
Report of meeting from external body

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Information Item (c)
LTW 297
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Lewisham Council Transport liaison 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 Council Transport Liaison meeting held on 9 December 2008 are attached as Annex A. The Director, Research and Development, represented London TravelWatch.
- 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.

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 December 2008 in COMMITTEE ROOM 3, CIVIC SUITE, CATFORD SE6 4RU

Present

Councillor Muldoon (Cllr M)(Chair)	LBL Councillor – Rushey Green ward
Councillor Milton (Cllr Mi)	LBL Councillor – Lewisham Central ward
Councillor Morris (Cllr Mo)	LBL Councillor – Downham ward
Councillor Paschoud (Cllr P)	LBL Councillor – Perry Vale ward
Councillor Peake (Cllr Pk)	LBL Councillor – Forest Hill ward
Councillor Robson (Cllr R)	LBL Councillor – Lee Green ward

Sean Farnan	LBL Meeting Co-ordinator
Paul Stewart (PS)	LBL Transport
Peter Stunell (PSt)	LBL Transport

Michael Abrahams (MA)	Forest Hill Society
Tim Bellenger (TB)	London Travel Watch
Mark Bichtemann (MB)	Travel London (National Express)
Andrew Boag (AB)	TfL – London Buses
Simon Fowles (SF)	Network Rail
Lorna Murphy (LM)	Travel London (National Express)
Tony Petim (TP)	Forest Hill Society
Ian Rashbrook (IR)	Southern Rail
Andrew Reid (AR)	Tewkesbury Lodge Estate R.A.
Geoffrey Thurley (GT)	Ladywell Society
Des Turner (DT)	London Central Buses
Dave Walsh (DW)	TfL – Network Operations

Minute No.

Action

1. Apologies and Introductions

Apologies were received from: Karen Bain – DLR; Daniel Francis – London Travel Watch; Mike Gibson – South Eastern; Dave Hooker – Metrobus; Julie Sutch – L.B.L. Town Centre Manager and Adam Wilkinson – Brockley Cross Action Group.

2. Minutes of last meeting

There were no matters arising that were not to be dealt with as part of the agenda.

3. Bus Issues

(a) Operational Issues

How many more months must my constituents wait for the shelter at bus stop HT in Rushey Green (just south of its junction with Rosenthal Road SE6) to be replaced?

P St explained that TfL had previously rejected the application for a shelter and the TfL contractor had been approached now. It would possibly be resolved quicker if it had not been a shelter with advertisements displayed but would now probably take another four months. AB said that he had been informed, just prior to the meeting, that J C Decaux had thought that TfL's contractor were to install the shelter, however, PSt understood it to be J C Decaux who would be responsible for it's installation and he would be asking them to do so. Cllr M asked that the meeting be kept informed of progress.

PSt

(b) Service Requests

When the N171 was re-routed away from Hither Green in 2006, TFL gave a commitment that provision of a night bus to Hither Green would be kept under review. Is there any prospect of a service being provided?

AB explained that the night service was re-routed to Catford Garage in 2006 in line with the day time service. It was said that provision of a night service to Hither Green would be looked into and, every time the service was reviewed, investment was requested to provide it. It was currently on hold.

Cllr Robson highlighted how passengers of late train services from Charing Cross suffered and AB explained that, although it was recognized that there was a demand for the service, to re-route to Hither Green Lane would mean losing another service elsewhere and, where a night service may be withdrawn, there would be an increase in day time provision. Night services did not have to match with day time, as in the case of route 36 and N36. It was wondered whether the N1 could be diverted to Hither Green when it was extended to Chislehurst but this was not possible, however, he said that he was on the case.

Are there any plans to extend the Number 63 Bus to go as far as Honor Oak Park, to the junction at Brockley Rise, to provide a much more practical link between the City of London & Old Kent Road & Peckham and Honor Oak Park Station.

AB agreed that he could see the logic in extending the route, as it stopped short of Honor Oak Park, however, it was already a long route running every five to six minutes, which meant that the cost would be high with a more irregular service, as a longer route would be harder to regulate. Reliability had improved on the route in recent years, partly due to a simplified network and, although extending route 63 to Brockley Rise could not be justified, other options would be looked at to provide links to Honor Oak Park Station . For example the East London Line extension will improve links to the city.

TP felt that it did not seem logical, as it would only involve an extra mile at most. There was sometimes a problem of getting stuck at Wood Vale and it seemed sensible to extend route 63. AB explained that the idea was not completely

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disliked but it was not felt necessary, as there were other ways to provide the service requested.

Cllr Pk pointed out that the P12 travelled the long way around to get over the hill and any local route out of Peckham would duplicate several existing routes. AB agreed, saying that a regular service had to be maintained to Crystal Palace, as well as local routes and extending all of the 63 route would require 2 additional buses at a cost of £1/4 million per year, per bus. There was also not much bus standing space at Brockley Rise. If it is possible, a local route can be designed and it would be helpful if people could let them know where service was required. DT and DW mentioned route 172, which was also a high frequency route.

TP asked about the costings of different options. Cllr M asked that the issue be referred to the Strategic Transport Liaison meeting and AB suggested further consideration before coming back to this meeting.

PS/AB

Post Meeting Note: The matter was discussed at the Strategic meeting held on 13th January 2009, where Gary Murphy of TfL – London Buses explained that a review of the Brockley Rise area had been carried out as part of the tender programme to find out such things as whether there would be extra demand due to the provision of links to the E.L.L. extension, which they would then need to monitor first to find any changes in passenger travel patterns etc. They were unsure if route 63 was the right choice, as they did not want to disrupt current service and the existing stand used was also at full capacity. It could be that another route be looked at. They were fully aware of the aspirations expressed and would continue to work on the situation and advise accordingly.

L.Buses

(c) General Issues

When will stops be installed at the agreed locations on route 273?

PSt reported that it was to be marked up in the next week or two with construction in the next month or two. The residential nature of the streets meant that shelters were more obtrusive. AB confirmed that residents in Southbrook Road were to be informed.

Can we have an update on the plan to develop a 'transport interchange' at the front of Hither Green Station (Staplehurst Road side).

PS reported that this was a SELTRANS scheme and it was a matter of funding, which had not been forthcoming. He was to check on progress.

PS

Is there a list of proposed new bus shelters planned for any of the bus stops in the Perry Vale and Forest Hill areas and is it possible to have a copy ?

DW confirmed that there were no new shelters planned at present and TP suggested that any plans to install them to improve the area would be a good news story. PSt added that there may be opportunities to do so at some time in the future.

(d) Other Issues

PS reported an issue raised with regard to bus lane operation, which Cllr M suggested was more of a TfL issue. AB offered to take the issue back and then report back.

AB

4. Rail Issues

(a) Service Issues

DLR services from Canary Wharf through to Lewisham are now so crowded that even after 7.00pm it is certainly not possible to find a seat sometimes not possible to get onto the first train that arrives. A number of trains terminate at Crossharbour, immediately after the peak. Would it not be possible to extend the number of trains that continue through to Lewisham until later into the evening?

Cllr M read the following response received from DLR prior to the meeting:-
This problem has been resolved with the new service as none of these terminate at Crossharbour. Current services from CAW to LEW in the evening are a 3.5 minute frequency from 16.00-19.30 and 4 minute frequency from 19.30. This improvement should have been quite visible to passengers.

Some early morning trains leave Ladywell ahead of the booked time rather than wait for the exact time of departure. Could drivers be reminded that they should not depart Ladywell in advance of the timetabled time?

Cllr M said that there had been a 36 minute gap in service and GT said that he had tried to find out the exact times when this occurred.

The response from Mike Gibson of South-Eastern asked that, if the situation did not improve, it be flagged up again, with more information given. TB pointed out that there was a new time-table for South-Eastern services with additional early morning trains.

Are there any plans to improve the peak morning service from Hither Green? Many residents have complained of lack of seats and the uneven timetable from this station.

PS read the following response received from Mike Gibson:-
As part of the Thameslink programme, 4,000 additional seats will become available from March 2009 and the units will be used to lengthen metro services including those from Hither Green. From December 2009 there will be a considerable increase in peak services from Hither Green to London and more information can be found on our new website www.southeastern2009.co.uk

Residents report that early morning (6.30/7am) DLR trains from Lewisham have become unreliable since 3 car extension works started. Is this something TFL are aware of and how is it being addressed?

PS said that there had not been a response received from DLR and this would be chased up and circulated.

PS

(b) Information Issues

Will the station operators install dot matrix train information screens at the north ends of platform 1 at both Catford and Catford Bridge stations.

PS read the response received, which referred to a makeover of the station and upgrading of the CIS system in 2009. Cllr M expressed his disappointment and explained that long platforms were involved, which made it even more difficult to find out information, as it was not visible from the far end. The Dot Matrix was also sometimes down and no announcements were made.

Trains are often crowded in peak times at Catford, Catford Bridge, and Forest Hill. Could more announcements be made asking passengers on the train to use all available spaces and move down the carriage.

Cllr M explained that the stations suffered from over-crowding and there was a need for access to information.

TP suggested that drivers politely ask passengers to move down, which would help greatly. The response from Mike Gibson of South-Eastern said that drivers were asked to do this and it did happen on a number of services. MA said that this did not happen at Brockley Station, with little chance of getting on and announcements should be made before the train arrives.

Cllr M said that he had complained about people with bicycles getting onto trains at peak times but he often sees station staff letting them through barriers etc. They sometimes received abuse when preventing them from getting through.

Is there a timetable when more carriages will be available, or additional frequency of trains to the city.

IR explained that this was included in the invitation to tender for Southern Rail, with 2010 time-table changes, as the first tranche, the second tranche being 2012.

Are there any plans to improve access to Honor Oak Park and Catford stations.

Cllr M said that he did not hold much hope for Catford, as there had been a reduced Section 106 Agreement in respect of the Catford Greyhound Stadium development. Cllr P pointed out that he was not aware of a reduced transport contribution and there would be a long process of negotiation now. GT said that his understanding from the Planning Committee meeting, which granted permission for the development, was that there was to be no improvement due to lack of funds. PS added that it may possibly be incorporated into the fourth tranche.

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TP suggested moving the Catford and Catford Bridge station access as part of the Masterplan for Catford, as even if it took until 2020/30 for anything to happen, there would at least be some objectives in place to improve the stations. Cllr M agreed with MA that this was more of a strategic matter, outside of his powers.

PS reported that there it is likely that TfL have plans to improve Honor Oak Park station, as part of the London Overground network.

Forest Hill Station, looking at better ways to improve lighting, access, Oyster card system, gates or barriers to be safe and practical, underpass to be modern, safe looking and "welcoming.

IR reported that work was under way at present installing a new gate-line, which meant the closure of that entrance for three weeks and limited access for the time being. It would be open during the day and remotely open/closed before the first and after the last trains. This was also part of the preparatory work for the introduction of Oyster pay as you go, which was to be introduced in 2009.

Cllr P felt that there was overall improvement and he had received comments and had recent contact with several people, including the local Police and Neighbourhood Panel. He would like information on what had been said to be circulated in writing, including information on the timetable of works, as this would be very useful.

He also mentioned how L.B.L. engineers were co-ordinating discussion between agencies and asked about access provision before the subway was closed for works. IR confirmed that works were scheduled not to clash with subway works and things were slowed, with a 'halfway house' situation so that there would be some access provided. It takes longer but there would be improved partial re-opening. In the schedule of works, the gatehouse would be open and operational by the end of January 2009, with complete closure and some access available by 18th/19th December.

MA pointed out that the steps down to the barriers were dark and the lights would sometimes go off as someone would be walking down them. This was inadequate and the situation would be worse once the barriers were installed. He suggested that brighter bulbs would be better at least. IR said that he would check if there were plans already included to improve the situation, or if this needs to be added.

IR

Cllr P highlighted the wider issue of access and how there was potential for flat access. Platform 2 was to be improved by the gate line but steep stairs were still involved.

He also explained how there had been discussion over the years with many operators regarding the use of the station car park, which the Council would support. Network Rail did not support plans though, as they would like to see it as a possible area for plant, however, he felt that it could be relocated without too much work or expense, as it would make it more accessible. PS added that Network Rail were to extend the platform which, if extended to the south, would

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create better alignment to the car park, with better access. SF explained that it was an ongoing situation, with a target date of 2014.

Cllr P requested that there be dialogue between Network Rail and L.B.L. which, given that he had been asking for this for eight years or so, he would like sooner rather than later, regarding the area of land on the Council's side of the fence. MB added that, if access was made available from the car park, there would be potential to redevelop the front car park, which would improve Network Rail's revenue stream.

(c) Station Issues

Ladywell

The newspaper kiosk in the booking hall closed at the end of September. The kiosk provided a valuable facility for users of the station allowing them to purchase coffee and newspapers. When does Southeastern expect the kiosk to be relet?

Cllr M read the response that had been received prior to the meeting and wondered if the rent might be reduced, as the previous business was driven out by rises. He felt that the kiosk served a need, as well as providing extra security too. TP said that he would encourage Network Rail to look at its rental income, as they may lose more and end up paying business rates.

Hither Green Station

A number of people have asked whether the closed-off ramps at Hither Green Station can be brought back into use. These would allow step-free access from platforms 2, 3 and 6. This would be particularly helpful to those with buggies and prams and would also relieve congestion over the bridge from platform 6 to platform 5 in the evening peak.

The matter had been referred to the Access and Disabilities manager, who would report back. Post meeting Note: The Head of Transport has recently written to Southeastern following a request from the Sustainable Development Select Committee who have also highlighted this issue

Will Southeastern be installing rain covers over the bike racks outside Hither Green as per those at Lee?

Cllr M read the response that had been received prior to the meeting and how it may be possible. IR added that, if South-Eastern moved quickly enough on this, funds were available TfL's budget.

PS reported that the Council's cycle officer was to liaise with Mike Gibson of South-Eastern but the response had been that there were no plans at present. Cllr M said that there were similar problems at Catford/Catford Bridge and people should be informed as soon as possible.

Lee station

Will Southeastern introduce more ticket machines (or ticket selling staff) at Lee Station to cut queues at peak times?

Cllr R read an answer that he had received and said that he would pass it onto Mike Gibson of South-Eastern.

Cllr R

MA asked how the current financial climate was affecting things and IR replied that costs stayed the same regardless of whether fewer people travelled and Southern predicted a decrease in the rate of growth. As examples: the same number of people were travelling to Victoria as 3-4 years ago; London Bridge was up by 4% (possibly affected by E.L.L. closure) and there was a downturn on the City/Dockland service. The number of people asking for refunds on season tickets had increased, as jobs were lost. He was unsure of the situation for South-Eastern but, as they served such a big number of the passengers to Greenwich and the City, he would imagine that they were suffering a similar effect.

Residents have asked whether indicator boards could be installed at the bottom of the ramp leading to Hither Green Station and at the bottom of the hill at Lee Station. This would be particularly useful when there are cancellations or delays – meaning passengers can make alternative travel arrangements or choose how to spend the time delay.

Cllr M suggested that a chalk board might be a good idea to warn passengers.

IR reported that all planned enhancements would be carried out but not extras, as DFT spending was needed for the franchise and savings had been requested in budgets, due to problems with marginal things such as stock affected. Cllr R highlighted the importance of having the boards in place and Cllr M agreed that information, even if on cancellations etc, enhances travelling experience. Cllr Mi suggested use of iPhones etc to relay information.

5. L.B. Lewisham and Other Issues

The junction of Bromley Road and Whitefoot Lane has only pedestrian controlled lights at two sides of this junction. When will Transport for London finally ensure that pedestrians can safely cross Whitefoot Lane and other roads at this junction?

AB confirmed to PS that the situation was being investigated and it was hoped that there would be a response within the next few days. PS added that the Deputy Mayor had written to Peter Hendy, as the issue had been discussed at Strategic Transport Liaison meetings and AB confirmed that Councillor Alexander's request had been received. Cllr M said that it was vague to just say 'consultation in spring' and improvement of the situation had been promised for years. He felt that both sides of the junction were unsafe, the report for the Green Man PH site had not been correct and the sooner works were completed to rectify things the better. PS explained that there had been legal aspects to resolve and hoped that it could be concluded once the response from the transport commissioner was received.

The Forest Hill Society rep has submitted a number of questions:-

Are Lewisham being consulted by TFL on any proposed traffic light re-phasing, to add more seconds for motor vehicles along the A205 route?

TP felt that there was an opportunity to look at the route to Catford and throughput of traffic, as there were always traffic jams in that area. He wondered if this was one of 100 hot spots identified for a reduction in congestion and pollution. Cllr M explained that there had been previous requests made and Catford was one of the most congested areas, with a pinch-point at the bridge. PS added that it was a strategic issue, due to the bridge being involved and proposals to widen had been rejected due to the affect on Forest Hill. Re-alignment would be required at Catford and major land owners would have to be on board. Any proposals were also suffering from the current economic climate and the Mayor had dropped the project, with no changes planned.

TP hoped that, once funding was available, plans to improve may be considered and he confirmed to PS that he was to be meeting Darien Goodwin, Head of L.B.L. Transportation in January to discuss transport issues in Forest Hill.

Could Lewisham Council seriously look at the reducing traffic light junctions, or at least not increasing their number anymore?

Cllr M explained that a lot of this was down to TfL and PS advised that it was a complex issue, with solutions usually evolving over time.

Reducing bus lanes, or bus lane operating hours where they are not sensible, to better share the roads eg. One only has to look at the bus lane on Stanstead Road, from Wastdale Road junction to Brockley Rise Junction.

TP suggested that illegal fines were going out and PS/PSt advised MA that this particular bus lane was on the south circular and the responsibility of TfL. There are currently no plans to review existing borough bus lanes and hours of operation.

Moving parking bays further up the road, to allow more room for vehicles turning left on Honor Oak Park into Stondon Park towards Crofton Park station.

TP said he believed that if 3 or 4 bays on the left hand side were taken out, it would allow more room for turning left, which might alleviate peak hour problems. AR agreed that there could be an improvement for buses, including route P12 etc, as the left filter was sometimes missed as it could not be reached. PS explained that it had to be weighed up against the needs of residents and frontages. PSt said that analysis would be required to look into this and funding identified.

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Control Parking Zones (CPZs) – in principle the Forest Hill Society Transport Committee agreed that a “no” policy was the default position of the committee regarding Control Parking Zones and there should be more free Parking in Forest Hill.

TP said that he would be keeping an eye on the further developments. PS explained that the opinion of local residents had to be gauged initially and MA pointed out that it had been approximately two years since the last consultation.

TP explained that, on principle, Forest Hill Society thought it wise to avoid having a CPZ and they could explain why more fully when the local community were engaged with at consultation stage. Cllr M added that if the majority of residents were in favour, including those at the western end in Rushey Green Ward who should be included due to over-spill parking which would occur, there would probably be one created. Cllr P said that the consultation was purely to get a response and he anticipated a range of answers from the various areas concerned.

Cycling – Should cycling be included in the remit of this forum.

PS explained that there was a cycle officer who had input as part of the forum and was consulted on development etc. PSt added that they have dealings with any sustainable transport issues.

6. **A.O.B**

Cllr P suggested that it would be good to have this meeting included on the Council website, describing what is within its scope. It would help in public participation and, if officers had a brief, they could publish it in that way. He also explained that scheduled dates for the meetings could be found on the Google website. Cllr M added that they were also on the Local Assembly internal website.

TP said that there were few issues raised compared to other Boroughs and Cllr M commended the Boroughs officers for being passionate about the good work that they do and the good relations with operators.

7. **Date of next meeting**

The date of next meeting was given as 10th March 2009.

The meeting ended at 7.25pm.