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SOUTHEND-ON-SEA BOROUGH COUNCIL

Meeting of Public Transport and Buses Working Party

Date: Monday, 23rd October, 2017
Place: Committee Room 2 - Civic Suite

Present: Councillor S Aylen (Chair)
Councillors M Borton, L Davies, D Garston, S Habermel and A Jones
and Mr S Knightley (SABUG)

In Attendance: T Row, N Hoskins, A Dalton and J Mayhew

Start/End Time: 6.30 p.m. - 8.35 pm.

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Byford, Cox and Terry (no substitutes).

2 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Aylen and D Garston declared non-pecuniary interests in Agenda Item nos. 4 (First group), 5 (Update on Current Issues), 6 (Southend Travel Centre), 7 (Bus Timetable Updates) and 8 (Service 11a) on the grounds that they were bus pass holders.

3 Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 24th April, 2017

Resolved:-

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 24th April 2017 be received and confirmed as a correct record.

4 First Group

The Working Party welcomed Mr Julian Elliot (Network Manager) of First Buses, who had been invited to the meeting to give an update on the services provided by First Buses.

Members noted the update and took the opportunity to ask a number of questions which were duly responded to.

There had been some minor changes to services. These included the termination of the 24 service on Sundays as a result of declining passenger numbers. There had also been an increase in the frequency of the 26 service at peak times on Mondays to Fridays.

A use of a double deck bus had been trialled on the X30 route. The trial was undertaken at the same times each day to gauge customer opinion. Results of the customer feedback were currently being assessed.

The approach taken by bus companies when seeking proof of age of students was also discussed.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

5 Update of Current Issues

The Working Party received an oral update on current issues.

The Working Party noted that 4 new bus shelters were to be installed shortly. 2 were being replaced in Hadleigh Road and Cranleigh Drive, Leigh on Sea. 1 had been requested to be installed at Leigh Station and another had been requested in Prittlewell Chase at its junction with Southbourne Grove on the eastbound carriageway. Councillors in the relevant Wards would be informed of the locations by email prior to installation. Consideration would be given as to whether a bus shelter was needed at a particular prior to any replacement.

The RTPI (real time passenger information) system was progressing well. Some of the older digital displays were being replaced along the London Road.

A number of the timetables originally produced by the Council along the 29 route between Belgrave Road and Coombes Corner required updating. Whilst the timetables were produced by the Council, the frequency of the changes by different operators at differing times, together with differing sizes and locations of the timetables made their updating and replacement by the Council very impracticable. Consideration would be given to updating them on a quarterly basis (if required) with a disclaimer added to the timetable notice that times may have changed since the publication of the notice and passengers should check with the relevant operator. Changes outside these times would generate cost implications which may need to be borne by the relevant operator.

The Working Party also received an oral update on the recent pilot Park and Ride trial that had taken place over the August bank holiday. It was explained that the pilot indicated limited success with 61 tickets being purchased over the whole weekend. Whilst the scheme was still available at weekends, the parking meters indicated that there had been no take up since the bank holiday. The scheme would continue to be monitored over the half term holiday, the Christmas period and Easter Holiday with consideration being given to marketing opportunities and alternative methods of purchasing tickets. The Working Party was encouraged by the result of the initial pilot and felt that the scheme should be extended to include the under used car parking facilities away from the Town Centre such as Leigh Station, the airport and Warner's Bridge.

Resolved:

1. That the report be noted.
2. That Cabinet be requested to investigate the potential for introducing a wider park and ride scheme for the Borough

6 Southend Travel Centre

The Working Party expressed concern at the poor state of repair of the Travel Centre and the delay the repair works being undertaken. The Council's Interim Group Manager - Major Projects & Strategic Transport Policy assured Members that the issues would be investigated and any appropriate repairs would be undertaken as soon as possible.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

7 Bus Timetable Updates

This item was discussed under Agenda item no. 5 as shown under Minute 5.

8 Service 11a

The Working Party noted that the Sunday service 11a, Sutton Cemetery to Chelmsford, provided by Regal Busways had now been. The Council had therefore removed the timetables as Regal Busways had failed to do so. Bus operators would be reminded of their duties in this regard.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

9 Future Items and Date of Next Meeting

Items for the next future meetings included:

- Size of timetables at bus stops and responsibility for updating/removal;
- Statistics for buses held up/cancelled due to delays;
- Park and Ride

Resolved:

That the next meeting of the Working Party take place on Wednesday 5th December 2017 commencing 6.30 p.m.

Chairman: _____

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