
Secretariat memorandum

Agenda item 8
CA018
Drafted 18.9.09

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Casework Review Update

1 Purpose of report

- 1.1. To update the Committee with progress on the casework review (Ref. CA003, 22.4.09).
- 1.2. In progressing the work priority continues to be given to those areas most likely to contribute to improved performance. Hence the priority has been to ensure staff resources are available to deal with casework and to procure new complaints software.
- 1.3. The key focus for the Director, Public Liaison since the last meeting has been to progress the new casework monitoring system. This, combined with the absence of the Casework Manager until mid-August, has resulted in the slippage of several actions arising from the casework review (e.g. 1.1.3; 1.2.2 on attached table).

2 Recommendation

- 2.1. That members note the report.

3 Casework Software Procurement

- 3.1. The Director, Public Liaison, is acting as our project manager for the procurement of the new casework software. At the time of the last meeting, a specification had been agreed and a number of proposals had been received from interested parties.
- 3.2. These bids were then evaluated and a shortlist was agreed. In addition to the Project Manager, members of the Consumer Affairs Committee, the Chief Executive and the consultant attended presentations from three shortlisted bidders. From this, site visits were organised to two of the bidders' reference sites within London to explore how their systems were currently being used.
- 3.3. This process enabled us to agree to award the contract to Tubedale Limited, whose proposal is based upon Microsoft Dynamics CRM software. Since awarding the contract on 31 July, regular meetings and workshops (two to three meetings a week) have taken place between the contractors and the project manager to ensure that the software is programmed to meet our particular requirements. Where appropriate, these meetings have included other key staff such as the Chief

Executive, the Casework Manager (on her return), the IT Systems officer and caseworkers as well as our IT support suppliers, Premier.

- 3.4. In addition, the project manager has met with Passenger Focus staff to ensure that where appropriate we are recording actions and outcomes consistently while recognising that our remits and working practices will not be entirely the same. Work has also been undertaken with third parties to procure software licenses and postcode look-up software.
- 3.5. Regular meetings between the contractor and the project manager will continue up until the end of September when training will be provided for casework staff in the use and administration of the new system. While the system is not yet complete a version of it will be available for viewing next week.

4 Equalities and inclusion implications

- 4.1. This report poses no specific equalities and inclusion implications for London TravelWatch.

5 Legal powers and financial implications

- 5.1. Section 248 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 requires London TravelWatch (as the London Transport Users Committee) to consider, and where it appears to it to be desirable, to make recommendations with respect to any service or facility provided by or for (or in the case of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles, licensed by) Transport for London, other than a matter relating to the transportation of freight, if it has been the subject of representations made by or on behalf of users of that service or facility. Section 252B of the same Act places a similar duty on the Committee in respect of users or potential users of railway services provided wholly or partly within the "London railway area" as defined under the provisions of the Railways Act 1993. The Consumer Affairs Committee is not required to consider matters which appear to it to be frivolous or (in the case of railway services) vexatious.
- 5.2. No specific financial implications for London TravelWatch arise from this report.

Recommendation:	Progress - September 2009
1. Capacity and resources	
1. Ensure adequate staffing resources are available to deal with casework.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Interim caseworker appointed 6 May for 3-6 months to cover long-term sickness absence in team, contract extended to 6 months. 2. Use of temporary admin staff to cover long absence on reception or to deal with administrative aspects of work peaks - Agency staff used to cover additional administrative work late June/early July. 3. Policy Officer trained to close cases and to act as our link with the Research & Development team. Initial training took place and will be followed up when Casework Manager returns to work. Manager returned mid-August but had to prioritise other work. New target November.
2. Reduce volume of work coming into team.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Suggest TfL change their `0845` complaints number on buses to a `020` or `030` number – Initial discussion with TfL Buses started late May- Paper to September CAC meeting. 2. Ask service providers to include additional sentence in standard correspondence asking passengers who take forward appeals to enclose copies of original complaint/correspondence. Delayed, new target end November. 3. Improve Frequently Asked Questions on website - This will be linked with the website redesign for completion by end of September. The website redesign will improve the functionality and visibility of the site. The content is being improved as part of the implementation of the new casework monitoring project.
2. Policies and procedures	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mechanisms to be established for agreeing action in respect of complex cases, ensuring these are timely and consistent – Weekly meetings established in August 2. Policy aspects of casework to be reported to Consumer Affairs Committee – Implemented and ongoing. 3. Document amendments for day procedures. Initial discussions held with Casework Team in May but detailed documentation of procedures to be linked with the software procurement and development.

Recommendation:	Progress:
3. Casework monitoring software	
1. Procure new casework monitoring software.	1. Consultant appointed – 22.5.09. 2. Specification completed – 21.6.09. 3. Invitation to bid sent to six companies – 22.6.09. 4. Bids returned – 6.6.09. 5. Initial sifting/short listing – 6.7.09. 6. Contact short listed companies – 9.7.09. 7. Presentation by short listed companies – 15.7.09. 8. Visit to see product in action – 22.7.09. 9. Contract awarded – 24.7.09. - Design & implementation training – Aug/Sept 09. - New system operational – 1.10.09.
4. Committee reporting	
	1. Amend style of reports to Consumer Affairs Committee using existing performance indicators but changing presentation of performance information – To be implemented by January meeting when next performance reports are due. The new system is being set up with a wide range of possible reporting fields. 2. Informal reporting of successful cases closed – Success of the Week implemented.
Phase 3 of Review	
1. To ensure our casework reflects the highest quality standards and that caseworkers are well trained to enable them to promote best practice in customer service and to ensure that operators work within industry guidelines and correctly interpret their legal requirements.	1. Although originally targeted for further works in August this will now be delayed until the new system is operational – to commence in November.