

***Winner of CILT award for best practice in passenger transport (2013)***

***promoting quality public transport.....***

## **CONFERENCE REPORT**

**Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2017**

**Winmarleigh House, Warrington**

**Conference kindly supported by Arriva Rail North, First TransPennine Express  
& Transport & Training Services Group (UK)**

### **1. Welcome and Introduction**

The Chairman, Chris Dale, welcomed delegates to Warrington and thanked Arriva Rail North, First TransPennine Express & Transport & Training Services Group (UK) for their generous support to the Conference.

He referred to the large amount of rail engineering work currently taking place in the North West and the contribution of TWNW in advising on rail replacement arrangements. Meetings had been attended with Transport Focus, Northern Rail and TransPennine Express and positive outcomes had emerged in the area of information provision and staffing, in particular bus driver helpfulness. He also mentioned the enormous amount of engineering work at Eden Brows on the Settle – Carlisle line and that it is scheduled to finish on schedule at the end of March.

He was pleased to report that Lancashire and Derbyshire County Councils had extended their respective bus subsidies for a further 12 months.

He congratulated Board member David Butterworth on a campaign he led in the Clitheroe area to instate bus services to serve new housing developments and also remote rural locations under a Section 106 planning agreement and commended his tenacity in this achievement against indifference from developers and the local authorities.

Chris then referred to the recently launched TWNW report entitled “Integration between Rail and Bus at Rail Stations.” This had been the result of surveys taken at 42 medium sized stations and indicated that, whilst information was available at most locations, it was inconsistent and variable, and at some stations (notably Virgin West Coast stations) particularly poor. The report is available on the TWNW website.

Finally he mentioned that the liaison and advisory work of TWNW continued and that 26 meetings with rail, bus, local authorities and other transport agencies had been attended since October 2016.

## **2. Senior Traffic Commissioner** ***Beverley Bell***

The Conference was addressed by the Senior Traffic Commissioner, Mrs. Beverly Bell who is leaving her position at the end of May. She had been appointed to the position of Traffic Commissioner in April 2000 and her role was to support and improve the public transport industry, making buses cleaner, more user friendly and punctual. Whilst this seems a simple set of tasks there are numerous challenges in achieving delivery. She congratulated TWNW on its achievements and said that the organisation played a vital role in its advisory, counselling and liaison work in representing passengers.

She described the life changes that have taken place between 2000 and the present day and said that public transport provision has reflected them in many ways and must continue to do so. It affects the lives of many people in providing access to health services, work, education, and leisure and social activity. She had been particularly concerned about early running of buses and traffic congestion, both of which required better management intervention and coordination. She was also concerned about the growth in mental health in the population which was now becoming a big issue for operators in making provision for both passengers and personnel.

The appointment of her successor will be announced by the DfT shortly and she hoped that the good dialogue with TWNW will continue into the future. With the Buses Bill currently being finalised there will be many issues to face. She ended by thanking TWNW for its support and dialogue during her tenure and wished it well for the future.

## **3. Northern Rail and TransPennine Express Franchises – 10 months on.** ***Alex Hynes, Managing Director, Arriva Rail North*** ***Leo Goodwin, Managing Director, TransPennine Express***

**Alex Hynes** began by describing the £1 billion investment being made by Northern Rail in new trains and infrastructure. 50% will be allocated to the 98 new trains being ordered, to come into service on a roll out between December 2018 and 2020, and the refurbishment of the existing fleet of train units being retained, to the same standard. Testing of the 1<sup>st</sup> new unit will take place in Spring/Summer 2017. All the Pacers will be decommissioned. 2000 extra services per week will be provided and they will offer an increase of 37% in capacity in the morning peak. 400 additional Sunday services will also be introduced into timetables. Seating design featuring an improved “pitch” has been agreed after consultation with customers.

A new management structure has been put into place with a regional structure featuring 4 Regional Directors with decision making powers. In the North West. One will be based in Manchester to cover the central regions and another will be based in Preston to cover the west region. A new customer service strategy has been worked

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up in liaison with Transport Focus. 55 Travel Safety Officers have been recruited for passenger assistant purposes and CCTV will be built into all vehicles.

£60 million will be spent on mostly small and medium sized stations and they will benefit from a total of 638 new ticket vending machines, new LED lighting, better accessibility and several “Harrington Humps.” Ticket gates are being introduced at 16 stations and at Bolton, Liverpool and Salford where they are in operation, revenue has increased by 50%. Improvements in training are being implemented for revenue collection staff and more “roving” station retail staff and passenger assistants are being deployed. Better use of digital technology systems is expected to improve feedback and returns as well as identifying operational issues.

A fresh marketing campaign is taking place under a “Proud to be Northern” banner and passenger information is being improved. A “Buy before you Board” campaign and “Delay Repay” will also feature. Contributions to Community Rail Partnerships are being doubled and an alliance with Network Rail has been set up to manage engineering disruption more effectively.

Employee engagement is receiving investment in skills, training empowerment and ideas encouragement. This will also be delivered under the “Proud to be Northern” banner.

Completion of the investment is expected to be achieved during 2020.

**Leo Goodwin** then introduced the investment programme being undertaken by TransPennine Express. The North has an economy of £300 billion and is home to 11 million people. Its Gross Value is growing at a significantly slower rate than the South East and other parts of the UK. Here, only 1 in 3 people use rail for long distance journeys compared with 2 in 3 elsewhere. As part of the Northern Powerhouse initiative it will need a world class transport system.

Under the vision statement “Taking the North Further” FTPE is making an investment of £500 million. This will feature 220 new inter-city carriages in train units capable of travelling up to 140mph (although current maximum will be 125mph). 87 existing train carriages will be retained having had a £30 million refurbishment to a consistent standard. The new fleet will provide an increase of 110% in capacity and 13 million new seats per year. A number of trains will be bi-modal and a fleet of loco-hauled intercity trains will also feature. The new trains will commence in service during 2018 and the refurbished present fleet will be rolled out from Spring 2017. All trains will provide free Wi-Fi and an on-board entertainment system. Improvements to catering are also being rolled out and hot food will be available on the new trains.

Journey times will be accelerated and the Manchester-Leeds corridor will benefit from 6 trains per hour. A new Liverpool–Edinburgh service via the east coast mainline will be introduced as well as a Liverpool–Glasgow service via the west coast main line and more Manchester-Glasgow services will be introduced. Train services will operate a 7-day timetable with Sunday services at the same level as weekdays and there will be later evening trains.

£18 million will be invested in the 19 stations controlled by FTPE featuring ticket vending machines, improvements to toilet provision and the general passenger environment. Total journey ticketing will be introduced to include train/bus travel and promotions to complement major festivals, such as Hull-City of Culture, will take place. The investment programme is expected to be completed by the end of 2019

Subsequent discussion featured

- Chinley station – agreed to meet with local group.
- 1st Class on Northern trains – no plans to introduce at present.
- TfGM's proposal to take over station management – consultation with best outcome for passengers. Franchisees fully engaged.
- DDA on rail replacement buses – acknowledged in need of attention and defined national standard desirable.
- Current capacity and punctuality issues – an acute shortage of diesel trains nationally. Present fleet coping as best it can, extra locos for Cumbrian coast services. Rail/Transport for the North a critical player.
- Seat window alignment – 95% alignment in new trains. Leg room – working with Transport Focus, conscious of leg room argument and took into account with 158 refurbishment review.
- Ticket compatibility with barriers – gates being upgraded & machines amended.
- Platforms 15/16 at Man Picc.– train operational review seeking best financial solution.
- Delay repay periods – to be improved.
- Manchester Airport station – automated ticket gates and ticket hall redevelopment to be implemented.
- TOWNW rail/ bus report – Steve Green has a copy of report and will meet TOWNW.
- Engineering diversions – Leo Goodwin expressed a desire to make more use of diversionary routes.

#### **4. Network Warrington**

***David Blainey, Operations Director***

Network Warrington has a 117-year history. It is now 1 of 7 remaining municipal transport operations in the UK. Currently it has a fleet of 89 buses, 240 staff and carries 6 million passengers per year with services throughout Warrington, and to Leigh, Altrincham, Earlestown and Northwich.

Current developments include real time passenger information at bus stops, via apps (downloadable from Traveline, Google or Apple) and network monitoring. An ongoing review is taking place to consider the current network to ensure that it is meeting the needs of the locality in the light of developments.

Nationally the bus is a vital part of the transport provision. Value to town centres is:

- 1.4 billion shopping trips each year
- £27 billion spend on retail goods
- 33% of retail & leisure trips to urban centres

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- 29% of expenditure on retail and entertainment in urban centres

Congestion remains an issue and a challenge with the average speed of general traffic now 3% slower in 2015 compared with 2014. Traffic is expected to increase by between 19% and 55% by 2040 and in major cities average speed is less than 10mph. Over the last 50 years bus journey times have increased by almost 50% in urban areas.

Air pollution is responsible for more deaths than either obesity and passive smoking. Effective bus priority measures can deliver up to 75% fewer emissions per bus passenger kilometre than for car passengers. A new generation of cleaner buses is already saving 55,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions per year and delivering £8 million in health and environment benefits.

Buses provide a vital contribution to re-generation. 3.5 million travel to work by bus and users create £64 million worth of goods and services. Every £1 spent in bus priority measures delivers up to £7 of net economic benefits.

1 in 4 people in the UK are at risk of social inclusion and 1 in 4 people lacks access to a car. A 10% improvement in bus service connectivity is associated with a 3.6% reduction in deprivation and the free bus passes deliver £1.7 billion in annual net benefits.

The forthcoming government's **Bus Services Bill** aims to:

- Grow bus passenger numbers
- Tackle air quality hotspots
- Improve bus services for passengers
- Enable a thriving and innovative bus sector
- Help cities and regions to unlock economic growth opportunities

It is intended that the aims will be achieved by strengthening arrangements for partnership working, introducing new franchising powers with local decisions and making and providing a step change in information provision to passengers.

Partnerships will be based on local authority measures comparing provision of traffic management against bus priority and will also broaden requirements to bus operators for marketing of services and fare/ticketing availability. Enhanced Partnerships will enable local authorities to work with bus operators to set standards for frequencies, apply ticketing requirements to operators and assume responsibility for bus registration from Traffic Commissioners. Combined authorities with elected Mayors will assume powers to franchise bus services and to determine provision, with operators bidding to run them.

Information to bus passengers is to be as good, if not better than that available to rail passengers and multi modal and operators ticketing schemes will be considered for the purposes of "seamless" travel.

Subsequent discussion featured:

- Potential for a tram system in Warrington – currently no resources but achievable if finance can be provided.
- Abuse of bus lanes by traffic – cameras being installed at key locations.
- Travel Passes – under review.
- Unsatisfactory connectivity at Warrington rail stations – difficult to achieve without affecting other route points.
- Competition from other operators – challenge that is part of modern competition regime.

## 5. “Just a Minute”

The potential for the reopening of the Sandbach – Middlewich rail line to provide services for new housing and retail developments along its route was discussed, also franchising of bus services and the role of the new mayors in Merseyside and Greater Manchester.

## 6. Next Conference

Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> June, 2017, Merseytravel, Liverpool

## Attendance

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Name	Organisation
Adrian Swift	
Aidan Turner Bishop	Campaign for Better Transport Lancashire
Alan Goater	Chinley & Buxworth Transport Group
Alex Hynes	Northern Rail
Andy Saunders	Manchester Airport
Beverley Bell	Senior Traffic Commissioner
Bill Hamilton	Transport & Training Services Group (UK)
Bob Withy	North Cheshire Rail Users Group
Caroline Whittam	Transport for Greater Manchester
Cedric Green	North Cheshire Rail Users Group
Chris Bates	TravelWatch South
Chris Bowles	Stagecoach UK Bus
Chris Coleman	Metrolink RATP Dev
Chris Dale	TravelWatch NorthWest
Chris Holmes	Chartered Institute of Logistics & Transport
Chris Smyth	Heritage Railway Association
Christopher Norton	Ralfuture North West

Cllr Norman Briggs	Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council
Colin Barnett	
Colin Kennington	TravelWatch NorthWest
Craig Harrop	Northern Rail
Craig Wright	South East Manchester CRP
David Armstrong	
David Blainey	Network Warrington
David Butterworth	TravelWatch NorthWest
David Culshaw	Friends of Hindley station
David Evans	Blackpool & Fylde Rail Users Association
David Godsmark	
David Leigh	
David Powell	
David Thrower	
Dawn McGough	Community Rail Cumbria
Dennis Harrison	Wirral Transport Users Association
Don Jary	
Dwayne Wells	First Manchester
Fred Kennington	
Graham Ellis	TravelWatch SouthWest
Harry Boardman	Mid Cheshire Rail Users Assoc.
Ian Allsopp	Wirral Transport Users Association
Ian Stuart	
James Harkins	Light Rail (UK)
Janet Briggs	North Cheshire Rail Users Group
Jeremy Walker	Blackpool Council
John Aaron	
John Berry	Ormskirk Preston Southport Travellers Association.
John Bone	
John Culshaw	Mattersons Cranes
John Hobbs	North Cheshire Rail Users Group
John Lobb	
John Moorhouse	TravelWatch NorthWest
John Owen	TravelWatch NorthWest
John Ryan	Wirral Transport Users Association
Jordan Sargeant	Transport Focus
Judie Collins	Mid Cheshire Rail Users Association
Keith Pennyfather	
Ken Harper	Friends of the Settle-Carlisle Line
Ken McKelvie	Ramblers Association

Ken Swallow	Chartered Institute of Logistics & Transport (NW)
Leo Goodwin	TransPennine Express
Liam Sumpter	Northern Rail
Lisa Owen	Transport & Training Services Group (UK)
Lucja Majewski	TransPennine Express
Malcolm Conway	TravelWatch NorthWest
Malcolm Richardson	Blackpool & Fylde RUA
Mandy Davies	Blackpool Transport Services Ltd
Margaret Mitchell	
Martin Keating	Northern Rail
Martin Shier	Transport for Greater Manchester
Mike Laycock	Wirral Transport Users Association
Mike Machin	Lancaster & Morecambe RUG
Miriam Walton	Chinley & Buxworth Transport Group
Norman Adams	
Paul Grant	Lancaster, Morecambe & District RUG
Peter Lamkin	Wrexham- Bidston Rail Users Association
Phil Smith	ROSSO
Philip Briggs	North Cheshire Rail Users Group
Philip Harrison	
Richard Lysons	
Robert Florence	North Cheshire Rail Users Group
Robert Parker	Furness Line Action Group
Robert Talbot	TravelWatch NorthWest
Roger Barton	Goyt Valley Rail Users Association
Roy Chapman	
Sandra Dutson	RoadPeace NW
Simon Reynish	Chartered Institute of Logistics & Transport
Simon Shrouder	Transport for the North
Simon Temple	Goyt Valley Rail Users Association
Stuart Patrick	Friends of Rose Hill
Tim Young	Campaign for Better Transport Lancs
Tony Fawthrop	Greater Manchester Transport Campaign
Tony Potts	Copeland Rail Users Group
Tony Young	TravelWatch NorthWest