

IN BRIEF

The Routemaster six
routeone has learned that the six manufacturers that have pre-qualified to build the Mayor of London's new Routemaster based on winning designs by Capoco and Aston Martin (routeone, News, 11 June) are Alexander Dennis, EvoBus, Hispano, Optare, Scania and Wrightbus.

Medway get top visit
Top tourism delegates from Germany have given Medway the seal of approval. The VPR coach tour operators' organisation comprises the most influential wholesale tour operators in Germany and held its annual in conference in Kent. Their visit included the award-winning Acorn Wharf coach park - internationally renowned throughout Europe as being one of the best in the coaching industry - and winner of Germany's travel trade magazine's 'Destination of the Year 2007' award.

Go-Ahead responsible
For the fifth year running Go-Ahead Group has been listed in the top 100 companies by Business in the Community (BITC) in its corporate responsibility index. The company has retained its 'gold rating' which it has achieved every year since the 'gold band' started three years ago. It is the highest rating among comparable participating public transport operators in the UK says Go-Ahead.

£1 in the evening
First has re-launched its £1 maximum evening fare (after 1900hrs on Sundays-Thursdays) across Sheffield, to encourage people to travel into the city by bus and support Sheffield City Council's campaign to stimulate evening trade in the city.

OfT lets off loW
After a study into Isle of Wight Ferry services, the Office of Fair Trading has decided not to refer the market to the Competition Commission, but instead has recommended that cross-Solent ferry operators should improve their passenger complaints handling.

Show offers 'last chance'

Flurry in sales as exhibitors make a scramble for last remaining stands at Coach & Bus Live

By Mel Holley

With fewer than four months until Coach & Bus Live (CBL) on 7-8 October 2009 at the NEC, Birmingham, the show's organisers are experiencing a flurry in sales activity as exhibitors make a scramble for the last remaining stands.

Many suppliers are taking the view that if they remain active this year and continue to promote their products and services, they will be better placed to take advantage of the opportunities in 2010 and beyond when the economy starts to recover.

Show Director Mark Griffin points out that CBL is the last opportunity to exhibit at a dedicated UK bus and coach show

until November 2010 when Euro Bus Expo takes place. The organisers are reporting more than 130 companies now on board for 2009 and 90% of all available stands taken. Amongst the major vehicle suppliers participating this year are Alexander Dennis, Arriva, Autosan, BASE, BMC, Dawsonrentals, Esker, EvoBus, King Long, MAN, MCV, Mistral, Moseley, Optare, Plaxton, Volvo and the Wright Group.

A recent announcement by the SMMT to reformat the old Commercial Vehicle Show for next year appears to have caused confusion in the market. Mr Griffin makes it clear there will be no dedicated bus or coach content at the CV Operator Show next April.

He says: "It's unfortunate that the CV Show Partnership's press release referred to bus and coach content for April 2010. We work hard with the NEC and all our partners to ensure there is no overlap between our shows and those organised by the CV Partnership. Next year is no different so those companies wishing to attract visitors from the bus and coach market should participate at CBL 2009 or the much larger Euro Bus Expo 2010."

"Indications from the market

would suggest that this autumn is the ideal time for companies to exhibit at CBL. This is a real opportunity to meet with new prospects and build a decent sales pipeline for 2010."

This is a view shared by a number of major vehicle manufacturers exhibiting later this year. For example Volvo Bus UK Managing Director Steve Dewhurst says: "We're looking forward to participating at Coach & Bus Live 2009. It's a great opportunity to meet with our customers, especially those who might be looking to update their existing fleets as they start to plan ahead for next year."

MAN Managing Director Vince Welsh, another keen supporter of the show agrees: "We have been particularly encouraged by the level of interest for our products this year. For us, the show timing couldn't be better. We aim to meet as many of our customers as possible over the two days in Birmingham."

● Those interested in the last remaining stands should hurry and contact the Coach & Bus Live sales team on: 01926 833052, email: info@coachandbuslive.com or www.coachandbuslive.com

Warrington MD fired

John Bannister, Warrington Borough Transport's (WBT) Managing Director has been sacked.

In a brief statement Les Hoyle, Chair of Warrington Borough Transport said: "I can confirm that following a thorough internal investigation, the employment of the Managing Director was terminated.

"This decision is however subject to appeal. Operations Director Charlie Shannon will remain Acting Managing Director." The reason for Mr Bannister's dismissal has not been officially disclosed.

It's all a far cry from Mr Bannister's appointment in June last year when he succeeded Nigel Featham who had taken up a new role with Arriva.

Mr Bannister had been WBT's Finance Director for 20 years and was described at the time as instrumental in its success. Mr Hoyle said then: "John has been such an influential figure in



John Bannister: Sacked by WBT

shaping the company to date and we are looking forward to his continued dedication in leading WBT through forthcoming exciting challenges."

Go-Ahead, and others, order Scania

The first customer, other than Stagecoach, to take Scania's N230UD double-decker with Alexander Dennis Enviro400 bodywork is Go-Ahead subsidiary Oxford Bus Company with 12 buses.

Metrobus is taking delivery of 30 N230UDs with Optare Olympus bodies while another eight are following eleven N270UD with OmniDekka-style 11.985m bodies at Nottingham City Transport. Eighteen 10.6m Polish-bodied N270UD OmniCity Double Deckers are to join Brighton & Hove from July. National Express West Midlands is to receive another 60 OmniLinks taking its tally to 180 over three years.

In London, Transdev has ordered 97 N230UD-based OmniCity Double Deckers for Transport for London tendered routes, while East London Buses will take delivery of 120 this year which will join the 39 it acquired in 2008.

