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## Minutes

Agenda item 5  
Drafted 4.10.10

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### Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 28 September 2010 at London TravelWatch

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#### Present

##### Members

David Barry; Terry Bennett; Kevin Davis, Gail Engert; Daniel Francis; Sharon Grant (Chair); David Leibling; Onjali Rauf (from Item 7); Lorna Reith (Deputy Chair).

##### Guests

Dan Beesley	Stakeholder Communications, London Underground
Simon Bennett	Head of Stakeholder Engagement, Transport for London
Penny Hazell	General Manager, London Underground
Graham Ludlow	Modal Policy Manager, Better Routes & Places, Surface Transport
Tricia Madge	Performance Manager, London Underground
David McNeill	Director of Group Public Affairs and Stakeholder Engagement, Transport for London
Chris Uckfield	London Underground

##### Stakeholder Representatives

Matt Winfield	Stakeholder Engagement Manager, TfL
Matt Ball	Stakeholder Communications, London Underground
Lianna Etkind	Transport for All
Beverley Hall	Surface Transport, TfL

Local transport users

##### Secretariat

Tim Bellenger	Director, Research and Development, London TravelWatch
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Janet Cooke	Chief Executive, London TravelWatch
Bryan Davey	Director, Public Liaison, London TravelWatch
Jo deBank	Communications Officer, London TravelWatch
Mark Donoghue	Committee Administrator, London TravelWatch
Rufus Impey	Senior Policy Officer, London TravelWatch [Items 1-8]
Sharon Malley	Senior Committee Administrator, London TravelWatch
Poonam Tamana	Policy Officer, London TravelWatch [from Item 9]

## **1 Chair's introduction and pre-meeting announcements**

The Chair welcomed members, officers and guests to the meeting.

## **2 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for lateness were received from Onjali Rauf.

## **3 Declarations of interest**

Gail Engert and David Leibling declared that they possessed Freedom Passes. A public record of members' interests may be found on the London TravelWatch website (<http://www.londontravelwatch.org.uk/document/3861/get>).

## **4 Chair's activities and Passenger Focus update**

### **4.1 Chair's activities**

The Chair reported that following the previous Board meeting on 6 July she had been informed that the organisation would need to prepare cuts at a greater level than expected and the Chief Executive would be reporting shortly on her internal review, in which she had identified potential savings that could lead to a budget reduction of at least 25%.

The Chair reported that the London Assembly had published its review of London TravelWatch and that its finding that London TravelWatch should be disbanded and its functions absorbed by other bodies was a significant cause for concern. Particularly worrying was the proposal that national rail issues should be absorbed by Passenger Focus and TfL issues should be folded into the London Assembly. Members noted their concern that this would lead to a fragmentation of passenger representation and would increase the possibility of confusion and duplication.

Members noted that implementation of the Assembly's proposals would require primary legislation and that this implied a long lead-in time. There was concern at the Assembly's proposal not to fill the six Board posts that would become vacant in December. Failure to fill the positions would create the risk of there not being a strong voice representing passengers. It was agreed that this issue would be brought to the attention of the London Assembly.

**Action: Chair**

## 4.2 Passenger Focus update

David Leibling reported that there had been two meetings of the Passenger Focus board since the last London TravelWatch board meeting. He said that Passenger Focus would be willing, if asked, to take on London rail issues, subject to appropriate funding. Passenger Focus was the subject of a Department for Transport review similar in scope to that which the London Assembly undertook about London TravelWatch.

Mr Leibling said that Passenger Focus had discussed a paper on rail franchising and had agreed that longer franchises would be welcomed subject to greater focus on consumer-related priorities.

## 5 Minutes

### 5.1 Corrections

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 6 July 2010 were agreed subject to the following corrections:

- In the final paragraph of page 2, the middle sentence should read: "They noted that London freedom passes were funded by a block grant from London Councils to Transport for London."
- In paragraph 17, Resolution to move into confidential session, there should be reference to the matters discussed, and the paragraph should include the following: "Members reviewed the meeting."

### 5.2 Matters arising from the minutes

Re paragraph 3: It was noted that Daniel Francis no longer worked for Theresa Pearce MP.

Re paragraph 5b: It was noted that Sophia Lambert had, with the support of all Board members, written to Richard Tracey AM about their concern that the London Assembly Review Panel had not consulted all Board members about its proposals.

Re paragraph 8: The Director, Research and Development, reported that TfL's response to London TravelWatch's submission that access to healthcare should be included in the Mayor's transport strategy had been unenthusiastic. TfL had maintained that its existing procedures were adequate. It was agreed that London TravelWatch should continue to maintain pressure on the Mayor to ensure that access to healthcare is regarded as an important element of transport proposals.

#### **Action: Director, Research and Development**

Re paragraph 10: The Chief Executive reported that she had attended a useful follow-up meeting with Hugh Sumner about preparations for the Olympic Games. She also stated that the problem in relation to litter on the railway near Woolwich Dockyard station had been taken up with Network Rail by Southeastern and had now been addressed. It was agreed that London TravelWatch should be involved in the testing of transport systems prior to the Olympic Games taking place.

**Action: Director, Research and Development**

**6 Matters arising (LTW 360)**

Members noted that the take-up of the concessionary fares scheme appeared to be lower than had been predicted. They agreed that London TravelWatch should investigate why take-up appeared to be so low; what efforts had been made to promote the scheme; and ask why the scheme did not apply to London Underground.

**Action: Committee Services**

The Communications Officer reported that six boroughs had been identified as potential locations for the next bus surgeries and that Newham and Richmond were interested in hosting. She needed to confirm a venue in north west London. TfL was also in a period of transition and the issue would be taken up again once its future was clearer. The Communications Officer would report again on progress at the next meeting.

**Action: Communications Officer**

It was agreed that London TravelWatch would write again to TfL in relation to the publication of complaints data three months after the initial contact to chase progress.

**Action: Committee Services**

**7 Actions taken (LTW 361)**

The report was noted.

**8 Overview of impact of changes to the economic climate (LTW 362)**

The Senior Policy Officer presented the paper on changes to the economic climate and drew members' attention to the recommendations outlined in paragraph 9.

David McNeill, Director of Group Public Affairs and Stakeholder Engagement at TfL, stated that he thought the report was a good summary of the issues and that he hoped to have a detailed funding allocation in October. The Treasury had requested all departments to propose cuts to budgets of between 25% and 40%. Any settlement that showed a cut of less than 25% would be regarded as positive.

He reported that he was encouraged by some of the signs coming from government in relation to a clear commitment to Crossrail and an increasingly clear commitment to the tube upgrade but clearly there would be pressures and spending would need to be cut in some areas. TfL's priorities were to add capacity to the network, which was the driver behind prioritising Crossrail and the tube upgrade.

He reported that the Mayor would seek to protect existing bus services as far as possible. However, he noted that there might be pressure in terms of fares and funding for boroughs' Local Implementation Plans and other projects. He noted that currently funding for TfL was approximately 50% from fares and 50% from grants

and that subsidy would be considered unsustainable in the long term. The question of how far funding gaps were filled with fare increases was a difficult one.

A member questioned whether several smaller projects would generate better value for money returns than a small number of major projects. Mr McNeill stated that while some smaller projects did add significant value, for example streets projects, the need to increase capacity meant that larger projects would be prioritised.

Members noted that the recommendations in paragraph 9 would give officers a perspective on policies so they could continue their work with the confidence of the support of the Board. It was agreed that the Board's endorsement of the recommendations outlined in paragraph 9 would be sent to the Transport Commissioner for his consideration.

**Action: Director, Research and Development**

## **9 London Underground ticket office hours reduction (LTW363)**

The Director, Research and Development, presented a paper on the scope and impact of proposed reductions in the opening hours of London Underground ticket offices and drew members' attention to the recommendations set out in paragraph 2.

Penny Hazell (General Manager), Tricia Madge (Performance Manager) and Chris Uckfield from London Underground presented London Underground's response to the report.

Ms Hazell stated that it had been five years since the last change to ticket office hours and that changes were needed to take advantage of improved technology. Only one in 20 journeys began with the purchase of a ticket at a ticket office. No station would lose its ticket office and work was being carried out on improving the ticket vending machines (TVMs).

Chris Uckfield reported that technological upgrades to TVMs would be carried out in four phases. By November the touch-screen machines would have a wider range of destinations and savings. This would be followed by increasing the machines' functionality in areas that required staff supervision, enabling staff to carry out more transactions in the station area. By February 2011 the newest TVMs would be able to vend Oyster cards and by summer 2011 all TVMs would provide all discounts.

Ms Hazell stated that the purpose of the change was to enable more staff to be visible in the station area and that staff would continue to provide assistance to passengers on tickets.

In response to questions from members, Ms Hazell stated that LU would retain flexibility to send teams to stations where demand was predicted to be unusually high, for example at stations servicing sports or entertainment venues.

Members noted that at present most transactions that took place at ticket offices could in fact take place at TVMs but passengers were choosing to use the ticket offices instead. Members questioned whether LU had carried out adequate analysis on barriers preventing passengers from using TVMs.

Members noted that increasing functionality of TVMs would be welcome but expressed concern that this should not be at the expense of ease of use.

In response to questions, Penny Hazell stated that there were back-up systems in place to address problems with the failure of technology.

Lianna Retkind, Campaigns Co-ordinator for Transport for All, addressed the meeting and said that her members were very concerned about the proposed changes. She feared that the changes would put the underground out of bounds for many members. She would expect that a disproportionately high number of people who prioritise ticket offices over TVMs would be older or disabled or have learning difficulties. She did not believe it was acceptable to expect older people who were unfamiliar with TVM technology to wait in long queues. She stated that her organisation was concerned about the loss of posts, which she feared would translate into fewer staff available to assist vulnerable passengers.

Members questioned London Underground about the basis for selecting which offices would have reduced hours and stated that National Rail viewed 12 transactions per hour as being busy enough to remain open. Tricia Madge stated that the LU calculations had used 30 transactions an hour as its starting point.

The Chair expressed her thanks to London Underground for its work on this issue and its desire to consult London TravelWatch on the implications of the proposals for passengers. She recognised that London Underground had made amendments to the proposals as a result of our comments to date.

Members agreed the following:

- London Underground did not appear to have a rationale for choosing 30 transactions an hour as a cut-off for the basis to close ticket offices, as opposed to the National Rail level of 12 transactions an hour. Members agreed that London Underground's metro system was different to the National Rail system due to the prevalence of Oyster and simpler ticketing arrangements. It considered that a higher cut-off might be appropriate, perhaps around 18-20 transactions an hour, but 30 appeared too high. However, at those joint stations with National Rail a standard of 12 transactions per hour should still apply.
- London Underground did not appear to have given adequate consideration to the range of reasons why passengers were currently choosing to use ticket offices rather than ticket machines. LU's own figures show that the vast majority of current ticket office transactions could in fact be carried out on machines but a proportion of passengers were choosing to buy tickets in person instead. LU was focusing too narrowly on increasing the functionality of the machines rather than investigating other barriers such as fear of technology or problems caused by physical impairments.
- London Underground must ensure thorough testing of the proposed changes to the ticket machines prior to their introduction, including testing with users who have particular impairments or needs. London TravelWatch would be content to play a role in the testing of the new machines.

- The new ticket machines should be in place prior to the reduction in hours of the ticket offices.
- London Underground must consult National Rail operators at interchange stations affected by these proposals. Consideration should be given to the installation of national rail ticket machines at stations such as Moorgate and Old Street that have a National Rail service but no National Rail ticket office.
- The proposals for Highbury & Islington, Stratford and Farringdon stations should be withdrawn because certain rail services were not operating at the time that the data on ticket office sales was obtained.
- The proposals for Blackfriars station should be withdrawn until after the reopening of this station to traffic.
- An additional Oyster agent should be appointed to operate at Heathrow Central (Terminals 1,2,3).
- Oyster ticket agents' opening hours were often more restrictive than ticket offices so should not be relied upon to replace them.
- Concern was expressed to ensure that ticket office facilities were made available at stations and at those entrances near event venues when events were planned.

These points would be sent to London Underground for its consideration.

**Action: Director, Research and Development**

## **10a Crossrail**

Simon Bennett, Head of Stakeholder Engagement at Crossrail, gave a presentation updating members on issues relating to Crossrail.

Members expressed their pleasure at recent assurances that Crossrail would continue to be funded at full scope. A member asked about the proposed redesign of two Crossrail stations and Mr Bennett said that some changes had needed to be made to meet sponsors' requirements. He said that the redesign of Whitechapel was a great improvement on the original proposals giving better integration with the nearby hospital.

Members reaffirmed their view that Crossrail was of great strategic importance to London and that London TravelWatch should continue to assist with issues around specific sites.

## **10b Bond Street upgrade works**

Dan Beesley, Stakeholder Communications at London Underground, and Graham Ludlow, Modal Policy Manager, Better Routes & Places at Surface Transport, gave a presentation on the ongoing Crossrail-related works at Bond Street station.

Graham Ludlow and Beverley Hall reported that the works would require part-closure of Oxford Street for a nine-month period in 2011. Having considered all the options it had been agreed that a single westbound lane would remain open for all permitted traffic but there would be diversions for eastbound traffic. Three diversions were currently under consideration: via Marylebone, via Wigmore Street (long) and via Wigmore Street (short). The aim was to remain as close to Oxford Street as possible but the Wigmore Street options presented problems in relation to existing businesses and residents. It may prove necessary to alter the termination point of some services and to have different diversions in place during nighttime.

In response to questions, Ms Hall reported that Piccadilly could not be used as a diversionary route as it was due to be converted to two-way operation during the same period as the Oxford Street works would take place. Ms Hall agreed to forward details of the Piccadilly scheme consultation to London TravelWatch.

**Action: Committee services**

Members stated that this might be a good opportunity to consider how the removal of taxis might work in practice on Oxford Street.

**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 the remainder of the meeting.

During the confidential session, members reviewed the meeting and considered the London Assembly review of London TravelWatch.

The next meeting of the full Board will be held on 9 November 2010.

**13 Glossary**

DfT	Department for Transport
LIPs	Local Implementation Plans
LU	London Underground
TfL	Transport for London
TVM	Ticket vending machine