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**Secretariat memorandum**

Author : Mark Donoghue

Agenda item 8

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Drafted 20.7.09

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**Actions taken**

**1 Purpose of report**

- 1.1 To advise members of matters dealt with by the Chairman, Deputy Chair, the Chief Executive and/or the secretariat since the last meeting.

**2 Recommendation**

- 2.1 That the report is received for information.

**3 Information**

- 3.1 Response to Department for Transport (DfT) consultation on Possible Changes to the Administration of Concessionary Travel.

On 16 July 2009 the Director, Research and Development, wrote to the DfT in response to this consultation. The letter is attached for information in the Annex to this report.

**4 Equalities and inclusion implications**

- 4.1 In accordance with London TravelWatch's duties under the Disability Discrimination Act and other legislation, account is taken when responding to consultations on proposals from external bodies of their particular impact (if any) on the needs of people whose access to transport may be restricted by reason of disability or social exclusion.

**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). 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.

**6 Financial implications**

6.1 No specific financial implications for London TravelWatch arise from this report.

## Annex

16 July 2009

Lec Nepal  
Consultation Co-ordinator  
Department for Transport  
Zone 1/33 Great Minster House  
76 Marsham Street  
LONDON SW1P 4DR

Dear Mr Nepal,

Consultation – possible changes to the administration of concessionary travel

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above proposals. London TravelWatch is the independent statutory consumer body representing the interests of transport users in and around London. As such most of the proposals contained in your consultation (such as in questions 1 to 6 and 10) do not have a direct impact on users we would offer the following general comments which are relevant to questions 7,8,9 and 11 :-

1. Those eligible for a concessionary travel pass have no particular preference on the level of local or transport authority that issues such a pass except that they are able to apply for and obtain this concession easily and without undue expense or inconvenience. Ideally this should be through a local agent close to their place of residence.
2. The concession available should be consistent between and within the modes and times of day/days of the week that it operates. It should also reflect the nature of the transport network. As an example we have previously expressed our disappointment that the current statutory concession does not extend to Trams and Community Transport which in many areas (including parts of London) are used as a direct equivalent to buses, where no bus service is either possible or provided and in many cases . This is particularly important in areas close to the London boundary where for example Surrey residents view Croydon as their local shopping centre find that their pass is valid on the feeder bus to the tram interchange but not on the tram for the major part of the journey. In other cases it may be that Community Transport or Dial-a-Ride services are more appropriate either because local bus services do not exist, the local bus stop is too far away for them to walk or the bus is not physically accessible, whereas virtually all tram and light rail systems are fully accessible. Under the present arrangements it is very odd that some people with disabilities or those over 60 can use the tram free while others who live a few yards down the same road cannot.
3. We note that in the Greater London area the Mayor and London Councils have recently changed the times of operation of the Freedom Pass to give free travel on all Transport for London services at all times. Holders of National Concessionary Bus Passes also travel free on TfL buses at any time. Whilst we have concerns about the impact of such a change on capacity at peak times, particularly on the Underground network we would not like to see a downgrading of such a concession in the event of a change in discretionary funding.
4. Similarly, we are aware of a number of discretionary concessionary fares schemes in our rail area where County and District Councils have negotiated reduced fare arrangements with rail operators and London Underground, because the rail network provides an equivalent service to that of a bus. Again we would

Annex

not like to see a downgrading of such concessions as a result of a change in discretionary funding.

I hope that this response is useful to you if you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Tim Bellenger

Director - Research and Development