

TRANSPORT 4 ALL – 25.01.18
Sheffield Town Hall - Room G42

1. Welcomes/Apologies

People present

Shel Turner (MT) – Chair
Grace Parry (GP)
Lee Harker (LH)
James Martin (JM)
Alan Thorpe (AT)
Becky Marson (BM)
Andy Metcalfe (AM) – First Bus
Nigel Wragg (NW) – Stagecoach Supertram
John Hudson (JH) – SCC Transport & Facilities Management
Saskia Peet (SP) – Sheffield Safe Places Scheme Co-ordinator
Mitch Genner (MG) – SCC Adult Social Care
Councillor Ian Auckland (IA) – SCC Shadow Cabinet
Paula Turner (PT) – SYPTE
Duncan Turner (DT) – SYPTE
Cate Jockel (CJ) - SCC Transport Planning
Simon Ovenden (SO) – SCC Planning

Welcome to Becky, Mitch and Duncan attending for first time.

Apologies

Stacey Anderson (SA)
David Caton (DC) – Stagecoach Bus
Ian Jenkinson (IJ) – Sheffield Community Transport
Councillor Douglas Johnson (DJ)

2) Minutes of October 2017

The draft minutes were agreed as an accurate record.

3) Updates since October meeting

a) Department for Transport's (DfT) Draft Accessibility Action Plan & consultation event in Leeds: JM, IJ and PT went to the Leeds workshop. A T4A response was sent to DfT before the closing date (15/11) and SYPTE also sent a response.

b) Taxis Update: no-one at the meeting had anything from the Disability Hub's Transport Action Group (TAG) on taxi matters: CJ will get an update. Questions were raised including:

- could taxi firms train up drivers as specialists for people needing different types of assistance?
- what responsibility do drivers have for assisting people from door to taxi and vice versa? The groups' view was that there is no requirement (several possible reasons). Also that it is best to be specific about what assistance is needed when making a booking.

Also, AT had reported 2 incidents to Taxi Licensing in December and had been impressed that officers had subsequently visited him to take statements. This may reflect a new complaints process? This was something that Taxi Licensing and the TAG both wanted to develop.

Further issues raised were:

- can people self-refer to Travel Solutions? MG responded that they can (this is now part of the Wrap-Around service) but there is a waiting list;
- what to do if community transport cancels? PT responded that these should be reported through Traveline or online – as can all other public transport issues. Either phone Traveline on 01709 515151 report or online at <https://www.travelsouthyorkshire.com/contactus/>

c) Audio Visual (AV) on bus service 120: this was launched on 04/12/17 on 37 buses, both First and Stagecoach, on route 120. There have been a small number of technical problems (AT noted) and MT noted that wheelchair users can't see the screen but may be OK to use the audio, but may also obstruct the screen for others. This is a pilot on how retrofitting equipment works. The Project Manager Praveena Mohanamurali (SYPTTE) is seeking feedback: there will be a feedback form which will be circulated to T4A later. Also if anyone would like to help promote AV as a good thing, please contact PT.

d) Visit to station with Area Station Manager: MT, JM, AT, Craig & CJ recently met with Wayne Kyte, Area Station Manager, to discuss what access improvements could be made at the station: Wayne is planning a bid to East Midlands Trains accessibility pot for modest improvements. He has compiled the suggestions made into a list. GP added that signage could be simplified with easy-read messages and less clutter so essential messages stand out more.

4) Supertram timetable changes from 28.01.18

NW introduced these. They are the first changes for 15 years. However, trams have been struggling to keep to the timetable and have often been 2/3 minutes down. The operator has wanted to change the timetable for 2 years or so, but has been waiting for more info on how tram-train will operate, especially at the Cathedral: the new timetable takes that into account.

The change is from a 10 min frequency to 12 mins at peak times, so 6 per hour to 5 per hour, adding in some journey time plus more time for the driver at the termini. It needs one extra crew to operate it, so is not about cost-saving. The change should improve reliability; recoverability and timetable robustness.

The timetable info is now split by line. NW noted that 32,000 leaflets are being delivered to households along the route and staff will be on-street to help when it's launched. JM asked whether large-print (16 font) would be available? NW is checking whether this will fit on A3: if so, then yes. If not, then SYPTTE will produce as requested. Online timetables: NW would appreciate feedback from JM and AT on the screen-reader facility.

Further issues raised were:

- Tram real-time announcements: MT noted that on-vehicle announcements on one tram were sometimes wrong. NW responded that there have been problems with a software fix to some old kit so that sometimes the system has had to be turned off with drivers making announcements. He also noted that the new CityLink vehicles only do one voice, not different ones for each route like the original vehicles.
- MT queried drivers' vision of inside and outside the vehicle, following an incident where her wheel had become stuck. NW responded that drivers check both internal & external mirrors, checking for movement, but it can be difficult if very busy, and they can't open the doors from the cab. On the City Link vehicles, drivers will have CCTV and will be able to open the doors from the cab: also the door area is less cluttered with poles etc and there is a low-level electronic beam for protection.
- GP and BM asked about height differences between the platform and the vehicle. NW responded that this has to be within certain tolerances and this is regularly tested. The tram level at a stop is affected by how many people get on and off so, at busy stops with lots of passengers, alighting will mean a bigger 'step' but it should be within the tolerances. The tram will auto-level but only when moving.
- AT and JM asked about the tram-train stop at Rotherham station, which is a tram stop at a train station. "Barrow crossings" (track level crossing like that at all tram stops) and low level platforms are not "the done thing" in rail. Therefore there have been lots of concerns and discussions in meetings to agree the way forward. NW will update AT and JM with the discussions and outcome on tactile marking of platforms.
- NW also reported that the tram-train route is being commissioned and tested and driver-training will follow shortly. If people are willing, there may be an opportunity to take part in some PR and photoshoots for the Disabled Persons Protection Policy (DPPP) document.
- IA asked about delay and overspend. NW responded that Network Rail had overlooked some of the aspects that needed to be considered to operate both as train and tram. It also had to deal with changes to other related plans such as rail electrification.

5) Paulley one year on

Following the Supreme Court judgment in Jan 2017, there were no further legal steps: it was for operators to consider what changes were needed to help drivers request more strongly that people vacate wheelchair spaces.

AM noted that staff were informed that they should strongly request. They should understand the clear wording in the Conditions of Travel (August 2017). This message has been repeated again recently as it is one year on from the judgment. His view is that the case has brought the issue more into the open so drivers and passengers understand the situation more. He thinks that drivers are doing better now (although MT had a bad week recently) and that most problems are caused by other passengers refusing to move and not by drivers not asking. Where drivers are at fault, the operator will take action (remedial training and disciplinary procedures) but can only do this if it has sufficient info to be sure who the driver is. IA asked whether the operator could refuse to carry a passenger who won't move. AM responded that the policy is not to ask someone who is already on the bus to get off.

AM noted that bus (PSV) drivers must have a CPC (certificate of professional competence) and this involves 35 hours of training in every 5 year-period. Focus for First this year is a training package called “Journeybuilders”, which looks at how customers see and experience things; how they feel about different experiences; and contrasting it with the driving experience; using examples both good and bad. GP asked whether this included examples from customers with hidden disabilities: she has offered to help with this. AM is keen to discuss with GP how she could be involved: First’s training is in-house and local which could help T4A to have input.

Passing praise reports to Traveline is good as it will go to operator and then on to the driver. NW reported that letters of praise go up on the staff noticeboard in the canteen at the Supertram depot. Also SYPT (Traveline) and Operators would like examples of good practice as praise can encourage other drivers to follow that example.

NW reported that Supertram has changed its wording to staff from “you should ...” to “you must” But it is still down to the individual’s ability to deliver in particular situations.

PT noted that she attends meetings in Leeds of a group called Talking Travel (run by Inclusion North (a Yorkshire-wide group)): this is looking at driver training to see what is and isn’t covered.

MT noted that some of the newer buses were better designed, with wheelchair and pushchair spaces: AM reported that there would be 42 more of these buses imminently.

Other passengers: there are clear notices on the vehicles but GP wondered about some more thought-provoking notices, maybe at bus stops? To help develop peer pressure and help with conflict resolution. PT to consider with colleagues.

MG asked what the procedure was if there was already a wheelchair user on the bus so that another wheelchair user had to be left at the stop: the driver uses radio to pass the info onto the next bus – especially important where the location isn’t regularly served.

6) Info on new consultations

- **Office of Rail and Road consultation on Passenger Assist:** responses by 31.01.18. JM is on with this, including incorporating the appropriate sections from T4A’s feedback to DfT in 2017 on rail issues;
- **Sheffield City Council’s Transport Vision:** responses by 06.02.18. (This Vision is what the joint T4A/ALG meeting in August 2017 was about);
- **Sheffield City Region Transport Strategy 2018-2040:** responses by 01.04.18 – this will replace the South Yorkshire Local Transport Plan (LTP) and is a Statutory Document;
- **Transport for the North Transport Strategy:** responses by 10.04.18: Sheffield event to be held on 14.02.18;

- **Government consultation on Blue Badge eligibility:** responses by 18.03.18. PT mentioned a concern at SYPTE about breaking the link between ENCTS passes and Blue Badge availability.

7) **Next Meeting**

Thursday 26th April - 10:00-12:00

This will include PT's colleagues at SYPTE presenting and discussing (1) how bus diversions and disruptions are communicated and (2) different ways to do journey planning.

Later 2018 Meetings will be:

Thursday 19th July – 10:00–12:00

Thursday 18th October – 14:00-16:00

ALL IN TOWN HALL ROOM G42