “mixed bag” of experiences. General quality of journey was quite favourable but the provision of information was the greatest deficiency that emerged from the observations taken during the survey.

*(report on website [www.travelwatch-northwest.org.uk](http://www.travelwatch-northwest.org.uk))*

## **Concessionary fares**

With the broadening of free off peak bus travel for Seniors throughout England from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008 research was undertaken to ascertain whether there would be the possibility of any concessionary passenger migration from local and regional rail to inter urban registered local bus services. The report “Migration from Rail” highlighted the most likely corridors for migration to take place, taking into account the increased fare savings in relation to journey times.

*(report on website [www.travelwatch-northwest.org.uk](http://www.travelwatch-northwest.org.uk))*

In January 2009 TWNW responded to consultation by the DfT on eligible services for bus travel concessions. We suggested that the DfT look again at some of these proposed exemptions. We put the question whether the anomalies identified at the margin were sufficiently serious to require corrective legislation or whether a simple all embracing entitlement for pass holders to travel off peak on any registered local service qualifying for BSOG would be sufficient.

*(response on website [www.travelwatch-northwest.org.uk](http://www.travelwatch-northwest.org.uk))*

## **Route Utilisation Strategies**

TWNW submitted its comments to Network Rail on the following draft Route Utilisation Strategies –

- Lancs and Cumbria

- Wales
- Merseyside

### ***Schools Transport***

TWNW responded to the House of Commons Transport Committee's consultation on Part 6 (School Travel Schemes) of the Education and Inspection Act 2006. We welcomed the 2006 Act's provisions including the transfer of responsibility for funding scholars (16-19) attendance at Colleges of FE and Sixth Forms from the Learning and Skills Councils to LEAs, but cautioned that some schemes, whilst educationally sound and, as intended, supporting wider parental choice, could have unintended consequences.

The HOC Transport Committee subsequently issued supplementary schools travel consultation on options for free or concessionary travel for 16-19 year old "scholars" to which TWNW responded in September 2008, pointing out, in particular, that such "scholars" are public transport's potential future fare paying passengers.

### ***Manchester's Railway Stations***

In February 2009 TWNW produced a report on Passengers Perceptions of Manchester's stations. This was a report based on observations of the state of Oxford Road, Piccadilly, Victoria, Deansgate, Salford Central and Salford Crescent stations. The findings were that the stations varied widely in their design, provision of services to passengers and overall "fitness for purpose". Oxford Road was most in need of radical improvement and there were serious issues at Victoria.

### ***Greater Manchester Transport Innovation Fund Bid***

TWNW responded to GMPTA's proposals to improve public transport with funding partially from a congestion charging scheme. We supported the principles of the bid, although having some reservations about specific elements of the plan. Following a referendum in Greater Manchester which rejected congestion charging the investment in the city region's public transport infrastructure became no longer available. However in May 2009 the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities announced an accelerated package which would bring forward £195 m of government funding to improve public transport.

## **2009-10**

### ***Concessionary fares***

TWNW responded to consultation on changes to the administration of concessionary travel. We made a number of points including ring fencing the special grant, giving consideration to a national reimbursement formula and direct reimbursement by DfT to operators.

### ***Information about bus fares***

In June 2009 we published a report on "Information about Bus Fares". We demonstrated that from a sample of 14 randomly chosen and mainly multi operator

bus journeys information about fares was difficult to obtain. Recommendations included -

- Local Transport Authorities should use their powers under the Transport Act 2000 to make ticketing schemes and/or their powers under the Local Transport Act 2008 to include ticketing agreements within Quality Partnerships. Such ticketing schemes should include an obligation to make fares information more widely available.
- Drivers should either carry relevant fare tables or be able to print these out on their Electronic Ticket Machines
- Bus station information offices should be able to give fares information more readily - this should become easier with electronic capture. The example of Northwich appears to show that it can be done.

(report on website [www.travelwatch-northwest.org.uk](http://www.travelwatch-northwest.org.uk))

### ***Overcrowding on Rail***

We raised concerns about chronic overcrowding on trains in the region and the lack of any action to alleviate this, highlighting the postulated loss of rail rolling stock from the NW following the closure of the Oldham Loop line in October 2009, prior to conversion to Metrolink. Following pressure from several sources and financial input from GMITA the trains were retained.

### ***High Speed Rail***

In October 2009 we produced a position paper on High Speed Rail, strongly supporting the concept of a new high speed railway linking London and the North West, designed as part of a strategically planned network of high-speed railways linking the nations and regions of the United Kingdom to London and to each other. .

### ***The “Weakest Link” Rail Stations***

In February 2010 TWNW published a report on the facilities provided by 12 of the North West’s major stations. This followed a report “Better Rail Stations” prepared for the Department for Transport by Sir Peter Hall and Chris Green which identified 7 out of the 10 worst scoring National Interchange stations to be in NW England. Our report closely examined these 7 stations and 5 other large stations in the region, concluding that the condition of the majority of these stations was well below what passengers should expect in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Extra government spending of £50 million spread across 10 stations was welcome but would barely scratch the surface.

(report on website [www.travelwatch-northwest.org.uk](http://www.travelwatch-northwest.org.uk))

### ***Rail Seat Reservations***

A discussion paper on rail seat reservations was published in March 2010. The paper aimed to highlight passengers experiences and shortcomings in reservation procedures suggesting possible improvements. The paper generated wide ranging responses from train operators and users.

(report on website [www.travelwatch-northwest.org.uk](http://www.travelwatch-northwest.org.uk))

## ***Appendix D Accounts 2010/11***

### **PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT year ended 31 March 2011**

|                                    | £           | £                                   |
|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>TURNOVER</b>                    |             | <b>12767</b>                        |
| <b>COST OF SALES</b>               |             |                                     |
| Project fees                       | <b>5819</b> |                                     |
| Administration fees                | <b>7215</b> |                                     |
| <b>Total</b>                       |             | <b>13034</b>                        |
| <b>GROSS LOSS</b>                  |             | <b>(267)</b>                        |
| <b>OVERHEADS</b>                   |             |                                     |
| Travel and subsistence             | <b>3040</b> |                                     |
| Office costs & sundries            | <b>1389</b> |                                     |
| <b>Total</b>                       |             | <b><u>4429</u></b><br><b>(4696)</b> |
| <b>OTHER OPERATING INCOME</b>      |             | <b>196</b>                          |
| <b>OPERATING LOSS</b>              |             | <b>(4500)</b>                       |
| Bank interest                      |             | <b>15</b>                           |
| <b>LOSS ON ORDINARY ACTIVITIES</b> |             | <b><u>(4485)</u></b>                |

### ***Fees paid to Directors for specific assignments and Directors Expenses***

| <b>Name</b>              | <b>Fees (£)</b> | <b>Expenses (£)</b> |
|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| <b>Chris Dale</b>        | <b>950.00</b>   | <b>616.15</b>       |
| <b>John Murray</b>       | <b>150.00</b>   | <b>3.90</b>         |
| <b>John Owen</b>         | <b>1200.00</b>  | <b>119.85</b>       |
| <b>David Butterworth</b> | <b>1500.00</b>  | <b>0.00</b>         |
| <b>Richard Rollins</b>   | <b>250.00</b>   | <b>0.00</b>         |

## **Appendix E Forecast Expenditure**

### **2011/12**

|                                |              |              |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Fees -                         |              |              |
| <i>Administration</i>          | <i>7000</i>  |              |
| <i>Project</i>                 | <i>10000</i> |              |
| Total Fees                     |              | 17000        |
| Travel expenses,etc            |              | 1500         |
| Meeting costs                  |              | 1000         |
| Reports & Publicity            |              | 1500         |
| Office (postage, internet,etc) |              | 2000         |
| <b>Total</b>                   |              | <b>23000</b> |

### **2012/13**

It is envisaged that funding requirements will be at a similar level to 2011/12 taking into account inflation.

|                                |              |              |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Fees -                         |              |              |
| <i>Administration</i>          | <i>7500</i>  |              |
| <i>Project</i>                 | <i>11000</i> |              |
| Total Fees                     |              | 18500        |
| Travel expenses,etc            |              | 1800         |
| Meeting costs                  |              | 1500         |
| Reports & Publicity            |              | 1600         |
| Office (postage, internet,etc) |              | 2500         |
| <b>Total</b>                   |              | <b>25900</b> |

# ***Appendix F Membership (at October 2011)***

## **Organisation/Name**

Blackpool & Fylde RUA  
Bus Users UK  
Campaign for Better Transport Cheshire  
Campaign for Better Transport Lancashire  
Cheadle & District RUG  
Cheshire West & Chester Council  
Copeland Rail Users Group  
Crewe & Shrewsbury Passengers Association  
CTC  
East Cheshire Lines RUG  
Friends of Eccles Station  
Goyt Valley RUA  
Greater Manchester Transport Campaign  
Kendal & District Bus Users  
Lakes Line RUG  
Lancaster & Skipton RUG  
Merseytravel  
North Cheshire RUG  
NWTAR & CPRE(NW)  
Ormskirk Preston Southport TA  
Railfuture NW  
Ribble Valley Rail  
Rochdale Transport Group  
Skipton East Lancashire Rail Action Partnership  
STELLA  
STORM  
University of Chester  
Wirral Transport Users Association  
Wrexham Birkenhead RUA  
Mr JF Aaron  
David Butterworth  
Janet Cuff  
Adrian Dunning  
Phil Edwards  
Leonard Green  
Philip Harrison  
John Hart  
Christopher Holmes  
Peter Johnston  
Geoff Kerr  
Tom Lunt  
Stuart Murray  
Brendan O'Friel  
John Owen  
Keith Pennyfather  
Malcolm Richardson  
David Robinson  
Peter Robinson  
Ian Stuart  
Mr JM Warner  
Ian Watson  
Tony Young