
Executive Minutes

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Agenda item : 5b
Drafted :30 June 2010

Minutes of a meeting of the London TravelWatch Executive Group held at 6 Middle Street, London EC1 on 20 May 2010, 14.00 – 16.40

Present:

Sharon Grant (SG)	Chair
David Barry (DB)	
Gail Engert (GE)	
David Leibling (DL)	
Lorna Reith (LR)	

Janet Cooke (JC)	Chief Executive
Patti Tobin (PT)	Director, Finance & Personnel
Peter Ellis (PE)	Senior Finance Officer (minute 5)
Tim Bellenger (TB)	Director, Research & Development (minute 10)
Gytha Chinweze (GC)	Executive Assistant

1. Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

Gytha Chinweze was introduced to the Executive Group as Executive Assistant to the Chief Executive.

2. Minutes of meeting held on 22 April 2010

Subject to one minor amendment these were approved namely: - to note that Kevin Davis had stood down **temporarily** as a member of the Board of London TravelWatch. (minute 4).

3. Matters arising

Board membership – To note that Kevin Davis had now returned as a member of the Board.

Freedom of Information requests – JC agreed to copy substantive freedom of information requests to the Executive Group when such requests were received and

also report quarterly on the total number of requests received and the timescales within which these requests were completed. **JC**

Casework performance– JC confirmed that a performance report had been put to the last Consumer Affairs Committee, and this would also be sent to members of the Executive not on that committee. **JC**

Casework database – JC reported that she and the Director of Public Liaison had had a high level meeting with Tubedale as a result of which there would now be a six month review of the system and any outstanding issues would be picked up. Queries were raised about various operational issues and the Chair requested that details of these be circulated to the Executive Group.

4. Chair's update

Board appointments - The Chair noted that apart from the position of Kevin Davis, the general election appeared to have had no implications for the membership of the TravelWatch Board. However, she had not yet heard anything about a recruitment process being triggered, and suspected that this might now be delayed until after the review. **JC**

Away day follow up – The Chair noted that the various groups had now met to consider their 'hot seat' issues and a meeting was scheduled the following week with Karyn Maier in advance of a second away day on 28 June 2010. She had shared brief profiles of board members with the staff when she attended the staff meeting recently.

PPP – The announcement of TfL's "buy out" of Tubelines was clearly a major development about which a good many questions would be raised going forward. It would mean some reconsideration of the Northern Line upgrades and thus a delay in the public meetings which London TravelWatch was to front over the summer.

Local work – Now that the elections were over, the Chair reported that she would be pressing board members to take forward their local liaison work, and to make contact with possibly newly appointed members responsible for transport at borough level.

Mayor's Transport Strategy – This had now been published and would be reviewed at the July Board Meeting. **JC**

5. Finance report

PE confirmed that last year's accounts had been accepted by the auditors without any amendments. PE was congratulated on this result.

The list of virements made as part of recasting the budget was discussed. Members agreed, on the request of JC, to vire £600 from the Members' salaries' budget to the Chair's travel budget. SG did not take part in the decision to agree this virement. The remainder of the virements were noted. **JC**

PE informed members that any VAT increases would have a noticeable adverse impact on the budget.

Members welcomed the clarity of the report in its new simpler format.

6. Chief Executive's report

JC presented her report and highlighted the work that was being undertaken in respect of the review currently underway by the London Assembly. She drew attention to the much reduced 2010-11 budget and the continued need as an organisation to seek further efficiency savings. The GLA budget guidelines for 2011-12 with their requirement for further reductions were noted. JC observed that the need for ongoing budget reductions was also one of the key drivers for the Assembly's review of the organisation.

Casework staffing was discussed and JC was asked to provide further information about her proposal for a net increase in casework capacity. **JC**

The half-day training course run by the Office of Rail Regulation's (ORR) Competition and Consumer Policy team was welcomed as a useful example of partnership working. Members requested that they be given the opportunity to attend such events in future where possible. **JC**

7. HR report

PT presented the HR Report which was noted. She was asked to progress recruitment under the 'Future Jobs Fund' scheme and to continue to prioritise her work on sickness absence management. **PT**

PT updated members that the Civil Service Compensation Scheme was in a state of flux following a judicial review.

8. Implications of political changes for London TravelWatch

A report on the political changes in London since May 2010 was noted. Members asked for a copy to be circulated to Board members. **JC**

9. Business plan delivery 2009-10 – position at year end

JC introduced this report and pointed out that this had been the first year that the work plan format had been used and that there was now a much better awareness of business planning at senior level in the organisation which was now filtering down to the rest of the staff.

JC went through the report explaining which targets had been met or not met and the reasons for these. The Executive Group suggested that outturn against the target to carry out four casework handling audits of transport operators should be amended and recorded as 'partially met' as the final audit reports had not yet all been signed off.

It was noted that consideration might need to be given to the suitability of some targets in future business planning.

JC

10. Board issues –

- a) **General** - Members were asked to note that London Assembly's Transport Committee meeting on 26 May 2010 would now focus mainly on PPP issues rather than just on London's orbital rail network, as previously advised. TB had already prepared evidence for this, and, with the Chair, would attend for this part of the meeting

London Assembly review – JC reminded members that their input would be required for the review and the GLA's Scrutiny Manager, Tim Jarvis, together with one or more members of the review panel would be arranging to meet with them in due course.

Research projects – In light of current financial constraints TB reported that research early in the year will focus on small projects with projects requiring larger budgets reserved until later in the year.

Transport Users' surgeries – It would be proposed that Southall and Kingston should be the next locations.

JC

- b) **Forthcoming Board meetings** – The agenda for the Board meeting to be held on 25 May 2010 had been circulated. SG reminded members that the meeting would be held at City Hall and would have a research theme and that this would be a high profile meeting with the Transport Commissioner, Peter Hendy attending.

11. Any other business of which advance notice had been given –

There were no further business matters.

GC / 20.5.10