
Report of meeting from external body

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Agenda item : (a)

Paper TS022

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AirTrack Forum steering group meeting 27 July 2009

1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To record for information the proceedings of a meeting of an external body attended by a representative of London TravelWatch.

2 Information

- 2.1 The minutes of a meeting of are attached in the Annex. The Policy Officer represented London TravelWatch at this meeting.
- 2.2 These minutes were prepared by the AirTrack Forum, and London TravelWatch has no responsibility for their content or format.

3 Equalities and inclusion implications

- 3.1 Not applicable – report is for information only.

4 Financial implications

- 4.1 Not applicable – report is for information only

5 Legal powers

- 5.1 Section 252A of the same Act (as amended by Schedule 6 of the Railways Act 2005) places a similar duty upon the Committee to keep under review matters affecting the interests of the public in relation to railway passenger and station services provided wholly or partly within the London railway area, and to make representations about them to such persons as it thinks appropriate.

6 Recommendation

- 6.1 That the report is received for information.

AirTrack Forum : Notes of Steering Group meeting, 27 July 2009, BA Waterside.

Present – Richard Meeks, TfL; George Burnett, WSP; David McKibben, SEEDA; Anthony Powell, Highways Agency; Simon Tarrant, Guildford BC; Iain Reeve, Surrey CC; John Slaughter, SWELTRAC; Steve Smith, AirTrack Forum; Poonam Tamana, London Travelwatch; Richard Morris, CJ Associates; David Milford, British Airways; Richard Walker, SE Regional Partnership Board; Phil Dominey, SW Trains.

1 - Apologies/Introductions

Apologies received from - David Arquati, TfL; Bob Etheridge, Runnymede BC; John Faulkner, DfT; Detlef Golletz, SEEDA; Paul Harwood, Highways Agency; Tim Pilsbury, Guildford BC; Steve Ronald, British Airways; Jocelyn Pearson, Passengerfocus; Bev Hindle, Bracknell Forest BC.

RM advised that Mike Noakes had left BAA. His place on the Forum would be taken by Matthew White, who was assuming responsibility for Heathrow southern access. Matthew had formerly been part of the T5 team. Unfortunately he was not available for today's meeting. A suitable letter of thanks to Mike would be drafted - **Action SS/IR**

2 - Notes of previous meeting

Agreed with one amendment - last sentence of penultimate paragraph of p1 read "There would be time to put a track access option in place before the anticipated Public Inquiry, if this was needed." Should be amended to read "There would be time to put a track access option **application** in place before the anticipated Public Inquiry, if this was needed."

Action items - given the absence of Mike Noakes, updates on his action items were not available. RM(orris) agreed to see if these could be progressed. NE had provided SS with SE Partnership Board info and this had been circulated.

3 - BAA/TWA Update

RM reported that the TWA application had been submitted on Friday 24 July. The 56 day objection period would run to 18 September. SG members were encouraged to write letters of support.

Following this, time would need to be spent dealing with objections - perhaps including developing agreements with landowners - and preparing for the anticipated Public Inquiry, including constructing statements of case and proofs of evidence. Initial indications were that the PI might take place around mid-February.

Discussions on costs were continuing and the business case was still to be finalised. Network Rail had been contacted re a framework agreement. More detailed timetabling work to underpin the track access option was needed. The current am peak and off peak timetables needed to be supplemented with a pm peak, working towards a full 24 hour schedule including Heathrow Airtrack services. An alternative approach to BAA seeking a track access option might be that DfT could vary the franchise.

The application submitted reflected the scheme proposal outlined to the SG last July. Further points included:

- Level crossings - being looked at by SCC with NR.
- NR had been satisfied that the chord presented no obstacle to operating the aspirational 12 car railway.
- 3 pieces of work were required to counter the possible effects of perturbation - at Twickenham, Virginia Water and Guildford; all were part of the estimate of cost.
- There was a dependency on the creation of capacity at Waterloo (bringing former Eurostar platforms back in to use).
- RM understood that DfT were going to instruct SWT to undertake timetabling work.

There was discussion of the NR position.

IR advised that SCC were likely to take a formal position somewhere between unqualified support and outright objection.

PD noted SWT position of support for the creation of improved public transport access to Heathrow, but this must be achieved without inconvenience to existing passengers. There was confidence that a package that will work can be found.

4 - Other developments since last meeting/SCC implementation Group

DM reported on the SEEDA/Delloite work on "Western Access Policy and Prioritisation Framework". The next stage would be to develop packages of mutually supportive multi-modal schemes for the sub-region. Airtrack would be included in the SW quadrant (Gatwick-Reading) element.

The SHARP study with Spelthorne had reached first draft stage - looking at the [economic] impacts of the scheme on Staines, Spelthorne and the SE more widely. It was agreed that headlines would be circulated to the SG (**Action DM/SS**).

IR reported that at a recent TVEP conference he had attended - a long list of Heathrow access options had been discussed.

SS advised that a complete revision of the Forum website content had been undertaken to reflect the new realities following the submission of the TWA application.

RM advised that it was understood that the London Mayor's Transport strategy would offer qualified support for the scheme. This was under development and it was anticipated that a consultation version might be available in September. There was discussion on whether there would be a formal response from the Mayor to the TWA, which might present a problem if the strategy was still under development. IR believed that it was a legislative requirement and would track down the relevant information and circulate. (**Action IR**)

There was discussion of the 2M Group's position on Heathrow Airtrack. The Forum/BAA had been approached (and declined) to comment on a paper being put forward by a consultant working on behalf of the group, which it was understood included, amongst other things, a proposal to serve the Kingston loop by reversing at Twickenham, replacing the direct Richmond-Waterloo service. GB reminded the SG that this reversing proposal had been thoroughly investigated as part of the original "SWOPTIONS" study some time ago and had been found wholly impractical. More positively, however, it was noted that

2M saw electrification of the GWR mainline for Crossrail as an opportunity. Further discussion followed on the assessment of alternatives to the scheme ultimately taken forward by the Forum.

IR reported that the SCC technical group were continuing to look at mitigation measures and the matter of possible funding were being looked at - including the possibility of Regional or DfT funding.

5 - Forum objectives and activity for 2009

IR proposed the following schedule of activity:

- 1) During the formal objection period, a letter should go to all members and stakeholders encouraging them to respond positively.
- 2) A letter of support from the Forum should be sent - draft to be circulated for approval.
- 3) The Annual Meeting to be scheduled for some time towards the end of the year, with the objective of rallying support and giving BAA quotes/material for use as PI evidence.
- 4) Future role - focus and remit of Forum to be considered post-PI.
- 5) Response letters/papers to be shared to advise and inform.

This was agreed.

RM noted that expressions of support for the scheme were vital for the success of the TWA.

It was agreed that invoices for the 09/10 contributions from SG members should be issued as soon as this could be arranged.

6 - AOB

None

7 - Next Meeting

Target end September. (post meeting note now fixed for 1400 Friday 16 Oct at BA Waterside).

A sub-group to discuss the Annual Meeting would also be convened before the next SG
(Action SS/IR/Others TBA)

SS 01/10/09