

Media Release by Bus Users UK and Campaign for Better Transport West group
Campaign Groups calls for a constructive partnership approach to bus services during this recession.

This group regrets the proposed West Yorkshire bus services cuts, whilst recognising that bus companies have to match resources to revenue. We know people are cutting back on leisure and shopping services hitting fares revenues by amounts which simply cannot be absorbed, and we call on local politicians to recognise this fact of life.

As reduced fares revenue is the cause of the cuts, we urge Metro and the councils to vigorously press ahead with

- bus corridor measures such as new shelters which protect bus users from adverse weather
- bus stop clearways and raised kerbs which are vital for the elderly, the disabled and people with young children.

This will encourage greater bus use and increase fares revenue.

We also want bus priority measures to be accelerated in order to retain passengers and encourage new ones. It is vital to the West Yorkshire economy and environment to reduce congestion by encouraging the use of public transport.

We recognise that bus companies have tried to protect services as much as possible and that Metro has stepped in to save some services. However, improving bus productivity by bus priority measures and congestion management is the key to maximising services at the least cost to the public purse. Nevertheless, we are especially concerned about the withdrawal of the Bradford Otley Harrogate service which we believe would surely be viable if First Bradford had recognised its potential rather than treating it as a marginal service. We call on First and Metro to look at reviving this service as a high quality route branded link.

We recognise that bus companies are looking beyond the recession as they are investing in new, higher quality vehicles, driver training and technology to reduce pollution and increase fuel economy.

We want local bus companies to improve marketing to the highest levels in the industry as this encourages more bus use.

We want to see better marketing of the good value season tickets provided by the bus companies and by Metro. Single company tickets are extremely good value, while for only a little extra countywide Metro Dayrovers and bus only Metrocards can be purchased.

Nothing useful can be achieved by confrontation or by the postponement of bus corridor improvements.

The needs of West Yorkshire citizens can only be met by a constructive partnership approach and we call on all politicians and bus companies to adopt this approach.

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Footnote: Bradford Council Executive Committee voted to postpone Bus Corridor measures, which benefit passengers, in response to the 3.7% network cuts by First

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Bus Users UK is an independent group
which was formed to give bus passengers a voice. www.bususers.org

Campaign for Better Transport campaigns to create transport policies
and programmes that give people better lives. www.bettertransport.org.uk