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Working Plymouth

Monday 28 October 2013

PRESENT:

Councillor Murphy, in the Chair.
Councillors Mrs Aspinall, Darcy and Wheeler.

Also in attendance: Ralph Ellis (Public Transport Officer), Debbie Newcombe (Public Transport Officer), Gill Peele (Lead Officer), (Helen Rickman (Democratic Support Officer) and Andy Sharp (Public Transport Manager).

The meeting started at 3.30 pm and finished at 5.00 pm.

Note: At a future meeting, the committee will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.

32. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest in accordance with the code of conduct.

33. **MINUTES**

Agreed that the minutes of 30 September 2013 were an accurate record of the meeting.

34. **CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of Chair's Urgent Business.

35. **RESULTS OF THE PARK AND RIDE SURVEY**

Members discussed the results of the Park and Ride survey that took place on Tuesday 8 October 2013 at all three Park and Ride sites.

The following comments were raised by Members:

- (a) the 'comments' section at the end of the survey needed to be condensed as there was a lot of repetition;
- (b) the 'users of Park and Ride from postcodes outside of Plymouth' section of the survey specified 33% of users were from 'other' locations than those specified however Members considered it would have been beneficial if those locations had been identified; Members agreed that the results of the survey, with regards to users outside of Plymouth, should be specified into percentages from Cornwall, Devon and Somerset;

- (c) the results of the survey highlighted that it was mostly women that used the Park and Ride Bus Service;
- (d) in some instances the survey highlighted that some passengers did not use the Park and Ride service closest to them; it was considered that this could be because of a variety of reasons such as work or childcare arrangements;
- (e) part of the survey asked passengers to identify how they travelled to the Park and Ride site and, if by car, how many passengers were car sharing; Members noted that this information was not contained within the analysis of results however officers confirmed that the number was insubstantial as the majority of passengers drove to the car park alone;
- (f) the figures showed that a considerable amount of users of the Park and Ride Service had a concessionary pass and of those users 75% would still use the service if they were required to pay;
- (g) it was considered that the survey was a success as a significant number of passengers participated;
- (h) 90% of passengers rated the service good; Members welcomed the positive feedback;
- (i) a gentleman at the George Interchange Park and Ride site who was questioned as part of the survey was full of praise for the PR3 service; this extended to the service as a whole and members of staff;
- (j) it was considered that the PR3 was a popular service used by visitors to Derriford Hospital and students of the University of St Mark and St John; the service was considered to be cheaper than the cost of parking;

In response to questions raised it was reported by Officers that –

- (l) some of the questionnaire results were incomplete as several passengers had to stop answering questions in order to catch their bus;
- (m) on the day that Councillors and officers were undertaking the park and ride survey, First Group PLC introduced the offer for concessionary pass holders in which they were able to travel on the bus, before 9.30am, for a charge of £1;

Agreed that –

- (l) the results of the survey, with regards to ‘users outside of Plymouth’ section, should be specified into percentages from Cornwall, Devon and Somerset;

- (2) officers would research the possibility of applying the special amenity element of the Travel Concessions (Eligible Services) (Amendment 2009) to the Milehouse, Coypool and the George Interchange Park and Ride services;

36. **WITNESSES**

The Chair informed Members that Richard Stevens, Managing Director for CityBus, would be in attendance at the meeting in order to provide Members with details of his experience having run several Park and Ride Bus Services in the South West and how these Park and Ride services compared with Plymouth.

In response to Members questions Richard Stevens responded that –

- (a) he had previously run Park and Ride Bus Services in Truro, Exeter, Taunton and Bristol;
- (b) from his experience, the majority of Park and Ride Bus Services sold tickets on the bus;
- (c) certain Park and Ride Services had to pay departure charges but these could be changed;
- (d) Park and Ride Bus Services generally had limited stop offs and were direct services however Exeter Green Park and Ride was linked with a registered bus service so had more stop off points;
- (e) Taunton's Park and Ride Bus Service did not allow for concessionary users to use their pass on this service;
- (f) CityBus would be interested in running a Park and Ride Service in Plymouth however this was not yet a priority for the company and would depend on variety of factors including departure charges and passenger numbers;
- (g) it was considered that to allow concessionary users to use their pass on the Park and Ride Bus Service was discretionary;
- (h) it was considered that First Group PLC did a good job running Plymouth's Park and Ride Bus Service; he considered the fares to be perhaps too cheap but ultimately the main factors customers would judge the service on would be quality and frequency;
- (i) Coypool car park had limited car parking spaces and it was unlikely that patronage could be increased for this specific site due to capacity issues;
- (j) Oxford's Park and Ride Bus Service charged passengers to park as well as for

their bus ticket; it was considered that this wouldn't work in Plymouth as there were a lot of competitively priced car parks that could be used if extra charges were added;

- (k) if two operators ran the Park and Ride Bus Service there would be an uplift in perceived frequency and use however it was not known where the new interest for the service would come from;
- (l) it was considered that Coypool Park and Ride site would not work as an interchange as improved facilities would need to be provided.

Under this item members discussed arrangements for the next meeting and confirmed that representatives from TravelWatch SouthWest, First Group PLC (Devon and Cornwall) and Target Travel would be in attendance.

Agreed that –

- (1) invitations should be extended to representatives from the Life Centre and Derriford Hospital;
- (2) officers would provide the panel with more information regarding Cambridge's Park and Ride Bus Service and the effects introducing the charges had on passenger numbers and activity;
- (3) the Council's Head of Integrated Transport would be invited to the next meeting.

37. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

There were no items of exempt business.