
Minutes

Agenda item: 4
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Minutes of the Transport Services committee meeting held on 5 April 2011 at 6 Middle Street, London EC1

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Present

Members

David Barry, Terry Bennett, Gail Engert (Chair), Sharon Grant (from Item 7), Sophia Lambert (Deputy Chair), David Leibling

Stakeholder Representatives

Matt Winfield Stakeholder Engagement Manager, Transport for London (TfL)

Members of the public

Secretariat

Tim Bellenger	Director, Research & Development
John Cartledge	Safety & Policy Adviser (from Item 6)
Jo deBank	Communications Officer
Sharon Malley	Senior Committee Administrator (minutes)
Vincent Stops	Streets & Surface Transport Policy Officer
Poonam Tamana	Policy Officer (Item 9 to end)

Minutes

1 Chair's introduction and pre-meeting announcements

The Chair welcomed members, officers and guests to the meeting, the first newly constituted meeting of the Transport Services committee incorporating the old Transport Services and Access to Transport committees' terms of reference. She made the standard housekeeping and safety announcements.

2 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from the Chief Executive.

3 Declarations of interest

There were no additional declarations of interest.

4 Minutes

The minutes of the Access to Transport committee meeting held on 1 December 2010 were agreed, subject to following correction: on paragraph 4 of page 3, the reference to the Surface Transport Design panel should be amended to the Surface Transport Design Forum. The minutes of the Transport Services committee meeting held on 16 December 2010 were agreed and both sets signed as a correct record.

There were no matters arising not raised elsewhere on the agenda.

5 Matters arising (TRS001)

5.1 ID for taxi and private hire vehicle drivers

The Streets & Surface Transport Policy Officer reported that he had met the Public Carriage Office (PCO) to discuss London TravelWatch's concerns in relation to public safety and proposals for an ID scheme for taxi and private hire vehicle drivers. The PCO was supportive of the ID scheme in principle and was working towards its introduction. Matt Winfield of Transport for London (TfL) agreed to let members know whether a target date for roll-out had been set. This issue was on the committee's forward plan for consideration again in December.

Action: Committee services

5.2 Complaints received from disabled passengers

Matt Winfield agreed to confirm the number of disabled passengers travelling on the TfL network, to put into context the figures that were being sought in relation to complaints received from disabled passengers.

Action: Committee services

5.3 Complaints received via work on accessible bus stops

The Streets & Surface Transport Policy Officer reported that four complaints had been received following the publicity on accessible bus stops and of these, two had been taken up as substantive cases. Unfortunately it was not possible to track the outcome of these particular cases although the passengers would have received full responses from the casework team.

5.1 System for the submission of pictures of inaccessible bus stops

It was noted that the proportion of accessible bus stops was rising and that the increasing focus of concern now was on driver behaviour. It was agreed that rather than seeking to compile images of problematic bus stops work would now focus on improving driver behaviour.

5.2 Migration from Dial-a-Ride to mainstream bus network

It was noted that Matt Winfield had provided an updated response to the issue of the extent to which there had been a migration of passengers from Dial-a-Ride to the mainstream bus network as bus services became more accessible. The response showed that the proportion of Dial-A-Ride members who stated that they had used an ordinary bus rose only 1% between 2007/08 and 2009/10, suggesting there had not been any significant migration from Dial-A-Ride to mainstream buses.

This issue would be considered further under item 8 below.

5.3 Hidden disabilities card

Matt Winfield provided a further update on the hidden disabilities card. He stated that approval for roll-out of the hidden disabilities had now been granted and a project plan was being developed. The target date for implementation was Autumn 2011.

Members welcomed this decision and agreed to keep the issue under review.

5.4 London Councils prioritising accessible transport

Members noted that following interventions by London TravelWatch and others, and following a judicial review of London Councils' initial decision to de-prioritise accessible transport, London Councils new consultation once again places accessible transport as a high priority for grant funding.

6 Actions taken (TRS002)

The Director, Research & Development, reported on actions that officers had taken under delegated authority.

It was agreed that London TravelWatch should publicise its work on securing operational lifts at Dagenham Dock.

Action: Communications Officer

7 Interim interchange and walking report (TRS003)

The Streets & Surface Transport Policy Officer presented a draft version of the Interchange and Walking report.

Members noted that Network Rail had replied to their letter outlining concerns following their walking visit to Paddington Station. Members were disappointed that Network Rail had not conceded any of their points and it was agreed that concerns about Paddington Station would feature in detail in the final version of the report.

It was noted that the Paddington Station visit highlighted problems of jurisdiction, with Network Rail passing responsibility for many issues to Westminster City Council. It was important for all authorities to co-operate on these issues and concerns relating to Westminster should also feature in the final report.

The Streets & Surface Transport Policy Officer stated that he hoped to send final draft copies of the report to members by the end of April with the report published by the end of May.

It was agreed that it would be useful to consider making a presentation to London Councils on the need for cross-working on transport infrastructure projects.

Action: Streets & Surface Transport Policy Officer

It was agreed that the Communications Officer should consider how best to publicise the report, including potentially holding an event at a station.

Action: Communications Officer

8 Proposals to change specialist services for people with mobility difficulties (TRS003)

The Director, Research & Development, presented his report on proposals to change specialist services for people with mobility difficulties. He noted that:

- Services for those with disabilities had been developed piecemeal at a time when the mainstream network was not very accessible
- A range of services was offered including Dial-a-Ride, patient transport, taxicard, local authority transport and charity community transport, with some areas of overlap and some gaps
- Some bus services – the 900 series – were developed as a means of allowing elderly residents to access local facilities
- Proposals were now under consultation to amend those services
- Many of the specialist services were expensive to provide, with an average subsidy per individual journey of £23
- Passengers often developed personal relationships with drivers and the trips became part of passengers' social experience
- London Councils was proposing to co-ordinate all specialised transport services to increase efficiency and reduce costs

London TravelWatch was concerned about the effect the proposed changes would have on passengers.

The Director, Research & Development, stated that in addition to these proposals, Dial-a-Ride was consulting on changes to its accessibility criteria, meaning that fewer people in future would be able to use the Dial-a-Ride service.

It was noted that the proposed system of passenger mentoring, designed to increase passengers' confidence in the mainstream transport network, would be resource-intensive and that previous trials had shown that passengers often required extensive mentoring before feeling confident enough to access the mainstream network alone.

It was noted that the consultation document did not provide for appeals following accessibility decisions and London TravelWatch should call for an appeal procedure.

Action: Director, Research & Development

It was noted that if more passengers were going to be directed to the mainstream network then it must be able to accommodate them, both physically and in terms of driver behaviour.

The Streets & Surface Transport Policy Officer said he would be meeting Dial-a-Ride to find more details of the consultation proposals.

It was agreed that London TravelWatch would seek to work with the London Assembly on the London Councils proposals.

It was also agreed that communications to vulnerable users about any changes to the services would need to be very clear and thorough and this would form part of London TravelWatch's response to the Dial-a-Ride consultation.

Action: Director, Research & Development

It was noted that officers had responded to the consultation on the changes to the 900 bus series under delegated powers, suggesting that a route in Croydon had such high volumes of usage that providing an alternative accessible bus service in the area would be more efficient than seeking to move passengers to Dial-a-Ride.

9 Transport for London performance report (TRS005)

The Streets & Surface Transport Policy Officer presented the report on TfL's performance. The report was compiled using publicly available data but added value by selecting performance measures that most directly affected passengers and providing the data in one place.

It was noted that in Graphs 3 and 4, about traffic speeds and volumes in London, it would be helpful to disaggregate inner and outer London traffic.

Action: Streets & Surface Transport Policy Officer

It was noted that Graph 6 showed TfL's success in handling roadworks and that Graphs 7 and 8 showed good performance of buses.

It was noted that TfL no longer had a bus priority unit. The Streets & Surface Policy Officer would ask TfL whether there was a list of sites where buses were being delayed and bus-related improvements would be beneficial.

Action: Streets & Surface Transport Policy Officer

Members considered Graph 10, which showed excess journey time across the Underground network. It was noted that the overall network average was higher than the apparent average for the lines individually. This was because the network statistics were derived from a basket of journeys reflecting average journeys across the network, and as 40% of journeys incorporated a change of line, the network figures often reflected journeys where there were delays on two lines. It was agreed that it would be helpful to include a note on the graph explaining this.

Action: Streets & Surface Transport Policy Officer

It was agreed that the graph showed some concerns about specific lines, in particular the Central line. It was agreed that if the performance of the Central line remained problematic in the next reporting period it would be worthwhile to invite the line's general manager to a future meeting.

Action: Committee services

It was agreed that the performance report was an important means of London TravelWatch holding TfL to account. It would be helpful if TfL could provide data in a raw format for London TravelWatch's analysis but to date TfL had resisted this. This meant London TravelWatch had to compile the data in its report from a variety of different sources, which was less straightforward than if TfL simply provided the data.

10 Rail and Underground safety regulation and performance (TRS006)

The Safety & Policy Adviser made a presentation on safety on the rail and Underground, covering the following issues:

- The legal context, including the Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974
- The bodies which had a legal responsibility for safety
- How the media treated accidents on trains and tubes
- The historical performance of railway safety, including international comparisons
- The risk of rail and tube travel compared to other modes of transport
- The reasons for different types of accident
- The experience of major incidents, fatalities and risk on the Underground
- The role of the Safety & Policy Adviser
- The priority passengers placed on safety

The Safety & Policy Adviser confirmed that relations between London TravelWatch and the TfL safety officers were generally good.

The Chair remarked that London TravelWatch should emphasise this important element of its role more strongly. In addition, it was important to transfer the Safety & Policy Adviser's knowledge to other members of staff. This was something the Governance Committee should consider.

Action: Chief Executive

11 Any other business

11.1 Proposed changes to the Olympia branch of the District line

Members considered the proposals to reduce services on the Olympia branch of the District line when events were not being held at the stadium. It was noted with concern that alternative transport options were not as accessible as the Underground stations. It

was agreed that the Director, Research & Development, would seek clarification on the proposals and circulate details to members when they were available.

Action: Director, Research & Development

It was noted that London Underground Ltd, unlike Network Rail, was under no obligation to consult London TravelWatch on timetable issues and that London TravelWatch should be firm on its role to speak up for passengers when such changes were proposed.

11.2 Pedicabs

A member reported that the Red Route Forum did not accept responsibility for issues related to pedicabs. The Director, Research & Development, suggested that inquiries should be made of TfL as to whether it was intended to pursue the power of licensing which was previously consulted upon some years ago.

Action: Director, Research & Development

12 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 considered an overview of current major transport projects and reviewed the meeting.