
Minutes

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

Contents

- 1 Chair's introduction, pre-meeting announcements
- 2 Apologies for absence
- 3 Declarations of Interest
- 4 Minutes
- 5 Matters arising (TRS008)
- 6 Actions taken (TRS009)
- 7 Northern line upgrade programme update
- 8 Performance on the Central line
- 9 Pedestrian response to Countdown trial
- 10 Motorcycles in bus lanes (TRS010)
- 11 Transport for London performance report (TRS011)
- 12 National Rail performance report (TRS012)
- 13 Major projects review (TRS013)
- 14 Any other business
- 15 Resolution to move into confidential session

Present

Members

David Barry, Terry Bennett (Items 1-9), Gail Engert (Chair), Sophia Lambert (Deputy Chair), David Leibling

Guests

Paul Naylor	Upgrade Delivery Manager, Northern Line, London Underground (Item 7)
Matt Blanks	Access and Olympics Manager, London Underground (Item 7)
Peter Tollington	General Manager, Central and Waterloo & City Line (Item 8)
Beverley Hall	Head of Surface Transport Communications and Engagement, TfL (Item 9)

Stakeholder Representatives

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

Members of the public

Secretariat	
Tim Bellenger	Director, Research & Development
Jo deBank	Communications Officer (Items 1-9)
Gytha Chinweze	Executive Assistant
Sharon Malley	Senior Committee Administrator (minutes)
Vincent Stops	Streets & Surface Transport Policy Officer
Poonam Tamana	Policy Officer (Item 12)

Minutes

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

Apologies for absence were received from Sharon Grant and the Chief Executive.

3 Declarations of interest

There were no additional declarations of interest.

4 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 April 2011 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

4.1 Matters arising not elsewhere on the agenda

In relation to Item 8, about proposals to change specialist services for people with mobility difficulties, it was noted that the Director, Research & Development, had been told that the London Assembly was not planning to do further work on accessible transport and that London TravelWatch was maintaining a watching brief in this area.

In relation to Item 11.1, about proposed changes to the Olympia branch of the District line, the Director, Research & Development, said that he had discussed this further in relation to both capacity and accessibility. It was noted that the Earls Court regeneration proposals could provide an opportunity to improve capacity at the Earls Court junction to separate the Olympia service from the rest of the line.

5 Matters arising (TRS008)

5.1 Complaints received by Transport for London from disabled passengers

Matt Winfield reported that work on this was progressing but that it was important to ensure that the data was in the same format as that used by the Office for Rail Regulation.

Action: Committee services

5.2 Dial-a-Ride consultation on changes to service

It was agreed that the Streets & Surface Transport Policy Officer would report back to members on the outcome of the consultation, including whether an 0845 number would be introduced as part of the service.

Action: Streets & Surface Transport Policy Officer

5.3 Congestion “hotspots” where bus priority measures would be beneficial

It was noted that the Travel in London website included a map that showed congestion hotspots but that it was small and low resolution. The Streets & Surface Transport Policy Officer agreed to seek a better quality image so that London TravelWatch might be able to make use of this data.

Action: Committee services

5.4 Licensing of pedicabs

The Streets & Surface Transport Policy Officer said that he had been given a strong steer that Transport for London did not intend to begin licensing pedicabs and that he was due to meet an officer from TfL following the raising of the issue at TfL’s Red Route Forum.

Action: Streets & Surface Transport Policy Officer

6 Actions taken (TRS009)

6.1 Response to TfL’s coach strategy document

The Director, Research & Development, reported that he had responded to TfL’s consultation on coach strategy, highlighting the need to provide shelters at stops and ensure that stops were accessible.

6.2 Department for Transport consultation on proposed fine for franchise breaches

The Director, Research & Development, reported that this fine was in respect of Chiltern Railways and that, following various representations including one from London TravelWatch, it was reduced from around £500,000 to £330,000. Members noted the DfT’s assurance that funds from the fine would be spent on transport matters.

6.3 London Assembly scrutiny on the performance of London Underground

Members noted that London TravelWatch had provided evidence to the London Assembly's scrutiny on the performance of London Underground and that it had been well received. The Director, Research & Development, would keep members informed of the outcome of the scrutiny.

Action: Director, Research & Development

7 Northern line upgrade programme update

Paul Naylor, Upgrade Delivery Manager, and Matt Blanks, Access and Olympics Manager, both at London Underground, gave a presentation on the Northern line upgrade programme. The presentation covered the following points:

- The Northern line is the busiest on the network and has experienced 18.5% passenger growth in the last five years
- The upgrade, due for completion in 2014, will increase capacity, reduce journey times and improve reliability
- Following experiences of the Jubilee line upgrade and the bringing in house of the PPP contract, the Northern line project will have fewer closures, more testing and less disruption for passengers
- A substantial proportion of upgrade work has already been carried out with some trackside installation, power upgrade, testing and commissioning still to be completed
- The programme will require 16 weekend closures (eight of which are full-line), six partial-line closures over Easters and Christmases, and starting services at 8.30am on Sunday mornings
- In addition, further closures are needed from August 2011 to complete essential track renewal, which are unrelated to the upgrade programme
- Work is underway on providing alternative transport strategies for passengers during the closures, including directing passengers to alternative existing services as well as providing rail replacement bus services

Mr Naylor and Mr Blanks took questions from members. In response to questions they stated:

- The programme protected the option for splitting the Northern line into separate services in future

- The option for a total blockade of the line for a period in August was considered but rejected as the alternative transport options were considered inadequate
- Considerable amounts of work had been carried out to assist passengers in planning alternative routes, including a communications programme about the closures and providing staff at strategic locations, eg Balham, to direct passengers to alternative services such as national rail
- There was a general move towards signposting more alternative walking routes, such as between Camden and Kings Cross, and Baker Street to Lord's, which would provide permanent benefits

Mr Naylor agreed to provide members with the detailed closure programme.

Action: Committee services

Members thanked Mr Naylor and Mr Blanks for the presentation and agreed that the reduction in the number of proposed closures was welcome. They also welcomed the proposals to encourage alternative routes for passengers, including the use of railheads and walking routes, noting that this was in line with a 2004 London TravelWatch campaign that called for these measures to be promoted more widely.

8 Performance of the Central line

Members had asked for the Central Line General Manager to answer questions following concerns raised in London TravelWatch's TfL performance Plan, Q3, 2010-11. Peter Tollington, General Manager of the Central and Waterloo & City lines, gave a presentation covering the following points:

- The Central line is the longest on the network and has the second-highest passenger demand
- Following an upgrade completed in the early 1990s, peak capacity within zone 1 has increased by 14% in the last 12 years
- The increase in Excess Journey Time experience in Quarter 3 of 2010-11 was largely attributable to industrial action by the RMT union and did not represent a problematic trend for the future
- Work is underway to improve customer service on the line, including the provision of pre-paid Oyster vending machines at all stations, more wide gates and a programme of staff training
- Work is underway to refresh the Central line fleet, including new seating and window panels
- Work is underway on upgrading a number of stations, including Bond Street, Tottenham Court Road, Bank and Stratford

Mr Tollington took questions from members. In response to questions he stated:

- The new seating moquette included a different design to distinguish priority seating
- Although some passengers beyond Woodford felt underserved compared to those on the Hainault branch, data on demand and provision did not support this
- It would be useful to provide more information to passengers about onward travel when trains were unexpectedly terminated at Leytonstone
- Options for cooling carriages had been considered, including window vents and under-carriage tanks of coolant, but none had yet been found that was feasible
- The problem with motors failing on carriages was being tracked so that the motors could be removed prior to failing
- Stratford and Stratford International stations should be 'joint' in ticketing terms but this fell beyond Mr Tollington's area of responsibility
- The Epping/Ongar branch was unlikely to reopen without support from a heritage railway group as the business case did not support its operation

Members thanked Mr Tollington for the presentation. It was agreed that Mr Tollington would send images of the priority seating maquette to members. He would also send through details of the Excess Journey Time statistic for Quarter 3 2010-11 with the industrial action impact stripped out.

Action: Committee services

9 Pedestrian response to Countdown trial

Beverley Hall, Communications & Engagement at TfL Surface Transport, gave a presentation on the pedestrian response to the Countdown trial. This trial involved the installation of eight "Countdown" pedestrian crossings, whereby a digital sign counted down how many seconds were left to cross the road following the green man invitation-to-cross phase. The presentation covered the following points:

- Research into how pedestrians viewed the crossings showed that a clear majority liked Countdown, with fewer pedestrians feeling rushed when crossing the road
- Re-timed crossings allowed an average reduction in vehicle delay of 8%
- The trial resulted in small changes to risk of pedestrian conflicts, with a decrease in 'controlled' conflicts at sites with the highest pedestrian flows but an increase in 'precautionary' conflicts (the lowest category of conflict) on average across all sites

- A formal request has been made to the DfT for permission to deploy Countdown across London, with around 200 sites identified for possible deployment

Ms Hall took questions from members. In response to questions she said that the Countdown project did not include removal of street clutter but this and Countdown had complimentary aims and supported pedestrians in making informed choices.

It was noted that TfL had put its research reports onto its website and Ms Hall agreed to send members the link to the Countdown research report.

Action: Committee services

Members welcomed the findings of the Countdown trial and thanked Ms Hall for her helpful presentation.

10 Motorcycles in bus lanes (TRS010)

The Streets & Surface Transport Policy Officer presented his report on TfL's trial of permitting motorcycles in bus lanes. It was noted that the findings of the trial were that motorcyclists were now less safe than before the trial.

It was agreed that London TravelWatch should express concern at the continuation of the trial and take a final view at the completion of the second trial in January 2012.

Action: Street & Surface Transport Policy Officer

11 Transport for London performance report (TRS011)

The Streets & Surface Transport Policy Officer reported that TfL's performance for Quarter 4 2010-11 was generally good. London Underground had improved, as had the DLR and Tramlink. Overground's performance had been exceptional. Dial-a-Ride was marginally below target but the quarter in question covered cold weather period when customers cancelled many journeys.

The most problematic area was London Streets, whose performance was rated at amber. The maintenance condition of the TLRN was of significant concern and the journey time reliability target was not being met, despite several initiatives to boost performance and an overall reduction in volume of traffic on London's roads.

It was noted that only seven of the 33 boroughs had done work on accessible bus stops in the last financial year and it would be useful to know which boroughs had the greatest distance to catch up.

Action: Streets & Surface Transport Policy Officer

It was noted in a Passenger Focus report that London Overground needed to focus on improving its customer service and the Director, Research & Development agreed to raise this at his next meeting with London Overground.

Action: Director, Research & Development

It was agreed that it might be useful to hear from the manager of the Victoria line at a future meeting to discuss performance generally and specifically address issues about the new rolling stock.

Action: Committee services

12 National Rail performance report (TRS012)

The Policy Officer presented the National Rail performance report for Quarter 4 2010-11.

It was noted that there was an error on page 2 describing London TravelWatch's work that needed correcting.

Action: Policy Officer

Members noted the report.

13 Major projects review (TRS013)

The Director, Research & Development, presented the major projects review and stated that Network Rail had submitted their planning application for major works at London Bridge station. London TravelWatch would be submitting comments on the application, especially in respect of phasing and also suggesting improvements to Elephant & Castle as an alternative station during construction works.

It was agreed that London TravelWatch would seek further information about the Bond Street development proposals, in a user-friendly format.

Members were keen to see this report uploaded to the website as a resource.

Action: Director, Research & Development

14 Any other business

There was no other business.

15 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 the draft Interchange & Walking report and reviewed the meeting.