
Minutes

Agenda item 5
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Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 18 March 2014 at Network Rail, Kings Place, 90 York Way, London N1 0AG

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Present

Members

Chris Brown, Richard Dilks, Glyn Kyle, Stephen Locke (Chair), Abdikafi Rage, John Stewart, Ruth Thompson

Guests

Rupert Walker	Network Rail (Item 7)
Michael Collela	Transport for London (Item 7)
Peter Fry	High Speed 2 area stakeholder manager (Item 7)
Chris Moores	Transport Planning Manager, Transport for London (Item 8)

Members of the public

Secretariat

Tim Bellenger	Director, Policy and Investigation
Janet Cooke	Chief Executive
Richard Freeston-Clough	Communications Officer
Rob Gifford	Safety Advisor
Sharon Malley	Executive Assistant (minutes)
Vincent Stops	Policy Officer

1 Chair's introduction and pre-meeting announcements

The Chair welcomed members and visitors to the meeting and made the standard safety announcements.

2 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

3 Declarations of interest

In addition to the standing declarations, John Stewart reminded the meeting of his work for HACAN in opposing the third runway at Heathrow. It was agreed that this interest would not prevent Mr Stewart from taking part in the discussion on access to airports at Item 8.

4 Chair's activities and Passenger Focus update

The Chair said there had been no Passenger Focus board meetings since the last London TravelWatch board but there had been some informal meetings around reviewing franchise activities. London TravelWatch would be involved in the de-brief discussions about the process for including the passenger perspective when considering franchise bids. Passenger Focus would be publishing its most recent bus passenger and rail passenger surveys shortly.

The Passenger Focus Passenger Contact group had met in Manchester and had reviewed the internal audit report on complaint handling and put forward useful thoughts on assessing the quality of complaint handling. There may be scope for some joint activity with London TravelWatch in this area.

The Chair had attended a meeting with Anna Walker, the Chair of Network Rail, and had also attended the retirement event for John Cartledge and had represented London TravelWatch at Holocaust Memorial Day.

He had attended a franchising meeting with Peter Wilkinson from the Department for Transport, who had strongly welcomed London TravelWatch's work on franchising and environmental quality and had invited London TravelWatch to attend a trade event in April.

5 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 14 January 2014 were agreed and signed as a correct record, subject to an amendment on page 2, changing February to December, and an amendment at the top of page 4, to add that London TravelWatch had no formal remit in relation to coach services to Stansted.

6 Matters arising (LTW464)

It was noted that the stakeholder engagement event in the borough of Enfield would take place in Edmonton Green on Saturday 22 March. Members would consider how stakeholder engagement events fit with the communications strategy after the Enfield event.

In relation to the TfL performance targets, members noted that the discussion should not be limited to the targets themselves but should include access to management information. London TravelWatch was keen to have access to

management data in order to improve oversight. This objective should be amended.

Action: Executive Assistant/Policy Officer

Members welcomed the inclusion of cycle hire information in the TfL Performance Report.

7 Key activities (LTW465)

The Chief Executive said that the Travel Demand Management board meetings that she and colleagues attended were very useful and were the most significant transport legacy of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The meetings enabled different parts of the transport industry to work together and London TravelWatch was attending all meetings. It was useful to see the joint work being undertaken in relation to events such as the Tour de France and to assist with issues affecting passengers.

It was noted that the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) was seeking to clarify its position in relation to second tier complaints against TfL. It was noted that if people were dissatisfied with TfL responses at present they could appeal to the LGO but that the LGO's enquiries tended to be detailed, lengthy and resource-intensive. The LGO was not set up in such a way as to accommodate general public complaints of the type handled by London TravelWatch.

The Chief Executive said that the Greater London Authority's 2050 Infrastructure Investment Plan would be ready for consultation in June and would be considered by the London TravelWatch board.

8 High Speed 2 and the implications for London transport users

Michael Collela of TfL and Rupert Walker of Network Rail gave a presentation on the implications for London of the proposals for the High Speed 2 (HS2) rail link. Mr Collela said his role was to influence the HS2 project for the best interests of London and act as stakeholder liaison. Mr Walker said his job was to develop HS2 plans and integrate these into the existing network.

Mr Collela said that 70% of HS2 trips were expected to begin or end in London, which was similar to inter-city profiles elsewhere. He said that the Mayor of London was broadly supportive of HS2 as long as it maximised benefits and minimised disruption. The Mayor had put forward four conditions in 2011 relating to Euston, Old Oak Common, HS2/HS1 connectivity and environmental issues along the route.

Mr Collela said that on current forecasts the West Coast Main Line would be at capacity in 10 years and the only economically viable intervention was a new line. To get the best balance of costs and benefits, the new line should be separate from the West Coast Main Line and should also be high speed.

Under the HS2 proposals, more than double the current number of passengers would be expected to use Euston station, which presented problems for the tube network. Rail demand was continuing to increase, despite the growth of new technologies. There was no evidence that, for example, working from home was

limiting demand. Even without HS2, Euston was experiencing more growth than any other main line station.

It was noted that HS2 may allow more choice for passengers to and from the East Midlands and Yorkshire, who might use the existing West Coast Main Line's routes into London in future. This meant that, while HS2 would relieve the saturation point at Kings Cross St Pancras, it would contribute to a doubling of passenger volumes at Euston.

It was noted that the details of timetables for possible HS2 services were not currently available, but it was assumed that there would be two options from Derby into London, with new services provided by HS2 into Euston and residual services into Kings Cross St Pancras.

A member asked whether passengers would be dissuaded from using HS2 if they needed to interchange onto it from another line. Mr Collela said that it was difficult to predict exactly how passengers would react to the various options and how much shorter a journey with an interchange would need to be before passengers would favour it over a longer one without. A piece of work was due to begin later this year to examine this issue. It was noted that other countries such as France had similar issues and that it would be important to understand how passengers currently arrived at existing stations.

Peter Fry said the consultation for HS2 had now been completed and the responses were currently being analysed. He outlined the proposals for Euston, including new entrances to the mainline station, a link to Euston Square station and a new linear bus station.

The Government had recently announced an update to the proposals which included better integration with the local environment. The link between Euston and St Pancras should be improved, which was something London TravelWatch had been seeking for some time. The Chief Executive said that during the 2012 Games the side entrance had been opened and it would be wrong to re-plan Euston without looking at reintroducing that.

Rupert Walker said he was working on a Euston area action plan with TfL, the Greater London Authority, Network Rail, the London Borough of Camden and other partners. He hoped to enable access to the station from the south side of Euston Road via a subway link. The Euston Area Plan 2013 was working on permeability for the station and area. He said up to 10,000 jobs and 3,000 homes could be built in the area around the station.

Work was underway on safeguarding the connection between HS2 and Crossrail 2. Crossrail 2 would see a large underground station created between Euston and St Pancras, extending almost the full length of the space between these stations.

Mr Walker said that the development at Old Oak Common offered potential for mass regeneration on a par with Stratford. The Mayor of London was keen to establish a Mayoral Development Commission to deliver the plan. This needed to be linked to HS2, Crossrail and also the Overground.

Mr Walker said that regeneration would not be successful until the transport improvements had taken place. The HS2 proposal assumed 30% of passengers

would change at Old Oak Common onto Crossrail, but an interchange with Overground was needed to fully exploit the regeneration proposals.

Members asked whether the HS2 proposals would need to be accompanied by an increase in capacity in services such as the West London Line. Mr Walker said that by 2020 the West London Line would be considering longer trains and increased frequency. It was included as part of the possible integration of services at Old Oak Common.

The Director, Policy and Investigation, said that Chiltern line services may be altered if HS2 were built and there was no current parallel vision of what should happen to the Chiltern line in the wake of HS2. London TravelWatch would like to see development of services for London commuters but Chiltern had appeared resistant to that as they favoured the longer distance routes from Birmingham.

The Director, Policy and Investigation, noted that London TravelWatch would need to undertake a statutory closure process for the part of the line between Old Oak Common and South Ruislip if it were to be closed. If it remained open, it would potentially be able to offer additional capacity and connectivity.

Mr Walker said that services post 2026 were unknown and there would be opportunities in future to discuss them further. He said that the single line between Old Oak Common and South Ruislip, which was mainly used by freight and during engineering possessions, would be closed for a period with the intention of reinstating it after the works, with the possibility of improving connectivity.

Members questioned whether there was a risk that the Old Oak Common plans would be omitted from the final scheme. Mr Walker said that requiring HS2 services to stop at Old Oak Common should be a franchise requirement and that if passengers did not have the opportunity to change onto Crossrail at Old Oak Common it would mean too many passengers trying to alight at Euston.

A representative from the West London Line passenger group asked whether a requirement for HS2 to accommodate twin decked trains would be a solution for Euston. Mr Walker said that double decked trains were considered at an early stage but were very difficult in engineering terms and disruptive to the existing railway. It would mean completely closing Euston for a long time. However, twin decking might be a suitable option elsewhere and would be considered again in other contexts.

Members thanked Mr Walker and Mr Collela for a very interesting and informative discussion.

9 Transport access to London airports

Chris Moores, Transport Planning Manager at TfL, gave a presentation on airport capacity and proposals for future airport expansion. He said that there were difficulties with expansion at either Heathrow or Gatwick and that accessing these airports by public transport was becoming increasingly difficult as Heathrow had relatively low public transport accessibility and the Brighton main line through Gatwick was almost at capacity.

The Chair noted that airport capacity as such was not within London TravelWatch's remit, but that the organisation had a substantial interest in the

question of surface access to airports. Mr Moores said that airport passengers had particular needs, with greater emphasis on reliability and journey time and a focus on easy interchange for those with luggage. He noted that airport-related travel did co-incide with traditional commuter peaks and so access could become problematic for passengers. The Mayor of London had proposed a location for a new airport that might address some of the problems passengers currently had in accessing Heathrow and Gatwick.

Members noted that passengers were having problems because they were travelling using their Oyster cards without realising that Oyster payments were not currently accepted at Gatwick station. Passengers also complained about delays in reaching Stansted Airport by train. Mr Moores said that several divisions of TfL were working on improving access to Heathrow and Gatwick, including work on providing low-emissions buses at Heathrow.

Mr Moores said that surface access forums were a good way of getting interested parties, such as the airport operator, transport operators, local authorities and others, around a table to discuss issues. Members noted that it would be beneficial for consumer groups to be included in these forums.

Members noted that passengers would welcome assistance with issues such as improving the ticket halls at Gatwick and Victoria stations and encouraging more efficient use of platform space by passengers.

In response to a question, Mr Moores said that if the Airports Commission ruled out the development of a new airport as proposed by the Mayor, and instead supported a third runway at Heathrow, TfL would revert to prioritising work to ensure that access by passengers was as easy as possible.

A member asked whether TfL would be able to assist with staffing arrangements at Gatwick station if and when it became part of the Oyster network. Michael Collela said that TfL's locus was limited because it did not operate any of the trains and that it would be an important issue to take forward as the operator may not have been aware of some of the problems being faced by passengers. Mr Moores agreed that there were problems with Gatwick station that affected the passenger experience.

The Director, Policy and Investigation, said that one of the justifications put forward by the Mayor of London for the new airport was that it improved flight interchange. However, the area of greatest growth in aviation was short haul rather than long distance. This meant that most passengers arriving at the new airport would be travelling into London rather than interchanging onto a new flight. The Director, Policy and Investigation, noted that most Londoner had a preferred airport depending on where they lived and that to improve the overall access to airports the best approach would be to improve access to all airports and access between airports.

Mr Moores agreed that London had a system of airports poorly linked together but the trend was for an increase in long haul flights from developing parts of the world. There was a risk that London would become a branch line if not enough was done to increase capacity. A new hub could address the need for both types of airport growth.

Mr Moores said that he was hoping to engage soon with Heathrow airport on a study looking at ways to improve access by modes other than the private car. There was a need to review the data to establish who was arriving by car, why they chose the car over public transport and what time of day they were travelling. TfL was sceptical about some of Heathrow's assumptions on car use but it would be worthwhile to work through the data to try to improve access to Heathrow.

Members thanked Mr Moores for his presentation and noted that this was an area to return to in more detail in future.

10 Consultation on the London Plan (LTW466)

The Policy Officer presented a report on proposed further alterations to the London Plan. He said some of the amendments focused on removing out of date provisions such as those relating to the Olympic Games and adding new references to the Olympic legacy. However, the majority of the changes were driven by the 2011 Census results, which showed an increased rate of population growth for London and a 10% increase in the forecast number of trips by 2031.

The Policy Officer said that the alterations raised several questions, such as the role that should be played by road pricing and other demand management options, whether there should be more bus priority and whether London TravelWatch should support smaller rail schemes. He said that the forecast growth in population and employment did not currently appear to be matched by increases in transport measures and capacity.

Members noted that there were no current plans to revise the Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS) and that London TravelWatch should make the case for its revision. It was agreed that London TravelWatch should focus in the shorter term on the items outline in the Policy Officer's report but call for a proper revision of the MTS in the longer term.

It was noted that other organisations such as the Chartered Institute of Housing would have similar concerns to London TravelWatch and a joint approach may be worthwhile.

It was noted that many transport organisations, including TfL, were keen to explore the issue of road pricing but were concerned about public reaction. It would be useful for London TravelWatch to show support in this area, even though it was somewhat controversial, in order to take the debate forward.

It was agreed that London TravelWatch would respond to the consultation on alterations to the London Plan in line with the recommendations in the Policy Officer's report.

Action: Policy Officer

11 Any other business

There was no other business.

12 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 a section of the meeting.

During the confidential session, members reviewed the meeting.