
Confidential Minutes

Agenda item: 16
Drafted: 30.10.13

Confidential minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 15 October 2013 at Dexter House.

These minutes are in addition to the public minutes of a meeting of the Board on the same date. The Board 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

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

Secretariat

Tim Bellenger	Director, Policy and Investigation
Janet Cooke	Chief Executive
Richard Freeston-Clough	Communications Officer
Robert Nicholls	Policy Officer
Sharon Malley	Executive Assistant (minutes)

1 Confidential minutes of the meeting on 23 July 2013

The confidential minutes of the Board meeting held on 23 July 2013 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

2 Chair's update

The Chair said that Josephine Channer had resigned from the London TravelWatch Board for personal reasons. The Transport Committee of the London Assembly was seeking a replacement from the reserve list. The Board sent its best wishes to Ms Channer for the future.

The Chair said he would be attending the Transport Committee on the day following the Board meeting to present London TravelWatch's business plan. The plan proposed savings of £46k, which equated to a 4% cut and was the same percentage reduction as the Greater London Authority (GLA) as a whole.

The Chief Executive said that officers at the GLA had asked that London TravelWatch seek to identify possible savings in the region of £100k. She said that this would be very difficult indeed to achieve without significantly cutting out functions, and would require cutting staffing hours, reducing premises costs and cutting the research budget. The Chair noted that London TravelWatch's annual budget had reduced from around £1.6m to just over £1m in the last three years and savings beyond the proposed £46k would impact on its ability to conduct its statutory duties.

The Chief Executive said that there may be a suggestion that London TravelWatch should share its back office services in order to save money. It was noted that the gross cost of these services to London TravelWatch was so small that sharing them would have minimal impact on the annual budget.

3 London TravelWatch research on passenger priorities on the Underground (LTW445)

The Policy Officer presented a report updating members on progress with London TravelWatch's research into passenger priorities on London Underground. He said that the report built on research already completed by Transport for London (TfL) on passengers' 'willingness to pay' for various aspects of a tube journey, such as temperature on trains and in stations, availability of shops or wifi, or comfort of seating on trains. TfL used the data compiled in its surveys to make business cases for its investment proposals but did not use the data for customer services work. London TravelWatch wanted to review the data to see whether the demographics of passengers influenced their priorities.

On the whole there were very few demographic splits among the responses to the research. Exceptions were that ride quality was important for the over 55s whereas provision of wifi and cash machines was important for younger passengers. Retail facilities were valued more by people beginning their journeys in outer London. Women valued on-train announcements more than men while men valued station service during periods when the line was closed more than women.

Because the research identified so few demographic splits, it was fair to assume that the research was a sensible basis for TfL's business case analysis. The research provided some useful information for London TravelWatch at minimal cost.

It was noted that only one disabled person was surveyed as part of the research and that person's responses were identical to the average. It may be worthwhile highlighting this in the report.

It was noted that the survey did not assess passengers' priorities towards safety, reliability and punctuality on the basis that these issues would be so important to passengers they would outweigh everything else they were questioned about.

However, it may be worth questioning passengers in future about their views on earlier starting and later finishing of services.

The sample size was 543, which meant that the responses for some of the smaller groups may not be wholly representative. A line-by-line breakdown may also be skewed by small sample sizes, but it may be possible to separate respondents into groups such as sub-surface lines or upgraded lines.

It was noted that TfL and London TravelWatch had worked well together in producing the report and that London TravelWatch had made some useful suggestions to TfL about how it uses its research in future. The overall cost to London TravelWatch for the report was around £4,000 and this was felt to be good value.

The Policy Officer would incorporate the comments from the discussion into the draft report and would then publish in soft form to key stakeholders.

Action: Policy Officer

It was agreed that London TravelWatch should seek the opportunity to discuss its views with TfL before the next round of research is carried out, to try to improve its value as a customer service tool.

Action: Policy Officer

4 Meeting review

It was agreed that the session with the Office of Rail Regulation had been helpful and it helped the flow of the meeting to hear from them after the internal business had been completed. It was agreed that, where practicable, external presenters should be asked to come towards the end of the public meeting.

No specific risks to the organisation were identified beyond the detailed comments raised in particular items.