

London TravelWatch

Scheme of Delegation- Bus Issues

1 Purpose of report

1.1 To review London TravelWatch's involvement with consultations on bus -related issues and to propose how the Board should respond to these as they arise.

2 Information

2.1 In general, issues affecting buses can be categorised either as 'high level' (or strategic issues or as "low level" (local) matters affecting individual services and items of infrastructure.

2.2 High level issues

2.2.1 Bus design, including design for people with disabilities. This covers the physical design and layout of vehicles used on the network. It would also include the provision of signage within and on the exterior of buses, such as destination blinds/displays and onboard information. Previously, this was dealt with by TfL's Bus Design Forum – now known as the Public Transport Design Forum.

2.2.2 Fares and ticketing. In London a standard range of fares and tickets applies on all services. The level of fares and the types of ticket available was previously dealt with by the Fares and Ticketing task force, but will in future be dealt with by the Fares and Ticketing Committee.

2.2.3 Staff training, attitudes and customer service. Transport for London has a number of standards which are set for its contractors' and for its own employees. Previously, these matters were dealt with by either the Streets and Surface Transport or the Strategy and Integration sub-committee, but will in future be either dealt with by the Transport Accessibility Committee or the Casework Committee.

2.2.4 Integration with other modes of transport (generic), bus priority measures, and bus related infrastructure (including bus stations). This covers the provision of infrastructure associated with bus service operation, including the generic design of bus stops and shelters. Previously these matters were dealt with by either the Streets and Surface Transport or the Strategy and Integration Sub-committee. It would seem appropriate for policy on such matters to be determined by the Board.

2.2.5 An example of an issue which may shortly need consideration is that of policy relating to compulsory and request stops. At present bus stops are either compulsory (where all buses stop regardless of any indications from passengers) or request (where buses only stop to pick up with a hand signal from the passenger or to set down by the bell being rung by the passenger). However, passengers are often unsure of the status of a stop and err on the side of caution by treating all stops as request stops. It has been suggested that, in order to speed up the operation of bus

services and to reduce confusion, a new operating convention should be established. All stops would be regarded as compulsory when a waiting passenger is standing at the stop, but as request when a passenger on board wishes to alight.

2.2.6 Legal framework and 'modus operandi' for bus services. From time to time the Board may be invited to consider changes to the legal framework in which bus services operate. Previously this was dealt with by either the Streets and Surface Transport or the Strategy and Integration sub-committee.

2.2.7 General principles of service planning, and consultation at pre-tendering stage. Transport for London (TfL) has a set of guidelines to which service planners work in deciding the pattern and level of services to be provided. The Board will shortly be given a presentation on these guidelines. TfL consults on proposed changes to the bus network by means of a three stage process. At stage 1 it invites general ideas and comments on routes which are due for re-tendering during the next twelve months.

Stage 2 is when TfL consults on specific changes proposed as a result of stage 1. Stage 3 is a final formal check when the chosen operator and any intended changes are published. Previously all of these stages have been subject to member consultation. At stage 1 the Secretariat seeks the views of others (user groups, local authorities, MPs and London Assembly members) to inform our response. Our responses at stages 2 and 3 have been informed by our response at stage 1, but the issues raised at these stages are generally local rather than strategic in nature (see below).

2.3 Low level issues

2.3.1 The routing and frequency of services – including community involvement and design of service. This often forms the basis of much detailed discussion and consultation about specific proposals in a local context. In the past these issues have often been dealt with by consulting members, but members have found that to be able to comment meaningfully on the proposals a substantial degree of local knowledge is required.

2.3.2 Similarly, commenting on the siting and design of individual bus stops, issues of integration with other modes of transport, and the choice of particular vehicle types, also requires a substantial degree of local knowledge.

2.4 Proposed scheme of delegation

2.4.1 Board members have indicated that they wish to be consulted primarily on issues of strategic or policy significance. It is therefore suggested that the following scheme of delegation is adopted.

2.4.2 Policy issues regarding vehicle design including exterior and interior signage and on board information will be dealt with by the Board, and its views will be made known to TfL's Public Transport Design Forum.

2.4.3 Policy issues regarding staff training, attitudes and customer service will be dealt with by the Casework Committee.

2.4.4 Policy issues of a generic nature regarding integration with other modes of transport, bus priority measures and infrastructure for the use of buses including bus stations will be dealt with by the Board.

2.4.5 Policy issues regarding the legal framework and 'modus operandi' for bus services will be dealt with by the Board.

2.4.6 Policy issues regarding the general principles of service planning will be dealt with by the Board.

2.4.7 Stage 1 bus service proposals (see paragraph 2.2.7 above). The Secretariat will seek the views of all Board members and relevant user groups, local authorities, London Assembly members, MPs and other interested parties, to produce a co-ordinated response. If there any conflicts that arise from this process the Board will be asked to resolve these. In respect of stages 2 and 3 the Secretariat will provide appropriate responses based on the response agreed at stage 1.

2.4.8 From time to time TfL will propose changes to the network outside the normal tendering cycle. In these cases the Secretariat shall provide a response based on the proposed compliance with the 'Guidelines for planning bus services' and any Board aspirations associated with these Guidelines.

2.4.9 Issues of a purely local nature such as the specific routeing of individual bus services or the siting of individual bus stops shall be dealt with by the Secretariat taking account of relevant Board policy.

3 Equalities and inclusion implications

3.1 Buses are an important means of transport for many people who may otherwise encounter social exclusion because of disability or for other reasons. Due account will be taken of this in determining London TravelWatch's response to specific proposals. The views of the Transport Accessibility Committee will be sought where appropriate, e.g. in relation to vehicle design issues.

4 Financial implications

4.1 The contents of this report have no specific financial implications for London TravelWatch.

5 Legal powers

5.1 Sections 183 and 184 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 provide for London TravelWatch (formally the London Transport Users Committee) to be consulted on bus service changes. Section 248 of the Act places upon London TravelWatch a duty to consider - and where it appears to it 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).

6 Recommendation

6.1 That all consultations on bus-related proposals are handled in accordance with the scheme of delegation proposed in paragraphs 2.4.2 to 2.4.9 of this report.