
Confidential Minutes

Agenda item: 12
Drafted: 24.03.14

Confidential minutes of the Policy committee held on 25 February 2014 at Dexter House, Royal Mint Court, London EC3

These minutes are in addition to the public minutes of a meeting of the Committee on the same date. In that meeting 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 this part of the meeting.

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Present

Members

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

Guests

Andy Firman AECOM (Item 2)

Secretariat

Tim Bellenger	Director, Research & Development
Janet Cooke	Chief Executive
Susan James	Casework Manager (Item 3)
Sharon Malley	Executive Assistant (minutes)
Vincent Stops	Policy Officer

Minutes

1 Confidential minutes, declarations of interest and matters arising

The confidential minutes of the Policy committee held on 10 December 2013 were agreed and signed as a correct record. There were no matters arising or additional declarations of interest.

2 Research on interchanges

Andy Firman of AECOM gave a presentation to members about research into passengers' views on interchanges. He said that the research aimed to understand the sorts of issues that mattered to the travelling public when interchanging between different transport services. These issues would then become attributes for assessment in "mystery traveller" evaluation exercises.

Members considered the findings of the focus groups and noted that it would be important for the mystery assessment to be carried out by someone unfamiliar with the particular station under evaluation. It was noted that questions relating to information about the locality should be separated from questions relating to how passengers could continue their journeys.

It was agreed that the mystery traveller should ask a standard question of station staff to get a comparable sense of accuracy and helpfulness. It was noted that some issues, such as the physical quality of an interchange, would be difficult for the mystery travellers to assess.

The Director, Policy and Investigation, said that the findings of the focus groups were very useful in developing the next stage of the project and the questionnaires were now more specific and focused in their approach. There were no current plans to publish the focus group findings although they could be used as evidence to back up London TravelWatch's position on issues as and when necessary.

The Chair said that London TravelWatch's intention was that operators would improve their interchange facilities in the interests of passengers. This might be best achieved by London TravelWatch conducting a handful of pilot audits on the system but not necessarily by auditing the entire transport network, for which resources would probably not be available. This might be best left to other organisations or the operators themselves, using the framework London TravelWatch had provided..

Members welcomed the opportunity to question Mr Firman on this issue and to begin the process of evaluating the interchanges.

3 Casework reporting (PC029)

The Casework Manger gave a report on how London TravelWatch should present information on the casework performance of transport operators. She said that although 'naming and shaming' of poor responses from operators might have short-term results, there could be longer term problems for passengers as the relationship between case handlers and transport operators broke down.

The Chair said that establishing good relationships with operators was important but they should not threaten to withdraw co-operation if London TravelWatch raised concerns about their performance. A solution may be to write privately to any operators who were not meeting the required standard.

It was noted that the Local Government Ombudsmen (LGO) was seeking to establish a role for itself in a limited field of TfL-related complaints. The Chief Executive said that consumer redress in transport was in danger of becoming crowded, with the Office of Rail Regulation and London TravelWatch already in place. The Chair noted that the LGO took a different approach to London TravelWatch as it was mainly concerned with internal operational processes and generally investigated small numbers of complaints in detail.

It was agreed that the diagram in the report should be amended to show that the LGO focused on organisational processes whereas London TravelWatch looked at consumer responses, refunds and so on. It was agreed to keep this issue under review.

4 Meeting review

Members noted that the discussions on taxis and the interchange research had been useful and of high quality. There did not appear to be any areas of reputational risk for London TravelWatch and no specific media opportunities were identified as arising from the meeting.