
Minutes

Drafted 28.09.11

Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 27 September 2011 at London TravelWatch

Contents

- 1 Chair's introduction and pre-meeting announcements
- 2 Apologies for absence
- 3 Declarations of interest
- 4 Chair's activities and Passenger Focus update
- 5 Minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2011
- 6 Matters arising (LTW 385)
- 7 Actions taken (LTW 386)
- 8 Changes to TfL fares from January 2012 (LTW 387)
- 9 Keeping London moving
- 10 Passenger engagement programme (LTW 388)
- 11 Presentation by Howard Smith, London Rail
- 12 London TravelWatch's 2012-13 business plan and budget (LTW 389)
- 13 London Assembly review update
- 14 Any other business
- 15 Resolution to move into confidential session

Present

Members

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

Guests

Garrett Emmerson Chief Operating Officer of Surface Transport, TfL (Item 9)
Howard Smith Chief Operating Officer, London Rail (Item 11)
Geoff Hobbs Head of Planning, London Rail (Item 11)

Stakeholder Representatives

Matt Winfield Stakeholder Engagement Manager, TfL

Local transport users

Secretariat

Janet Cooke Chief Executive
Tim Bellenger Director, Policy and Investigation
Gytha Chinweze Executive Assistant
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

There were no apologies for absence.

3 Declarations of interest

There were no additional declarations of interest.

4 Chair's activities and Passenger Focus update

The Chair reported that she had been busy dealing with the implementation of the internal review and the outcome of the London Assembly review of London TravelWatch. She reported that the House of Lords amendment to the Localism Bill to abolish London TravelWatch had been debated but London TravelWatch had received substantial support from peers and the amendment had been withdrawn.

The Chair informed members that she had attended a meeting with the Home Office to discuss the issue of criminal record checks on taxi drivers, which had led to changes in policy and more effective regulation of those driving taxis. A further meeting was being held shortly.

As regards the organisation's profile, she reported that LondonTravelWatch had drawn attention to the poor take-up of a discount scheme for those receiving Job Seekers Allowance. This had received good coverage at local level. Also, a proposal for walking routes had received good publicity and London TravelWatch would continue to press stakeholders to carry out its recommendations.

The Chair reported that she had attended a lecture by the Chairman of Network Rail with the Director of Policy and Investigation where he had encouraged the public to see the virtue and value of our railways.

London TravelWatch had also presented its Business Plan and Budget for the forthcoming year to the Transport Committee. The proposal had been agreed and would now form part of the Assembly's overall budget bid.

David Leibling updated the meeting on Passenger Focus and made the following points:

- The reorganisation at Passenger Focus was now complete and a staff Away Day had been planned for the end of the month.
- There had been a review of the advice and appeal function to determine ways of improving efficiency and effectiveness. There was some concern at the apparent drop in appellant satisfaction following the previous very high scores.

- The bus passenger satisfaction survey had been formally approved by ministers.
- Passenger Focus was leading national work on bus punctuality for the Department for Transport and contact with TfL had been suggested.
- The following research reports were published in the last quarter: National Passenger Survey, coach passengers, Reading station engineering works, website ticketing usability, train operator compensation scheme, putting rail information into the public domain and getting to the station.
- Passenger Focus had sent its response to the review of National Rail Conditions of Carriage and the Regulated Agreement on Fares and Ticketing.

5 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 12 July 2011 were agreed and signed as a correct record subject to the following amendment: Item 9 Keeping London moving during the Olympics, final paragraph on page 5; for 'Southern' read 'Southeastern'.

6 Matters arising (LTW385)

6.1 Transport for London (TfL) complaints data

Matt Winfield reported that he was progressing the issue of publishing internal TfL complaints data. Members asked the Chief Executive to take this up with Vernon Everitt if there was no further progress and David Leibling agreed to check TfL compensation figures and trends.

Action: Chief Executive/David Leibling

6.2 TfL's use of non-geographic telephone numbers

Members requested that Caroline Pidgeon be asked for a copy of TfL's response to her on its use of non-geographic numbers.

Action: Executive Assistant

6.3 Submission of unanswered questions from London TravelWatch Board to TfL

Committee services were reminded to chase TfL for answers to the unanswered questions from the Board session with Peter Hendy and to publish them on the website.

Action: Executive Assistant

6.4 Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) representations

Members noted that staff should take credit for stops at Charlton station being reinstated during the Olympics, though other concerns had not been addressed, for instance that trains from Victoria to Dartford were not stopping at Kidbrooke. Members agreed that if an opportunity arose in future, they would reiterate London

TravelWatch's position on the issue but that no additional work should be done on this.

Officers reported that the matter of infrastructure not operating at temperatures greater than 30 degrees centigrade had been raised with Network Rail and copied to the ODA, DfT and TfL. They were awaiting a response on this issue.

7 Actions taken (LTW386)

The report on actions taken was noted. Members observed that staff had responded to 22 consultations since the last meeting and had chosen not to respond to 86 consultations, confirming that London TravelWatch was taking a carefully selective approach to consultation responses.

Members noted that the Director, Policy and Investigation, had received data showing bus patronage figures by route, and would report to the next Transport Services meeting on what use could be made of the information for passengers.

Action: Director of Policy and Investigation

8 Changes to TfL fares from January 2012 (LTW 387)

The Director of Policy and Investigation presented his report on the proposed changes to TfL fares from January 2012 and London TravelWatch's response to this.

Members acknowledged that in spite of current economic pressures, the overall volume of service had largely been protected. However, they expressed a general regret at the trend of increasing fares at a time when incomes of passengers were being cut or remaining static. Members hoped that the increase in fares would be used to improve service and reliability and were keen to understand whether differential fares between peak and off-peak services had influenced passenger behaviour. Members agreed the recommendations in the report.

Action: Director of Policy and Investigation

9 Keeping London moving

Garrett Emmerson, Chief Operating Officer of Surface Transport (TfL), gave a presentation on matters affecting London streets including road management and smoothing the traffic flow. The presentation covered the following points:

- TfL's road management responsibilities included responsibility for coordinating road work, maintaining the 6000 traffic signals on all roads across London, and controlling the road network in real time through the London Streets Traffic Control Centre.
- The economic significance of the road network in London meant that road congestion cost London at least £2 billion per year.
- How performance of the road network was measured and that overall trends were generally improving.

- The contents of the draft Network Operating Strategy for roads which included maximising the efficient and reliable operation of the road network, minimising the impact of planned interventions, minimising disruption from unplanned events, managing demand to achieve modal shift, and measuring outcomes.

In response to questions, Mr Emmerson confirmed that:

- TfL did not have a list of ongoing small projects costing £1-5 million, for example Henley's Corner, on its business plan but it did have a programme of schemes for maintaining assets. TfL's focus was on prioritising small improvement or small scale interventions which would yield the most performance or be of the greatest benefit.
- Signal timing reviews on the A40 had led to 10-20% reduction in delays on the road.
- TfL was increasing its use of variable message signs and found this to be a very valuable communication tool. However, this was a last resort as TfL aimed to get information out to people before they get into their car, for instance by relaying information via the radio.
- He would be willing to do a future presentation on road safety, should members request this.
- The Department for Transport had approved the concept of the Countdown pedestrian crossing programme. Boroughs would have to fund and decide on individual signals and their siting. The conditions of roads and footways would be taken into account when siting signals. There was no intention to remove signals that were still useful or to favour car users over pedestrians. TfL would work with local boroughs to achieve the right balance.
- The Western Congestion Charge Zone had led to a 20% drop in congestion.
- Unplanned incidents on the Blackwall Tunnel in East London were very disruptive because although the corridor was being managed, it had little resilience when problems occurred. One solution would be a new river crossing package which would be presented shortly to the Mayor. In addition a high sided vehicle lane would be introduced at the Blackwall Tunnel to ensure that two lanes remained open in case of a vehicle breakdown. 30% of all breakdowns were due to vehicles running out of fuel. To further minimise disruption a free tow away service from the tunnel was in operation.
- There had been an improvement in real time operational control of the road network through the London Streets Traffic Control Centre (LSTCC).
- A lane rental scheme was to be introduced to charge utility companies for both planned and emergency road works and any income derived from this would be invested in improvements, for instance to construct conduits or subway pipes so that major road works could be undertaken more easily.

- The role of managers had changed and they had now been switched from managing geographical areas into strategic areas or 'corridors' with a clear set of objectives. TfL aimed to make its managers more accessible and had provided information on its website displaying corridor maps and key contacts. Also, a Red Route forum existed which allowed for better dialogue between road users and the TRLN.

Members thanked Mr Emmerson for his helpful presentation and agreed that it might be useful to review in six month's time how two-way communication between TfL and road users was being improved.

Action: Executive Assistant

10 Passenger engagement programme (LTW 388)

The passenger engagement programme for passenger events in autumn 2011 was agreed. Members asked officers to bring details of arrangements to the next Board meeting and also requested for the programme to be developed further into a rolling programme of three or four events.

Action: Executive Assistant

11 Presentation by Howard Smith, Chief Operating Officer, London Rail and Geoff Hobbs, Head of Planning

Howard Smith, Chief Operating Officer of London Rail and Geoff Hobbs, Head of Planning gave a presentation on the Docklands Light Railway (DLR), Overground and Tramlink.

The presentation highlighted the following points:-

- Operational performance and customer satisfaction was currently sound across all London Rail modes.
- The DLR and Overground would be key to delivery of the Olympics Travel Plan.
- Good progress continued to be made on the Overground extension to Clapham Junction.
- Six additional trams had been ordered for Tramlink to address rising demand on the network.
- Demand had risen fast on rail modes, and had more than doubled in four years on the Overground.
- TfL was starting to develop possible future capacity upgrades to DLR.
- London Rail's recommended 2014-19 train capacity schemes complemented big schemes such as Crossrail and Thameslink.

- The Mayor had made the case for devolution to help improve rail's value for money.

In response to questions, Mr Smith and Mr Hobbs stated:

- The McNulty review made reference to cutting staff at 94 London stations but this would be done on the basis of how staff could best be deployed, especially when 'wave and pay' came into operation early next year. The impact of 'wave and pay' would mean passengers having less need to use ticket stations.
- Currently, all Overground stations were staffed. DLR stations were constructed for unmanned offices and therefore are not staffed, though evasion levels were low on the DLR.
- Improvements during Games time would be retained post the Olympic Games; Overground stations would be developed to make staff more accessible to passengers and to give staff a better oversight of the platforms.
- 'Community Ambassadors' were provided by Serco. There could be scope for adopting this successful DLR model on the Overground.
- Most London Underground stations had had basic infrastructure work done, for instance on CCTV and help points and the ambience at most stations had been improved.
- The cost of the cable car project remained unchanged from the figure in the original contract, which was £45 million. This would be a serious form of transport similar to the one in New York and would be funded by TfL. The cost would be recouped from fares, an ERDF funding application from Europe and commercial sponsorship. It would be operated by Mace, the construction company which built the London Eye.
- Litter collection was good on the Overground, had improved on the DLR but needed to improve on trams which currently did not have litter bins.
- The extension of the East London Line to Highbury & Islington was proving very popular because of how easy it made getting from North to South London. However, on weekends the easy interchange was not available. Members asked if TfL could assist with supporting the case to persuade First Capital Connect to open the Moorgate branch at the weekend to enable better connection between North and South and to Stratford. TfL agreed to look into this. Officers will follow up with TfL on this issue.

Action: Policy and Investigation Team

- Officers informed London Rail that at the moment passengers could not resolve Oyster queries at either West or East Croydon stations. Officers suggested that Oyster equipment could be installed at the Tramlink stop in East Croydon, and the London Buses enquiry office at West Croydon bus station.

- Mr Smith agreed that London Rail would work with Legible London and the Highway Authorities to improve station to station interchanges as highlighted in London TravelWatch's 'Interchange and Walking in London' report and that he would report back to the Board on improvements made. To assist with this, the Policy and Investigation team would supply him with a list of the top six priorities.

Action: Policy and Investigation Team

- Mr Smith stated that he was aware of the complications of checking in and out at Wimbledon station and welcomed suggestions from London TravelWatch to improve the signage and information on the validators to improve their visibility.

Action: Policy and Investigation Team

12 London TravelWatch's 2012-13 business plan and budget (LTW 389)

Members noted London TravelWatch's 2012-13 business plan and budget and welcomed the improved format. The Chief Executive informed members that the business plan and budget had been accepted by the Transport Committee and would be finalised by the Mayor in February 2012.

13 London Assembly review update

The Chief Executive updated members on London TravelWatch's current position in respect of the London Assembly's review. The Memorandum of Understanding between the London Assembly and London TravelWatch had now been suspended following a decision by the Assembly's Transport Committee in July. An implementation group had been set up by the Assembly to implement the recommendations of its review of London TravelWatch, and to issue directions and guidance including the possibility of relocating to City Hall. London TravelWatch had expressed concerns about the loss of its independence as a passenger representative watchdog and other options had been discussed.

The Assembly had instructed London TravelWatch to meet with Passenger Focus to discuss how further savings could be achieved and a meeting had been scheduled in November to take this forward.

14 Any other business

There was no other business.

15 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 15 November 2011.