
Minutes

Agenda item: 4
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Minutes of the Transport Services Committee meeting held on 11 September 2012 at Dexter House, London EC2

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Present

Members

David Barry, Terry Bennett, Gail Engert (Chair), Sharon Grant, Sophia Lambert (Deputy Chair), David Leibling

Guests

Beverley Hall	London Bus Performance, Transport for London (Item 7)
Keith Gardner	Bus Policy Manager, Transport for London (Item 7)
Andy Best	Head of Highways, London Surface Transport (Item 8)

Matt Winfield	Stakeholder Engagement Manager, Transport for London
Mark Leslie	Secretary, Essex Rail Users Federation
Karl Farrell	National Federation of the Blind UK
Lianna Etkind	Campaigns and Outreach Co-ordinator, Transport for All

Secretariat

Keletha Barrett	Policy Assistant (Item 9)
Tim Bellenger	Director, Policy & Investigation
Janet Cooke	Chief Executive
Richard Freeston-Clough	Communications Officer
Sharon Malley	Executive Assistant (minutes)
Vincent Stops	Policy Officer

1 Chair's introduction and pre-meeting announcements

The Chair welcomed members, officers and guests to the meeting. She apologised for the late start, which was due to the site visit at Paddington Station overrunning, and made the standard safety announcements.

2 Apologies for absence

No apologies were received. Sharon Grant sent apologised for lateness.

3 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest in addition to those included on the online register.

4 Minutes

The minutes of the Transport Services committee held on 19 June 2012 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

5 Matters arising (TRS033)

5.1 Meeting with Minister for Transport

The Chief Executive was optimistic that a meeting with the new Minister for Transport would take place shortly and would keep members informed of the outcome.

5.2 Report into deaths on the railway

It was agreed that this issue could be put into abeyance as other agencies had more influence in this area than London TravelWatch.

Action: Executive Assistant

6 Actions taken (TRS034)

The Director, Policy and Investigation, presented his report on his team's activity since the previous meeting. It was noted that the Policy and Investigation team had been very busy with several rail franchise consultations taking place during the period.

It was noted that the meetings had largely focused on rail rather than other modes.

7 Use of iBus to manage bus services

Beverley Hall, from the London Bus Performance team at Transport for London (TfL), attended the meeting to discuss how data captured by the iBus system could be used to measure and monitor bus performance. Her presentation covered the following areas:

- The objectives for monitoring bus performance, including gaining an understanding of reliability, incentivising good performance, identify and investigating poor performance and improving performance for passengers.
- How bus performance was monitored through the iBus system with increased data obtained throughout the duration of routes and across both day and night.
- How the data was managed and reviewed, including automatic diagnostics and report-running.
- How bus performance could be improved through the provision of real time information to operators and better understanding of problems and trends.
- How the data captured by iBus might be used in future, such as to create more robust schedules and set minimum performance standards.

In response to questions, Ms Hall said that the iBus system collected both real-time data, which drove passenger information and the control screens in garages and which was available for a finite period, and overnight data, which was downloaded from every bus every night and which was stored in a database run by a contractor but owned by TfL.

Ms Hall said that the volume of data collected meant that it needed to be processed automatically rather than manually and TfL was focusing on creating diagnostics to identify potential problems and differentiate between performance problems and data errors.

The use of iBus on night bus routes would enable these routes to be incentivised in the future and this was currently under consideration. Previously night buses had not been incentivised as performance was monitored only during daytime hours.

Ms Hall said that since the introduction of the iBus operators had seen slightly lower scores for Excess Waiting Time. This meant that operators had to make small improvements to performance in order to continue to receive their incentivisation payments.

iBus and Oyster information could also be used together to improve the ability to estimate origin and destination patterns for buses. For example, if an Oyster user touched in on a bus and then shortly afterwards touched in at a train station, it would be possible to estimate that the user had left the bus at the stop by the station. This combined with iBus data would give a better understanding of where the peak demands were on routes.

The Chair thanked Ms Hall for her presentation and noted that it would be useful to review the position on incentivisation in six months' time.

8 Obstructions on the pavement (TRS035)

Andy Best, Head of Highways for London Surface Transport, gave a presentation on TfL's role in enforcing regulations relating to obstructions on the pavements and highway. The presentation focused on the statutory provisions relating to highways and the powers of authorities to clear obstructions from them. It also addressed the way TfL enforced the provisions relating to highways obstructions and gave examples of successful enforcement action.

In response to questions, Mr Best said that TfL approached enforcement in stages, beginning with informal discussions and moving finally to prosecution. There were three cases being prosecuted at the moment with costs for each likely to be in the region of £10-15k, meaning that prosecutions were not undertaken lightly.

Mr Best said that legislation relating to enforcement was weaker than he would like and he would welcome authorities being given stronger powers in this area. He said that TfL had issued 61 enforcement notices requiring people to clear obstructions from pavements in the last 12 months.

Karl Farrell of the National Federation of the Blind UK said that his organisation believed guardrails to be more friendly than bollards, and that guardrails were safer for others such as children. Mr Best said it was important to balance the risks involved in removing guardrails and take decisions on an individual basis.

Lianna Etkind from Transport for All welcomed the progress that was being made in removing obstructions from pavements. She said that wheelchair users in particular found street clutter difficult to navigate.

The Policy Officer asked whether fixed penalty notices would be introduced for contraventions. Mr Best said that fixed penalty notices were not being issued at present but that this would remain under review.

Ms Etkind said that she, Mr Farrell and John Thornton, a wheelchair user, would be doing a walkabout in Cowcross Street and would feedback their findings to Mr Best.

The Chair thanked Mr Best for attending and for explaining the difficulties faced by TfL when seeking to enforce provisions to keep pavements clear of clutter.

9 National Rail performance report (TRS036)

The Policy Assistant presented London TravelWatch's report on National Rail performance for Quarter 1 in 2012-13. She said that the performance figures had fallen overall by 1.4 percentage points compared to the previous quarter.

The trend for increasing signal failures was caused more by degradation of old stock than cable theft. Theft was decreasing as the police and Network Rail were taking action against together, including securing cables, forensic marking and CCTV.

Other causes for lower performance included issues such as deaths on the railway and vehicles striking railway bridges. It was noted that these causes were out of Network Rail's direct control. It was agreed that the report would in future include a table showing the cause of disruption.

Action: Executive Assistant/Policy Assistant

Mark Leslie, the Secretary of the Essex Rail Users Federation, said that focusing on the punctuality of trains did not give the whole picture. He was concerned that trains starting at locations such as Colchester were no longer identified as 'connecting' with trains coming from London, which meant that if the London trains were delayed the Colchester trains would leave before passengers could transfer onto it.

10 Any other business

There was no other business.

11 Resolution to move into confidential session

The meeting resolved, under section 15(b) of schedule 18 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999, that by reason of the confidential nature of the next following item/s, that it was desirable in the public interest that the public should be excluded from the meeting.

In confidential session, members reviewed the meeting.