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## Secretariat memorandum

Author: Vincent Stops

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LTW418

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### Watford station closure proposal

#### 1 Purpose of report

1.1 To report the conclusion of our consideration of the proposal to close Watford station.

#### 2 Background

2.1 On 23 February 2012 London Underground Ltd (LUL) initiated the closure process for Watford station on the Metropolitan line.

2.2 Under the Railways Act 2005 London TravelWatch is required to consider such proposals and report to the Mayor of London by 2 September 2012.

#### 3 Process

3.1 In April 2012 the Board appointed a panel of members to consider the closure on its behalf.

3.2 The main elements of the panel's consideration were:

- i) Assuring that notices to passengers wishing to object were properly posted;
- ii) The analysis of LUL's proposals and passengers objections;
- iii) An escorted site visit for members;
- iv) A hearing at Watford Colosseum
- v) Producing a report for the Mayor

3.3 The report was finalised and sent to the Mayor of London on 28 August 2012. It is available on the London TravelWatch website:

[http://www.londontravelwatch.org.uk/news/2012/08/london\\_travelwatch\\_produces\\_report\\_for\\_mayor\\_of\\_london\\_on\\_proposed\\_closure\\_of\\_watford\\_station](http://www.londontravelwatch.org.uk/news/2012/08/london_travelwatch_produces_report_for_mayor_of_london_on_proposed_closure_of_watford_station)

3.4 The main findings and recommendations from the report include:

- The closure of Watford station will result in hardship to some existing passengers but this will be largely alleviated by the implementation of the Croxley Rail Link project that will provide two new accessible stations giving access to the Metropolitan line. LUL have stated that any closure of Watford station would not take place until the proposed Croxley Rail Link project is operational.

- For about half of existing passengers there will be a longer walking journey to the proposed new stations, but this additional walk will be short for most. Only a small number of existing passengers will have longer than a 15 minute additional journey but a requirement for Hertfordshire County Council to make pedestrian and cycling route improvements and provide a bus service between the Cassiobury Park area and the new stations for a period of three years would reduce this hardship.
- London TravelWatch recommends that a discretionary fare is agreed, for a limited time period, to allow the small group of passengers who, in the event of closure of Watford Station, would have to either walk to the new fare zone 7 stations or pay the additional fare from Watford High Street and Watford Junction stations, to use the Metropolitan line at London fare zone 7 levels.
- London TravelWatch also believes that there is a business case for a Croxley Rail Link that retains Watford station as part of a split service, albeit with fewer overall benefits than LUL's preferred option. The Closure Panel recommends that a trial split service is trialled, serving both Watford and Watford Junction stations, to determine the real passenger numbers and issues involved with the running of a split service serving both Watford and Watford Junction stations prior to a final decision on the closure of Watford station. The trial could last for two years from the opening of the Croxley Rail Link to 2018 when the new signalling is due to be completed on the Metropolitan line when there will, presumably, be a major re-timetabling programme.

3.4 We have sent a copy of the report to the Transport and Works Inspector. We are registered to speak to the inquiry which commences on 9 October 2012.

#### **4 Equalities and inclusion implications**

4.1 There are no equalities issues associated with this report. Equalities issues have been considered as part of the consideration of the closure.

#### **5 Legal powers**

5.1 Section 25 and associated Schedule 8 of the Railways Act 2005 requires London TravelWatch to consider any closure of a station or passenger services on the London Underground System.

#### **6 Financial implications**

6.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report. The costs of conducting the closure process have been considered previously by members.