



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
REGENERATION AND TRANSPORT TASK GROUP
(Star Trak – Technical Briefing)

Held: THURSDAY, 26 JUNE 2008 at 2.00pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Russell – Task Group Leader

Councillor Bhavsar
Councillor Newcombe

Councillor Palmer

Also in Attendance

Andy Brookes
Jerry Connolly
Julian Heubeck
Mike Keen
Phil Knott
Jeff Miller
Satish Shah
Andy Thomas
David Wright

Campaign for Better Transport
Members Support Officer
Public Transport Co-ordinator
Committee Services Officer
Star Trak Team
Service Director
Star Trak Team
Head of City Development
Team Leader, Star Trak Team

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7. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

- Jeff Miller, Service Director, Regeneration, Highways and Transportation welcomed those present to York House and stated that a number of issues relating to Star Trak were in the process of being sorted

8. STAR TRAK - HOW IT WORKS

- David Wright, Team Leader, outlined how the Star Trak system, based at York House, worked and of the radio interfaces located at New Walk Centre
- Examples of equipment fitted to buses was demonstrated
- Buses received signals via Global Positioning System (GPS) satellite, with a signal sent from York House every 15 seconds, via New Walk Centre, via satellite to the bus. The bus then replies via the same route
- Bus Stop signs received a signal every 30 seconds
- Timing Points – punctuality of buses measured and determined by

timing points that are required to be not more than 15 minutes apart on each bus route. Buses are required to be not more than 1 minute early or more than 5 minutes late at each timing point

- Councillor Russell asked whether timing points were clear notated on bus company publicity, the response was that First did not differentiate timing points on their publicity, Arriva did differentiate but some of the times were the same at several bus stops on a route
- Bus drivers should understand timing points on routes and comply
- First had 2-way communication with drivers, Arriva did not
- Star Trak equipment on vehicles should be autonomous – driver signs on and the rest is automatic. Faults were reported to the operator
- First were equipping new/transferred vehicles with Star Trak equipment at the rate of 1 vehicle per week

9. DEMONSTRATION: THE ON-LINE ' DESPATCHER' TERMINAL

- Equipment demonstrated

10. DEMONSTRATION: THE HISTORIC STATISTICS FUNCTIONS

- Equipment demonstrated

11. DISCUSSIONS

- Councillor Russell stated that the discussion should keep to the technical aspects of Star Trak
- Councillor Kitterick (Cabinet Lead) to be interviewed
- Short/Medium and Long Term recommendations to be drafted and agreed
- New displays to be located at Causeway Lane in time for opening of Highcross Centre
- Displays at Humberstone Gate and Gallowtree Gate to be reinstated
- Issues around non-Star Trak fitted vehicles being used on Star Trak routes, particular problems in the evenings when fewer vehicles on the road
- Officers stated that wherever possible bus companies utilised Star Trak fitted vehicles on Star Trak routes during the day and at evenings and weekends
- Some operators in City do not have Star Trak fitted vehicles
- Arriva have some 95% of their Star Trak fitted vehicles working each day on Star Trak routes.
- Councillor Russell stated that she was aware of cases of early running of vehicles.
- Officers stated that they would be able to identify early running at timing points on Star Trak routes
- Bus companies still send staff out with clipboards and stopwatches to check on running times of their vehicles. Star Trak equipment not being utilised to it's full extent
- Councillor Russell questioned the current use of 'one way' radio links with

Star Trak bus stop signs, as opposed to 'two way' and questioned whether this was a resourcing issue. Officers stated that it was a radio channel capacity issue, with the current 400 messages per minute to existing Star Trak signs this would then double to 800 messages per minute. There was currently no way an existing sign could detect a fault and report it back

- Suggested that drivers could check signs, but it was stated that this would not be possible because each stop would in effect become a timing point
- **Councillor Russell stated that there was an issue because bus companies did not differentiate on bus stops/timetables which were timing points or non-timing points**
- Members asked whether there was any data that was readily available that could be used regarding timings
- Officers stated that they were able to provide bus companies with information that accurately reflected day to day operations. They were happy to provide data summaries as appropriate
- **Agreed that data summaries from one First route and one Arriva route be made available to the Task Group**
- Suggestion that existing Star Trak signs on certain busy routes should have capability to display information on more than the current 2 services at a time. Officers stated that capacity with the current signs had now almost been reached and that improved systems were being looked at. **A report on a possible improvement programme would be prepared. Councillor Russell stated that stops that required enhanced signs could then be identified**
- Officers outlined current issues not covered in the discussion and in particular the 'bus war' on the 14 route. First vehicles on the route were mostly Star Trak equipped and showed on Star Trak signs, Arriva vehicles were not equipped. Arriva did not intend to fit Star Trak equipment to vehicles on this route

12. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 4.22 pm.