
External meeting report

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Agenda item 6 (a)
FT2
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Meeting with Transport for London regarding fares and ticketing

1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To record for information a meeting with two members of Transport for London (TfL)'s fares and ticketing team, Peter Legg (Ticketing Policy Manager) and Harold Godwin, regarding fare and ticketing issues on the National Rail (primarily London Overground) network.

2 Information

- 2.1 Peter Legg began by outlining the transition that occurred between Silverlink finishing its franchise and the London Overground concession starting. Silverlink had been required to facilitate the changes that TfL wanted to occur at the January 2008 fares round on National Rail, it had been generally co-operative but had no incentive to do the work. There were also a number of issues related to last minute changes required by London Midland, and the result was that a number of things that TfL had wanted to do did not get done. TfL was also bound by the Mayor's commitment not to raise fares. London Overground fares and ticketing arrangements are therefore still at an 'interim' stage vis-à-vis where TfL wishes to take them.

- 2.2 TfL is proposing to make further changes to fares and tickets on London Overground to overcome some of the problems it has inherited from Silverlink.

February changes

- 2.3 The changes proposed by TfL from February 2008 (date to be fixed and subject to the agreement of the Association of Train Operating Companies, as it is an "out of course" change) are as follows.

- 2.3.1 Some changes to Oyster PAYG fares local to the Watford area (£1.50 reduced to £1).
- 2.3.2 Reintroduction of cheap day returns from Richmond to North London line stations (this is to solve the "St Margarets anomaly" that appeared through casework).

- 2.3.3 Cheap day returns on the North London line were meant to have been abolished in January 2008 (because Oyster PAYG is TfL's version of a cheap day return), but have continued to be available. However, in this proposed change most of them will be abolished for journeys internal to London Overground, except where there are issues arising from other National Rail stations being in the same fares cluster as London Overground (e.g. the Richmond issue above, Watford Junction (stations to the north), West Hampstead stations).
- 2.3.4 There will be a number of corrections to cash fares : where a decrease had occurred in January this will go back up to the correct cash fare, and where the fare had been wrongly increased this will go back down to the correct cash fare. Most of these flows have very low passenger numbers, and where passengers have been overcharged a full refund will be given.
- 2.3.5 First class fares will be reintroduced for journeys where parallel London Midland and Southern services operate with this facility e.g. Bushey to London Euston, Harrow and Wealdstone to West Brompton.

May changes

- 2.4 The changes proposed by TfL from May 2008 (at normal change date) are as follows.
 - 2.4.1 New cluster arrangements on National Rail to get around the cheap day return problem identified above.
 - 2.4.2 Review of chargeable routes for Oyster PAYG e.g. Richmond to Stratford currently assumed to be via zone 1 is likely to become assumed not via zone 1. There are also likely to be two different fares depending on the route.
 - 2.4.3 National Railcard discounts loaded onto Oyster : there will be an easement from Watford Junction to Carpenders Park allowing off-peak travel on the 0921 ex Watford to be capped.

3 Commentary

- 3.1 There are a number of observations on the above proposals by TfL.
- 3.2 Oyster PAYG takeup has already been much higher than TfL anticipated at this stage.
- 3.3 Revenue on the concession is also much higher than TfL had anticipated. This may be due to a number of factors such as the higher level of staff presence, the introduction of new ticket vending machines (TVMs) at stations previously without them, some new ticket gates or that the high level of publicity surrounding the Overground launch has attracted passengers to the service who were previously unaware of its existence.
- 3.4 There have been considerable problems with the ticket vending machines and some booking office machines inherited from Silverlink, particularly 'FAS-TIS' where TfL has been unable to adapt it so far to issue Oyster based tickets. Travelcards from Carpenders Park, Bushey and Watford High Street which

should be issued on Oyster as zone 789 validity are therefore still being issued as station specific on paper, but with instructions to Metropolitan line staff to accept them at the relevant stations in zones 789 if presented at a gate line. ATOC still has not been able to solve the problem of selling Travelcards covering zones 7, 8, 9 and 10 from National Rail stations (which arose as a casework item some time ago in the context of a Purley to Amersham trip).

- 3.5 The proposed introduction of a TVM with Oyster capability at Clapham Junction has still not happened because of the opposition of South West Trains. As a result the local newsagent has now become the highest Oyster selling agent on the TfL network, which he is obviously very pleased about! (He is presumably selling a substantial number of Travelcards as well as PAYG, at the expense of tickets sold by the train company).
- 3.6 There are still some gaps in the agent network for Oyster which TfL is trying to close.
- 3.7 It appears that TfL is regarding London Overground as a testing ground for a number of items of Oyster functionality to see if they work (as the numbers of people affected are likely to be very small if they go wrong).

4 Other changes

4.1 NFM98 London

- 4.1.1 Peter Legg has advised that we should not rely on National Fares Manual issue 98 for London as being accurate, and if members of the casework team have any queries they should contact him direct, rather than relying on this publication.

4.2 Oyster PAYG on First Great Western (FGW)

- 4.2.1 Peter believed that Oyster PAYG acceptance on First Great Western at Paddington would, for journeys from Ealing Broadway and Greenford, be implemented fairly shortly, and it may be possible to advance implementation at intermediate stations to Greenford and West Drayton sooner than previously anticipated. London TravelWatch commented on the recent announcement from FGW about its fares debacle, and that it had suggested asking FGW as a 'passenger benefit' to promote Oyster PAYG at Ealing Broadway more intensively than perhaps it would have done, given that the FGW announcement does not cover London area fares.

3 Equalities and inclusion implications

- 3.1 The proposed changes would simplify ticketing arrangements and reduce the price of some tickets on the network. Taken together with an increase in the number of outlets offering Oyster cards, these would encourage more people to travel, enabling them to enter the labour market and increase participation in society.

4 Legal powers

- 4.1 Section 248 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 places upon London TravelWatch (as the London Transport Users Committee) a duty to consider - and where it appears to the Committee to be desirable, to make recommendations with respect to - any matter affecting the functions of the Greater London Authority or Transport for London which relate to transport (other than of freight). 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.

5 Financial implications

- 5.1 There are no specific financial implications for London TravelWatch arising from this report.

6 Recommendation

- 6.1 That the report is received for information.