
Secretariat memorandum

Author: Sharon Malley

Agenda item: 10

LTW388

Drafted: 21.09.11

Passenger engagement programme

1 Purpose of report

- 1.1. To outline London TravelWatch's proposed strategy for passenger events in autumn 2011.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1. That the Board agrees the following:
- 2.2. To hold a passenger event before Christmas in Tooting or Morden on a Saturday morning in a community venue, focusing on the Northern line closure programme and with support from London Underground.
- 2.3. To hold a passenger event in Southall during the daytime on a weekday in a community venue in Spring 2012.

3 History of London TravelWatch passenger events

- 3.1. London TravelWatch has held three passenger events – in Croydon, Romford and Stratford, with varying outcomes. The Croydon event was successful in generating publicity for London TravelWatch, particularly as it was able to link to a topical concern in Croydon relating to trams. The Romford and Stratford events also succeeded in gaining local media coverage and engaging with local passengers.
- 3.2. The use of a bus worked well in Romford and Croydon in that it attracted passengers to the event by being located where local people would not normally expect to see a red London bus. It was also consistent with London TravelWatch's focus at the time on buses. However, the bus did not work as well in Stratford, where it had to be parked adjacent to other buses at a bus station.
- 3.3. The passenger survey has provided some information about transport concerns in visited areas. It was used previously for research into the travel needs of different faith communities in the Golders Green and Stamford Hill areas. In both Croydon and Romford it was notable how many wheelchair users did not understand how to board wheelchair-accessible buses and the events provided an opportunity for this to be demonstrated. Passengers in Stratford raised concerns about bus driver behaviour, which is consistent with what London TravelWatch has heard from passengers generally.

- 3.4. The information provided in the surveys has informed policy perspectives in relation to first class travel. The surveys are a useful tool for opening up conversation and establishing whether there are any overarching themes or concerns in any given location, such as at Stratford where passengers raised concerns about bus re-routing during the Olympics.

4 Objectives going forward

- 4.1. It is important to clarify the objectives of the events in order to ensure their formats meet the identified outcomes. Events have previously focused on the following outcomes:
- Gaining profile through media exposure
 - Gaining profile through meeting passengers
 - Gaining knowledge through feedback from passengers
 - Gaining influence with stakeholders through being seen to lead on passenger engagement and understanding of issues
- 4.2. These objectives are not mutually exclusive but it is helpful to confirm where the emphasis should be. It is recommended that members agree that the events should be seen primarily as a way of engaging with passengers, gaining knowledge from them in order to inform policy perspectives. This should be reflected in the debrief and evaluation of the events when they are completed.
- 4.3. The previous passenger events have demonstrated the importance of tailoring each event to local circumstances rather than trying to impose a standard format everywhere. Therefore it is recommended that different styles of event take place at different locations.
- 4.4. Previous experience also suggests that the events will be more successful when the location is chosen because of a particular transport issue in the area rather than being more general. This provides a greater opportunity to work with stakeholders such as London Underground and Transport for All, as well as providing more of a hook for local media interest. The Northern line engineering works is a good example of an issue London TravelWatch should be engaging with passengers over. This also coincides with London TravelWatch's concerns in recent months in relation to London Underground performance issues.

5 Proposals for events

- 5.1. We are proposing an event located near a station at the southern end of the Northern line. This would focus primarily on offering the opportunity for passengers to find out more about the Northern line engineering programme but would cover other transport issues in the area as well. London Underground's support, and attendance, would be required to make this a successful event.
- 5.2. As the engineering programme will have the most impact on those who use the services at weekends, it may be worthwhile to hold the event on a Saturday morning to reach those who will be most affected.

- 5.3. The event could be held in a community venue such as council offices, community centre or function rooms, rather than a bus if parking is problematic.
- 5.4. The event would need material supplied by London Underground. We understand that LU will be producing leaflets and posters explaining the closures and these could be useful at the event. This would be supplemented by the London TravelWatch questionnaire and provide an opportunity to circulate the How to Complain leaflet.
- 5.5. It is recommended that the event should take place in Tooting. Alternatives include Morden, Balham and Clapham but Tooting is preferred as the Northern line is a very important commuting route in the area, there are fewer obvious alternatives, it serves a diverse population and can be very crowded during peak periods.
- 5.6. In addition, it is recommended that London TravelWatch holds an event in Southall in Spring 2012. This location relies on rail links into Paddington and Reading by First Great Western, with the nearest tube services (on the Heathrow Piccadilly line) some distance away. The area is home to a large south Asian population, with some 55% of residents identifying as Indian or Pakistani. The population claiming Job Seekers Allowance in the three wards in the Southall area is considerably higher than the London average, giving an indication of levels of local deprivation.
- 5.7. Holding an event at Southall would give passengers more information about access to transport and would help increase transport inclusion.

6 Equalities and inclusion implications

- 6.1. The Southall passenger engagement event in particular is focused on improving transport inclusion among those who may currently face barriers to using public transport.

7 Legal powers

- 7.1. 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.

8 Financial implications

- 8.1. The passenger engagement events would require some investment in terms of hiring venues, producing questionnaires and opportunity costs of taking staff away from their usual duties. Provision for this has been made in the budget.