
Secretariat memorandum

Author : Mark Donoghue

Agenda item 5

FT37

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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 Public Carriage Office (PCO) consultation on taxi fares and regulations

On 29 December 2009, London TravelWatch's response to the consultation by the PCO on taxi fares and regulations from 1 April 2010 was submitted. A copy of the response is included in the annex to this report.

- 3.2 Response to Department for Transport consultation on National Rail penalty fares rules policy and charge change

On 20 January 2010, London TravelWatch's response to the Department for Transport consultation on penalty fares was submitted. It may be viewed on the London TravelWatch website

(<http://www.londontravelwatch.org.uk/document/4026/get>).

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

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your recent email consulting us on possible changes to taxi fares and regulations from 1st April 2010.

I would comment on your proposals as follows:-

1. General revision of tariffs. We have previously supported the current method for calculating tariffs and we do not see any pressing reason for a change in this area.
2. Heathrow Supplement – we offer no comment on the increase from £2 to £2.40, but would like to see the encouragement of fixed fares from Heathrow – see below.
3. Restoration of supplements for additional luggage and passengers – we are strongly opposed to any measure to restore these types of additional ‘hidden’ charges.
4. Fuel price supplements – please see our previous correspondence on this subject.
5. Existing Fixed fare taxi sharing arrangements. We strongly support the continuation of these arrangements and would like to see a further expansion to cover all main line rail terminals in central London.
6. Contingency Fixed fare taxi sharing arrangements. We strongly support the continuation of these arrangements.
7. Fixed Fares – Westminster late night scheme. We strongly support this proposal and would wish it to be extended to all nights of the week. We support the idea of upfront payment before passengers get in the cab, as this will mean that all passengers will agree to who pays what prior to the commencement of the journey. This should reduce the potential for conflict with drivers at the end of the journey – multiple set downs should however be agreed (and the order in which they happen) before the journey commences. However, there is no inner cordon for central and inner London – and we would like such additional zone created as well as a lower minimum fare. There should also be another zone 5 to cover the rest of outer Greater London.
8. Fixed Fares – Heathrow Airport to Central London. We strongly support this concept provided that it gives a very clear indication to passengers how much they will pay for a journey, especially to those arriving in the UK who may be unfamiliar with the country, currency or the geography of London. Ideally this should be based on a zonal system and for consistency it should be similar to the Westminster scheme. This should be based on mileage from Terminals 123 – so that anyone coming from Terminal 4 pays slightly more per mile and anyone from Terminal 5 slightly less per mile.
9. Fare payment by bank card. In principle these should be available in all taxis. Debit cards should be charged at the same rate as cash. Credit cards should be accepted with a premium of no more than 10% of the fare paid. Ideally we would like to see Oyster and other smartcards also accepted for payment of taxi fares.
10. Information in the passenger compartment – fare chart. This is a reasonable proposal and would bring all information into one place and in more legible style.
11. Information in the passenger compartment – wheelchair symbol. Support this proposal.

Annex

12. Information in the passenger compartment – the taxi driver. Ideally this should take the form of information stating the driver's name, PCO license number, a photograph of him/her, PCO cab number and the expiry dates of the PCO driver and vehicle license numbers.
13. Receipts. These should clearly identify the taxi driver / company, their address, contact details, stating the time and date of travel as well as the fare incurred. Ideally these should be a printed summary of the fare charged on the meter. No external advertising should be permitted.
14. Taxi ranks. We support this proposal which should reduce the ability of illegal minicabs to operate.