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promoting quality public transport.....

Michael Miller
 Enhanced Partnership Officer
 Sustainable Transport and Highways | Thriving Places
 Westmorland & Furness Council
 Cumbria House | 117 Botchergate | Carlisle | CA1 1RD

10th October 2024

Dear Michael,

Passenger Charter for the Enhanced Partnership: Cumberland Council and Westmorland and Furness Council areas

1. Introduction

1.1 TravelWatch NorthWest is an independent Community Interest Company representing all public transport users in North West England. I am sorry that we could not make today's Enhanced Partnership Forum - we give below our comments on this consultation, which are mainly additional to the current text

2. "Operators"

2.1 Permanent as opposed to temporary changes to timetables should be publicised on websites, etc. A fortnight's notice seems rather short notice for such changes. We do welcome the production of timetable leaflets for all services.

2.2 There is no mention of visual/audio information on buses We understand that this is required to be fitted by 2026.

3. "Cumberland Council and Westmorland and Furness Council"

3.1 The council should bear the responsibility of ensuring that information about disruption from whatever cause is displayed prominently at bus stops and publicised widely by other means.

3.2 "Work to improve waiting facilities at bus stops". The Council should ensure that every bus stop is fully accessible with, as a minimum, a hard standing area with raised kerb where necessary, bus stop pole & flag and current timetable displayed. Real time information should be provided as widely as possible.

3.2 Bus Stations do not appear to be referred to in the document. They should be kept safe, clean, well maintained, accessible to all, have public toilets open at all times buses are running and have up to date information available, including printed timetables available for all operators services.

3.3 As above printed timetables should also be available to the public in all towns, including public buildings such as Tourist Information Offices and libraries. Information must be kept up to date.

3.4 We note the comments on road closures and support that the Councils should endeavour to minimise the effects of road works/ closures on bus schedules. There needs to be a mechanism for any additional costs incurred by the bus operator in these situations to be compensated by those responsible for the disruption.

3.5 “Bus Priority”. Traffic management issues are ever becoming more challenging. The councils should ensure that traffic management measures are in place and enforced to ensure buses are not delayed by badly/illegally parked vehicles. These measures include bus stop clearways (which should be at every bus stop), parking and loading restrictions, clearly marked and enforced box junctions, traffic light priorities, bus lanes etc.

4. “Passengers”

4.1 Paying the fare – we would like to see more easily available information about the cost of tickets before the journey is made.

4. If something goes wrong.

4.1 We welcome the advice on how to complain and the appeal process. appeal if the complaint is not dealt with satisfactorily. There is no mention in the Charter of how passengers can obtain access to this procedure, One simple step would be to provide “how to comment/ complain” information on board buses and at bus stations. This requirement should then be embodied in the Charter itself.

4.2 Specifically there is no information on –

- Redress for passengers if the last bus is cancelled.
- The operators conditions of carriage.
- Disabled access. This is in the legislation but a reference here would reassure passengers

Thank you for the opportunity to respond.

Yours sincerely,

John

John Moorhouse Company Secretary

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