

2 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

3 Declarations of interest

The Chair said that his appointment to take over Chairmanship of the Anglia Supervisory Board had now been confirmed and that it had clear links with Crossrail. On the advice of the Chief Executive, it was agreed that John Stewart would chair the session on Crossrail on the agenda. Arthur Leathley would remain in the meeting and take part in the discussion.

4 Chair's activities and Transport Focus update

The Chair said that he had attended two meetings at Transport Focus, with Bernadette Kelly, Director General of the Department of Transport (DfT). He said that the DfT was keen to receive information from other sources and would invite friendly criticism from London TravelWatch.

The Chair said that Transport Focus was going to have South Western Railway back to a meeting to hear what is changing following the Waterloo episode last summer. They will attend a public session in May to answer further questions through the Chair.

5 Minutes of the Board meeting held on 27 February 2018

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 27 February 2018 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

6 Matters arising (LTW580)

In response to a question from the Chair about whether any information had been received from the Rail Delivery Group (RDG) regarding station travel plans, the Director, Policy & Investigation said that he had attended a meeting with them where this was discussed.

The Policy Officer said that the London TravelWatch response to the London Plan consultation had been updated to reflect Board member comments and submitted without being circulated again to members due to time constraints.

7 Key activities (LTW581)

The Director, Policy & Investigation, said that most of the ticket offices had now been closed. He will have further discussions with London Underground about Wembley Central and whether they had put in sufficient mitigation measures to close the station. He said that it is a National Rail station managed by London Underground and is not a typical London Underground station as many passengers buy rail tickets there. He said that Wembley Central had a lot of

tourists staying over for events in hotels. He said we need to keep an eye on it because the station is used by many people unfamiliar with London or its transport system. He said London TravelWatch should raise this issue in the right places and he will raise it with Mark Wild when he attends his next meeting with London TravelWatch.

The Casework manager said she was concerned about some of the cases she had received from 'Resolver'. She said that it logs cases through a website on behalf of a complainant and is a facilitator. However, there had been some errors with people being directed to the wrong operator.

She said that she had met with South Western Railway's senior team and informed them of London TravelWatch's role and what they should be telling passengers.

It was noted that Network Rail's Southeastern Route had appointed a new Director of Major stations who is bringing in the principles of a 'one team' approach, and looking at things from a passenger perspective. London TravelWatch has been meeting him on a regular basis as this is an appointment that it has been advocating for stations, for a long time.

8 Update on progress with the GTR franchise following Chris Gibb's independent review of the Southern Rail network

The Chair welcomed Chris Gibb to the meeting.

Chris Gibb explained to members that he had previously served as the Chief Operating Officer of Virgin Rail Group Limited and as the Managing Director of Cross Country of Virgin Rail Group Limited. He has been an Independent Non-Executive Director of Network Rail Limited and a Non-Executive Director of Network Rail Infrastructure Limited. He has worked in the industry for more than 30 years.

He had been commissioned by the Secretary of State for Transport, to carry out an independent review of the Southern Rail network. He said that he had presented his report to the Board and members. He said that he was at the meeting independently in his own capacity on the invitation of the Board, to provide an update on the progress of the review.

Chris Gibb said that there were 38 recommendations from his report. He said that, in a nutshell 23 were done; 11 were not done but not rejected, and 4 were either pending, not needed or redacted.

Chris Gibb said that the following recommendations were done-

- GTR franchise agreement review – changing the franchise agreement had been difficult but the DfT team worked hard on this.
- Role of System Operator – this will come in CP6. They will act as a referee or custodian of the network across numerous boundaries and will manage capacity and the timetable process to fulfil the recommendations.

- The Big Plan – the plan is to spend £300m to improve the infrastructure away from central London to improve reliability. Work is being done and there has been steady progress but this will not be fully implemented until next year across the network.
- The Overnight Railway – trains between central London and Gatwick and Luton Airport are needed all night; in CP6 they will review the engineering access process to ensure Network Rail are making good use of access.
- Daytime possessions – this is for work that cannot be done at night or the weekend, for example which will take place at half term in October and February 2019.
- Class 442s – this class has now been withdrawn and has departed from the network.
- Transfer of rolling stock to South Eastern – this is done.
- New stabling facilities at Cambridge, Bedford and Ashford - these are in progress and will be completed by 2019. Stabling facilities have been done at Hove and West Worthing.
- Driver manpower plan – this has been done in full.
- Major station schemes – for example at Victoria and East Croydon. Victoria is part of Network Rail proposals for CP6 but has been deferred since CP3.
- Gatwick Airport station – this is in hand and is making good progress; planning permission has been applied for an upgrade for extra capacity
- Station shelters – provision of additional shelters on the Brighton Main Line is being implemented in full in 2018.
- London terminal leadership – Ian Hanson has been appointed as Director of Major Stations to carry out that role.
- Train dispatch – GTR has reduced dwell time at stations by reviewing how this is done.
- Suicide prevention – this has been done but they need to work hard on this and work closer with train operators.
- Great Northern control centre at Kings Cross – this will close at Kings Cross and be transferred to Three Bridges Railway Operating Centre and will be completed in April 2018.
- Traffic management - Network Rail tool for signalling to aid automation; now 'live', checks timetable on daily basis to ensure it works from a signalling point of view. This is now working on Thameslink.

- Thameslink programme governance – more effective governance of the Thameslink programme; the Secretary of State has asked Chris Gibb to chair this.
- Future of GTR franchise – what will happen to the network at the end of the franchise is being considered and debated.

The following had not been done, but were not rejected:

- Stabling facilities in North Kent – this is not yet progressed.
- Transfer of GTR routes to other operators – this is still being considered.
- Uckfield Line electrification
- Littlehampton – providing a driver depot has not been done.
- Train crew depot strategy – this has not been done for strategic reasons; very large depots cause more industrial relations issues than a collection of small depots.
- Crowborough – provision of stabling facilities not done.
- Commercial strategy – this includes ticketing between London and Gatwick and the fact that passengers are not necessarily getting the cheaper fares; this is not done because it is difficult but has not been ruled out.
- Wrong regulation – the principle has been accepted but need to come up with a more suitable term that is less confrontational.
- Little used stations – this is where service is in excess of passengers; it has not been done because it is a sensitive issue.
- Objectives, incentives and performance metrics – Network Rail and GTR to have the same objectives, incentives and performance metrics; this is a complex issue.
- Level crossings – there is a fear that this will become more of a performance than a safety issue. Still very difficult to close level crossings; the Law Commission recommends placing responsibility on local authorities to do this but there is no reason for them to cooperate with the railway industry on this.

The following were not needed or redacted:

- Thameslink 2018 – the Thameslink service specification record is not needed because the infrastructure is being improved; the original specification is deliverable.
- Class 455s – these trains may be replaced from 2023 in the next Southern franchise.
- Class 700s – this was redacted from the report.

- Timetable firebreaks – this is to ensure the service is ready for the evening peak; there is no need to have a fire break in the middle of the day.
- Off peak services – the proposal to reduce some of the off-peak services has not been taken forward largely due to it not being needed because of the new timetables.

Chris Gibb said Thameslink had had a very difficult challenge. In the last 18 months industry players at a senior level from the Department of Transport (DfT), Office of Rail and Road (ORR) amongst others had set about adopting principles of phasing the whole project. He said that it had required compromise by both operators and passengers but the benefit would be enormous and would increase capacity across London. He said the compromise in the timetable will be worth it in terms of both capacity and performance.

He said that he was confident that Thameslink will deliver a reliable service on 20 May when the new timetable comes into place. However, he said that the transition would be complex from mid-May until mid-June.

Members asked what the order of priority was for the unfinished business, and whether the works that had been done had been inspected and there was anything that London TravelWatch could do to help.

Chris Gibb said that the responsibility for implementing the recommendations was with the operator, Network Rail or the Secretary of State and not with him. He said what was difficult to achieve but worthy of taking forward is the recommendation to have common industry objectives, incentives and performance metrics.

The Chair said that he hoped that all will be in place by next year and asked how much learning was going to be transferred to Crossrail.

Chris Gibb said that there had been considerable learning between Thameslink and Crossrail and best practice was being spread and many lessons could be applied widely across the rail industry. He said that projects take a long time to come to fruition and it needs to be very clear what is required from the outset.

The Policy Officer said that Farringdon historically is a very challenging interchange station with no easy answers and that it would be interesting to see what happens there. He suggested that some simple things to improve the stations would be signage and better communications with passengers. He also said that ticket gates needed to have more capacity to handle larger numbers of passengers.

A member asked if passenger service information would be available. Chris Gibb responded by saying that the simple message to passengers travelling on Thameslink will be to check before travelling.

The Chair thanked Chris Gibb for coming in his own time to the meeting.

9 London's fares and ticketing system (LTW582)

The Director, Policy and Investigation, said that fares and ticketing is an issue that is important to passengers who want to get the right ticket at the right price and want to be confident that they have paid the appropriate fare. He said that his paper had set out the complexities and how things can be changed for the better for consumers in the future.

He said that, in recent years, decisions made about fares and ticketing have been made at a global level for good reason but from an individual level this was contradictory and adds complexity or makes things difficult in terms of transparency. He said that for example in the National Rail fares system some fares between individual stations are never issued because people don't travel from them and there are anomalies within the fares system.

He said fares and ticketing is a political issue and they can be very difficult to change.

He said he had attended a recent meeting with representatives from TfL, DfT, ORR and the Rail Delivery Group (RDG) to see what the field of complexity looked like and whether there was an appetite for simplifying fares to make life better for passengers.

He said that there were huge differences in fares between towns of similar distances.

The Chair said that at the meeting it was clear that with the industry were engaged and there was a desire for change but the challenge will be to turn desire into real action.

Members asked what areas London TravelWatch could focus on to have some impact and where the opportunities will be for London TravelWatch to drive things forward. It was noted that things had changed for passengers within London because of the Oyster but there is unfairness in the outer area.

The Chief Executive said that London TravelWatch's Transport Users' Priorities produced ahead of the mayoral elections fits what we believe should be done so passengers are confident that they are buying the right ticket. She said that London TravelWatch was trying to do two things. Firstly, to try and provide some leadership and start the discussions on fares simplification. Secondly, to raise the profile on how important this is for passengers for example through press releases and pushing for things in the long term in the business plan in a proactive way.

Members asked for London TravelWatch to engage with politicians during the mayoral elections in 2020 on this but also with MPs in the outer London area.

Members said that fares lie at the heart of what we are doing and is of great interest to passengers. They suggested that a matrix approach which maps out the numbers of people affected and the chances of achieving success will be a way forward so that we address the biggest anomaly that affects the most people and would have the most impact.

Members suggested that officers should identify particular issues but also talk about the general issues and publicise this in the media to show fares that are unfair and how the wider policy and framework is not right.

Members said that London TravelWatch should focus on the issues around the boundary points of London as these are the most problematic.

It was noted that what people pay for their ticket depended on the expertise of the person carrying out the purchase. The advent of smart cards and contactless payments could provide an opportunity to simplify fares and ticketing arrangements.

Members said that it was good to know the reason behind the discrepancies in fares. The evidence is that Oyster is cheap and easy to use and London TravelWatch should push for this to be extended where it has not been extended.

It was noted that in 2007 zonal fares implemented had huge variations and some fares went up quite a lot. About 60,000 people per day paid more, 60,000 paid less and 30,000 had no change.

The Director, Policy and Investigation said that when Oyster came in from 2010 onwards, operators were concerned that that they would lose money but when it was implemented it led to a 5% increase in patronage. The guarantees that the DfT had put in place for operators were not needed. This illustrates the risk averseness of train operating companies and the DfT in implementing change.

The Chair asked the Director, Policy and Investigation to show this evidence to the industry to explain that their concerns came to nought and that history shows the reality.

Action: Director, Policy and Investigation

The Chief Executive said that the key thing to prioritise in our proactive work is the disparity or unfairness of the ring around London and also within London. She said that we had great success in pushing for the extension of Oyster to Gatwick and on delay repay compensation and can push on this and have a meeting with the Rail Minister who is a zone 6 MP at the edge of London, promoting a simple message that 'this is not fair'.

The Chair said that we do not want to be seen to be political but as doing what is in the best interest of passengers.

The Director, Policy and Investigation confirmed, in response to a question from a member, that London TravelWatch does lobby the DfT to include fares simplification in their franchises.

The Chair thanked the Director, Policy and Investigation, for his paper.

10. Crossrail operating arrangements (JS in the Chair)

As a result of the Chair's recent appointment as non-executive Chair of Network Rail's Anglia Route Supervisory Board, this item was chaired by the Deputy Chair.

The Deputy Chair welcomed MTR Crossrail's Managing Director, Steve Murphy and Customer Experience Director, Paul Parsons.

Mr Murphy gave a short presentation on the arrangements underway for the full operation of Crossrail. He outlined the stages leading up to full operation of Crossrail as the Elizabeth line. This started with the takeover of the Liverpool Street to Shenfield services from Greater Anglia in May 2015 and complete replacement of infrastructure on that line and continued with the introduction of new class 345 trains on the route. Mr Murphy said that close working with Network Rail has helped drive up performance.

The next stage will be the takeover of passenger services on the west to Paddington in May 2018. Heathrow Connect services will be brought under Crossrail control and there will eventually be four trains an hour to the airport. Mr Murphy said that Elizabeth line trains will have to operate seamlessly on three different signalling systems; automatic signalling through the central London core; ETCS and conventional signalling. This is something that has not been attempted in Britain before. However, he said that there would always be a driver on board the train.

The third stage marks the planned introduction of the first Crossrail services through the Central Operating Section (COS) between Paddington (Crossrail station) and Abbey Wood via Tottenham Court Road and Canary Wharf. Testing is currently being carried out.

This will be followed by the introduction of Elizabeth line services between Shenfield and Paddington via Tottenham Court Road (May 2019) and finally full passenger service with a connection to Reading in December 2019.

Mr Parsons added that MTR Crossrail have been working very hard on the information provided to passengers. Each station will provide detailed information of connections including bus and taxi services. A one team management approach will be used to ensure excellent customer service.

Mr Murphy said that ticketing falls in line with TfL's pricing strategy and Oyster PAYG fares will be cheaper than the current Heathrow Connect fare. He will confirm whether there is a pricing differential on Piccadilly line services to Heathrow.

Action: Committee & Liaison Officer

Responding to a question from the Policy Officer (VS) about how passengers interchanging at Farringdon will be managed, Mr Murphy said that the station would continue to be a London Underground station and MTR Crossrail are in talks with London Underground about how all stations including Farringdon will be managed.

Members asked why a lot of work has been done relating to services on the eastern part of Crossrail in terms of branding and consultation but less has been done on the western side. Mr Murphy said that funding has only recently been secured to deal with this and it has taken longer to get designs agreed but he has confidence that works will be carried out including level access. He explained that for major station rebuilds TfL tends to contract with Network Rail but for more minor pieces of work like customer information screens, MTR Crossrail would take this on.

Members asked about the potential for lengthening services and increasing the frequency in the event of passenger growth. Mr Murphy said that the service will launch initially with 15 trains per hour on the core route but the signalling is designed for 24 trains an hour, perhaps 28 so all that would be needed to run more services would be additional trains.

Members asked about problems posed by freight trains and whether MTR Crossrail have learned anything from the Thameslink project. Mr Murphy said that MTR Crossrail is working closely with GTR as there are many similarities between their routes. He said that the challenge is to knit the new railway together with the classic parts of National Rail which can be affected by things like late running freight trains. They are trying to learn from GTR's timetable redesign to allow even interval passenger services as they want to avoid sending trains into the core route late.

The Chief Executive said that it is really important to have high quality, joined up signage at interchange stations and Mr Murphy agreed with members that signage at many stations including Paddington is not good enough. He said that the investment he mentioned earlier should help them improve signage at key stations. The Chief Executive said that London TravelWatch looked forward to hearing from Mr Parsons at their next interchange matters seminar on 21 June.

Mr Murphy explained that MTR Crossrail operates under a concession from TfL unlike National Rail services so TfL take the financial risk, market the service and set pricing levels. MTR Crossrail do not take passenger revenue directly and are subject to a stringent set of financial incentives to ensure that they provide a high quality service. The regime includes incentives for MTR Crossrail to work with Network Rail to repair faults and they face financial penalties if people express dissatisfaction with the service they provide in customer surveys.

The Director, Policy and Investigation asked whether there would be training for drivers when then three different parts of the railway join up. Mr Murphy said that a comprehensive training matrix is in place so that every driver is aware of all routes and signalling systems – it will take three years to get everyone trained.

The Chair thanked Mr Murphy and Mr Parsons for an informative presentation.

11. Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS)

The Policy Officer (VS) presented a report on the new MTS. He said that London TravelWatch had contributed to the draft consultation on the MTS in November 2017 and was very pleased to have had the influence it has had. He said that taking into account the final version of the Strategy London TravelWatch had probably had more influence than any other organisation apart from TfL. He highlighted the inclusion of Crossrail 2, roads pricing, efficient use of roads and increasing capacity on the railways as key issues which London TravelWatch have pushed for. The Policy Officer (VS) explained that the final MTS was published a few weeks ago and contained minor changes from the draft. There is support for closing streets to improve the cycling environment, new ideas on responding to road collisions and much stronger prioritisation of vehicle reduction. He said that London

TravelWatch can claim some credit for the strengthening of the wording on roads pricing.

The Policy Officer (VS) said that London TravelWatch can claim credit for the commitment in the MTS to improve accessibility of bus services including hail and ride. He said that while it was good that the need to improve bus services was recognised in the document we have asked TfL to speak to us about concentrating bus services on streets where they can be given the highest priority required in central London. He mentioned that in Reading, Bristol and Bath this has been done, leaving small operators to run the less popular routes. The Director, Policy and Investigation added that this may mean that the idea that you are never more than 400 metres from a bus stop may rely on demand responsive services filling in the gaps where TfL decide not to run services.

Action: Policy Officer (VS)

The Policy Officer (VS) explained that there are large numbers of hail and ride stops in Enfield and Sutton and a Board member mentioned that the rail 419 hail and ride section in Richmond is well used.

12. Any other business

There was no other business.

13. 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.