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**Secretariat memorandum**

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**Passenger Rights Project**

**1 Purpose of report**

- 1.1 Members have asked us to produce a publication providing information on passenger rights. It was agreed at the last meeting that this would be in the form of a passenger charter, including information on what to do if your rights are not recognised. It was also agreed to have a draft leaflet to the September Consumer Affairs Committee meeting for approval prior to publication on the website.
- 1.2 The attached is the first draft of the leaflet for consideration by the Consumer Affairs Committee.

**2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 That members agree the draft text of the Passenger Charter or suggest any amendments or further information they would like a charter to contain.

**3 Introduction**

- 3.1 At the last meeting of Consumer Affairs Committee, members decided to prioritise the production of a Passenger Charter leaflet based upon the draft provided by one of the members.
- 3.2 In preparing a first draft, it was important to ensure that the messages contained in the Charter build upon the policies and statements previously produced by London TravelWatch, but did not duplicate them. It was recognised that the Charter should cover all modes and that it would not focus solely on "rights" as for some transport users, such as bus users, formal rights are relatively limited. It also should not be too specialised and should be of interest to a wide proportion of transport users.
- 3.3 In preparing a first draft of the Charter, we have based the key demands upon those contained in Our Vision which is contained in the Annual Review. This appears to be fairly comprehensive in scope and helps to provide a consistent framework for the Charter. We have supplemented this with concerns from casework and issues raised in the Manifesto for the New Mayoral Term 2008 - 2012.

## **4 Format**

- 4.1 The Passenger Charter will be produced on our website in order to be useful both to those transport users who are aware of our role and through search engines to those that do not. No budget provision has been made for the production of more leaflets this year so it is unlikely that we will be able to professionally produce any leaflets this year.

## **5 Timetable**

- 5.1 As requested, the attached is the first draft for consideration by the Consumer Affairs Committee. Subject to members' views, and further iteration, we would be able to publish this as it is as soon as possible.

## **6 Equalities and inclusion implications**

- 6.1 Due account will be taken whenever any such implications arise from cases brought to the attention of London TravelWatch.

## **7 Legal powers and financial implications**

- 7.1 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 it to be desirable, to make representations with respect to – any matter affecting the services and facilities provided by Transport for London which relate to transport (other than freight) and which have been the subject of representations made to it by or on behalf of users of those services and facilities. Section 252A of the same Act (as amended by Schedule 6 of the Railways Act 2005) places a similar duty upon it in respect of representations received from users or potential users of railway passenger services provided wholly or partly within the London railway area.

## **8 Financial implications**

- 8.1 The financial implications for London TravelWatch will vary according to approach taken and will need to be taken into account.

## **London TravelWatch Passenger Charter**

London TravelWatch considers that all passengers are entitled to:

### **Services which run frequently and reliably, at all reasonable times of the day and the week**

Our aim is to ensure that there is a comprehensive bus network and that each station in the London area as far as practicably possible is provided with regular turn-up-and-go services.

Buses must be given the priority they need to run reliable services on London's busy roads.

### **Networks which provide good access to all areas, have adequate capacity, and offer easy interchange between different types of transport**

Public transport is for people, and that means that they are entitled to civilised conditions. Longer and more frequent trains, more spacious stations and new services are needed to relieve the pressure on Underground and rail users. Buses must also run as often as is needed to meet passenger demand in reasonable comfort.

London has an integrated transport network, so we work with operators to make interchanges more user-friendly and best suited to passenger needs.

### **Vehicles which are comfortable, clean, easily accessible, readily identifiable, quiet, non-polluting, and convenient for those travelling with luggage, shopping or small children**

Transport users expect buses and trains to be fit for purpose. That means that they need adequate space for luggage, adequate heating in the winter and adequate ventilation in summer.

### **Staff who are alert, helpful, highly-motivated, well-informed and committed to providing a high quality of service**

Staff need to be properly trained and well-informed to provide good customer service and information to passengers.

### **Journeys which are safe and free from crime or the fear of crime**

Over the last few years, great steps have been made to reduce crime on the transport network. But success in reducing crime on the transport must be matched by continuing efforts to reduce the fear of crime and anti-social conduct. This requires further improvements to the design and lighting of stations and stops and the use of technology such as installing help points and CCTV.

### **Information which is intelligible, relevant, accurate, and readily available in appropriate formats both before and during travel**

Reliable and accurate information is vital to give passengers the confidence to use public transport. Therefore, we expect transport providers to provide journey planners and

timetables to enable users to plan journeys in advance and to provide good customer information systems and announcements to keep them informed while they travel.

Transport providers must inform passengers of changes to their services due to diversions or engineering works in plenty of time to ensure that alternative arrangements can be made.

### **Fares which are affordable, represent good value for money, and are structured in ways which encourage frequent use**

Passengers when asked consistently state that they do not believe that they get good value for money. This is often because fares vary between peak and off-peak times, and because passengers find it difficult to get the cheapest fare for their journey.

Fare evasion is theft and is unfair both to transport providers and to fare-paying passengers. Therefore we support the efforts of transport providers to minimise fare evasion through better revenue protection enforcement such as gating stations.

Nevertheless, we recognise that penalty fares can be a blunt instrument and can lead to passengers who make genuine errors paying much higher fares and administrative charges. We consider that it is important that passengers are given accurate information about how they can use their ticket and are made aware of their right to appeal. Where an appeal is ongoing, we also believe that administrative charges should not be added to the appeal.

### **Ticket systems which are user-friendly, flexible, and appropriately integrated between different operators and types of transport**

London is an integrated transport network and therefore for most transport users, it is important that ticketing systems are user-friendly and flexible. This is why we have been consistent and staunch supporters of Travelcards and the full introduction of Oyster pay as you go.

The introduction of smartcard ticketing and ticket machines, online ticketing and Oyster Ticket Stops has significantly increased the number of ways to purchase a ticket and reduced the need to queue at stations. However, there is still a role for ticket offices and a need to ensure that staffing of them is appropriate to the needs of users.

### **Stations and stops which are well designed, properly maintained and fully accessible, offering a civilised waiting environment**

Stations should not have to negotiate large gaps between the train and the platform, and larger stations should be provided with facilities such as toilets and retail outlets. Bus stops must be accessible to ensure that buses can get directly to the kerb to allow easy boarding and alighting and, where possible, covered waiting facilities should be provided.

### **Streets which are inviting, clean, well-policed, properly signed, uncongested, and maintained and managed in a manner which ensures that they can be used with confidence and in safety by pedestrians and cyclists as well as motorists**

Highway authorities have a duty to ensure that roads and streets are well maintained and that parking controls, bus and cycle lanes are enforced consistently to ensure that traffic keeps on the move.

### **Transport providers who are approachable, communicative, genuinely receptive to suggestions, take complaints seriously, and have proper redress mechanisms for when things go wrong**

When things go wrong, it is important that transport providers do their best to put them right. This means that their staff need to be properly trained and have access to sufficient information to resolve problems at the time.

After the event, complaints must be properly investigated and concerns properly addressed. Where services are delayed or cancelled, transport providers need to provide appropriate levels of redress promptly and efficiently.

London TravelWatch believes that making suggestions or complaints should be easy, and that transport users should be able to make their complaints at no cost to themselves.

### **The obligations on the passenger**

To make journeys more comfortable and a better experience for their fellow transport users, passengers need to ensure:

- They have the correct ticket and any appropriate passes or railcards, and to be able to produce them on demand
- Treat transport provider staff and other passengers with respect – not to shout, swear or be violent
- Give up their seats and make space to those less able or using a wheelchair
- Not litter or damage stops, stations or vehicles
- Not to interfere with the operation of vehicles
- Follow the rules on alcohol, eating and security

### **The role of London TravelWatch**

London TravelWatch is the official watchdog organisation representing the interests of transport users in and around the capital. We speak for the travelling public in discussions with opinion formers and decision makers and meet with all parts of the transport industry regularly about services and plans which affect the travelling public.

We examine all complaints brought to us by people who are unhappy with responses they have received from service providers, and seek redress on their behalf where appropriate. We also monitor developments and the quality of transport services to ensure that transport users get the service they deserve.