

Board meeting

14.01.14

Secretariat memorandum

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LTW459

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Consultation on local authority parking

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. To suggest a London TravelWatch response to the Department for Transport's consultation local authority parking.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Government is concerned about allegedly "over-zealous parking enforcement" and that some local authorities appear "not to be using their powers to meet the best interest of road users, communities and businesses...."
- 2.2 In London all stopping, loading and parking restrictions are implemented and enforced by either the local borough or in the case of the Transport for London road network (TLRN) by TfL using Metropolitan Police Service wardens applying civil powers.
- 2.3 The consultation paperwork can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-authority-parking>

Responses are required by 14 February 2014.

3. The Department for Transport's (DfT's) proposals

- 3.1 The DfT are proposing a series of changes, the most significant of which is stopping the use of CCTV for on-street parking.
- 3.2 There are further proposals which it is suggested that London TravelWatch respond to: i) the introduction of a grace periods for parking where there are restrictions; ii) the introduction of resident and business led parking reviews.

4. Discussion

- 4.1 The management and enforcement of stopping, loading and parking restrictions by TfL and the London boroughs is clearly an important issue for London TravelWatch as without the use of restrictions there would be greater levels of congestion leading to slower journeys and poorer journey time reliability for all users. This is generally how the TLRN and many of London's busier roads are managed, though there are some locations where more stringent restriction is needed.

- 4.2 The rhetoric used in the consultation encourages the view that local authorities may be misusing their powers. In the view of officers this is not generally the case, rather local authorities are trying to strike a very difficult balance between the competing demands on the use of road space and are seeking to fairly enforce what are necessary restrictions
- 4.3 London TravelWatch policies prioritise the use of road space for moving over stationary vehicles, particularly for bus services on bus routes. London TravelWatch accepts the need for loading on bus routes, but wants to see this accommodated on side roads or at times where the impact on bus services will be least, i.e. out of peak hours.
- 4.4 It is in the interest of all users that stopping, loading and parking restrictions are well considered before they are introduced and are then enforced consistently. The penalty is civil one and there is a longstanding appeal service that is available to resolve any misapplication of penalties and allows some discretion. Parking professionals believe that camera and on-street enforcement officers should apply the rules and not be allowed discretion as this would lead to inconsistent and possibly corrupt practice.
- 4.5 TfL and many of the London boroughs have been using CCTV to enforce parking violations (as opposed to moving bus lane and speed contraventions) for about a decade. Prior to that, managing parking was very much less effective, particularly in the evening and at weekends. Where camera enforcement is not available enforcement is not so rigorous. The photos below show the situation at one location on the TLRN before and after the introduction of camera enforcement. At this location the bus stop was regularly parked in during the evening. When camera enforcement was introduced the problem was eliminated.



- 4.6 Of course, it is theoretically possible that with much greater levels of on-street enforcement officers illegal parking could be addressed, but this would not happen in any practical sense and once again illegal parking would become a problem for the operation of London's streets. CCTV enforcement of London's bus routes is vital to their efficient operation.
- 4.7 The introduction of a grace period for parking where there are loading restrictions or single yellow line junctions would effectively negate the purpose of the restrictions and make enforcement much more difficult. Loading bays would become short term parking bays and yellow line restrictions, implemented to keep traffic flowing in, say, peak hours would cease to have that function at some locations. Where loading bays become short term parking bays there would be displacement of legal loading to other locations where loading is not permitted.
- 4.8 The demands for road space will, of course, change over time and some restrictions that may have been deemed appropriate when introduced may subsequently need amending. Therefore it would seem appropriate that reviews are undertaken of any restrictions. However, the views of those users passing through the area should also be taken into account and so any consultation should include users or their representatives. It would also seem appropriate that users of a street should be able to prompt a consultation along with residents and local business.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 It is recommended that London TravelWatch:
- i) continues to support the use of CCTV to enforce parking violations on bus routes;
 - ii) opposes the introduction of a grace period for loading bays and yellow line restrictions;
 - iii) asks that bus users be consulted as part of any consultation on the review of stopping, loading and waiting restrictions along bus routes and allows bus users to also petition for the implementation of restrictions that delay their services.

6. Prioritisation criteria

- 6.1 The enforcement of stopping, loading and parking restrictions is fundamental to the proper operation of London's streets. It is important that London TravelWatch makes representation on this issue which will be of great concern to users.

7. Equalities and inclusion implications

- 7.1 Those that have disabilities particularly benefit from the proper enforcement of stopping, loading and parking restrictions, particularly the enforcement on no-waiting restrictions at bus stops is required if buses are to be accessible to all.

8. Legal powers

- 8.1 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).

9. Financial implications

- 9.1 There are no financial implications for London TravelWatch arising from this report, beyond the cost of publication which will be undertaken within the existing budget.