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**Secretariat memorandum**

Author : Mark Donoghue

Agenda item : 4

AT015

Final Draft : 21.1.10

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## Matters arising

### 1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To record progress on action items tabled at previous meetings.

### 2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the report is received for information.

### 3 Information

- 3.1 The table at Annex A indicates the current position in relation to matters arising from previous meetings of the Committee.

- 3.2 Updates for inclusion in this report were invited 5 working days in advance of the meeting, in writing to the Committee Services team, rather than in person at the meeting.

- 3.3 Views of DPTAC and IDAG on fixed bus stops (7.7.09, minute 8)

The Streets and Surfaces Transport Policy Officer provided an update as follows on 20 January 2010 :

“IDAG are a sounding board for TfL and as such do not have a view independent of TfL. DPTAC the chair of DPTAC has been contacted again. A verbal update will be given at the meeting.”

- 3.4 To ask the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) for their views on the priority seat moquette on LOROL trains (16.12.09, minute 3)

The following response was received from the RNIB on 21 January 2010 :

“Thank you for your enquiry regarding the seat contrast on over ground trains for Visually Impaired individuals. I have looked at the pictures that you sent and there doesn't seem like there is a great contrast in the seating.”

- 3.5 TfL to share with London TravelWatch examples of how countdown locations were considered (16.12.09, minute 8)

A letter was received on 5 January 2010 from Beverley Hall, Head of Surface Transport Communications, Transport for London, on the roll out of Countdown. A copy of the letter can be found in the appendix to this report.

#### **4 Equalities and inclusion implications**

4.1 This report has no equalities and inclusion implications for London TravelWatch.

#### **5 Financial implications**

5.1 This report has no financial implications for London TravelWatch.

#### **6 Legal powers**

6.1 Section 248 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 places upon London TravelWatch (as the London Transport Users Committee) a duty to consider - and where it appears to the Committee to be desirable, to make recommendations with respect to - any matter affecting the functions of the Greater London Authority or Transport for London which relate to transport (other than of freight). Section 252A of the same Act (as amended by Schedule 6 of the Railways Act 2005) places a similar duty upon the Committee to keep under review matters affecting the interests of the public in relation to railway passenger and station services provided wholly or partly within the London railway area, and to make representations about them to such persons as it thinks appropriate.

## Annex A : Access to Transport Committee matters arising

Date	Minute	Action	Action Owner	London TravelWatch Owner	Status
7.7.09	8	To find out what the views of DPTAC (Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee) and IDAG (Independent Disability Advisory Group) were on fixed bus stops	London TravelWatch	Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer	<b>In progress</b> – see para 3.3, above
16.9.09	6	To determine the additional cost of air conditioning and energy consumption on i) LOROL	TfL	i) Rail and Underground Policy Officer/Senior Policy Officer (LOROL)	Awaiting information from LOROL
16.9.09	9	To ask LUL for details on footfall, cost and benefits on deferred step-free access schemes.	TfL	Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer	A verbal update will be given at the meeting.
16.12.09	3	To ask the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) for their views on the priority seat moquette on LOROL trains.	London TravelWatch	Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer	<b>Complete</b> – see para 3.4, above
16.12.09	3	To discuss the list of stations that had platform humps further with London Underground (LUL).	London TravelWatch	Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer	A verbal update will be given at the meeting.
16.12.09	6	The Chief Executive would send a copy of the report from the Croydon bus surgery to Mr Osborne.	London TravelWatch	Chief Executive	A verbal update will be given at the meeting.

Date	Minute	Action	Action Owner	London TravelWatch Owner	Status
16.12.09	7	Ms Hall would supply a larger map of the coverage of traffic lights.	TfL	Committee Services	Requested
16.12.09	7	TfL to share the review of rephasing traffic lights with London TravelWatch.	TfL	Committee Services	Requested
16.12.09	8	To share with London TravelWatch examples of how countdown locations were considered	TfL	Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer	<b>Complete</b> – see para 3.5, above



To Vincent Stops  
Streets & Surface Transport Policy Officer  
London TravelWatch

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05 January 2010

Dear Vincent

## **Rollout of the new and improved Countdown system**

Further to our presentation and useful discussion at the Access to Transport Committee on Wednesday 16 December 2009, I am writing to provide details of the planned rollout of the new Countdown system in 2011. In particular, I thought it would be helpful to share our customer research findings which helped form the approach we propose to adopt.

As you are aware, TfL continually undertakes surveys and conducts market research to inform project delivery as well as to ensure we understand how we can communicate in the best possible way with our customers.

Recent findings regarding our customer's perception of London Bus services and the suitability of information provided to our passengers, has found that customer's current high awareness of Countdown on-street signs has led to demands for real-time bus arrival information for every bus stop across the London network. Since this is not an affordable option, we looked at other ways to meet the requirement.

With significant advances made in technology since Countdown was first introduced in London in 1992, TfL is presented with the opportunity to provide real-time information across the entire London bus network for the first time, via Web and SMS services. These ideas generally tested well with customers. We also considered the potential confusion, highlighted in our discussions, of retaining the "Countdown" name that many associate with signs rather than an information system. On balance it was felt that it was better to keep the name and focus our communication on expanding people's understanding of how Countdown information can be provided. "Countdown" is widely recognised as a TfL trademark for real-time bus arrival information at stops. With good brand recognition, the decision was made to continue with the use of this name to ensure we continue to provide consistent, simple and effective messaging for our customers.

Recent research supports our belief that continued use of “Countdown” is the most suitable way forward. Passengers did not like other names suggested, such as ‘MyBus’. Future marketing campaigns will stress the expansion and improvement of the current Countdown service – with real-time bus arrival information for all bus stops and routes in Greater London now provided via the Internet and SMS on mobile phones. We also want to work with you to ensure we have a simple and effective way of handling local public concerns and representations relating to the loss of an existing sign where the location does not meet the selection criteria.

The research also explored people’s receptivity to a Countdown system on mobile phones. This concept was embraced immediately with a full understanding of the benefits of making information even more accessible given that it can be used at any location.

While the cost of such a service was found to likely limit the expected use for some customers, research findings suggest that such costs would not negate its overall appeal as long as the costs were at a standard, and not premium, level. TfL has made every effort to ensure this is the case, and as such, the SMS service will cost the standard network rate to send a text message, plus a 12p charge to receive the text response - well below premium-level rate mobile services.

### **Stop Selection Strategy**

As we discussed, the selection of stops to receive one of 2500 new signs, will be based upon a stop-selection strategy in which every stop in London will be assessed against a range of criteria. New generation Countdown signs will be installed at the stops where they will provide the most benefit to the greatest number of passengers. The factors taken into account when assessing stops will be the following:

- Number of passengers using stop
- Proximity to centres of population
- Proximity to transport interchanges
- Proximity to key local services
- Low frequency
- 24 hr routes serving stop

Each stop will be scored against the above criteria. The higher the values of the criterion, the higher the bus stop scores. Bus stops scoring the highest are then selected to receive a Countdown sign.

The following provides an example of the multi-criteria analysis applied to one of 19,000 stop across the network:

Stop Code	Stop Name	Criteria					
		No. of Passengers	Proximity to centres of population	Proximity to transport interchanges	Proximity to key local services	Low frequency	24 hr Routes
7699	Southall Broadway	426, 571	GLA Town Centre	TfL Interchanges	Secondary school	0	YES

The above stop has scored highly in most areas and will subsequently receive a new Countdown sign. Applying the multi-criteria analysis across all stops will mean that stops which have an existing Countdown sign, if not identified in the stop selection analysis, will have the sign decommissioned and not replaced.

I would like to discuss with you the concern raised by the Committee about ensuring access to information for harder to reach groups. As we agreed at the meeting there is not just one homogenous group; nor is it immediately obvious if we can change our approach to Countdown or other information provision to meet their needs. If you are agreeable I would like to arrange an officer level meeting to discuss this further.

For further information on Countdown, please see [www.tfl.gov.uk/countdown](http://www.tfl.gov.uk/countdown) or contact [countdown@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:countdown@tfl.gov.uk).

Yours sincerely,

Beverley Hall