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**Confidential Minutes**

Agenda item 13  
Drafted 29.1.09

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**Confidential minutes of the Casework Committee  
held on 28 January 2008 at Middle Street, London, EC1**

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**Present**

Terry Bennett	
Daniel Francis	Vice Chair
Sharon Grant	London TravelWatch Chair
Teena Lashmore	
David Leibling	
Sarah Pond	Chair
Lorna Reith	London TravelWatch Deputy Chair
Kevin Davis	
Gail Engert	

Tim Bellenger	Director, Research and Development (items 155 - 158)
Janet Cooke	Chief Executive
Bryan Davey	Director, Public Liaison
Jo deBank	Communications Officer
Mark Donoghue	Committee Administrator
Christine Evans	Casework Manager

Vernon Everitt	Managing Director, Marketing and Communications, Transport for London (TfL) (item 156)
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## 155 Confidential minutes

The confidential minutes of the Casework Committee meeting held on 19 November 2008 were agreed and signed for the record.

## 156 Transport for London complaints handling

The Chair welcomed Vernon Everitt, Managing Director, Marketing and Communications, Transport for London, to the meeting.

Mr Everitt began by explaining TfL's philosophy on customer service complaints and how they were managed. The emphasis of TfL's customer service handling was empathy with the customer, with the first principle being to go to the source of a complaint to resolve it. This was backed up by new technology that allows for better tracking on complaints.

The aim was always to address complaints quickly and fairly, and Mr Everitt admitted that TfL did not always get it right, and that sometimes it was simply a matter of using the correct tone and answering questions correctly. At the time of the meeting, the various businesses within TfL were in the process of being joined up, resulting in the customer service system becoming more effective and efficient. The new central customer services team will deal with all complaints, across all modes. Passengers do not regard themselves as being a customer of one service : they are customers of all services operated by TfL, and this needed to be reflected in the customer service they receive.

The Chair responded that London TravelWatch's experience did not reflect these ideas. There were regular problems with getting back to customers within 20 days; London TravelWatch's record showed that in most cases TfL had responded after 20 days. On complaint handling, the Chair noted that, as TfL improves, London TravelWatch also improves. Mr Everitt replied that it helped to have specific information on delays; in response the Chair asked that Mr Everitt be given a copy of the report, CWC 30.

**Action : Committee Administrator**

The Chair asked whether TfL's own data on its handling of complaints within TfL was in the public domain; Mr Everitt replied that it was not. Customer service scores for all modes were published quarterly, and he outlined the improvements that had been made to the London TravelWatch members' enquiries system.

However, two members reported that when they had made complaints on the TfL website they had received an e-mail acknowledgement, but no reference number by which to track progress. Mr Everitt asked for those specific complaints to be given to him, and again admitted that improvement was needed.

On responses to complaints, Mr Everitt felt that this could be explained in part by differences in expectations between the complainant and TfL regarding how a call complaining about a service should be handled.

Members asked when the integration of customer service systems would be complete. Mr Everitt replied that some of the work would be finished by March 2008, but most of it was ongoing.

The Chair of London TravelWatch asked for clarity of the governance of the complaints handling system, and suggested that there should be a closer relationship between TfL and London TravelWatch. Further, she suggested that it would be useful for TfL to have London TravelWatch's input to the design of its customer service survey and that a more direct way of working together could be found. Mr Everitt agreed that the development of a closer relationship would be useful, and that working together would be a mark of good practice. It was important to build on the existing relationship and discuss how to do that, and to keep momentum going. He had no problem with London TravelWatch carrying out complaint handling audits on parts of TfL, and suggested that a work programme be drawn up as TfL and London TravelWatch had shared objectives.

Members then discussed customer charter refunds and the ways that the system operated, and how it could be improved, and went on to discuss the roll out of Oyster Pay as You Go (PAYG) on national rail. Mr Everitt reported that TfL had funding to resource the extra calls from the Train Operating Companies (TOCs), and that the volume of calls would be closely monitored.

The Chair thanked Mr Everitt for attending the meeting.

#### **157 Confidential matters arising**

Members reviewed the cases submitted to the meeting by the Casework Manager. The Chair Designate particularly welcomed the outcome for Annex C.

A draft complaints policy would be produced by the Chief Executive and discussed with the Chair Designate. The board would discuss and review the policy after a year.

**Action : Chief Executive**

#### **158 Casework's Manager's report**

It was agreed that all documents would in future be made anonymous for presentation to the Casework committee.

**Action : Casework Manager**

The Chair asked that correspondence from the Casework team was rewritten to be better phrased to ensure that appellants are clearly told that London TravelWatch has no power over the transport provider the case relates to. This was agreed.

**Action : Casework Manager**

The Chair asked whether the commentary on cases presented to members was useful. Members agreed that it was, and proceeded to discuss the cases before them with results as follows :

Mr W

A letter would be sent to IPFAS asking why they requested a print out of the Oyster card travel details; why they set an unrealistic target of 14 days to the appellant to receive this; why the progression of the case was not halted when they asked for the Oyster card records; and finally to reconsider their decision. IPFAS would also be asked to clarify whether they can check Oyster travel records themselves.

**Action : Chair /Casework Manager**

On policy, passengers should be recommended to register their Oyster card and advised that, even if they get through the ticket barriers, their Oyster card might not be valid for travel on that journey, and be warned to check the validity of their card before they travel – for example, Oyster Pay As You Go (PAYG) might not be valid on their journey).

**Action : Communication Officer**

The Fares and Ticketing committee would take up issues regarding data protection issues relating to unregistered Oyster cards were agreed to be passed to the Fares and Ticketing Committee. In addition, that Committee would be asked to point out to TfL that on the receipt/records of travel Oyster PAYG was referred to as pre pay, when it should be called Oyster PAYG. This title had not been used for some years.

**Action : Fares and Ticketing Committee**

It was agreed to advise the appellant that London TravelWatch was pursuing their specific case as well as using it to raise policy issues with a view to helping passengers generally.

**Action : Casework Manager**

The Director, Public Liaison would contact the Department for Transport and ask for clarification about the long-awaited review of penalty fares on national rail services and the timetable for its commencement.

**Action : Director, Public Liaison**

Mrs K

It was agreed to ask TfL what amount it intended to offer as compensation and when this would be sent. TfL would be given a time limit to provide the compensation, given the significant delays in dealing with this case so far.

**Action : Casework Manager/Chair**

On policy it was agreed to ask the Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer what the arrangements were for TfL towing away vehicles on Transport for London Road Network (TLRN). Mention the Spanish system of towing the car, but leaving a picture of the towed car on the kerb.

**Action : Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer**

Miss M

It was agreed that TfL should increase its offer of compensation to the appellant to £50, given the continuing failure of the TICC to accept her complaints at weekends.

**Action : Casework Manager**

Members of the committee would carry out a mystery shopper exercise at weekends to see if the TICC would log a complaint.

**Action : Committee members**

The Casework Manager to advise the appellant that the committee believed £50 was appropriate compensation in the circumstances.

**Action : Casework Manager**

Various cases (Mr C, Mr O, Mr S et al)

It was agreed that Fares and Ticketing Committee would pick up this issue as it is an issue of policy.

**Action : Chair, Fares and Ticketing Committee**

The Casework manager would write to the appellants to advise that their case was being used as evidence of the need for Oyster to review their claims procedures, and that the Fares and Ticketing Committee would pursue the policy issues with TfL.

**Action : Casework Manager**

The Casework manager would put the salient points of the policy issues raised in the various complaints in an e-mail to the Fares and Ticketing committee Chair (copied to Committee Administrator).

**Action : Casework Manager**

## **159 Casework review**

The Chief Executive Officer presented her thoughts on how to resolve the issues relating to casework handling internally within London TravelWatch. This would take the form of an in-depth review, looking at a number of aspects of the work of the Casework team. She was keen for the changes to be made by the fourth quarter of 2009. The Chief Executive Officer and the Director, Public Liaison had visited the Passenger Focus complaints handling section to look and better recording of what the team does would need to take place.. A new IT system would be required and various options were being looked at.

The Chief Executive Officer concluded by reporting that there needed to be a better categorisation of casework, and that performance indicators needed to be finessed. The successes that were achieved needed to be given greater recognition. It was agreed that the Chief Executive would report the key recommendations for the next meeting.

**Action : Chief Executive**

## **160 Any other business**

There was no other business.

## **161 Meeting review**

The Chair felt that London TravelWatch needed to find ways to promote itself and to be more positive. Members discussed the presentation from Vernon Everitt, and it was agreed to send a copy of the DLR operational report to him as an example of what information that London TravelWatch would like to receive from TfL.

**Action : Chief Executive**

London TravelWatch would give details to Vernon Everitt on the difficulties faced by the Casework Team in trying to pursue staff bus complaints, and ask him to consider how TfL's processes could be changed to achieve a better outcome for complainants, other than merely being informed that the driver had been interviewed.

**Action : Director, Public Liaison/Casework Officer**

The next meeting would take place on 25 March 2009, to include the Chief Executive's report on the casework review. (post meeting note : this meeting was postponed to 22 April 2009)