

**NOTES FOR NORTH BIRMINGHAM DISTRICT ADVISORY  
GROUP MEETING ON TUESDAY 30<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2010 AT HEAD  
OFFICE TRAINING ROOM, PARK ROAD, ASTON.**

Present:

Peter Kane	Barry Clewer
Gertrude Brambleby	Audrey Hollyoake
Mary Eagan	Jean Burton
Jean Kendal	Constance Baker
Joceylnn Tennant	Sylvia Phillips
Frances Meade	

Present for W.M.S.N.T:

Paul Lakin	District Manager
Duncan Ashlee	Development Manager
Des Rogers	Operations Manager
Kerry Spence	Note Taker

Apologies:

John Yates	Chairperson
June Newbury	
Anthony Duckett	

Apologies for W.M.S.N.T:

Peter Maggs	Chief Executive
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Des gave his apologies as he was leaving the meeting early.

It was agreed in the absence of the chairperson that Paul Lakin would chair the meeting. Paul introduced Peter Kane (Councillor) and explained that he would like Peter to be nominated as the new chairperson as John Yates would no longer be doing it.

Notes from previous meeting were accepted as a true record.

Des Rogers welcomed everyone to their new venue, he explained that we were considering using the training room as a cinema club for passengers to come in on the evenings to watch films. Des explained that the idea had come from South Bham Depot.

Des explained from an operational point of view we would be looking to take members shopping of an evening and at weekends where we had the spare capacity to do so.

Des explained that the Ring and Ride had recently signed a business plan with Centro funding for a further three years in advance. The future is certain of operating in the years to come as Duncan will be explaining later on.

We are trying to get more younger people to utilise the operation and give them more independence. We have more contract vehicles to do this and on the last count we had 347 mini buses on the fleet. We are very proud of what we have achieved.

Barry Clewer wanted to know if there was any possibility of moving the flexibility in booking two weeks in advance and problems with the cross boundary service as the surplus of buses may not occur.

Des explained that it will still occur the way the service is built up and explained about the cross boundary being three days notice.

Duncan also explained the way the advanced booking form system worked and could be sent in up to six months in advance.

Des explained that our main call of business is telephone based and there is a limit on the advanced booking forms so it is not abused.

Duncan explained that he was in the process of changing the advanced booking system, which could mean less journeys but more flexibility as they were guaranteed with a booking form.

### **Development Report**

Duncan explained that the new scheduling system is in the process of being developed but was a slow process as it is a one off bespoke programme.

Duncan explained that the advanced booking forms would be updated in the next news letter.

Duncan explained that we are running a campaign to raise people awareness of the cancellations we are receiving and the impact it has on other users. We can have up to 5000 per month which is a significant number. It would help if we had more notice and then journeys wouldn't be wasted. There will be posters going on the buses.

Duncan explained that we was working with various agencies for younger people and school contracts in the West Midlands area. Under 16's rely on their parents and friends, we want them to understand that we can offer a door to door service in a safe environment where are drivers are fully trained and CRB checked.

Mrs Kendal expressed that she thought they used taxis and had cheaper fares

Duncan agreed but said not all children are in the position to do that.

Constance Baker thought that it needed to be published more

Des explained that the main reason was for the Ring and Ride to gain more trips encourage more younger people to use our transport. Ring and Ride is public transport and until we were on the scene it was very difficult for people to get about.

### **Depot Report**

Paul explained how the new site had completely changed since first moving down to Park Road and how staff had worked very hard to make it happen.

Paul explained how having the vehicles garaged indoors had made such a difference to our drivers especially when we were experiencing the bad weather.

Paul explained that we would like to hold an open day for passengers to have a look round and show you how we operate.

We haven't had any complaints about the new Crafters, which is good news.

Paul explained that we could now offer a contract trip facility, this can be booked at the weekends, holidays and evenings and was available to hire at a reasonable cost. Groups would benefit more as it would work out less costly for each individual.

Mrs Kendal made a point about being fully insured.

Paul explained that the insurance was inclusive

Barry Clewer asked if you would still be picked up from your home address.

Paul explained that it would still be a door to door service.

Paul announced that we had two retirements from the company and wished them both well in the future.

Paul explained that North Birmingham Driver of the year was Ray Pickering, North had won this award for the last two years and how it has become a successful occasion. It will be nice to win it again so we can go for the hatrick.

Paul explained that the trips had picked up even with the bad weather and would like to thank all the drivers and staff as we managed to still operate the service. The evenings are quiet and we would like that to pick up, and how we had lost a lot of trips from the Walsall Illuminations being cancelled for the next few years.

Paul explained that he would be out and about over the next few months promoting the service.

## **Any Other Business**

Jean Kendal wanted to know why you couldn't book the Four Oaks line until 10:00am and what happens if you needed to go out before the line opens.

Paul explained that the areas were broken down and Four Oaks was the last area to be operated in, it was advised to send in an advanced booking form.

Constance Baker asked if any of the schedulers had ever been out on the bus

Paul explained that two of our schedulers had previously been drivers.

Audrey Hollyoake explained that she didn't want to send a booking form in and would rather book the ordinary way

Paul explained that if one form was sent in and then the other users could ring in which meant only one form was being used.

Frances Meade was grateful for the service and wouldn't be able to do without the service.

Barry Clewer asked if we could contact other agencies when we were unable to supply journeys

Paul and Duncan both agreed that this was a good point and would look into it.

Barry Clewer would like to see timetable with Centro and Ring and Ride

Peter Kane would put something forward to Birmingham City Council.

Paul explained that having Peter and Barry on board would be a great asset. We have run the meeting in the past and done the agenda, this is your meeting and it should be run as a group now.

Jocelyn Tennant thought that if you weren't part of a group then you get missed out for a lot of trips

Paul explained that things would also be advertised on the buses.

Jean Kendal wanted to know where the stops were in Sutton Coldfield as it was so congested at the moment.

Paul explained where our stops were

A range of other issues was raised by members, which Paul agreed to look into.

The next meeting will be arranged for Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2010 at 2pm.