



Minutes of Board Meeting

Held on Friday 17 April 2015

At 10.30am in the NTA Offices

Present: Mr John Fitzgerald (Chairperson), Ms Anne Graham (Chief Executive), Mr Hugh Creegan (Deputy Chief Executive), Mr Owen Keegan (CEO, Dublin City Council), Dr Berna Grist, Ms Linda Saunders.

Apologies: None.

Staff in attendance: Mr Philip L'Estrange, Mr Tim Gaston, Mr Barry Dorgan (Item 3), Mr Michael Aherne (Item 5), Ms Marianne Cassidy (Item 6), Mr Karl Seeber (Minutes).

* * * * *

1. Minutes of previous meeting

The draft minutes of the Board meeting held on 27 March 2015 were agreed without amendment.

The Board congratulated Mr Gaston on his appointment as the NTA's Director of Public Transport Services following an open competition.

2. CEO Report

The Chief Executive updated the Board on developments since the last meeting and responded to issues raised by members. The matters discussed included

- Developments in relation to the bus tendering process including the decision of trade unions to withdraw from the discussions being facilitated by Labour Relations Commission;
- The requirement for alternative bus services to be implemented following the decision by Bus Éireann to withdraw two of its *Expressway* routes;
- The NTA's input into the next national capital investment plan and the timescale for the completion of various related reports and studies;
- Leap card and real-time passenger information developments;
- Planned promotional campaigns;
- Developments concerning the filling of vacancies on the NTA Board;
- NTA inputs into the review of local government arrangements in Cork and Galway.

3. Finance Report

Mr L'Estrange outlined the highlights of the NTA's Management Accounts for March. He noted that overall the NTA is performing well to budget at the end of Q1. He highlighted the recent outcome of an arbitration case brought against the NTA in 2011.

Mr. L'Estrange explained that the NTA's Integrated Ticketing Scheme Operate Contract with HP is due to expire in May 2016 and he outlined proposals to extend that contract for a further 2 year

period in accordance with the terms of the original procurement process for that contract. Following discussion the Board agreed to extend the HP contract for a further 2 years until May 2018.

The Board requested that clarification be given on a data issue in respect of Leap card.

4. Public Transport Services Performance

The Chief Executive updated the Board on the performance in 2014 of the operators of bus, rail and light rail services against the targets for reliability, punctuality and customer service set down in the operators' public transport contracts with the NTA. She also provided an overview of the trend in passenger journeys and fare revenues between 2010 and 2014.

5. Public Bike Scheme

Mr Aherne updated the Board on the implementation and operation of the Regional Cities Bikes Scheme, which has been implemented in Cork, Galway and Limerick. At this stage the initial level of registrations is ahead of target while the number of hires per bike per day is less than anticipated. However, the Scheme is still in its infancy and the NTA is planning further marketing initiatives to promote the Bike Scheme in those cities. The NTA will examine the scope for extending the Scheme to additional areas once it has fully bedded down in Cork, Galway and Limerick and the NTA is satisfied that that the Scheme is operating satisfactorily.

6. Consultation on Wheelchair Accessible Licensed Bus Sector

Ms Cassidy outlined the outcome of a public consultation on making the transition to a fully wheelchair accessible bus fleet within the licensed bus sector. In total 56 responses were received from transport operators, members of the public and representative organisations. The results of the consultation indicate that the main obstacles to the transition were the higher cost of acquiring and maintaining wheelchair accessible vehicles and the difficulties for wheelchair users in getting to and from stopping places. Consultees expressed a preference for low-floor coaches rather than coaches with wheelchair lifts. The need to develop awareness of the needs of wheelchair users and for appropriate training of bus drivers was also highlighted. Half of all consultees felt that the transition to a wheelchair accessible licensed bus sector could be achieved within 5 years while 40% considered that a 10 year period was more appropriate. As a result of this consultation exercise the NTA has identified a range of recommendations to advance the transition to a wheelchair accessible licensed bus sector, which Ms Cassidy outlined.

The Chief Executive explained that the NTA is in the process of preparing a review of the guidelines for the licensing of commercial bus services for consideration by the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport later this year. She indicated that the emerging recommendations on the transition to a wheelchair accessible bus fleet will now be taken forward through that process.

The Board welcomed the steps being taken to advance this important issue.

7. Any other business

The Chief Executive undertook to examine an issue concerning a rail fare.

Next Meeting: Friday 29 May 2015 @ 10.30am in the NTA Offices.

Signed: _____
John Fitzgerald, Chairperson

Dated: _____