
Minutes

Agenda item 2

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Date: 20 May 2014

Minutes of a meeting of the London TravelWatch Governance Committee held at Dexter House, London EC3N on 28 January 2014, 10.00 hrs - 12.45 hrs

Present:

Members

Chris Brown (CB)
Richard Dilks (RD)
Glyn Kyle (GK)
Stephen Locke (SL)
Abdikafi Rage (AR)
John Stewart (JS)
Ruth Thompson (RT)

Chair, Governance Committee

Secretariat

Janet Cooke (JC)
Tim Bellenger (TB)
Gytha Chinweze (GC)
Peter Ellis (PE)
Sandra Ambo (SO)
John Burgess (JB)

Chief Executive
Director, Policy and Investigation
Executive Assistant
Senior Finance Officer (item 6)
Finance Officer (item 6 - observer)
HR Adviser (item 7)

1 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

2 Minutes of the meeting held on 29 October 2013

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 October 2013 were agreed as a correct record.

3 Matters arising

Members noted the progress of actions taken from the previous meeting as set out in a short table. CB asked for the list of stakeholders to be sent to members. The list should be prioritised, subject to any restrictions imposed under the Data Protection Act.

Action: Communications Officer

4 Notes from Chairs' Group held on 26 November 2013

The notes had been circulated for information. It was noted that the revised Memorandum of Understanding had now been approved by the Transport Committee.

Members noted that London TravelWatch's work commenting on aspects of the bids for the Essex Thameside and the Thameslink, Southern, Great Northern franchises from the passenger perspective had been well-received. They asked that Robert Nichols, Policy Officer, be thanked for the contribution he had made on this. It was hoped that there would be an evaluation of the process by the Department for Transport, Passenger Focus and London TravelWatch that could help inform future activity.

Action: TB

5 Chief Executive's report

JC presented her report which gave an informal overview of internal organisation issues, primarily for information purposes. The report covered staffing issues, payroll, the financial audit, cloud server arrangements and GLA liaison arrangements. Members noted the report.

6 Management accounts for the quarter ending December 2013

PE presented the accounts and his report on the financial results to date as well as the forecast outturn for the 2013/14 year. These were noted.

7 Quarter three performance reports

a. Workplan

Members discussed progress against the 2013/14 workplan and made some suggestions on its content and presentation. They thanked officers for a useful report and asked for more information on the impact that had been achieved from the work. JC said that this information would be included in the end of year report to the GLA and also in the annual report and be available in the public domain. It was suggested that the 2014/15 workplan might include looking at smaller stations in the London Railway Area not covered in the National Rail Passenger Survey and river crossings.

The Chair clarified that the process for developing the workplan to deliver the 2014/15 Business Plan would be for a draft to go to the Chairs' Group on 4 March 2014 which would then be circulated to other members. She asked members to flag up further items to JC for next year's workplan and also to give her early thoughts on what might be included in the 2015/16 Business Plan.

Action: JC/ Members

b. Communications

Members considered the Communication Officer's report which included updates on press activity, social media and events, and explained the impact of communications work in terms of outcomes for passengers. It also looked ahead to forthcoming communications plans.

Members asked to receive further indication of the penetration in each stakeholder category. They noted that London TravelWatch did not subscribe to a press cutting service and asked the Communications Officer to give further information about the costs involved. It was noted that a report on the transport users' engagement events in Bexleyheath and Enfield would go to the next Policy Committee meeting.

Action: Communications Officer

c. HR

JB presented his report which updated members on staffing matters during the last quarter and included a recommendation for a small pay increase for Board members in line with what the London Assembly had just agreed for their own statutory officers, members and the Mayor. After some discussion and receiving confirmation from JB and JC that the established convention was for Board members pay increases to follow those given to London Assembly members, members authorised a small increase in their pay settlement. JC confirmed to members that the Memorandum of Understanding as agreed now includes a requirement for the GLA to share information about proposed developments affecting pay levels within London TravelWatch. SL said he would inform the Chair of the Transport Committee of the Board's decision on the pay increase.

Action: SL

8 Office move update

JC presented her report which explained the need to move offices later this year and the options open to the organisation. It was hoped that London TravelWatch might be able to move into the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority premises at Union Street but negotiations were taking longer than expected to progress. She was asked to try and accelerate the process. Members were also concerned about the increase in accommodation charges following relocation. JC had explained that the rent for our current premises was artificially low but agreed to investigate other options so they could be sure that the proposed move represented best value.

Action: JC

9 Scheme of policy delegation

RT introduced the report which was agreed to be a useful document. Members asked for it to be redrafted and presented differently with a change of title to either 'Policy positions' or 'Policy principles' with a focus on general criteria and

broad principles and for some other textual changes to be made. Members commended the presentation used in the streets paper and suggested the others could be presented in a similar format. There should also be a short set of guidelines covering casework. It was noted that the process of reviewing this document would start with a discussion on streets issues and other topics would be covered progressively through the year. The fully revised scheme of policy delegation would be brought to a meeting of the Board at the end of 2014 for formal agreement.

Action: TB

10 European and Local Government elections

Members noted the report which explained the need for the organisation to be particularly vigilant in the pre-election period to ensure that no activity or policy announcements were made which might be construed as being politically partial.

11 Any other business

It was noted that the Chairs' Group would be considering how the role of Board champions could be developed.

Action: SL /JC

Members noted that the Assembly would be holding a bus seminar on 19 February 2014. JS will be attending as Chair of the Policy Committee and other members were also encouraged to attend.

Action: JS