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## Minutes

Agenda item : 5  
Final Draft : 11.06.10

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### Minutes of a meeting of the Access to Transport Committee held on 3 February 2010 at 6 Middle Street, London EC1

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#### Present

##### Members

Onjali Bodrul (Vice Chair), Gail Engert (Chair), Sophia Lambert, Lorna Reith and Sharon Grant (London TravelWatch Chair)

Teena Lashmore (Observer min. 7)

##### Guests

John Stevens	Transport Manager, London Borough of Tower Hamlets (min. 7)
Junad Uddin	Limehouse Project (min. 7)
Elin Campbell	Stakeholder Engagement Manager, Transport for London (TfL)

##### Staff

Chief Executive; Committee Administrator; Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer; Senior Policy Officer (min. 6)

#### Minutes

##### 1 Chair's introduction, announcements and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed members, guests and the public and made the standard housekeeping announcements. Apologies were received from Sarah Pond.

## **2 Declarations of interest**

Onjali Bodrul declared that she had previously worked for the Limehouse Project.

## **3 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2009 were agreed and signed for the record.

## **4 Matters arising**

The Chair stated that a member had emailed her regarding the response from the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) (item 3.4 on the Matters arising report).

The Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer reported that he had discussed the issue with colleagues. The Senior Policy Officer had talked to London Overground (LOROL) and it was not possible to change the seat colour. However, he proposed to include differentiating the colour of the priority seat in the Disabled Persons' Protection Policy (DPPP) consultation response.

The Chair asked if it was too late to raise the colour of priority seats on the new sub-surface trains on the Underground. The Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer would check.

**Action : Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer**

The Chair of London TravelWatch asked for an update on accessible bus stops in Waltham Forest borough. Had the Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer received an update from the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)? The Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer reported that Waltham Forest had not finished the process and will hold a further consultation in March. The borough will propose not to have a whole bus clear way and install a short, but acceptable bus border. Effectively, the parking will remain, but there will be fixed bus stops.

The Chair of London TravelWatch asked for the Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer to monitor progress and report back.

**Action : Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer**

The Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer reported that he had received some further information on footfall data for the step-free access stations which are now deferred. He will meet London Underground (LUL) to get an idea of the costings, etc. The Committee Administrator would circulate the information to members.

**Action : Committee Administrator**

On minute 9, 16.12.09, The Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer commented that he had clarified the list of LUL stations with platform humps. The list supplied to London TravelWatch includes all the stations with platform humps. If stations which have accessible platforms, but do not have a step-free platform, London Underground will address this by installing platform humps.

On minute 3, 16.12.09 the Chief Executive stated that a report would not be produced until after Romford bus surgery. She would contact Mr Osborne and give him feedback on the Croydon event.

On minute 8, 16.12.09 a member had raised whether a low frequency bus stop will feature in the roll out of the new Countdown system. The Deputy Chair expressed surprise that the scores for low frequency were not included. The Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer would go back to Transport for London (TfL) and ask for worked examples. Members also asked for details on the marginal costs of the scheme.

**Action : Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer**

## **5 Action Taken**

The Chair noted that the Euston-St Pancras interchange meeting had been a success.

The Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer reported that another TOC had declared their support and Network Rail support the scheme in principle. He had been having difficulties in contacting the Olympic Delivery Authority.

## **6 Comparing complaints statistics**

The Chair welcomed the Senior Policy Officer to the meeting.

One of the business plan targets for London TravelWatch is to identify who it is interacting with and build up a strategy to see how representative appellants are of the travelling public. The figures he presented were compared with other organisations, for example, TfL, National Rail, etc. The aim of the strategy is to broaden the passengers that London TravelWatch's represents.

He had broken down the calls received by London TravelWatch by mode and then by type of call for each mode : appeals, initial enquiries and quick calls. There are caveats on the data. Firstly our appellants are only a sub-set of the operator's complainants. If the original complainants are not representative of the travelling public our appeals cannot be. Additionally, at the end of the appeals process, appellants complete a questionnaire to provide feedback to London TravelWatch. 75 per cent of appellants complete the questionnaire and only 25 per cent of those who completed the questionnaire gave their ethnic origin. The TfL data he had used as comparison was a snap shot of complaints data from 2006 (bus and streets complaints). They are broadly comparable to the London TravelWatch data.

Members discussed the data that had been presented to them. They favoured promoting the idea of using the complaints system if passengers received a poor service, particularly to under-represented ethnic minority groups. It was felt that more articulate people were more likely to come to London TravelWatch.

The Chair felt that some of the under-representation may be due to a lack of confidence and, some groups are less likely to complain. The Chair of London TravelWatch felt that the best approach was to promote the idea of using the complaints system. Members believed that promotional leaflets, targeted work, etc should be carried out with ethnic minority groups. The Chief Executive reported that the questionnaire form would be redesigned. The Deputy Chair of London TravelWatch believed that successful bus cases should be highlighted. The Chair of London TravelWatch felt that successful cases with an ethnic minority appellant should be used in local media to promote London TravelWatch to under-represented groups.

A member wondered whether ethnic minority passengers knew what their rights were. Members felt that the proposed complaints leaflet should be tested to get feedback.

The Chair asked if there was a bus charter for passengers in London. The Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer volunteered to check if this existed.

**Action : Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer**

## **7 Local Community projects with Black and Minority Ethnic women to encourage transport use**

The Chair welcomed Mr Stevens and Mr Uddin to the meeting.

The Vice-Chair reported that she was following up work done last year to try and bridge the communication gap between Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) women and TfL and the British Transport Police (BTP). She had worked with the Limehouse project before. They run a course to train BME women to become passenger assistants. She felt that this course should be rolled out more widely and it would help improve communication between BME women and TfL and BTP. It would also dispel rumours, etc which prevent women in this group from using public transport, for example, prevalence of sexual assault.

Mr Uddin introduced the course by stating that the cultural restrictions may mean that women in this group may not have worked for 20 years. However, if they become widowed, separated, etc they often do not know where to go. In the Limehouse area these women come to the project to discuss their futures. They will lack self-confidence and not understand the opportunities available to them. They can understand English, but discrimination based on gender or race is still an issue. Even though we live in a more tolerant society they still fear racism due to past experiences. The project starts on the basis that every person is different. They try to build confidence, develop skills and encourage women to apply for jobs. Mr Uddin viewed the project's job as supporting women to become a full participant in society.

The passenger assistant course was developed in consultation with Tower Hamlets council. The course covers relevant areas, for example, health and safety, basic care, etc and provides work experience opportunities. The council helps conduct mock interviews. There is no guarantee that the women will get a job with the council at the end of the course. The course is not accredited.

A member asked if the course was available to women outside of the borough. Mr Uddin stated that they were restricted by funding but it was actually available to all.

Mr Stevens gave a presentation on passenger transport in the borough. They help over 800 clients daily and have a diverse customer base. The scheme is funded by Section 106 money. Tower Hamlets works with the Limehouse Project to enable Bengali, Somali and other BME clients to apply for jobs. Tower Hamlets wanted to change the workforce and attract BME women. The aims of course are to produce confident women and additional income with other job opportunities.

Members discussed how passenger transport operated in Tower Hamlets. Mr Stevens explained that the services Tower Hamlets operates fill a gap that Dial-a-Ride and NHS transport do not cover. They are trying to personalise services for clients. A member asked whether the project had been raised with other boroughs. Mr Stevens replied that it had formed part of the Borough's beacon status. They try to pass on their knowledge and experience to other boroughs.

The Chair of London TravelWatch noted that London TravelWatch wanted TfL to reach out to those who do not travel or impeded from travelling. Mr Uddin reported that Tower Hamlets wanted their

workforce to better reflect the community. Mr Stevens noted that his department had come up with the initiative for this project. They wanted to get to know who their clients were. It also helped to deliver a good service and prevent outsourcing.

## **8 Interchange**

The Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer noted that interchange was a specialist area for London TravelWatch. He had recently met John McNulty, Interchange Programme Director, TFL along with the Chief Executive and Director, Research and Development. At the site visits that had taken place in the morning, a number of details could be improved at Walthamstow Central and Lewisham. The Chair noted the stark contrast between TFL and National Rail at Walthamstow Central.

The Senior Policy Officer gave a presentation to members on the Department for Transport (DfT) Better Rail stations consultation. The DfT had come up with minimum standards, but the report raises specific London issues. There is a significant concern on the inconsistencies in the categorisation of stations. London TravelWatch wants to see properly co-ordinated and contractual investment at stations. It should be clear who has the responsibility to invest : Network Rail or Train Operating Companies (TOCs).

TOCs should be encouraged to invest over the period of a franchise. The Senior Policy Officer felt that there should be a quality measure for stations. Old station structures should either be demolished or adapted for other use. He noted that London Overground (LOROL) had invested in stations, but this was not picked up in the satisfaction scores. He felt that the improvement should be measured over time.

At the moment, London TravelWatch is carrying out research on London Underground Limited (LUL) and National Rail stations. The research would update a previous research report, Whose Station are you?, and feed in to Rail Utilisation Strategies (RUS). The research carried out by the Policy Officer, would focus on :

- Signage and Branding
- Customer Service
- Station facilities
- Communication
- Accessibility
- Safety and security

The Senior Policy Officer noted that London Underground focus on a different area (identified by satisfaction scores) at each quarter.

The Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer would collate information on interchange and the site visits and feedback on the next meeting.

**Action : Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer**

## **9 Any other business**

None.

## **10 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.

In confidential session, members approved the minutes for the confidential session of the Committee meeting held on 16 December 2009 and reviewed the meeting.

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 21 April 2010, subsequently cancelled due to the election period.

## **11 Glossary**

BTP	British Transport Police
EHRC	Equalities and Human Rights Committee
LOROL	London Overground
LUL	London Underground Limited
RUS	Rail Utilisation Strategy
TfL	Transport for London
TOCs	Train Operating Companies

Section 106            This is where councils can request money from developers for social and community infrastructure where need has arisen as a result of a new development.