
Minutes

Agenda item: 4
Drafted 08.08.18

Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 24 July 2018 at the Dartford Civic Centre, Dartford, DA1 1DZ

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Present

Members

Jackie Ballard, Alan Benson, Richard Dilks, Glyn Kyle, Arthur Leathley (Chair), Abdi Osman, John Stewart

Guests

Roger Johnson	Vice Chair, Sevenoaks Rail Travellers Association (Item 9)
Paul Moore	Director of Regeneration, Communities and Customer Service, London Borough of Bexley (Item 10)
Simon Jones	Director of Highways, Transport and Waste at Kent County Council (Item 11)
Stefano Borella	Cllr for Slade Green and Northend. Shadow spokesperson for Places, London Borough of Bexley

Secretariat

Keletha Barrett	Policy Officer
Tim Bellenger	Director, Policy and Investigation
Janet Cooke	Chief Executive
Richard Freeston-Clough	Operations and Communications Manager
Luke Muskett	Committee and Public Liaison Officer
Trevor Rosenberg	Policy Officer

1 Chair's introduction and pre-meeting announcements

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting and made the standard safety announcements.

2 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

3 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest in addition to the standing declarations recorded on the London TravelWatch website.

4 Minutes of the Board meeting held on 17 April 2018

An amendment was made to the wording on page 8. There had been no action for the Director, Policy and Investigation, only to encourage the adoption of Oyster/Contactless when opportunities arise. A sentence and action was removed on page 9 as London TravelWatch was already aware of the pricing differential on Piccadilly line services to Heathrow. The minutes of the Board meeting held on 17 April 2018 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

5 Matters arising (LTW584)

There were no comments on the outstanding matter that had been completed.

6 Key activities (LTW585)

The Director, Policy and Investigation said that there remained a number of outstanding issues relating to the Gospel Oak-Barking electrification. The new electric trains were new to the UK network and would be required to go through a much more rigorous testing process than would be the case for an established train type. He remarked that the existing diesel units were due to be released by December 2018 to allow the new operator to train their drivers to use them. Due to a lack of spare diesel units, Transport for London (TfL) would be unable to release to the new operator train stock prior to December.

A member asked what would happen if the existing process for introducing electric trains was not completed by December 2018. The Director, Policy and Investigation replied that it would be a question for TfL to answer. The member asked that it be followed up with TfL as if trains were removed before replacement units could be installed it would be a 'recipe for chaos'.

ACTION: Director, Policy and Investigation

A member asked when the independent report of the incident at Lewisham would be published. The Director, Policy and Investigation replied that he had been in

discussion with Southeastern about their internal report, though the information that had been divulged was given in confidence and could not be revealed in public. It was unknown when the formal report would be issued. The Chief Executive stated that the next Governance Committee would take place on 9 October, and asked the Director, Policy and Investigation to produce a report on the topic which could be discussed with the Board confidentially.

ACTION: Director, Policy and Investigation

The Director, Policy and Investigation stated that as far as he was aware the December opening of the central stations for MTR Crossrail, including the opening of the station between Paddington and Abbey Wood, was still on track. The Chair asked whether the recent changes to the May timetable and delay in introducing the second timetable in December would affect Crossrail. The Director, Policy and Investigation replied that it would not as the Paddington to Abbey Wood line was independent from other parts of the national rail network. Furthermore, the scale of the proposed changes in December would not be as significant as what had been brought in in May.

The Chair asked about the direction of the Travel Demand Management (TDM) Board. The Chief Executive remarked that London TravelWatch had asked that the group look again at its terms of reference as the industry had not recently engaged with the TDM as much as it could have. Both Mark Farrow of Network Rail and Emily Herreras-Griffiths of TfL had been supportive of the idea, and London TravelWatch would continue to make the case for change through their regular meetings. The aim was to get the discussion moving on future closures whilst there was still time to make operational changes, and London TravelWatch would be pushing to do so.

The Director, Policy and Investigation commented that he had been granted sight of the feasibility report regarding step-free access at Bank station, and there remained work that needed to be done. However, the report did show that there were possibilities of providing a solution to the issue and he had come away from the meeting more positive about it than he had been in some time.

The Director, Policy and Investigation stated that the bus consultation process was now 'back on track' and they had a further meeting with TfL planned to discuss it later in the week. A member questioned whether the forthcoming meeting was specifically to speak about route changes or would cover other topics as well. The Director, Policy and Investigation said that route changes would be the key area of the discussions but other issues would also be covered.

The member asked what had been the purpose of the meeting with Anna Saunders in discussing the Office of Rail and Road's (ORR) review of the Disabled Person Protection Policy. The Policy Officer (KB) stated that it had been an introductory discussion to discover what London TravelWatch's position was on the review. The member commented that he wanted to ensure that the organisation was consulted on the process.

The Director, Policy and Investigation said that the meeting with Mark Wild had been focused around suicides and attempted suicides on the Underground network, and whether a piece of work needed to be done on the subject. The

member asked if a piece of work had been agreed to be produced. The Director, Policy and Investigation replied that it was something that TfL were interested in pursuing. There had been a similar study carried out across Network Rail lines by encouraging passengers to intervene via the Small Talk Saves Lives campaign, which TfL was looking to replicate.

A member asked whether the changes to TfL's journey planner would be significant or only minor. The Director, Policy and Investigation remarked that the change would be significant as it would soon include the cost of the fare the passenger would be expected to pay for the journey they wished to take. This would enable passengers to make decisions based on cost as well as on the speed of the journey. He stated there would be a limit to what fares it could show, with some services, such as National Express, not displaying its pricing. The member commented that it would be beneficial if London TravelWatch could welcome the introduction of the new timetable and the benefits it would have for passengers.

ACTION: Operations and Communications Manager

A member asked what had caused the Peckham Rye train evacuation. The Director, Policy and Investigation said that he had discussed the incident with the senior accident investigator and a report was being worked on, which he had made a number of comments on. However, anything that had been discovered could not yet be put out into the public domain.

The Chief Executive stated that the European Rail Policy Forum was an ongoing meeting that the Department for Transport (DfT) hosted every quarter. Its purpose was to look at specific scenarios in detail in preparation for the UK leaving the European Union. The Director, Policy and Investigation remarked that with regard to Eurostar, there would not be any significant changes post leaving the EU as it was largely targeted at European business.

The Director, Policy and Investigation stated that one issue that was of concern was the consequences for the European freight network and the rights of freight trains for train paths in and around London. He commented that any impact to the current system would have a knock-on effect for rail operators, such as TfL or Southeastern, being able to run additional passenger trains on congested routes. This was due to the fact that freight trains would be given priority if there was competition to use the same track.

The Chief Executive stated that the new managing director of Eurostar, Mike Cooper, had been invited to attend London TravelWatch's board meeting in the new year. It could be at that stage that members could be updated as to what the current situation looked like.

The Chair asked why there had been a need to have an informal discussion on case handling with Pierre Delalande at Eurostar. The Chief Executive replied that the casework team had noticed a deterioration in case handling and the speed in which complaints were being dealt with by the operator, which was why they felt the need to discuss it with them. It had come as a surprise as previously Eurostar had gained a reputation for dealing with complaints in an efficient manner.

The Chief Executive stated that Mr Delalande had appeared not to have been aware of the problems, though did state that the company had recently changed its call centre and was in the process of training staff at the new location. It had been suggested that the Casework Manager would visit Eurostar's site in Derby and a member of her team would visit their other offices in Ashford in order to see how complaints were currently being handled and to offer their advice.

A member asked what level of confidence there was that the newly revised GTR timetable was going to run to schedule. The Director, Policy and Investigation replied that indications so far were that the problems were starting to reduce and the situation would likely get far better prior to December. It was hoped that the original May timetable would be fully implemented by the time the previously planned December timetable changes are introduced. However, there would be many variable factors that could affect GTR's ability to deliver to that timeframe. The Chair asked if London TravelWatch had informally made contact with the Glaister review into the May timetable changes. The Director, Policy and Investigation replied that we had not submitted any formal evidence but had a meeting scheduled later in the week to discuss it.

7 Passenger issues in North West Kent and adjacent London Boroughs (LTW586)

The Director, Policy and Investigation presented a report on passenger issues in North West Kent and adjacent London boroughs. North West Kent had had a rich history of transport innovation through concepts such as the introduction of tramways, trolley buses and bike buses that in the 1960s would run from one side of the River Thames to the other. He commented that ferry services had also operated from Gravesend into London.

The Director, Policy and Investigation remarked that because the area had a rich industrial history the transport issues it experienced would be much different than those in other parts of Kent, with more local employment rather than people having to commute out. Kent County Council had produced the Fastrack bus service in order to open up some of the former industrial areas around Gravesend and Dartford. The service could be taken from outside the building.

A member asked about the new interim GTR timetable that had been brought in on 15 July 2018 and had resulted in services being reduced from trains every half an hour to every hour, which would obviously have a negative impact for local people. Another member agreed and suggested that reducing services due to the unreliability of the current timetable was the 'wrong way round' and not the appropriate action.

The Director, Policy and Investigation stated that those travelling from Rainham into London could have the option of waiting less than an hour for a train, though this would likely involve an interchange at London Bridge. Services from Sevenoaks into Blackfriars were more problematic. He asked Roger Johnson from the Sevenoaks Rail Travellers Association if he had any comment on the service.

Roger Johnson stated that the services had 'basically collapsed entirely'. He had been in touch with his members and so far the interim timetable appeared to be

working as planned. However, this meant that passengers had been left with a reduced service to the extent that at some points there would be an hour and a half wait between trains. Mr Johnson remarked that in some areas services had been removed altogether without a replacement bus service to take their place, leaving commuters 'stranded'. He concluded that the situation had been a 'disgrace'.

Councillor Stefano Borella commented that there had been several issues with Thameslink following the introduction of the May timetable changes, and Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) had been very poorly organised. He remarked that the trains were rarely seen operating on local lines, and GTR should be held accountable for that. Mr Borella stated that there had also been issues with the current signalling infrastructure at New Cross and Lewisham. Lewisham in particular had been 'a disaster', which if sorted out would improve services all across Kent. He remarked that until such works had been carried out they could not add additional capacity to the network.

The Director, Policy and Investigation agreed that the 'pinch-point' at Lewisham was probably the biggest issue on that part of the network though there were potential solutions that could be implemented. One option would be to extend the Bakerloo line through Lewisham and onto the Hayes branch, which would simplify train movements across the junction. He stated that there would still be a need to have a link between Lewisham and Hither Green, but reducing the number of trains that crossed over the junction could be a step forward. There would also need to be a rebuilding of Lewisham station due to it being a major interchange, which the current layout did not lend itself well to.

A member asked whether the Freedom Pass would be included with the ongoing extensions to both Oyster and Contactless payment systems. The Director Policy and Investigation replied it would not as the cost of the service was paid by the local authority. The reason the Pass covered Dartford and Swanley was based on the legacy of an older system where residents of Bromley and Bexley wanted to have access to the shopping centres in those areas. The member replied that she believed most Freedom Pass holders were unaware of the exact area it covered. The Director, Policy and Investigation replied that a map of the area was published online, and suggested that a link to it could be found on the London TravelWatch website. The Chair asked that it be clarified if the information was available and displayed on the website.

ACTION: Operations and Communications Manager

8 London TravelWatch's South Eastern franchise aspirations (LTW587)

The Director, Policy and Investigation introduced his paper on London TravelWatch's South Eastern franchise aspirations. He remarked that there would be a limit to what he could comment on but welcomed any questions that people had. A member asked whether devolution was a potential option for the franchise. The Director, Policy and Investigation replied that the settled position of the Department for Transport (DfT) was that the franchise would not be devolved as part of the arrangement, and there had been no agreement for that to happen. There was potential for devolution to happen for other franchises such as Chiltern

and GTR, which was discussed in London TravelWatch's meeting with the Minister for Rail two weeks previously.

A member asked whether it would be more effective to seek a change in approach so that the benefits of devolution could be achieved through the franchising system. The Chief Executive remarked that London TravelWatch had stopped using the word as the organisation was neutral and instead was trying to promote the benefits to passengers that had come about from the TfL model.

Stefano Borella remarked that changes to train service patterns had been proposed which would result in trains no longer traveling into Victoria Station from the Bexleyheath line. It was also an issue with the development of the Howbury Park freight terminal. This would result in potentially 30 freight movements going through Lewisham junction, which the franchise operator (Southeastern) had not been consulted on. He stated that he thought it likely that the rail operator would have a view on the potential impact on the depot as well.

The Director, Policy and Investigation replied that although London TravelWatch was a passenger body and did not cover the operation of freight trains on the network, the potential for there to be issues for commuters following the changes to freight services was something the organisation was very conscious of. As a result, he proposed that the junction at Angerstein Wharf freight branch be changed to allow freight trains to move directly down to Blackheath. This would then free up capacity on the rest of the North West Kent and Sidcup lines.

The Chair thanked the Director, Policy and Investigation for his paper and for the contributions from the Board and audience.

9 Sevenoaks Rail Travellers Association

The Chair welcomed Roger Johnson, Vice Chair of the Sevenoaks Rail Travellers Association (SRTA) to the meeting and invited him to give a presentation on the various issues affecting passengers in his area.

Mr Johnson stated that North West Kent and the Sevenoaks area were currently experiencing some difficulty and change with regards to rail transport, which had had a detrimental effect on a large number of passengers commuting through those routes. He said that each one of the stations at Tonbridge, Sevenoaks, Tunbridge Wells, Dartford and Ashford International had all either had in excess or just short of 4 million journeys per year, with Gravesend seeing an average of a 3 million footfall. For trains passing through into Tonbridge, the twin track bottleneck system at Orpington would only allow a maximum of 18 trains passing through it per hour, and with current signalling, this was more likely to be 15 trains at maximum.

Roger Johnson remarked that North West Kent commuters had been badly affected by the introduction of the interim timetable that had come into place during the construction works at London Bridge. The May timetable had restored services to a schedule which had been in operation virtually unchanged since 1986. However, the opportunity for improving and expanding services going forward was 'close to nil'.

With regard to performance on the Darent Valley line, Mr Johnson stated that GTR had behaved in a 'disgraceful way' by leaving communities at Shoreham and Eynsford with no meaningful transport: only four off-peak buses per day. Southeastern also initially refused to stop selected fast peak services at the stations despite a request from the local MP Sir Michael Fallon. After he raised the issue at Prime Minister's Questions Southeastern agreed to stop services, though later only did so during the evening peak. Mr Johnson commented that both Shoreham and Eynsford were unmanned stations and the information given to passengers via the CIS feeds were often wrong, leaving passengers waiting for trains that would not arrive.

Roger Johnson said that in an attempt to address the problems, the SRTA held a meeting with 30 affected passengers to discuss the matter. GTR and Southeastern also sent representatives to the meeting, which had shown that they had been willing to listen to the concerns of the community. Mr Johnson remarked that he did not feel that the companies had maliciously intended to disrupt passengers though had done so in any case.

Mr Johnson stated that the SRTA had long supported the extension of Oyster and Contactless to Sevenoaks as well as to all Southeastern metro service lines. They had been informed by TfL that the process of extending the payment methods to the stations proposed would be relatively simple to do with fares set by the mainline Train Operating Company (TOC).

During a meeting with the DfT, Roger Johnson recalled that their plans during the Invitation to Tender (ITT) would not be based around the historic timetable, which worked 'as well as could be', but rather the interim timetable that had been used during the reconstruction of London Bridge. If such an idea was implemented, this would cause 'real hardship' for rapidly growing communities such as in Knockholt and Dunton Green. Mr Johnson commented that despite there being potential for the Bakerloo line to be extended to Hayes, which would free up train paths, this was unlikely to happen 'very soon' and so additional solutions needed to be found.

A member asked if there was anything that London TravelWatch could do to help passengers that had been left without transport in Shoreham and Eynsford. Mr Johnson replied that it was 'not easy' and restated his position that despite GTR perhaps being 'incompetent' they were not 'malevolent'. The replacement bus service was an area that could be improved, particularly if it was able to run to a set timetable. He commented that there remained the issue of there not being enough buses to run in the peak areas. One improvement that could be made would be to try and make the bus services that were available more visible to passengers, though there was a limit to what could be done.

The Director, Policy and Investigation said that the validation of the timetables was something that London TravelWatch would be making a comment on when feeding into the Glaister review. He suggested it would be helpful for the SRTA user group to make a comment to support this. Network Rail should have the function to determine whether the proposed timetable was feasible. Mr Johnson said that he could share the SRTA's submission with London TravelWatch if it would be of help. The Director, Policy and Investigation asked if he could have something by the end of the week as they would be holding a meeting with them soon. Mr Johnson replied that he would try to do so. The Chair thanked him for his time and contribution.

10 Extension of Crossrail/Elizabeth line to Ebbsfleet presentation

The Chair welcomed Paul Moore, Director of Regeneration, Communities and Customer Service at London Borough of Bexley, to the meeting and invited him to give the day's second presentation on the potential extension of the Crossrail/Elizabeth line to Ebbsfleet. Mr Moore explained the first pillar of his argument was the need for increased levels of new housing to meet current demand, which would need to have transport links in order for them to be connected and attractive to people.

The second pillar of Mr Moore's argument stemmed from the business case and strategic connectivity for the project, which had been estimated to be worth £15 billion to UK plc. Kent was a county that would have strategic importance in the coming years, being the gateway to Europe, which would be important in a post-Brexit economy. Mr Moore stated that there had been increased demand for public transport from residents in Bexley and North West Kent. Bexley Riverside stood ready for development and would enable growth and additional housing to be put in place. A garden city was also proposed at Ebbsfleet, so having strong transport connectivity would only enable greater economic benefit to the area.

Paul Moore commented that economic growth that would come about through the extension of Crossrail would not end at Ebbsfleet – rather it would have a much wider impact. He gave the example of how HS1 had seen large swathes of housing growth in areas close to the line but also in areas further afield. Mr Moore stated that the area was in a position of rising land values which would only increase with good transport connectivity. There would therefore be the possibility of capturing the value of the land in creative ways in order to develop the scheme.

Mr Moore remarked that there was a great dependence by local people on the Dartford Bridge crossing, which if it ran into problems caused severe traffic congestion. He suggested that enabling people to get out of their cars and onto public transport would help relieve this problem and also have a broader benefit in terms of congestion and the environment. It would also have a knock-on effect for traffic further into London as fewer cars would be on the road.

Paul Moore stated that Sir John Armit and the Thames Estuary 2050 Growth Commission had selected the extension of Crossrail as one of its 15 commission priorities. It recommended that the Government allocate £20-£25 million to the project in order to do the necessary planning, engineering and design work for it to move forward. Mr Moore said that although the Treasury had not guaranteed that they would provide the funding, he was hopeful that a positive message would come from the Government by the autumn.

A member asked whether there was the potential for overloading on the network if more residents from outer London were able to gain access to public transport in London through the increase in connectivity. Mr Moore replied that Canary Wharf had been a strong supporter of the development, with the potential for increased job opportunities which provide good salaries. He commented that there was the potential for overloading at the core, though TfL had put a great deal of work into ensuring that it did not become a reality.

A member asked how confident Mr Moore felt that he would be granted the £20-£25 million in order to progress the project to the next stage. He replied that he had heard 'receptive noises' coming from Government, and that it would be 'all to play for' in the autumn budget. The member suggested that it would be beneficial to have people commuting into the area rather than adding to the number travelling into London for work opportunities. Mr Moore replied that due to salaries available to workers in the capital, people would tend to gravitate to those jobs rather than staying or commuting within Kent. However, if money was brought back to the community and spent locally, there would be the potential for the area to develop and be an attractive destination to workers.

A member stated that he had been persuaded by Mr Moore's argument, and had seen through past experience how the value of land could develop thanks to greater transport links. He asked whether he was able to quantify the value that the additional connectivity would give to the area. Mr Moore replied that there would be significant uplift in the value of land. Crossrail services arriving at Abbey Wood had already had a transformative effect, with previously difficult housing estates in Thamesmead becoming attractive for buyers. He suggested it would also have a huge benefit in terms of commuter times with some passengers saving on average of an hour's commute per day.

A member asked whether the advantages to UK plc from the scheme could be under threat if a no deal Brexit did not go through positively. Paul Moore replied that rather than thinking of the impact of Brexit, the scheme would enable resilience to be built into the local economy.

Stefano Borella stated that the scheme had backing from 'both sides of the chamber'; however there would be concerns from residents about the potential for long-term disruption following the experience of the rebuild of London Bridge. He asked what assurances could be given to local commuters that routes and services would not be either disrupted or drastically altered. Mr Moore replied that the scheme was predicated on not disrupting passengers, and that there would be no takeover of existing routes or diminution of services in the plans put forward.

The Chief Executive suggested that in order to be granted the funding for the next stage of the process he ought to stress the need for this development for the wider London and South East area. Despite common misconceptions 'London streets are not all paved in gold', and many workers were forced to live further out of the city due to the cost of living. She commented that his argument should also not be put in the context of a North/South funding divide. The money to pay for the scheme would come from the land value capture model as well as through other investments and therefore, would not be money that would be available in other parts of the country. She stated that although infrastructure projects such as Crossrail should not be seen as a competition for financing, politically that was a reality.

Mr Moore agreed that his argument for securing funding should not put one scheme in the South against another in the North, and he would stress the economic benefits that would come about through the increase in connectivity between London and the South East. The Chief Executive replied that it should be made clear that if the scheme was turned down the money for it could not be made available elsewhere in

the country. Thus the funding for the scheme could not be used as part of a North/South argument. The Chair thanked Mr Moore for his presentation and time.

11 Issues for transport users in North West Kent presentation

The Chair welcomed the final speaker, Simon Jones, Director of Highways, Transport and Waste at Kent County Council, to the meeting and invited him to present his information on issues affecting transport users in North West Kent.

Mr Jones stated that with regards to the South Eastern franchise, Kent County Council would have a number of requirements from the new operator. The key deliverable would be to run a good service that was on time and met the demands of the population rather than the operator. The target was for passengers to have no longer than an hour's commute into London. Between 2011 and 2031 it is expected that the housing growth in Kent would increase by at least 170,000 with employment opportunities increasing by 160,000, so a reliable train service would be critical for local people.

Simon Jones remarked that Kent County Council was fully supportive of the extension of Crossrail to Ebbsfleet, which would enable growth and investment to come into the area. The Council was involved in the process and had stressed the need to provide the £20 million funding to process the scheme to the next stage. He commented that there was a strong business case for the works which would provide a host of benefits to the economy and for local residents.

Mr Jones gave a brief overview of the types of transport services that Kent County Council provided. He remarked that the Council was currently undergoing a public consultation on how to shape rural transport in Kent called 'Join the big conversation', and Kent County Council had its own ideas of how to improve services. One such idea was to ensure that there was enough volume on the network in order to make services as financially viable as possible. He stated this would include enabling taxis, private hire and dial-a-ride type services to have passengers to pick up at a destination rather than simply drop people off and drive back with an empty vehicle. Mr Jones said a number of pilots would be tested to see what benefits they could bring, which would hopefully allow for better transport services in the future.

Mr Jones commented on the Council's current smart card system, which allowed passengers to put cash onto a plastic card to use for their journeys. He remarked, however, that the system needed improvement and that they would work with operators in order to make it more flexible, easier to pay with and multi-modal. Mr Jones stated that such ideas were being considered by operators such as Arriva, as was the possibility of introducing contactless payments to the system.

Simon Jones commented that one scheme that had been very successful was the introduction of the Fastrack bus service in 2006/7. The concept was to encourage passengers into a modal shift before they got used to using their car as their primary mode of transportation. He stated that the service was a major regeneration project for Kent Thameside, and had provided residents with easy access to areas between Dartford and Gravesend. A full network was planned by 2022, which would include

the development of new technologies such as electric vehicles, on demand bus services and new tunnelling infrastructure.

Mr Jones commented that aside from public transport improvements and developments, Kent County Council was also investing in road infrastructure. He stated that the area of work was mainly focused on the maintenance of the road, such as replacing potholes and other damage, to prevent deterioration of the surface and guard against major works having to take place.

A member stated that he was interested in the reference to on demand buses and asked what kind of services were being envisioned by Kent County Council. Mr Jones replied that it was his opinion that the local authority did not fully understand the true demand for public services at the present time, with current intelligence coming from ad hoc data rather than hard evidence. He remarked that the way he envisioned on demand services working would be by allowing passengers to schedule their trip so that theirs coincided with those of other local residents. That would create enough demand for the service to make it more financially viable. However, without having that data it would not be possible to implement.

A member asked whether Kent County Council had considered going down the franchising method to provide bus services. Mr Jones said that the Council was considering all options in terms of what the exposure and benefit was to each model but 'wouldn't rush into anything'. The member asked whether it would be possible to have a further conversation with Mr Jones in order to discuss the benefits of the devolution model and what safeguards could be offered by TfL. Mr Jones replied that he saw no reason why they could not have a follow up meeting to discuss the issue but would need to check with his members before agreeing to do so.

A member referred back to an earlier question around on demand bus services. He suggested that the problem with organising services around passengers commuting at the same time would not be with the passengers themselves but with the services they would be accessing. People with regular hospital appointments was a good example, as it would be difficult for passengers to rearrange appointments for specific times as hospital staff tended to be inflexible in making changes. Mr Jones replied that he understood that passengers would not always be able to choose when to make their trips, though greater understanding of transport user demands should allow for greater opportunity to optimise some services.

The Director, Policy and Investigation enquired about the adoption of Contactless payment across public transport in Kent, and extending Oyster further on the rail network into the county. Mr Jones replied that at face value there appeared to be no reason why the Council should prevent the further adoption of Contactless and Oyster payment systems across the transport network. However, having only been in post for four weeks he was unable to comment further at that stage until he had looked at the proposal in detail.

Roger Johnson of the SRTA asked about the likelihood of the introduction of Thameslink services on the Maidstone East route.. Mr Jones replied that the reintroduction of the service having been postponed was 'worrying', however, he was unable to forecast what would happen in relation to the service though Kent County Council would be pushing to ensure it stayed on the agenda.

Mr Johnson commented that he was puzzled by Mr Jones' approach to buses. He remarked that there were pollution hotspots across the country which the Council owed a duty of care to its residents to resolve. However, throughout the presentation there had been barely any reference to improving the environmental impact of public transport. Simon Jones replied that Kent County Council did not run buses so they could not set the service's environmental agenda. Electric vehicles were proposed to be used in future, which would help to improve pollution, and the Council was encouraging people away from using cars and onto public transport in the most persuasive way possible.

A member commented that the problem could be resolved if Kent adopted the franchise model. Mr Jones did not rule this out but said that the economic model of Kent and that of London was 'totally different': London was a densely populated city whereas Kent's population was far more dispersed.

12 Meeting dates 2019 (LTW588)

The Chair turned to the proposed meeting dates for 2019. He enquired as to whether the dates given were correct or if they needed to be updated further. The Chief Executive replied that she assumed that the dates in the document were correct though would check with the Governance Officer.

ACTION: Committee and Public Liaison Officer

13 Any other business

There was no other business.

14 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.