

London Transport Users Committee	LTUC
Secretariat's Memorandum Author: Vincent Stops	Agenda No:10 LTUC 134 Date: 30 October 2002

Bus Priority Action Plan 2004 – 2011 Consultation Draft

Background

- 1.1 The Mayor's Transport Strategy has a key policy objective: *People's experience of travelling by bus must be transformed.*
- 1.2 Bus services and patronage are expanding. By 2011 passenger demand is forecast to increase by 40% on 2001 levels. This is set against a backdrop of a drop in traffic volume within the congestion charging zone, but static traffic volume in inner London and growth in traffic in outer London. The trend in average traffic speeds is also down in all these zones (pre congestion charging).
- 1.3 To achieve a transformation of the travelling experience and accommodate the increased demand London Buses has proposed an action plan to increase the amount of bus priority over the next decade. The plan is attached.
- 1.4 This is the plan being presented to members. We are asked to comment by 4 November 2002.

Summary of the Plan

- 2.1 The plan proposes four priorities for 2002 – 2003: London Bus initiative (LBI) 1 and 2 schemes; improved enforcement and some other important schemes.
- 2.2 For 2003 to 2004 the plan proposes to complete committed schemes; works to facilitate new and enhanced services and the articulated bus operations; enforcement; accessible bus stop works and again some other important schemes.
- 2.3 For 2004 to 2008 and beyond it is proposed to expand bus priority by completion of any outstanding LBI schemes; adding complementary links associated with the LBI; expand the London Bus Priority Network on the basis of passenger flows rather than bus flows; tackle some 'hot spots' that have been missed from other schemes; pilot and develop future intensified bus priority.
- 2.4 Leading up to 2008 and beyond ideas are suggested for further increasing bus priority by innovative means such as greater segregation of bus lanes; better loading / servicing facilities for businesses and frontages to minimise bus lane violation; extra width bus stops to allow overtaking; continuity of bus lanes through junctions; dedicated busways; virtual bus lanes using signalling techniques where road width is limited; and improved enforcement.
- 2.5 The plan recognises the needs of other road users; the issues of political and public acceptance; human resources and the requirement of partnership with the boroughs to fulfil much of the plan.
- 2.6 delivering the Plan will require expenditure of £70M in 2003/04, rising to £133M in 2010/11.

Commentary

- 3.1 Given the Committee's strong support for improving the quality of London's bus network, members will want to welcome all that is proposed in this plan.
- 3.1.1 The secretariat has identified three issues members may wish to see dealt with more fully in the Plan:
- 3.1.2 Gyro systems are seldom of benefit to bus users. They mean passengers are frequently taken away from their objectives, they add to journey length, and they are very confusing for passengers who are unfamiliar with the routes or are interchanging. The Plan should explicitly support a presumption in favour of restoring two-way working on bus routes.
- 3.1.3 In some cases taxis cause congestion in bus lanes, and are as inefficient in their use of road space capacity as singly occupied private cars. The Plan should support a policy of maximising the transport capacity of bus lanes in terms of passenger benefits. This may mean excluding taxis from some bus lanes where the net impact of their presence is negative.
- 3.1.4 The Committee has always argued that bus priority and enforcement should go hand in hand. The present policing initiative, which the Committee have welcomed, only covers a limited number of important routes. The plan should explicitly recognise this, and detail how present and future bus priority measures are to be effectively enforced. In particular it should spell out an agreed position on the respective roles of the police and the boroughs, which emerging as an area of tension which could adversely affect the momentum of TfL's programme for achieving a bus renaissance on the streets of London.

Recommendation

- 4.1 Members are invited to agree that a response to the draft Plan be submitted on the basis of this paper and the Committees existing policies, subject to any comments raised in the course of their discussion.