
Minutes

Agenda item: 4
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**Minutes of the Transport Services Committee meeting held on 13 March 2012 at
6 Middle Street, London EC1**

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Present

Members

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

Guests

Jonathan Denby Head of Corporate Affairs, Greater Anglia (Item 7)
Dana Skelley Director of Streets, Transport for London (Item 8)

Secretariat

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 and made the standard housekeeping and safety announcements.

2 Apologies for absence

No apologies were received.

3 Declarations of interest

There were no additional declarations of interest.

4 Minutes

The minutes of the Transport Services committee held on 7 December 2011 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

It was noted that the Policy Officer had been invited to take part in Transport for London's (TfL's) cycling safety group. It was also noted that the new Blackfriars underground station had opened on 20 February.

5 Matters arising (TRS025)

5.1 Arranging meeting between Ministers for Health and Transport

The Director, Policy & Investigation, reported that there may be some progress in arranging a meeting with the Minister for Transport although it would be for a broad update on transport matters rather than focusing on links with health.

5.2 Travel support card

Members welcomed the launch of TfL's new travel support card, which enabled passengers to give information about hidden disabilities that might mean they required extra assistance when travelling. Members stated that they would like to be updated on progress with this initiative once it had had the opportunity to be in.

Action: Executive Assistant

It was agreed that information about the hidden disabilities card should be included on the London TravelWatch website.

Action: Communications Officer

5.3 Licensing of pedicabs

It was noted that the issue of TfL licensing pedicabs was to be considered at the TfL Board meeting on 14 March.

5.4 Countdown signs at bus stops

It was agreed that the Policy Officer would seek information from TfL on the use of SMS as an alternative to Countdown boards at bus stops.

Action: Policy Officer

5.5 Paddington station

The Director, Policy & Investigation, reported on several meetings that had taken place to make progress with the matters raised in London TravelWatch's report about Paddington station.

5.6 Transport regeneration projects report

The Director, Policy & Investigation, reported that he had given presentations to Wandsworth and Croydon councils about his report on transport regeneration and had also attended a seminar at the old County Hall where he had had the opportunity to discuss the findings of the report with several politicians.

6 Actions taken (TRS026)

The Chair reported that she had attended a useful seminar on accessibility on 8 February.

The Director, Policy & Investigation, said that he and Karl Grewer had attended an event with Passenger Focus and several invited London and South East rail user groups to report on changes at Passenger Focus and London TravelWatch.

The report was noted.

7 Greater Anglia franchise

Jonathan Denby, Head of Corporate Affairs at Greater Anglia, gave a presentation on the new Greater Anglia franchise and improving performance in the London region. He apologised for the absence of Ruud Haket, who unfortunately was unable to attend. The presentation covered the following points:

- Branding for the new franchise would be Greater Anglia and Stansted Express rather than Abellio, the parent company, because the emphasis was on local delivery.
- The new franchise was only for two-and-a-half years so infrastructure investment would be limited. However, some previous work on expanding capacity would come to fruition during the franchise period.

- The focus would be on improving customer care and information provision as well as some refreshing of stations.
- Work should be done to address the fact that passengers with PDAs had better information than some station staff and providing staff with their own PDAs may be necessary.
- It was hoped to extend Oyster to the Greater Anglia metro area, which started at Shenfield, and also possibly Hertford East. With DfT approval this could be in place by January 2013.
- Work was being carried out to help passengers avoid overcrowded carriages and to create integrated 'plus bike' and 'plus cab' tickets.
- Network Rail was working on overhead lines to avoid problems of overheating in the Stratford area to minimise disruptions during the Olympics period.
- The transfer of the franchise was difficult because of severe winter weather and problems with IT and the website. However, performance had now settled and was generally now over 90%.
- A new customer panel had been introduced so that each route could have its own panel, as the needs of each route were very different. The Director, Policy & Investigation, would advise Greater Anglia on best practice for such panels.
- Should Greater Anglia win the longer franchise there would need to be significant infrastructure improvements to improve capacity as routes were now full and trains as long as they could be.

In response to questions, Mr Denby confirmed that metro services did not have first-class accommodation but longer distance and Stansted Express trains did, in response to significant customer demand. Free tea and coffee would be introduced for first-class customers on routes to Ipswich and Norwich, to bring them into line with other services.

In response to a tweet from Transport for All about increasing accessibility at stations, Mr Denby said he hoped to improve accessibility across the routes. As an example, at Billericay, there were lifts for northbound trains but not southbound and this should be addressed.

Mr Denby said Greater Anglia had plans for improving performance across the franchise, including working closer with Network Rail, and thought that benchmarking against an operator such as South West Trains, which had an average performance score of 92%, would be most appropriate as it had a comparable length of track and similarly high levels of trains from other companies using its tracks. He would meet officers outside the meeting to discuss this further.

In addition, other issues to be discussed outside the meeting included London TravelWatch's views on customer panels, training for drivers on keeping passengers

informed about disruption, liaison with TfL at interchange stations and detailed information about the cleansing schedule for trains.

Action: Policy Officer

The Chair thanked Mr Denby for attending the meeting and answering members' questions.

8 Streets performance and update on highways

Dana Skelley, Director of Streets at Transport for London, gave a presentation on issues affecting highways in the TfL area. The presentation covered the following points:

- TfL was introducing more customer feedback into decision making about maintenance and repair of highways and pavements.
- Work was continuing to ensure the robustness of the Hammersmith flyover with invasive investigations showing that the flyover was able to hold its own weight and the weight of light traffic. Five of the 16 spans were found to be in the poorest condition and work on them was due to complete in June with the remainder being completed in Summer 2013.
- No other structures in London were built in the same way as the Hammersmith flyover although Spaghetti Junction in Birmingham used the same construction method. The M4 flyover may need work in the medium term.

In response to questions, Ms Skelley said that litter on the highways was an issue for local authorities rather than TfL. However, TfL was working closely with the highway authorities to make litter collection on the highways easier, particularly on faster roads where traffic management was required in order for operatives to work safely. The Chief Executive added that the roundabout at the southern entrance to the Blackwall Tunnel was very badly littered and this would reflect badly on London during the Olympics as it was an important access route for the Olympics site.

Ms Skelley reported that TfL had agreed Memoranda of Understanding with major utilities companies so that when there were problems with the utilities' drains or manhole covers TfL would be able to repair them and then charge the cost back to the utility companies. This was a much more efficient way of solving the problem than waiting for the utilities to make the repairs themselves and was a big step forward in providing a seamless service to road users.

The Policy Officer noted that the target for the amount of the road surface to be in a good state of repair had dropped from 92% to 90%. Ms Skelley said that this was acceptable both in terms of engineering and customer feedback, although the target for pavements remained at 92%.

Ms Skelley agreed to provide further details to London TravelWatch about the costs of insurance claims for damage caused by poorly maintained roads and pavements in London as compared to other cities.

Action: Executive Assistant

The Chair thanked Ms Skelley for her presentation and contributing to the discussions.

9 Transport for London performance report (TRS027)

The Policy Officer presented the report on TfL's performance for the third quarter of 2011-12. He noted that there was a limited amount of detail on streets performance as the data had not yet been supplied by TfL. Matt Winfield of TfL agreed that he would provide the necessary information in the next few days.

It was noted that there was a decreasing level of customer satisfaction with the Tramlink service and this may be an area for further consideration by the Committee.

Action: Executive Assistant

It was noted that there remained good satisfaction levels with buses and the Overground.

10 Step-free access update (TRS028)

The Policy Officer presented the report updating members on progress with improving accessibility at stations. It was noted that the TfL website did now provide detailed information about the number of steps at each station to give passengers greater understanding of whether they would be able to access them.

It was noted that lifts that were not working would be a problem for passengers with mobility impairments and that there should be a way for passengers to find out before beginning their journeys whether there was a problems with any lifts. This was an issue that the Committee may consider reviewing in more detail in future.

Action: Executive Assistant

11 Bus stop accessibility update (TRS029)

The Policy Assistant presented the report updating members on progress with increasing the number of bus stops that were accessible to people with mobility impairments.

The number of accessible bus stops had increased to 60% of the network. Officers had written to the worst performing boroughs to encourage them to improve and noted that Redbridge had done a considerable amount of work in response, increasing from 35% to 58%.

Members welcomed the clarity of the report.

12 Any other business

The Director, Policy & Investigation, reported that Chiltern Railways was proposing to change its timetable in May, to halve the frequency of service at Northolt Park and other reductions. London TravelWatch has long expressed concern about frequencies in the Greater London area and this would exacerbate those problems. In addition, changes in May would be both very short notice and would be introduced at a time when other train operating companies would not be making changes because of the lead-in to the Olympics. In addition, Chiltern Railways was proposing further timetable changes in December. This seemed unfair on Chiltern's passengers, who should be able to expect a stable timetable. The Director, Policy & Investigation, would be responding to Chiltern Railways' proposals setting out these concerns.

Action: Director, Policy & Investigation

13 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.