



All Party Parliamentary Group for  
**bus and coach**

**Minutes 16/11/24** Attlee Room. 7pm.

**Parliamentary Attendees.**

Lord Snape, Lord Austin, Lord Berkeley, Baroness Randerson.

Mike Wood MP. Sarah Edwards MP. Alex Mayer MP. Tahir Ali MP. Cat Eccles MP. Scott Arthur MP.

1. Minutes of 22/07/24 Agreed.
2. Lord Snape addressed the meeting, talking about 'Catch The Bus Month.'

There was a contribution from Paul Sainthouse, Dawson Group about the help from sector organisations and TfL in agreeing to and setting up some photos for members to drop into so that they can promote the month in their constituencies. Photos will be taken by Secretariat and distributed to attending members. Sector members were also invited to attend the event just opposite the Lords Entrance end of the building, in the layby by Church House. There followed a general discussion about promotion of the event and use of information to further promote bus use in constituencies.

3. **Speaker** : Louise Cheeseman. Founder Women in Bus and Coach and former director at TfL Bus Services.

has been a prominent advocate for gender diversity and inclusivity within the bus, coach, and community transport sectors.

She spoke about-

- Advocacy for Gender Diversity and Inclusion highlighted the underrepresentation of women in the transport industry, noting that only about 10% of the workforce are women, with 91% of bus drivers being male and an average driver age of 52. She emphasises the need to challenge deep-seated gender stereotypes and create a more inclusive environment that attracts and retains female talent.
- She continued with reference to launch of key initiatives like Women in Bus and Coach-At the 2024 WiBC Summit in Manchester
- Trailblazers Blue Plaque Initiative: This program honours women who have made exceptional contributions to the industry, such as Mary Curry, the first woman bus driver for Hants & Dorset, and Jill Viner, the first woman bus driver in London.

- **Period Positive Campaign:** Aimed at promoting menstrual equity by ensuring that facilities and policies accommodate women's health needs, fostering a supportive and inclusive working environment.
- **Regional Expansion:** WiBC established new branches in Ireland and Northern England, providing dedicated platforms for women in these regions to connect and collaborate
- **Coach Sub-Group:** This sub-group addresses the unique challenges faced by women in the coach sector, offering targeted support and advocacy.
- **Recognizing the importance of mentorship,** WiBC launched a competition to select aspiring female leaders for a one-year term on its Board of Directors. This initiative provides mentees with insights into strategic decision-making and leadership responsibilities, aiming to cultivate the next generation of female leaders in the industry.
- **In March 2024,** WiBC launched the "Spotlight On" campaign to showcase the diverse talents and achievements of women across various roles in the bus, coach, and community transport sectors. This initiative aims to inspire others to pursue careers in the field and foster a more inclusive and diverse workforce.
- **Louise reprised her "Transport Talking Aloud" speech in May 2024,** she shared her personal journey and emphasised the need for inclusivity in the transport sector. She also highlighted the importance of creating a working environment that attracts women, especially in light of the transition to zero-emission technologies requiring skilled professionals\_
- **Louise reported on the 2024 WiBC Summit and the inaugural Women in Bus and Coach Awards held to celebrate outstanding individuals who have made significant contributions to the industry.** Julie Hartley, Sales Director at Irizar UK, was named Woman of the Year, among other category winners.

Lord Snape thanked Louise for her contribution and said that through these initiatives and her unwavering commitment, Louise Cheeseman has played a pivotal role in driving positive change, promoting gender equality, and fostering a more inclusive future within the bus, coach, and community transport sectors.

#### **4. Speaker : Peter Bradley MD- UKCOA**

- Spoke about Driver Recruitment and Retention, highlighted the pressing issue of driver shortages affecting the industry. He has advocated for policy changes to allow 18–21-year-olds to drive coaches on all routes, not just short ones, to expand the pool of available drivers. Additionally, he supports financial incentives for training programs to attract new talent into the profession.

- **Transition to Zero-Emission Vehicles, Recognising the environmental imperatives,** he emphasized the need for government support in the industry's transition to zero-emission vehicles. He pointed out challenges such as the lack of available zero-emission coach models, insufficient charging infrastructure, and the high costs associated with upgrading depots and fleets. He advocates for targeted funding and infrastructure development to facilitate this transition.
- **Accessibility and PSVAR Compliance.** Peter addressed the complexities surrounding the Public Service Vehicle Accessibility Regulations (PSVAR), noting the difficulties operators face in sourcing compliant vehicles and the need for clarity on future requirements. He urges the government to provide clear guidance and support to ensure operators can meet accessibility standards without undue financial burden.
- **Advocacy and Industry Engagement.** Peter said he has tried to keep channels open with new and former government ministers. Through regular communications, including open letters to Members of Parliament and participation in industry events, he says he needs to maintain a proactive stance in representing the interests of UKBCA members. He emphasises the importance of collaboration between the government and industry stakeholders to address ongoing challenges and promote the growth and sustainability of the bus and coach sector.

Mike Wood MP thanked Peter Bradley for his speech and said that his leadership reflects a commitment to addressing the multifaceted challenges facing the UK bus and coach industry, advocating for policies and initiatives that support its resilience and progression, and that the industry had a worthy leader in him.

- 5. Conclusion.** There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned and there followed a discussion on issues raised by Louise Cheeseman and Peter Bradley informally chaired by Mike Wood and Lord Snape and including members of the Bus and Coach Sector attending followed by dinner.

Concluded 9.30pm.