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## Secretariat memorandum

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### London TravelWatch's work on accessible bus stops

#### 1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To brief the Access to Transport Committee on the work the Secretariat and members have been undertaking to promote bus stop accessibility. This report updates members on a similar report of June 2009.

#### 2 Background

- 2.1 London is now well placed in terms of accessible buses. London has a comprehensive network of bus services and every bus in London is low floored and has a space for wheelchairs. This is an important achievement as buses will continue, for many years, to be the only form of public transport in London that can be accessible to almost all – the Underground and National Rail will take much longer, some stations may never be accessible.
- 2.2 However, in order that services are accessible to wheelchair users and the less mobile the bus must be able to pull into the kerb (within 200mm), particularly if the bus driver is to deploy the ramp.

To facilitate this and allow enforcement against vehicles parking at a bus stop, the local highway authority needs to:

- i) implement a bus stop clearway - yellow line the kerb and paint markings on the carriageway as per the regulation drawings;
  - ii) attach a time plate on the bus stop flag adjacent to the clearway.
- 2.3 Other requirements are for a kerb height of 125mm and an unimpeded kerbside.
- 2.4 London TravelWatch believes that in order for a local highway authority to comply with its duties under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) it should implement bus stop clearways, as described above, at all of its bus stops. The restrictions should be in force for at least the hours that buses serve the stop, to enable wheelchair users to have access to bus services in a similar manner to the able bodied. This will often mean at least 18 hours a day. There are benefits in terms of compliance if all stops are simply 24 hour clearways.
- 2.5 The cost of implementation of the required lines and signs is in the region of £500, but any highway costs of raising the pavement level may be high. Moving various items of street furniture impeding the kerbside may vary greatly in cost.

- 2.6 Though it is good practice to consult those affected and most highway authorities will do so, there is no statutory requirement to do this.
- 2.7 Guidance to highway authorities in London on these issues has been available for many years. London TravelWatch and its predecessors have stressed the importance of this for many years.
- 2.8 The general point is accepted by many local highway authorities. TfL and some boroughs quote the legislation in their consultation literature. Over the years there has been steady progress made on both raising pavement levels, removing impediments adjacent to the kerb and implementing clearways.
- 2.9 Some London local authorities have taken the view that there is a balance to be struck between the needs of vehicle drivers to park at the kerbside and the need for disabled access to bus services and have concluded that at some locations parking should be prioritised. This effectively means mobility impaired passengers are not able to use some bus services and even where buses are accessible at the boarding point mobility impaired passengers will not have the confidence to travel if they can't be assured of alighting.
- 2.10 Over a number of years, particularly since the DDA was amended to include highway authorities, we have written to local authorities pointing out that we believe it is a duty on them to promote equal access to bus services by wheelchair users. Members have discussed the issue with local borough councillors and officers.
- 2.11 There is a particular problem where Hail-and-Ride services operate because there is often no history of fixed bus stops and parking demand may be such that local residents resist the implementation of clearways and the associated loss of kerbside parking.
- 2.12 We have sought the views of a transport minister, a TfL legal view and the Human Rights and Equalities Commission's (HREC) legal view. All this advice is general and is written in difficult legal language, but we think it is supportive of the Secretariat's view that local highway authorities have a legal duty to implement bus stop clearways at bus stops in order that they are to be accessible for all.

### **3 Update**

- 3.1 TfL has reported its latest statistics of accessible bus stops to us and the table is reproduced as Appendix A. This shows that across London 50.03% of stops were accessible. This figure does not account for Hail-and-Ride services.
- 3.2 The Secretariat always makes this case when it is consulted regarding the provision of bus stop clearways by highway authorities and will request the implementation of clearways when we see examples during our work. We were recently successful in persuading Westminster not to convert a 24hour clearway on Oxford Street into a part-time clearway and part-time loading bay for Primark.

- 3.3 The Secretariat is still involved in two pieces of work to try and progress this issue. Both are work-in progress.
- 3.3.1 Waltham Forest had proposed and received funding support from TfL to convert a section of Hail-and-Ride on route 397 to fixed stops. Whilst we were supportive local resident pressure for the retention of parking meant the scheme was not pursued. We have continued to press for a scheme to be implemented.
- 3.3.2 For over two years we have tried to persuade the Human Rights and Equalities Commission to engage with us on this issue. Unfortunately they are unwilling to meet with us despite numerous correspondence with them including asking a Commissioner to help. We will continue to try and get help from the Commission.
- 3.4 Through our casework and members interest in the bus stop at Muswell Hill (southbound services) it is apparent that an important factor in the location of bus stops is the gradient of the road at the bus stop location. The Secretariat will take this into account when commenting on bus stop locations during any consultations etc.

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

- 4.1 If buses are accessible to all then there will be a significant improvement in the quality of life of mobility impaired passengers, particularly wheelchair users.

#### **5 Legal powers**

- 5.1 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).

#### **6 Financial implications**

- 6.1 There are no financial consequences for London TravelWatch.

## Appendix A

### Totals ALL London - P13 2009/10

The following breaks down the current state of all Bus Stops *included* in the audit. A total of **17476** Bus Stops; **2157** on the TLRN and **15319** on Borough roads

This includes all Bus Stops reported as DDA compliant since the completion of the audit

Borough	Overall (Forecast - 50%)			TLRN							Borough						
	Total Audited Stops	Total Compliant	% Compliant	Total	Total Compliant	% Compliant	Require Time Plates	Require Kerb Height Adjustment	Require Cage	Require Impediments Move	Total	Total Compliant	% Compliant	Require Time Plates	Require Kerb Height Adjustment	Require Cage	Require Impediments Move
<b>All London</b>	<b>17476</b>	<b>8743</b>	<b>50.03%</b>	<b>2157</b>	<b>1324</b>	<b>61.38%</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>499</b>	<b>15319</b>	<b>7419</b>	<b>48.43%</b>	<b>3476</b>	<b>4285</b>	<b>3078</b>	<b>2776</b>
Barking & Dagenham	372	212	56.99%	23	11	47.83%	7	1	1	3	349	201	57.59%	22	65	24	70
Barnet	816	274	33.58%	73	41	56.16%	0	12	1	22	743	233	31.36%	351	309	286	152
Bexley	578	297	51.38%	0	0	n/a	0	0	0	0	578	297	51.38%	123	150	107	92
Brent	584	254	43.49%	31	25	80.65%	0	1	1	4	553	229	41.41%	52	192	104	139
Bromley	1040	412	39.62%	68	37	54.41%	2	12	4	18	972	375	38.58%	395	256	346	160
Camden	452	218	48.23%	77	42	54.55%	0	16	0	20	375	178	46.93%	34	114	39	108
City of London	140	101	72.14%	40	28	70.00%	1	3	4	8	100	73	73.00%	13	13	14	5
Croydon	982	352	35.85%	113	48	42.48%	2	53	5	22	869	304	34.98%	348	379	280	108
Ealing	701	359	51.21%	59	37	62.71%	0	10	0	15	642	322	50.16%	67	185	74	144
Enfield	556	236	42.45%	55	42	76.36%	0	5	1	11	501	194	38.72%	153	183	113	102
Greenwich	699	330	47.21%	60	47	78.33%	0	7	0	8	639	283	44.29%	129	217	51	107
Hackney	420	256	60.95%	108	59	54.63%	0	29	6	25	312	197	63.14%	10	77	19	39
H&F	270	145	53.70%	9	6	66.67%	0	1	0	3	261	139	53.26%	60	33	28	58
Haringey	394	213	54.06%	64	38	59.38%	0	16	0	17	330	175	53.03%	52	89	0	70
Harrow	398	252	63.32%	0	0	n/a	0	0	0	0	398	252	63.32%	44	63	59	66
Havering	659	219	33.23%	19	16	84.21%	0	1	0	2	640	203	31.72%	379	201	330	94
Hillingdon	740	354	47.84%	23	13	56.52%	0	4	0	9	717	341	47.56%	178	192	172	125
Hounslow	657	262	39.88%	89	51	57.30%	0	24	2	19	568	211	37.15%	178	220	186	108
Islington	350	219	62.57%	83	50	60.24%	0	25	3	12	267	169	63.30%	4	61	8	51
K&C	262	112	42.75%	37	20	54.05%	0	10	0	11	225	92	40.89%	6	62	6	51
Kingston	387	322	83.20%	39	26	66.67%	0	6	3	5	348	296	85.06%	3	27	13	28
Lambeth	574	296	51.57%	216	122	56.48%	2	33	9	64	358	174	48.60%	31	118	37	92
Lewisham	598	360	60.20%	157	120	76.43%	2	11	5	27	441	240	54.42%	20	173	21	46
Merton	432	245	56.71%	55	35	63.64%	0	9	2	12	377	210	55.70%	0	72	81	81
Newham	522	256	49.04%	14	11	78.57%	1	0	2	1	508	245	48.23%	137	110	121	98
Redbridge	504	196	38.89%	46	34	73.91%	0	5	0	8	458	162	35.37%	286	113	200	104
Richmond	470	158	33.62%	32	13	40.63%	0	6	0	16	438	145	33.11%	192	130	81	75
Southwark	620	438	70.65%	144	95	65.97%	0	24	6	27	476	343	72.06%	22	79	29	52
Sutton	346	269	77.75%	43	30	69.77%	0	7	0	9	303	239	78.88%	14	23	18	43
Tower Hamlets	429	265	61.77%	102	56	54.90%	0	24	4	28	327	209	63.91%	11	53	20	69
Waltham Forest	501	261	52.10%	6	4	66.67%	0	1	0	1	495	257	51.92%	68	139	82	74
Wandsworth	502	353	70.32%	179	129	72.07%	3	17	4	42	323	224	69.35%	11	44	17	60
Westminster	521	207	39.73%	93	38	40.86%	0	47	2	30	428	169	39.49%	103	143	112	105

NB: The above figures do not include the **1489** Bus Stops that were not a part of the audit due to either being not valid Bus Stops (Dead Bus Stands, Hail and Ride etc - c1100) or inaccessible due to road works (c400)

NB: It has been assumed that any cage length greater than 0m would qualify for DDA compliance. However some anomalous figures have been identified and Colin Buchanans have been asked to investigate. This may have a negative impact on the current numbers of DDA compliant Bus Stops.