
Minutes

Agenda item 5(b)

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Minutes of a meeting of the London TravelWatch Executive Group held at 6 Middle Street, London EC1 on 19 October 2009

Present

Sharon Grant (SG)

Chair

Lorna Reith (LR)

Deputy Chair

Sarah Pond (SP)

(absent for minutes 7-11)

Gail Engert (GE)

David Leibling (DL)

(absent for minutes 1-2)

Janet Cooke (JC)

Chief Executive

Patti Tobin (PT)

Director, Finance & Personnel

Peter Ellis (PE)

Senior Finance Officer

Amy Waters (AW)

Chief Executive/Chair's PA (temporary) – Note taker

1. Apologies for absence

No apologies were received.

2. Draft minutes of meeting held on 17 September 2009

There was discussion about the draft minutes as the Chair said she felt uncomfortable signing off minutes when there was such a delay in receiving them, as she was unable to recall every detail and therefore unsure if there had been any omissions. JC said that this was due mainly to AW's unfortunate recent absence, but that she would ensure sufficient time was freed up for the minute taker so this would not happen again.

Pending the following amendments, the minutes of the last meeting were agreed:

- **3. Matters Arising/paragraph 2** – Amend the Passenger Focus joint event as deferred from the 13 October;
- **4. Chair's Update/NHS North East London** – Amend "Chair of the NHS" to "Chair of the NE London Strategic Review Group" and insert "and useful model for the future to increase the reach of London TravelWatch and services available to it" at the end of the sentence ending "...worthwhile opportunity";
- **11. Board Issues/(a)** – GE requested the deletion of the word "very" from the first sentence.

SP queried the position in respect of quarterly reporting and JC replied that we had agreed with the Transport Committee that henceforth we would collect data on casework performance quarterly,

which would be included in our six monthly reports to them. Internally such data would be reported quarterly to the Consumer Affairs Committee.

3. Matters arising

Investors in People – SG asked the Executive Group if they would still be interested in receiving a presentation by the liP Assessor, Vincent Dolan, as discussed at the last meeting. It was confirmed that he would make a short presentation to the Executive but that papers should be circulated in advance.

PT

Withdrawal of Arriva Cross Country Trains - JC said that the Office of Rail Regulation had taken the matter up with the DfT who had subsequently confirmed to us that they were looking at how the service could be reinstated. In respect of the query at the last meeting about the Thameslink closure, JC added that only one complaint had been received concerning the Barbican – Moorgate service and this related to whether it would cost more to travel this route by underground. However, as London TravelWatch had raised this issue during the closure hearings, we were able to reassure the passenger that his journey would be no more expensive than it would have been by train.

Piccadilly Line Upgrades – JC confirmed that action to upload this report to the website had been delayed once it had been decided to consider it at the Board meeting.

NHS North East London – JC reported that the Streets & Surface Policy Officer had been unable to attend this meeting as it had been rearranged, however another meeting was scheduled soon.

Non-Executive members – SG asked the Executive to reflect upon their roles and the need to develop other members. Discussion followed on how to make the Executive more accessible to potential members. LR suggested that a way to do this might be to invite Vice Chairs to meetings in a member's absence.

Communications/ February 2010 event – SG reported that she had spoken to the Director of Research & Development about other potential themes for the event and discussion followed during which various suggestions were made. JC suggested that the February event should be another transport surgery as this would provide an opportunity to raise our profile in a different part of outer London. We would also be able to build on the work already done to plan the Croydon event.

Members agreed this proposal, subject to an evaluation of the Croydon event, and asked that a date be set for the February event as soon as possible.

JC

4. Chair's update

SG announced that Board member, Andrew Probert, had just tendered his resignation and that she would be liaising with Valerie Shawcross/Caroline Pidgeon about filling the vacancy.

SG

Jerry Gold's leaving do – SG asked for her thanks to be conveyed to everyone who had assisted in organising this event and JC advised that Jerry had sent her a letter of thanks which she would circulate to the Board and staff.

JC

Passenger Focus – DL said that he felt the issue of Passenger Focus' and London TravelWatch's overlapping remits had still not been addressed and that it would be helpful to quantify the number of appeals cases referred to us by Passenger Focus. It was agreed that this information would be brought to the next Consumer Affairs Committee.

JC

Casework – SG reported that the new casework management system had gone live on 1 October 2009 and that the Director of Public Liaison would be giving a briefing to the Board on this.

Transport Committee – SG reported that she, together with the Streets & Surface Transport Policy Officer, had attended the Transport Committee on 15 October 2009 to give evidence on congestion in the Oxford Street area and advised that it had been a very useful experience and that our contribution had been well received.

The Mayor's Transport Strategy – It was confirmed that the Director of Research & Development would be highlighting the key elements of this, as well as the Transport chapter in the London Plan, to the Board at tomorrow's informal meeting and that it would be a major item for the November Board meeting.

JC

LIPS (Local Implementation Plans) – There was some discussion regarding this document which could be important to our liaison work with local authorities. SG confirmed that the Streets & Surface Transport Policy Officer would give a briefing on this at the following day's informal Board meeting.

London Councils Transport & Environment Committee (TEC) – LR reported that she, together with JC and DL, had attended this meeting and reported that Kulveer Ranger had made a presentation. She also said that a London Councils paper on TfL's response/approach to an "Engagements Consultation" was distributed at the meeting and it was decided that LR would wait for the minutes of the meeting to be circulated before deciding whether any further action was needed in respect of this. LR also said that she was surprised at how political the meeting was, and given that fact, she didn't think she should attend the next meeting. SG confirmed that she would take her place at future meetings.

5. Finance report and accounts – September 2009

PE introduced his report and highlighted the key items within it. In particular he confirmed that our rent review had now been completed and that our budget bid for 2010-11 had been submitted to the GLA which, if accepted, would mean a reduction of £2,000 per month from our existing grant.

DL queried the difference between the variance to date on staffing costs and the variance projected for the year end. Following further discussion it was agreed that the Chair would be given a detailed briefing on staffing costs and that a note would be circulated summarising the changes. LR said that, although mindful that such reports contain confidential information, the Executive should have sight of this information from time to time. SG suggested that every 6 months an Executive meeting should consider the accounts in more detail.

JC

6. Chief Executive's report

JC confirmed that the implementation of the new casework management system was going well and said that the Casework Team had decided to hold an October Food Fest event to celebrate.

JC said that although she had not produced a written report of this meeting many of the points she would have dealt with were covered elsewhere this month, such as in the performance report and the confidential staffing update that PT had recently circulated.

She confirmed that for the rest of the quarter she would be focusing particularly on completing the work arising from the Chief Executive's review and carrying out appraisals. She added that archiving of many of the documents currently being stored on the third floor would take place shortly.

7. Risk Management – Updated policy for ratification

JC confirmed that the policy had been updated to reflect changes arising from the internal audit. The changes were noted and agreed and it was requested that it be copied to the Board for information.

JC

8. Six monthly performance report

JC introduced her report which was discussed in some detail by the Executive Group. She was asked to double check target dates for key milestones before the report was circulated to the whole Board.

JC

9. Update to Communications Strategy

JC apologised that this paper was not ready as she had not been able to liaise with the Communications Officer about, the paper would be circulated a week in advance of the November Executive.

JC

10. Board issues:

- a) **Informal meeting 20.10.09** – SG confirmed that this would be used as the opportunity for an advance discussion of issues for the 10 November Board meeting. This meeting would be themed around TfL and, as well as discussing the Mayor's Transport Strategy, would consider their approach to complaints, communications and research.
- b) **Local authority relations** – SG asked that LR present her paper to the Board tomorrow, highlighting that :
 - Board members are not expected to attend meetings unless they feel they need to / will be better informed for;
 - Board members are expected to volunteer to liaise for 2-3 boroughs each and their role would then be to act as a watching brief, obtaining minutes, looking for reoccurring key issues. Intelligence monitoring;

- A letter would be sent to all boroughs from SG introducing London TravelWatch and requesting a meeting with their lead member for transport. If they then took us up on this, the relevant Board member would attend.

11. Any other business

DL mentioned the Circle Line event taking place the weekend of the 23/24 October 2009 and advised members that the Transport Committee would be holding a Bus Seminar on the 8 December 2009. As the event coincides with a London TravelWatch Board meeting, it was decided that JC would instigate the possibility of the Board attending the event in the morning and then return to Middle Street for an afternoon Board session, which would conclude with the annual Christmas drinks with the staff.

JC

DL mentioned that he was unaware that JC had recently been on a week's annual leave, and requested that the Board be advised of this in future.

JC