

TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

PUBLIC TRANSPORT PANEL

Thursday, 17th September, 2009

Present: Cllr M A C Balfour (Chairman), Cllr M R Rhodes (Vice-Chairman), Cllr C Brown, Cllr D W P Evans, Cllr Mrs C A F Grant, Cllr Miss J L Sergison, Cllr C P Smith and Cllr M S Worrall.

Mr M Spalding (Arriva), Mr I Paterson (Medway Valley Community Rail Partnership), Mr D Kings (Kent Association of Local Councils), Mr R Howkins (Network Rail), Mr M Gibson (South Eastern Trains) and Mr L Shields (Tonbridge Rail Commuters).

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs Simpson, D Smith, Sullivan and Thornewell.

PART 1 - PUBLIC

**PT
09/010** **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made.

**PT
09/011** **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Public Transport Panel held on 31 March 2009 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**PT
09/012** **PRELIMINARY UPDATE ON PROGRESS ON ROUTE UTILISATION STRATEGY & OVERVIEW OF THE NATIONAL STATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME**

Mr R Howkins of Network Rail provided a preliminary assessment of the comments received during the consultation on the Route Utilisation Strategy and overview of the National Station Improvement Programme. Particular attention was drawn to the considerable responses received in respect of the Kent and East Sussex London Peak Options and to the further development of high speed rail services beyond 2009. Copies of the Borough Council's responses to the RUS consultation were set out in annexes 1a and 1b circulated with the agenda. It was anticipated that the publication of the final Strategy document would be Winter 2010.

The Panel's attention was drawn to the redevelopment of Tonbridge Station, under the National Stations Improvement Plan fund, to increase customer satisfaction of the facilities provided. The Chairman expressed the hope that early notice of the proposed improvements

would be received to allow the Borough Council and other interested parties to contribute constructively on the proposals.

Copies of the presentation would be circulated at the request of the Chairman.

**PT
09/013 WEST MALLING / MAIDSTONE EAST LINE: DECEMBER 2009
TIMETABLE CHANGES**

Details of the Borough Council's comments on West Malling/Maidstone East Line - December 2009 Timetable Changes were set out in Annex 2 circulated with the agenda. Mr M Gibson, Public Affairs Manager at South Eastern, presented details of the draft timetable and advised that the final version would be available from October following receipt of a decision by the Department for Transport on the services on the Maidstone East line in respect of the costings submitted to the Department for Transport regarding the operation of a limited shoulder peak service to Cannon Street and Charing Cross stations. Details of the proposals were contained in the presentation submitted in relation to the following item.

**PT
09/014 FEEDBACK ON THE 'PREVIEW' HIGH SPEED SERVICES AND ANY
OTHER TOPICAL ISSUES**

Mr M Gibson, Public Affairs Manager at South Eastern, provided a presentation on the December 2009 timetable, the award of safer stations accreditation to West Malling and Tonbridge Stations, proposed fare increases and performance and reliability of trains over the summer months.

Copies of the presentation would be circulated at the request of the Chairman.

**PT
09/015 MEDWAY VALLEY LINE CURRENT DEVELOPMENT AND
INITIATIVES**

Mr I Paterson, the Community Rail Project Officer, provided an update on activity and projects undertaken in the last 6 months.

Copies of the presentation would be circulated at the request of the Chairman.

**PT
09/016 ARRIVA SERVICES – GENERAL UPDATE**

Mr M Spalding provided a general update on services provided by Arriva. He indicated that hard copies of the information provided would be circulated with the Minutes and he outlined changes to the Arriva bus services since April 2009. These included extensions to services provided to Hadlow College (service 6), to Bennett Memorial School (service 147 and 220/221) and services 541 and 542 to Hugh Christie School from Leybourne, West Malling, East Malling and Snodland areas which allowed use to Kent Freedom Pass holders. Reference was also made to the PlusBus service and the introduction of a mobile

phone ticket purchasing scheme.

**PT
09/017** **NU VENTURE – GENERAL UPDATE**

In the absence of Mr Kemp there was no general update at this meeting.

**PT
09/018** **UPDATE ON THE BUS FACILITIES ALONG THE A20 CORRIDOR
AND HOW THIS LINKS IN WITH THE MEDWAY VALLEY PUBLIC
TRANSPORT STRATEGY**

Mr D Washington, Public Transport Planner at Kent Highways Services, provided a brief update on bus facilities along the A20 corridor and linkages to the Medway Valley Public Transport Strategy.

**PT
09/019** **UPDATE ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT ISSUES**

Mr D Washington, Public Transport Planner at Kent Highways Services, provided a brief update on public transport issues, making particular reference to the Kent Freedom Pass, infrastructure developments and minor changes to the school bus services provided by Griffin Bus.

Mr Washington welcomed the provision of a new coach service to Gatwick Airport operated by Excel Coaches and offered to investigate this after the meeting. He subsequently provided the following contact details: www.airportbycoachmedway.co.uk

Mr Washington advised that the Department for Transport would announce the outcome of the Kick Start bids on 1 October 2009.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE

**PT
09/020** **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

No items were considered in private.

The meeting ended at 2148 hours