
Minutes

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Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 15 November 2011 at London TravelWatch

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Present

Members

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

Guests

Dyan Crowther	Operational Services Director, Network Rail (Item 7)
Gary Cooper	Head of Operations, National Task Force (Item 7)
Richard de Cani	Director, Strategy & Policy, Transport for London (Item 8)
Alan Pacey	Assistant Chief Constable (Territorial Policing & Crime), British Transport Police (Item 9)

Stakeholder Representatives

Matt Winfield Stakeholder Engagement Manager, TfL

Local transport users

Secretariat

John Cartledge	Safety & Policy Adviser
Janet Cooke	Chief Executive
Tim Bellenger	Director, Policy and Investigation
Gytha Chinweze	Executive Assistant
Poonam Hayer	Policy Officer
Sharon Malley	Executive Assistant

1 Chair's introduction and pre-meeting announcements

The Chair welcomed members, officers and guests to the meeting and made the standard housekeeping announcements.

2 Apologies for absence

Sophia Lambert sent apologies for the meeting.

3 Declarations of interest

Gail Engert highlighted her role as councillor in Haringey and noted that this would prevent her from taking a formal view on the recommendations in the report at item 8.

Sharon Grant also asked that her long-standing connections with Tottenham be noted in connection with the same item.

4 Chair's activities and Passenger Focus update

The Chair reported on recent activities including a meeting with Leon Daniels, Managing Director of Surface Transport at Transport for London (TfL), work on London TravelWatch's passenger priorities document, implementation of the London Assembly review of London TravelWatch and media work in relation to temporary line closures.

David Leibling updated members on the most recent Passenger Focus board meeting, which had considered service disruption, the Greater Anglia and West Coast franchises, concessionary bus fares outside London and its passenger contact system.

5 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 27 September 2011 were agreed and signed as a correct record subject to the amendment of line 8 to read "ticket offices at stations".

Re paragraph 6.2, members welcomed Caroline Pidgeon AM's concern about TfL's move to an 0843 telephone number for enquiries. Members noted that a helpline association had created a technical solution to enable calls to such numbers to be free from mobile phones and would need to investigate this possibility further at Consumer Affairs committee before making a recommendation to TfL.

Action: Executive Assistant

Re paragraph 6.4, on infrastructure failing at temperatures above 30 degrees, the Director, Policy & Investigation, reported that he had prompted Network Rail for a response to London TravelWatch's concerns but that this had not yet been received. Dyan Crowther of Network Rail agreed to raise the issue with Ed Wilson.

Action: Director, Policy & Investigation

6 Matters arising (LTW385)

6.1 Slips and trips on TLRN pavements

A member questioned whether Transport for London was in fact issuing reference numbers for complaints about the Transport for London Road Network and asked for this to be further investigated.

Action: Policy Officer

6.2 Fares increases in 2012

It was reported that London TravelWatch had not yet received a response from the Mayor's office in relation to its letter about the 2012 fares increases.

6.3 Passenger engagement programme

It was reported that dates for the passenger engagement event in south London would be finalised once the communications officer was in post later in the year.

7 Preparedness for winter on London's rail network (LTW391)

Gary Cooper, Head of Operations at the National Task Force, and Dyan Crowther, Director of Operational Services at Network Rail, gave presentations on preparations for dealing with adverse weather conditions on the railway. Mr Cooper's presentation covered the following points:

- Background to the National Task Force
- Recent national rail performance figures
- The Task Force's role in co-ordinating responses to winter preparation
- Challenges facing the network in responding to adverse weather
- Work on improving passengers' access to information during disruption
- Contingency timetables

Ms Crowther's presentation addressed the following issues:

- Network Rail's response to previous reviews on winter preparedness
- Focus on key routes and preparation of contingency timetables
- Work on conductor rail heating, treatment trains and snow clearing
- Improvements to infrastructure and fleet to combat impacts of snow
- Weather monitoring and work of the Emergency Weather Action Team
- Potential future technological developments

During questions, it was noted that there was a problem with gritting across level crossings as they were not the responsibility of highways authorities and Network Rail did not appear to include them in its own gritting programme.

Ms Crowther confirmed that TfL were included as part of the Emergency Weather Action Team and the Gold/Silver/Bronze control structure. She agreed to confirm the current position in respect of TfL accepting tickets issued by other providers during periods of disruption.

Members thanked Mr Cooper and Ms Crowther for their assistance and their informative presentations.

8 Transport-led regeneration (LTW392)

Richard de Cani, Director of Strategy & Policy at Transport for London, gave a presentation on transport-led regeneration, which covered the following points:

- Areas of planned residential and commercial growth in London and their relationship to planned transport infrastructure investment
- Analysis of where additional transport investment would be required
- Assessment of how investment would fit with other Mayoral priorities
- How investment could be linked to the riot recovery fund

Mr De Cani said that the riot recovery fund provided an opportunity for boroughs to come forward with their own priorities for improving their areas, some of which related to transport infrastructure, and that where transport measures were proposed TfL would work with the boroughs to bring those projects forward.

In response to questions, Mr De Cani said that work was underway on the analysis of locations that were problematic in highways terms and what could be done to address them.

The Director, Policy & Investigation, noted that the London TravelWatch report pulled together proposed schemes and projects (some going back several decades) that would improve transport provision in the areas that had experienced civil disorder and help reduce transport deprivation.

It was agreed that the Director, Policy & Investigation, would revise the report to make it more suitable for external audiences and would then circulate it as a prompt for discussion to relevant MPs, Assembly members, and Council leads on regeneration and transport. In addition London TravelWatch would seek to generate support and publicity for some of the 'quick wins'.

Action: Director, Policy & Investigation

9 Crime on London's transport network

Assistant Chief Constable (Territorial Policing & Crime) Alan Pacey of the British Transport Police gave a presentation on problems resulting from cable theft on the railway. The presentation addressed the following points:

- The profile of individuals involved in cable theft
- The supply chain for stolen metals
- The impact on the railway of individual acts of cable theft
- The organisations that have experienced metal theft and the increasing trends
- The annual cost to all industries and organisations of metal theft, estimated to be around £100 million
- The growing market for scrap metal
- The organisation of the police response

The Assistant Chief Constable expressed concern that legislation around scrap metal was out of date and not fit for purpose. Scrap metal dealers could be fairly open about taking in metals without having to know the source. It presented a large challenge for enforcement agencies and it was important that Network Rail had robust procedures so that thefts could be prosecuted successfully.

The Assistant Chief Constable reported that Network Rail was carrying out theft prevention work such as burying cables and moving towards a signalling system that did not rely on cables. There were over 100 police officers focused on scrap metal theft and work was ongoing on building relationships with scrap metal dealers. However, the Assistant Chief Constable believed the best way to deal with the problem was better legislation about cash-handling businesses.

It was agreed that London TravelWatch would support a change in the law and urged support for an Early Day Motion on the subject.

The Chair thanked Mr Pacey for his interesting presentation and for answering questions from members.

10 London TravelWatch's passenger priorities for the forthcoming London elections

The document outlining London TravelWatch's priorities for passengers in the forthcoming London elections was endorsed.

It was noted that briefings had been offered to all declared Mayoral candidates and that the document itself would be distributed early in the new year.

11 Actions taken (LTW939)

The Chair reported on her meeting with Leon Daniels, the Managing Director of TfL Surface Transport. He had updated her on TfL's organisational restructure and some of the major projects Surface Transport were working on, including the development of an app for reporting roadworks, the New Bus for London, repairs needed to the Hammersmith flyover and work on journey time reliability.

11 Any other business

There was no other business.

12 Resolution to move into confidential session

It was resolved, under section 15(2)(b) of schedule 18 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999, that by reason of the confidential nature of the item(s) to be discussed, it was desirable in the public interest that the public should be excluded for a section of the meeting.

During the confidential session, members reviewed the meeting.

The next meeting of the full Board will be held on 24 January 2012.