
Minutes

Agenda item : 4
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Minutes of a meeting of the Transport Service Committee held on 28 May 2010 at 6 Middle Street, London EC1

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Present

Members : Terry Bennett (Vice Chair); Gail Engert; Teena Lashmore; Lorna Reith (Chair); Sharon Grant (Chair, London TravelWatch)

Guests

Mark Beasley Head of Planned Interventions, Transport for London (TfL)
Andy Best Senior Highways Operations Manager, TfL
Beverley Hall Head of Surface Transport Communications, TfL
Martin Sachs Head of Transport and Highways, Lambeth Council and Highway Operations and London
Technical Advisors Group 2 Infrastructure (LOTAG)

Stakeholder representatives

Simon Mouncey TfL Partnership Liaison and Development
Matt Winfield Stakeholder Engagement Manager, TfL

Staff

Chief Executive; Committee Administrator; Senior Policy Officer

Minutes

1 Chair's introduction, pre-meeting announcements

The Chair welcomed visitors, members and staff to the meeting of the committee, and made standard housekeeping announcements.

2 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from David Leibling and from Teena Lashmore for lateness.

3 Declarations of interest

No additional declarations of interest were made. A public record of members' interests may be found on the London TravelWatch website (<http://www.londontravelwatch.org.uk/document/3861/get>).

4 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2010 were approved and signed for the record, subject to one amendment on page 6, first line, second paragraph where there was a typing error.

5 Matters arising (TS029)

The Chair noted that the visit made by herself and others to the Waterloo and City Line was given added significance as a points failure meant it was possible to observe how staff coped during a disruption event.

A member asked in reference to 3.2 (How many passengers would change at Kennington for the Charing Cross branch of the Northern Line if the line were partially split) whether passengers would cross the same platform. The Senior Policy Officer replied that the platforms would be next to each other and there would be a level interchange between platforms.

On item 3.5 (TfL to update information to passengers whose buses no longer enter Tottenham Hale station), the Chair reported that buses were now entering Tottenham Hale station again.

On item 3.9 (What service the Waterloo and City line would operate during the Olympics), it was agreed to raise the question of the hours of service for this line at the Board meeting in July. Members felt that the line might have a role relieving pressure on the network.

6 Actions taken (TS030)

The Chief Executive reported that she had a meeting with London Buses (also attended by the Chair of London TravelWatch and Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer) on the cutting of bus services in Oxford Street. There are particular pinch points in the area, for example, near BHS. London Buses are trying to use creative ways to reduce the number of buses. The Chair of London TravelWatch felt that it was important to prevent the space being taken up by other modes, for example, private hire vehicles. The Chief Executive reported that London Buses is currently formulating its response to the London Assembly Transport Committee's report on buses in Oxford Street.

The responses to the Department for Transport's (DfT) rail franchise consultations were noted.

The Chair noted that London TravelWatch had again asked for services to be added to serve the Hornsey neighbourhood clinic.

7 Performance Monitoring reports

The Senior Policy Officer gave a presentation on this item. His presentation may be viewed in full at <http://www.londontravelwatch.org.uk/document/4194/get>.

The Senior Policy Officer reported that there had been an overall improvement on the public performance measure (PPM) by London and south east train companies (for quarter 3 2009/10).

He highlighted the key performance indicators from the Transport for London (TfL) performance monitoring report. Data on smoothing the traffic will be included from the next financial year. Generally the amount of congestion has been generally in decline with seasonal variations across the year. He highlighted the bus routes which were the worst ten high frequency routes by variance from the contracted standards. However, it was important to note that this may be due to specific factors in the quarter, such as road works. Members asked that particular routes be monitored if they continued to be in this list.

London Underground had met its target, whilst the Docklands Light Railway (DLR) was slightly below target in some areas. Tramlink performed well and London Overground (LOROL) had showed improvements. Dial-a-Ride was improving, but was not hitting its target.

A member asked whether TOCs (Train Operating Companies) were hiding behind the cold weather. The Senior Policy Officer replied that the TOCs' performance had been judged against the emergency timetable. TfL were not as badly affected by the poor weather. Members noted that bus customer satisfaction scores were in decline. The Senior Policy Officer would raise this with TfL.

Action : Senior Policy Officer

The Chief Executive noted, with reference to the DLR, that London TravelWatch had received a number of complaints from passengers about ticket machines. The Chair of London TravelWatch asked if there were any operational reasons for the decline. The Senior Policy Officer replied that it was not known, but would investigate.

A member queried the overall performance for TOCs. The Senior Policy Officer will look at the figures.

Action : Senior Policy Officer

Members thanked the Policy Officer and Senior Policy Officer for the reports. The Chair of London TravelWatch would send a letter to Assembly members along with a copy of the report, highlighting particular performance issues.

Action : Communications Officer

8 Road maintenance

The Chair welcomed Mr Beasley, Mr Best and Mr Sachs to the meeting. Their presentation may be viewed in full at <http://www.londontravelwatch.org.uk/document/4193/get>.

Mr Best gave examples of the infrastructure that TfL looked after on the Transport for London Road Network (TLRN), for example, TfL is the biggest single tunnel operator in the UK. TfL carries out regular inspections on its network of roads and gathers intelligence on the network, for example, where defects in the roads are clustered. There has been a change in strategy since the severe weather of 2009/10 to make sure that money is spent in the right places. Defects are categorised due to their severity. Surveys are carried out to test skid resistance (SCRIM), condition of the carriageways (using a scanner), and the condition of trees and lamp posts (using ultrasound).

The Chair asked who notified TfL when there was a traffic accident on the TLRN : was it the police? Mr Best replied that a report would be received from either the police or public. Mr Sachs noted that a minor accident on a Borough road would be picked up by a road inspector or they would receive notification via the public.

Mr Best noted that some parts of the TLRN had the same level of traffic as motorways. This meant that they were more likely to have defects. Utilities and third party reinstatements can also cause problems (they are often the first to go in poor weather). Severe weather has exacerbated the problems. He explained how maintenance of the TLRN was carried out : works are carried out by contractors, who are funded by a lump sum. Therefore TfL is cushioned to some extent and has lower administration costs. Third party damage (up to £10,000) can be recovered by the contractor. Works may be postponed if TfL is aware of other works being carried out. The capital budget is a little over £48 million a year. The amount spent on road resurfacing schemes has increased after the severe winter.

There are a series of manuals to ensure high standards of works and standardisation across the network. Carriageway schemes need to consider the design of the work, how much is available to spend and the expected duration of the works.

A member asked if better off areas have more money allocated to their roads. Mr Sachs noted that in Lambeth carriageway funds were allocated to more deprived areas first. Footways are prioritised in these areas, as inhabitants are more dependent on pathways. Mr Best explained that footways in, for example, Victoria Embankment are of a higher quality because they reflect the buildings and public realm.

Mr Best explained how TfL were trying to smooth the traffic flow on the TLRN. TfL is minimising disruption in block closures, for example, Boroughs and utilities were invited in at the same time as TfL's work. Mr Beasley highlighted the success of this scheme which had meant a potential 18 month set of works had been reduced to 7 months thanks to greater co-ordination between utilities and TfL. The timing of resurfacing work is carried out to ensure a balance between public and users. Mr Beasley noted that work was ongoing to improve co-ordination between Highway Authorities and utilities to minimise disruption on the road network.

The Chair of London TravelWatch asked how TfL is planning to get the public involved. Mr Best replied that there were plans to brand the TLRN better and members of the public could report defects via the telephone or website. Mr Beasley noted that there was a pilot scheme to place a phone number on the traffic signals. This would be on the TLRN and Boroughs

(TfL is the body for all traffic signals in the GLA area). Mr Best noted that TfL were planning to have phone numbers on 80 per cent of lamp posts on the TLRN.

Mr Beasley updated members on the permit scheme. The scheme started on 11 January 2010. TfL and 16 Boroughs were taking part. Croydon and Bromley joined on 1 April 2010. Further Boroughs will join in January 2011 (one borough, Kingston, is not going to join at the moment). Thames Water, EDF, British Telecom, Virgin Media, Southern Gas, National Grid Gas and TfL are all members of the scheme. This is 95 per cent of all utility providers in London. On 22 June 2010 the launch of the National Joint Utilities group's improved code of conduct would be launched nationally.

Mr Beasley is keen for the Boroughs to sign up to the code of conduct and for there to be greater co-ordination of works. Mr Beasley reported that a meeting had taken place to increase co-ordination, for example, carrying out works in the summer, when traffic volumes were lower. 2011 would be the last year of works on the Olympic road network.

Since 11 January 2010, TfL had granted 15,500 permits on the TLRN and rejected 2,200. 72 fines had been issued since 11 January (30 did not have a valid permit). Mr Beasley is using red route enforcement officers to carry out inspections. He has given inspectors a mobile phone and pictures are taken of permit breaches. Permits display the Highway Authority, permit number and telephone number of the utility. If the permit number is not displayed this can result in a fine. The level of fine can vary from £50 to £500. The maximum fine is £2,500 per day. A DfT consultation is currently taking place, proposing an increase to £25,000. Fines can be issued if reinstatements are not up to standard. Contractors are responsible for any litter in fenced off areas. Refusals can be on the basis that there are too many other works going on, insufficient provision for pedestrians, etc.

A member asked how often inspections of reinstatements took place. Mr Beasley replied that regular inspections took place 6 months after completion, and then after a year and 2 years. Utilities receive a defect notice if problems are identified. Mr Beasley noted that income generated from fines was ring fenced for inspection costs.

9 Bus planning

The Chair welcomed Ms Hall to the meeting. Transport for London's business plan 2009/10 to 2017/18 was based on the assumption that demand would recover and grow. The plans are for the bus kilometres to fall from 482 million kilometres in 2010/11 to 478 million in 2017/18. London Buses are planning not to increase the bus fares by a similar amount to that which had been seen in January 2010. There will be no change to the planning criteria of services. Any changes to bus services would use a network planned approach.

Members discussed the marketing around route X26. Ms Hall promised to supply the report on the marketing of this bus service.

Action : TfL

The Chair asked about concessionary travel for children. Would there be caps on journeys? Ms Hall replied that there was no plan to charge children at the moment. There was an option of either maintaining service levels or keeping fares low. The cuts in the 1990s were to reduce off peak services. There is a strong case for how important buses are in the Mayor's Transport plan.

The Senior Policy Officer noted that London TravelWatch is concerned about bus service cuts due to the greater scope for achieving cost savings by reducing bus service levels. The bus network is less capital intensive than the London Underground and National Railway. London TravelWatch are concerned that cuts may occur to the bus network for cost savings alone rather than reflecting the demand for travel and the impact on transport users. Ms Hall said that TfL appreciated these concerns.

The Senior Policy Officer would send further questions to Ms Hall.

Action : Senior Policy Officer

10 Any other business

The Chair reported that an announcement had been made that the cycle hire scheme would be sponsored by Barclays bank. The deal meant that £25 million would be paid over the next 5 years.

11 Resolution to move into confidential session

The Committee 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, it was desirable in the public interest that the public should be excluded from this part of the meeting.

In confidential session, the Committee commented upon the two draft documents which were circulated to members before the meeting and reviewed the meeting.

The next Transport Services Committee meeting will be held on 21 July 2010.

12 Glossary

DfT	Department for Transport
DLR	Docklands Light Railway
EWT	Excess Waiting Time
LIPs	Local Implementation Plans
LOROL	London Overground
LUL	London Underground
TfL	Transport for London
TLRN	Transport for London Road Network
TOCs	Train Operating Companies