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## Secretariat memorandum

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### Journey Time Reliability

#### 1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To provide a confidential background briefing note for members on TfL's performance measure for road congestion on the Transport for London road network (TLRN) known as journey time reliability (JTR).

#### 2 Background

- 2.1 One of the Mayor of London's key transport pledges in his 2008 transport manifesto was to smooth traffic flow by measures such as:

“re-phasing traffic lights, allowing motorcycles in bus lanes and cracking down on utility companies who dig up the roads”<sup>1</sup>.

- 2.2 The Mayor also stated in his manifesto that:

“I will get traffic flowing smoothly. This will make commuters' lives easier, it will also help to reduce emissions and make buses more reliable – which will encourage long term modal shift.”

- 2.3 Since May 2008 TfL have set about implementing the Mayor's manifesto commitment in various ways:

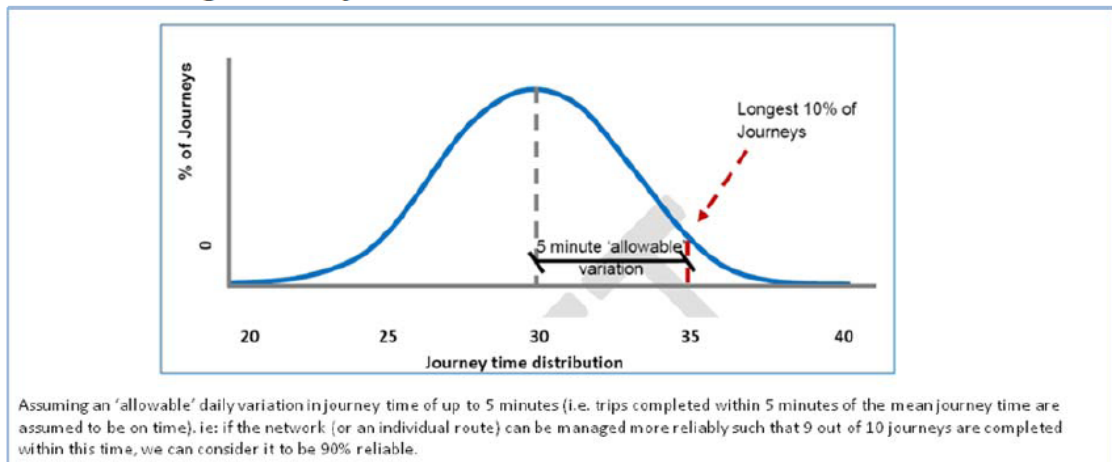
- Traffic lights have been rephased and more are now controlled by computer. Some traffic lights have been removed;
- Streetworks permitting has been introduced to manage roadworks more actively. Traffic wardens now enforce permits more actively. There has been a code of conduct for roadworks. Since June 2012 a lane rental scheme has been in place;
- TfL have adopted a corridor management approach to managing each of the TLRN corridors. Minor streetworks have been implemented;
- Pedestrian Countdown has been introduced at a number of locations and motorcyclists allowed into bus lanes.
- There has been better planning for events that affect the road network and work undertaken to ensure a more speedy response to unplanned events.
- Modal shift, particularly to cycle, has been promoted.

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<sup>1</sup> Getting Londoners Moving, Boris Johnson's 2008 transport manifesto

- 2.4 In parallel with these activities TfL has started to measure the performance of the road network by measuring vehicle journey times using Automatic Number Plate Recognition cameras (ANPR). This measurement, which is reported quarterly, is called Journey Time Reliability (JTR).
- 2.5 The JTR measure is defined as the proportion of traffic which - for a 'typical' 30-minute journey – takes less than 35 minutes (a representative average London journey time of 30 minutes plus a five-minute 'allowance'). This measure is described by TfL in the figure below.
- 2.6 Journey times are measured across the TLRN. The 2011/12 – 2014/15

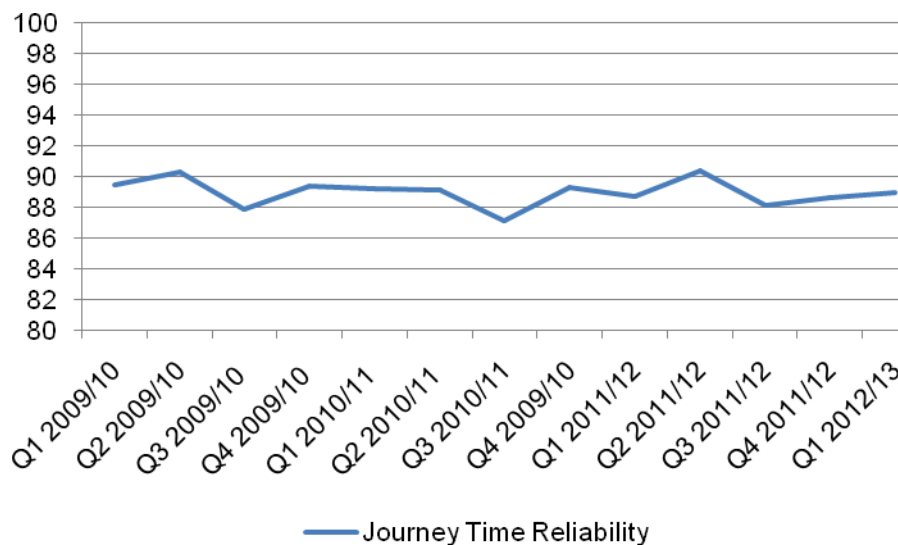
**Average Journey Time and 'Allowable' Variation from the Mean**



Business Plan included future projections. The projection for this financial year is 89.3%, improving to 90% in 2014/15.

- 2.7 Performance over the last few years has been reported by TfL streets and is represented in the graph below taken from London TravelWatch's TfL Performance report.

**Graph 1a - Journey Time Reliability on the TLRN in the AM peak since Q1 2009/10**



### **3 Discussion**

- 3.1 Journey Time Reliability, as defined and measured by TfL, has been at or about the Business Plan projection (89.0% in 2011/12 rising to 90% in 2014/15) over the last three years. However, this has been against a back drop of steadily declining traffic volumes (5% less traffic on the TLRN over the period that JTR has been reported) and the focussed activity described in paragraph 2.3 above.
- 3.2 London TravelWatch has previously asked TfL to comment on the fact that JTR did not seem to be responding to lower traffic levels and TfL's actions as part of its 2011/12 Q1 TfL performance reporting. TfL said they were not able to explain the underlying reasons.
- 3.3 Following discussion of the 2011/12 Q4 performance report, members suggested that TfL be invited to discuss these issues with them.

### **4 Questions for TfL**

- 4.1 Are TfL confident that JTR is a good measure of the performance that road users experience? Does JTR performance correspond with user experience?
- 4.2 Do TfL understand the relationship between their activities to smooth traffic flow and the reduction in traffic volume and JTR? Should JTR not have improved more given the drop in traffic volumes across London?
- 4.3 How confident are TfL that JTR Business Plan projections will be delivered post recession, which will have done much to reduce the present traffic volumes? What is the likely impact of greater traffic volumes on JTR?
- 4.4 What has been the experience of lane rental?
- 4.5 Has there been any other changes in driver behaviour that might explain the lack of improvement in JTR? Could drivers be driving more slowly to reduce fuel consumption for example?
- 4.6 Has the expanded use of satellite navigation had any impact on driver behaviour and routing?

### **5 Equalities and inclusion implications**

- 5.1 There are no specific equalities issues.

### **6 Legal powers**

- 6.1 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).

## **7 Financial implications**

7.1 There are no financial consequences for London TravelWatch.