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## Meeting of Executive Members for City Strategy and Advisory Panel

8<sup>th</sup> September 2008

Report of the Director of City Strategy

### Quality Bus Partnership Progress Report

#### Summary

1. This report has been requested by Councillor D'Agorne for details on decisions made by the Quality Bus Partnership (QBP) since its re-launch in August 2007. The partnership in this period has undergone something of a transformation with the creation of 'working groups' operating alongside the main QBP. These are tasked with examining specific issues (such as BLISS and marketing) designed to improve the quality of bus services in York. This report will detail the actions and decisions taken by the partnership and, as the report is intended to be a descriptive update, no options will be offered.

#### Background

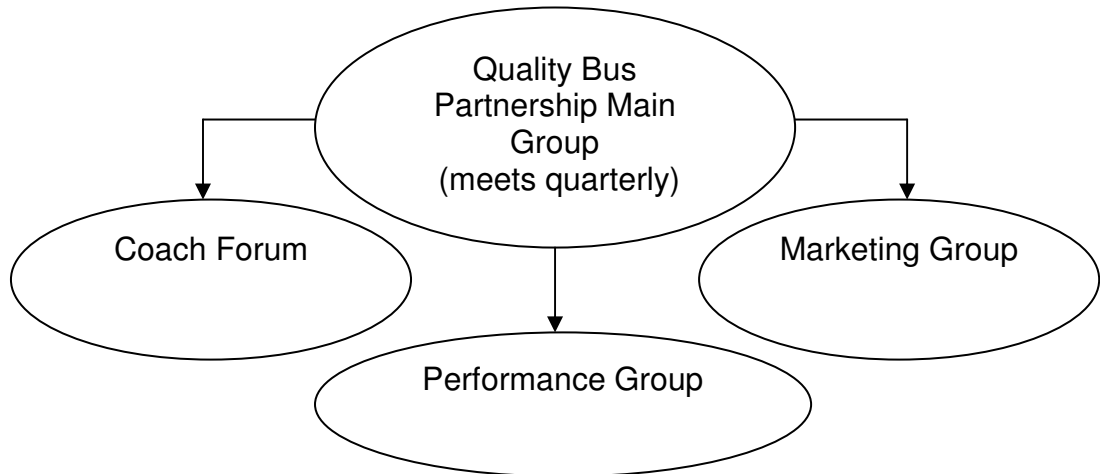
2. The QBP was re-launched in August 2007 to officially recognise the new chair, John Carr (ex West Yorkshire PTE director), to provide increased publicity for the group and to provide new stimulus to take the partnership forward. City of York Council provides administrative support to the partnership, which consists of the following companies, organisations and people.

City of York Council Officers	First York
North Yorkshire Police	Arriva
Confederation of Passenger Transport (Yorkshire Region)	Yorkshire Coastliner/Blazefield
Bus Users UK	East Yorkshire Motor Services (EYMS)
Executive Member for City Strategy	Topline Travel
Shadow Executive Member for City Strategy	Reliance Motor Services

York Pullman are also invited but have not yet signed the partnership terms of reference.

3. These companies and organisations provide a reasonably comprehensive coverage of the city's bus network, only a few smaller companies do not attend. The structure of the partnership is shown in the diagram below.

Figure One:



The three 'sub groups' meet on a more ad-hoc basis as they are designed to work towards completion of specific tasks.

## Update

### Main Group

4. The main QBP group is attended by senior representatives from the organisations / operators listed in paragraph 2. Progress up to April this year has been slightly inhibited by not having a Principal Transport Planner (operations), traditionally the lead City of York Council officer for the QBP. This has now been addressed by the appointment of an officer in this post so increased impetus should result in forthcoming months.
5. The list below shows some items the QBP has to offer and subjects that have been discussed along with a brief synopsis of the outcomes.
  - a. **Integrated Ticketing** – Has been discussed but largely inconclusive in terms of actions. The decision has been taken to wait for the integrating ticketing report before progressing this issue. It is expected that the QBP will occupy a leading role in the development of this project.
  - b. **Communication** – The QBP offers a forum where the sharing of information and examples of good practice can take place. Much of the work done in the past year across the main group and sub-groups has been to improve communication between City of York Council and the operators. This leads to improved relations, increased cooperation and allows the council officers and operators to make decisions with knowledge of forthcoming operational changes / City of York Council schemes respectively.
  - c. **York Northwest** – The bus operators will play a key role in providing the public transport for the development. A workshop is planned for January 2009 when sufficient information should be available to begin involving bus operators in the scheme.

- d. **Advising Groups on Public Transport** – The QBP has been involved in providing views with regard to bus operations to the recent Traffic Congestion Ad Hoc Scrutiny Committee and the Without Walls Partnership.
- e. **Disability Awareness** - A presentation given to the group by a City of York Council officer highlighted some issues affecting disabled people on public transport. The presenting officer has since been provided with; bus operator contact numbers, guidance on what information is required in order to act on any incidents disabled people may encounter and good practice examples of inclusive public transport from elsewhere.

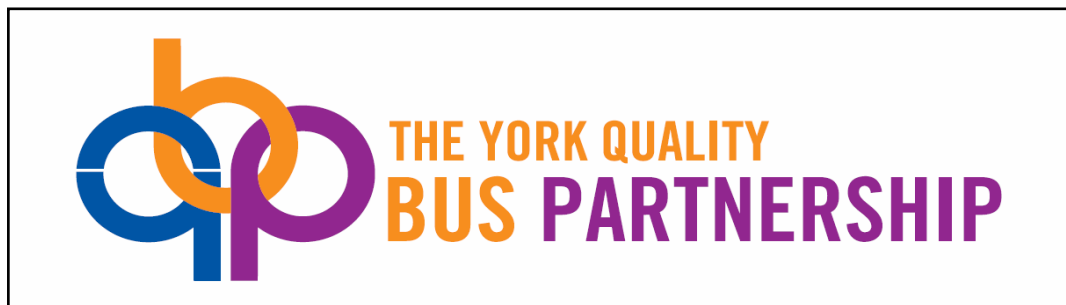
### **Performance Group**

- 6. The performance group has made significant progress in dealing with the real-time information system in York. Bus operators who have vehicles that are real-time enabled have attended meetings along with the main supplier of the equipment (ACIS), representatives of METRO and various council officers. There are many issues associated with achieving complete accuracy with the real-time information in the city, from antennae being dislodged from vehicles by vegetation to ensuring the data is entered into the system correctly. A key component of achieving success with this project is the enthusiasm of the group members. There has been a strong desire amongst all partners to get the system working to a satisfactory level and this has resulted in improvements to real time information in York.
- 7. The issues surrounding real-time information are technical and this is not the appropriate paper for it's detailed discussion, however, some actions taken include:
  - a. Communication has greatly improved between partners, knowledge has been shared and problems with the real time information system were identified in a workshop, which took place in February 2008. This enabled each group with a concern in the system to identify areas of their responsibility.
  - b. The bus stop datasets have been updated and intensively worked on to ensure that the correct information is relayed to the correct stop. It is vital for the information screens (PIP's) at the bus stops to show the correct data in order to increase public confidence in the system.
  - c. Work is progressing to ensure as many services as possible are equipped with real – time information technology so that the majority of passengers have access to the information and operators have access to bus priority measures such as traffic light priority.
- 8. The group has also discussed traffic hotspots with a view to recommending areas where significant improvement could be made for bus operations. This has been established as an issue that requires input from all operators, so will be examined initially in a workshop with the aim of providing a list to City of York Council officers of 'hotspots' where achievable action is most urgently required.

## **Marketing Group**

9. The marketing group is attended by representatives from the City of York Council and marketing professionals from some of the larger operators involved in the partnership – namely, First York, Blazefield and EYMS. The group (in association with the main partnership) was involved in ensuring the bus route map contained accurate data and will be examining ways to improve information at stops for bus passengers. The marketing group is also looking at ways how the partnership can publicise itself and the quality bus partnership logo will be placed in buses operating in the city in the near future. Figure two shows the new logo adopted in conjunction with the relaunch.

Figure Two:



## **Coach Forum**

10. The coach forum has not met regularly however; it was consulted for the recent coach study update, commissioned by Transport Planning Unit and completed by Halcrow.

## **Consultation**

11. No consultation has taken place as this report is for information only

## **Options**

12. There are no options for members to consider.

## **Analysis**

13. This report is intended for information and as such, no analysis of the QBP's constitution and development was requested so this section will not be elaborated upon.

## **Corporate Objectives**

14. The QBP is most directly linked to the corporate priority stated below;  
“Increase the use of public and other environmentally friendly modes of transport”

The QBP will endeavour to contribute towards this priority through its future work programmes.

### **Implications**

15. There are no known implications associated with this report

### **Risk Management**

16. There are no known risks associated with this report

### **Recommendations**

17. That the Advisory Panel advise the Executive Member to note the contents of the report

Reason: In order to be informed on the progress of the Quality Bus Partnership in the past year.

### **Contact Details**

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**Report Approved**

**Date** 18-08-08

**Specialist Implications Officer(s)**

None

**Wards Affected:** *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

**All**  *tick*

**For further information please contact the author of the report**

**Background Papers:**

None