

ALCA – North Somerset Group AGM, 25 June 2015

Bristol Airport – Airport Transport Forum (ATF)

This is a report on the half yearly meeting held May 2015. Note that the ATF is only concerned with surface access issues, ie. road and rail transport. It does not consider aircraft or other airport operational matters. However, to provide context air passenger numbers for the 12 month period to the end of March reached 6.3m compared with 6.09m in the previous 12 months, an increase of 3.4%. Also, the route network continues to expand with three new BMI routes to Paris, Dusseldorf and Nantes. Thomson and First Choice have also added new routes to Catania in Italy, Hurghada in Egypt and to Cape Verde.

1. Flyer bus service to and from Bristol

The Airport Flyer bus provides the main public transport service for BA. A chart showing use in the period January 2003 to March 2015 is attached, together with comments. Also note the following update:

- 793,326 passengers and staff used the Flyer service in the 12 months to the end of September 2015, an increase of 7.9% compared with the previous 12 months and up from 766,545 passengers in the past six months.
- Flyer passengers (including air passengers and staff) amounted to 12.6% of air passengers, up from 12.4% in the same period.
- Local concessionary fare scheme passes were due for renewal in March. Over 80% of passes were renewed, meaning 376 local residents have a pass enabling half-price travel. Applications still continue to come in.
- Traffic congestion due to road works in Bristol continues to affect punctuality.
- The Bath and Bristol legible city signage at the Flyer bus stop is being updated to reflect the current public transport services. A proposal for a real time 'totem' information sign is being developed and it is hoped that this will be installed during the summer months.
- The A38 roadworks (Section 278 works) resulted in some overnight traffic controls and one road closure in March due to the removal of the pedestrian bridge. The impact on the Flyer service had been minimal.
- BA commented that a response had been submitted to the BCC consultation concerning the proposed gyratory scheme at Temple Meads and its impact on the Flyer service.

2. Other public transport services

Bath Air Decker – the service frequency between BA and Bath has increased from hourly to every 30 minutes at certain times and passenger numbers continue to increase. New vehicles have been added to the fleet and further vehicles are expected. There is now a website which enables passengers to book tickets online. Tickets are also now sold via the National Express website. The operator has been in discussion with BCC about additional bus stops in South Bristol. While some new stops will be provided along the route BCC will not install new stops along Hengrove Way or near Cater Business Park for H&S reasons.

On a related matter, the Bath bus operator raised the issue of diversions for both single and double decker buses in the event of accidents or road closures on the A38, especially close to the airport. BA will discuss this with the airport police and other interested parties.

National Express service to Newport and Cardiff, which started in March. This has replaced the previous Greyhound service. The National Express buses are branded in line with Bristol Airport. National Express has reported that the service is running well.

Local bus services. There was discussion about the loss of the 121 bus and its impact on nearby villages, with Winford no longer having a bus to either the airport or to Bristol and with Wrington, Redhill, etc., now having no direct link with Bristol. It was reported that Wrington PC has met with First Bus to discuss how the service might be improved, with BA commenting that First are currently reviewing potential enhancements to the service.

3. Rail Services

First Great Western reported that electrification works will commence in July which will affect the service operating from London to Bristol via Bath. Some services to Bristol Temple Meads from London Paddington will be routed via Bristol Parkway. This will cause some delays and BA will communicate this to passengers at the time.

4. Public Transport Steering Group

The Public Transport Steering Group set up with BA management and NSC Officers meets twice a year in accordance with the S106 Agreement. Passenger numbers have not yet reached the level at which financial contributions are required. The last meeting was held in January 2015 at which the A2 service and loss of the departure of the Greyhound bus service were discussed.

5. Staff Travel Plan

A staff travel survey was undertaken earlier in the year with the results tabulated and a draft report issued to NSC in March. BA will meet NSC to discuss the report and identify any opportunities for new initiatives.

6. Sub regional transport matters

BCC provided an update on the South Bristol Link. Traffic management on the A370 has begun to enable construction of the new road to commence in June. Similar measures are due to be installed on the A38 shortly. Vegetation clearance has been undertaken. Completion is scheduled for October/November 2016.

Contracts are now in place for the Ashton Vale to Temple Meads MetroBus scheme. Some vegetation clearance has been undertaken. This scheme is due to be completed in Winter 2016.

With regards to the North Fringe to Hengrove Metrobus scheme, contracts are currently being agreed for the design and build stage. A detailed programme of works will follow.

On MetroWest, a legal team has been appointed to progress the development consent order and a land agent is taking this forward. Option 2B for the Portishead train station has been agreed. Detailed planning will be progressed in the next 12 months.

7. Other issues

BA advised that works on the A38 road schemes are progressing in line with programme, with completion planned for the end of May 2015.

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