
Report of meeting from external body

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Information Item (d)
LTW 286
Drafted 28/1/09

London Borough of Lewisham Public Transport Liaison panel meeting

1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To record for information the proceedings of a meeting of an external body attended by a representative of London TravelWatch.

2 Information

- 2.1 The minutes of a meeting of the Lewisham Public transport Liaison Panel held on 9 September 2008 are attached as Annex A.
- 2.2 The minutes were prepared by Lewisham Council and London TravelWatch has no responsibility for their content or format.

3 Equalities and inclusion implications

- 3.1 Not applicable – report is for information only.

4 Financial implications

- 4.1 Not applicable – report is for information only

5 Legal powers

- 5.1 Section 248 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 places upon London TravelWatch (as the London Transport Users Committee) a duty to consider - and where it appears to the Committee to be desirable, to make recommendations with respect to - any matter affecting the functions of the Greater London Authority or Transport for London which relate to transport (other than of freight). Section 252A of the same Act (as amended by Schedule 6 of the Railways Act 2005) places a similar duty upon the Committee to keep under review matters affecting the interests of the public in relation to railway passenger and station services provided wholly or partly

within the London railway area, and to make representations about them to such persons as it thinks appropriate.

6 Recommendation

6.1 That the report is received for information.

Annex A

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM/LONDON TRANSPORT LIAISON MEETING

Action Points and notes of the Operational Public Transport Liaison Meeting held at 6.00pm on TUESDAY 9th September 2008 in COMMITTEE ROOM 3, CIVIC SUITE, CATFORD SE6 4RU

Present

Councillor Muldoon (Cllr M)(Chair)	LBL Councillor – Rushey Green ward
Councillor Paschoud	LBL Councillor – Perry Vale ward
Sean Farnan	LBL Meeting Co-ordinator
Paul Stewart (PS)	LBL Transport
Peter Stunell	LBL Transport
Michael Abrahams	Forest Hill Society
Tim Bellenger	London Travel Watch
Dave Hooker	Metrobus
Gary Murphy	TfL – Buses (Stakeholder Engagement)
Ian Rashbrook	Southern Rail
Geoffrey Thurley	Ladywell Society
Dave Walsh	TfL – Network Operations

Minute No.

Action

1. Apologies and Introductions

Apologies were received from: Councillors Milton and Nisbet – L.B.L; Karen Bain – DLR; Julie Sutch – L.B.L. Town Centre Manager and Adam Wilkinson – Brockley Cross Action Group.

2. Minutes of last meeting

MA referred bus route 63, as mentioned on pages 2 and 3 of the minutes and how it had been said that there was to be some consultation in the summer/autumn as it was supposed to be under review, however, he had not seen anything as yet. TB advised him that it would not be in the first tranche and GM added that a letter would confirm it to be 2010/2011 and there would be split consultation this year.

MG referred to page 4 of the minutes and reported that information on the new timetable would be sent the next month, which included an additional morning peak Hayes service from 14th December and another from March 2009.

Cllr P asked if there was an update on the number of Lewisham Borough residents purchasing tickets from newsagents, who were changing their system, as mentioned in page 4 of the minutes and Cllr M added that the sale of saver tickets was finishing that month and there was a 50p premium per day payable if insisting on using paper tickets. GM confirmed that saver tickets were still accepted and TB explained that the percentage of saver tickets used on buses was less than 1% and how TfL were moving away from paper tickets/passes, as the use of Oyster cards meant less fraud etc. TB confirmed that rail would be adopting them at some point in 2009 but IR was not yet sure when. Cllr P reported that he had received information that the situation was working well at Forest Hill and said that he was happy to use Oyster, when available. MA highlighted how staff at Forest Hill never seemed to check tickets, especially if an Oyster card was just shown to them and at peak times, when they seemed to find things hard to handle. There were plans to install gates at the bottom end, to Perry Vale, which he felt was the wrong location as they should be sited at the car park.

Cllr P asked that the sentence on page 8 of the minutes – ‘Cllr P added that gates were sometimes closed, only for subsequent changing of minds’ be deleted, as it did not seem to make sense.

3. Rail Issues

(a) Service Issues

(b) Information Issues

(c) Station Issues

Could DLR give a progress report on extending the platforms along the route from Lewisham northwards? (Cllr Milton)

Cllr M requested a written report from DLR.

DLR

PS pointed out that details of DLR works could be found on the website and it should be working well with some minor works taking place. TB added that Town Gateway works may be finishing ahead of schedule but he had not heard any more.

On how many occasions has the ticket office at Catford Bridge Station been closed at times when it was scheduled to be open? (Cllr Muldoon)

MG explained that there had been issues over sickness of staff at Catford Bridge station but this was now being managed and it was hoped that the situation had improved. It was always possible to put a sign on display during staff comfort breaks and whenever it was not possible to get a member of staff.

A briefing is requested from First Capital Connect about the proposed improvements to London Blackfriars Mainline station, including the timetable for extending the platforms. (Cllr Muldoon)

There was to be a 'Meet the Manager' session held at Blackfriars on Thursday 18th September from 08:00 to 10:00, where senior managers from First Capital Connect, Southeastern, London Underground and Network Rail would be available to answer questions, which Stakeholders etc were invited to attend. The underground station there was to be closed for two years. Cllr M added that this was to be from March 2009 and would mean major changes for passengers and inconvenience for Catford Loopline and E.L.Line users, with a double whammy effect. MG explained that Graham Goodwin and Duncan Stephenson were both involved and PS added that Network Rail had been requested to send representation to the meeting but there had not been a response. Cllr M expressed that he was keen to hear from Network Rail given the closure.

N.Rail

PSt asked if there had been increased capacity provided elsewhere and MG advised him that details of what was an exciting project, where available on the website.

Cllr P felt that there was an issue of timing.

(d) General Issues

Other Issues

A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting and MG reported that:- Performance for the Metro area was around 92%, which was considered to be good and these were some of the best figures since records began in the 90's, although winter was now beginning and the figures could be affected; some of the longer services had been extended; crime figures were down by 25% in the last 4 years with improved security and Catford Bridge and Sydenham stations had been awarded safer station accreditation. Ladywell was to receive an award in a couple of weeks; there was a campaign on TV and radio in November to highlight off peak fares to try to fill trains; as mentioned earlier, there was to be an additional morning peak train on the Hayes line from 14th December and another from March 2009. The Route Utilization Strategy (RUS) recommended that in key output 1, works would be required at Blackfriars that would prevent terminating trains and this would result, from March 2009, in through trains extending from the Catford Loopline, to North London and beyond, providing connections to Eurostar at St Pancras.

Cllr M congratulated Southeastern and said that the award ceremonies at Catford Bridge and Lower Sydenham had been well received, with good turn-outs including M.P's and were good photo opportunities. MG thanked him.

IR said that he was pleased to hear that people were happy now regarding the gating issues, which seemed to be working. There was another tranche to do and lessons were learnt. He also reported that: the Metro area was running at 94% over the last four week period and 91-92% over the year, which was pleasing, as it was improving, although there would now be a seasonal dip; crime was down by

approximately 50% over the last 3-4 years, helped by secure stations; winter timetable changes mainly affected the Brighton line and he would know soon and brief stakeholders if there were to be any changes, which would be minor, for the Metro area.

MG reported that there had been news of RMT balloting its members on possible strike action over issues including pay awards for station staff, train conditions and longer district service. If the decision is to strike it could cause disruption to services in December, however, there was a contingency plan in place and the Metro area should not be affected.

4. Bus Issues

(a) Operational Issues

The 172 bus service has buses terminated because they are running late. (Cllr Addison)

It was reported that London Central were the operators of the service and Des Turner was their representative. An alternative service should always be offered to passengers in these circumstances. Cllr P commented that they frequently terminate and start short of where supposed to. The City stops at Aldwich to Waterloo etc. were very full, with the next buses over-full and he had noticed buses parking at the back of Aldwich and starting at Kings College. He asked if it was for keeping to timetable reasons, as buses bound for Brockley Rise sometimes terminated at New Cross or Brockley Cross and he suggested that there be greater prior planning. DW confirmed that they should not do this and said that mileage was a priority for drivers. DH added that buses had been travelling via St. Pauls due to horrendous traffic jams caused by road works and Aldwich was the first point of termination. iBus should help matters as it was an improvement on the current system.

GM added that the situation had been discussed with the route manager from London Central and it was hoped that, along with iBus, there would be improvements.

DH explained to MA that passengers should not buy another ticket and the driver should stay with them and give transfer tickets to the next driver.

What instructions were given to drivers of 181 and 225 buses concerning picking up and dropping off passengers when these routes were recently diverted away from Hither Green Lane? What complaints were received on this issue? (Cllr Milton)

Cllr M said that he thought the diversion to have been well publicized and it was at the drivers discretion. DW reported that only one minor complaint had been received.

(b) Service Requests

When the 181 bus service returns to normal, could an additional bus stop be put in on the southbound part of the route between Rycroft Road and Theodore Road? (Cllr Milton)

DW reported that he had visited the section concerned and concurred that there was a long distance between stops. He thought that there could possibly be technical reasons preventing it and was asking colleagues if there was any scope to put an additional stop in.

DW

(c) General Issues

484 – Some have witnessed the bus drivers passing by the wrong side of the central reservation at the base of Vicars Hill (Algernon Road SE13 technically) whilst climbing the hill (northwards). (Cllr Keogh)

DW reported that notices were out regarding the situation. PSt added that some waiting restrictions had been put in place close to the island and junction concerned, so there was no excuse, unless maybe illegal parking took place.

We still have a problem with speeding buses, (484 and 343 on Avignon Road. I am wondering if this is the best channel to seek redress. (Adam Wilkinson – Brockley Cross Action Group)

Adam Wilkinson had requested that the question that he raised be answered separately.

Bus stops 2A03 on Brockley Grove, SE4 (ref BP1210 & BP1211). These stops are called “Darfield Road” which is some 200m away. A better name would be “Huxbear Street” as it is within a few metres of these stops. (Geoffrey Thurley – Ladywell Society)

DW explained that it was difficult to justify the expense of changing names and GT pointed out that Huxbear Street was closer to the stops than Darfield Road, as was Merritt Road. DW said that he would investigate further.

DW

When will the shelter at stop HT in Rushey Green be replaced? (Cllr Muldoon)

PSt reported that the process, which takes four to six months due to planning permission being required and installation of electrics, was three months along.

Other Issues

Cllr P raised the issue following iBus suggestions which assumed that the visually impaired only use the bottom deck of a bus, as announcements were not to be made on the upper deck and he asked if this was policy. GM said that he would take the matter back.

GM

MA suggested that the thinking behind it may be that there was not a problem, with it possibly felt that being provided on the bottom deck complies with the DDA Act etc.

TB added that announcement would not just benefit the disabled but others such as those unsure of the route. Cllr P mentioned a comment he had heard, which he had some sympathy with, that passengers may not necessarily appreciate being constantly given announcements and he suggested that a balance be found.

Cllr M highlighted a problem with a north bound bus stop for route 75, which serves the L.B. Lewisham, outside the Whitgift Centre in Croydon, not mentioning that it is towards Lewisham. DW agreed to pass the request on.

DW

5. L.B. Lewisham and Other Issues

Fly tipping onto the railway line by the owner's "assistant" of 42 Avignon Road and the residents of 46 Avignon Road. This matter still has not been fully resolved despite many promises to resolve the matter over the last 4 years by Network Rail. (Adam Wilkinson – Brockley Cross Action Group)

PS confirmed that MG had given him details of the relevant contact and he would pass it on.

TB added that there had been a research report produced called 'Good Riddance to Bad Rubbish', which included a Pro Forma as to how to take legal action and used the Environmental Protection Act legislation. It was open to everyone and he understood it to be available on the website but if not, it could be requested by phone.

Can we have a briefing from TfL about the closure of Blackfriars underground station? (Cllr Muldoon)

Cllr M requested that the matter be referred to TVR and TB explained that route 388 was to now go to Temple Station and Mansion Place, serving Temple to Embankment and Trafalgar Square. MA pointed out that trains to City Thameslink can go to City and TB added that users of Blackfriars could travel to City Thameslink, although at present it was felt by most passengers to be too short a distance to get out for.

6. A.O.B

DH reported that the Transport General Workers Union had balloted members on strike action over pay and there was to be a one day strike by Metrobus employees from 3am on Friday 12th September to 3am on Saturday 13th. Routes affected include 181, 251, 356 and 336, although they would try their best to provide some service. DW added that, if it went ahead, it would be publicized at stops on the Thursday morning.

TB advised MA that the short list for the South Central Franchise had been announced and the process of consultation was underway, including Forest Hill Society, who's details they had and anyone could give their views. GoVia and some others had visited Boroughs concerned. PS confirmed that he had met with one of the representatives and there had been a press release on 20th August, naming the bidders: the current operator Go via Stagecoach, National Express and Ned Railways. Bidders have until 18th February 2009 to submit their bid. TB

advised GT that the only amalgamation or swapping of services between Southern and Southeastern had taken place elsewhere and not in this area.

7. Date of next meeting

The date of next meeting was given as 10th March 2007.

The meeting ended at 6.55pm.