
Secretariat memorandum

Author : Robert Nichols

Agenda item: 9
LTW495
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London Underground issues

1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To advise the Board on the progress of our interactions with London Underground regarding the ticket office closures, and the Bank station capacity upgrade scheme.

2 Ticket office closures

- 2.1 London Underground has begun to implement its planned alterations to their ticket offices, with 19 ticket offices currently closed for conversion. The background for the scheme as a whole, along with the timetable for ticket office conversions, can be found as part of the papers from the previous Policy Committee meeting.
- 2.2 London TravelWatch wrote to Gareth Powell, Director of Strategy & Service Development, London Rail and Underground, on 2 February 2015, to outline our position based on our research to date, and to re-iterate our key concerns. We requested a formal response to each of these issues.

The key concerns that we highlighted were:

- The proposals are being rushed through without the opportunity to consider passenger input, including our previous recommendations;
- The process must be flexible enough to both include any of our recommendations and to react to changing demand in the future, if necessary, even after the works have been completed for the stations currently being converted;
- That London TravelWatch is consulted before any part of the ticket hall is converted from passenger use;
- A number of specific station categorisation changes, including the upgrading of some major stations to 'Gateway' status;
- That our offer to work with Transport for London (TfL) on the design of the ticket machines is taken up; and
- That some LU stations are already refusing to sell tickets to National Rail stations.

We also reminded TfL of their statutory responsibility to consult regarding any closure of ticket offices at the former Silverlink stations.

- 2.3 We received a response from Gareth Powell dated 2 March 2015, which did not provide any commitment to work with us on any of our recommendations, other than an assurance to comply with the statutory requirements regarding the former Silverlink stations, although with no details were given as to how or when this will happen. This response is attached as Appendix A.
- 2.4 We now intend to write to Sir Peter Hendy as Commissioner of Transport for London to highlight our key concerns both with the scheme and with the lack of will to engage with us over the needs of passengers arising from the changes.

3 Bank station capacity upgrade

- 3.1 The background to the Bank station capacity upgrade is detailed in the papers from the December 2014 board meeting. London TravelWatch's key concern was that the Central Line at Bank would not be made accessible, and that the opportunity to provide step-free access to the Central Line platforms would have been missed based on the plans submitted to the public inquiry.
- 3.2 After a number of meetings and correspondence with TfL, we received written confirmation on 27 February 2015 that TfL will provide step free access to the Central Line at Bank station, subject to agreement with London Fire Brigade regarding emergency escape routes, and subject to a study on the costs and benefits being positive.
- 3.3 We have submitted an amendment to our previous objection to the public inquiry, changing our status to that of a supporter of the scheme, with a request to the inquiry that this step-free access to the Central Line be enshrined as a requirement, subject to the measures outlined in 3.2. With this proviso, we propose to speak at the public inquiry in support of the scheme. This submission is attached as Appendix B.

4 Recommendations

- 4.1 That the board discuss the next steps open to London TravelWatch regarding the ticket office closures.
- 4.2 That the board note the outcomes regarding the Bank station capacity upgrade, and approve the recommendation to speak at the public inquiry in support of the scheme.

5 Equalities and inclusion implications

- 5.1 In relation to the London Underground ticket office, London TravelWatch's survey showed that, whilst the number of responses from those with disabilities or from minority groups was in some cases lower than can be called statistically significant, ticket offices are used at a greater frequency by minority groups, and the loss of ticket offices could present a significant barrier to travel for the elderly and those who consider themselves to have disabilities in particular. Some

passengers have also commented that they experience considerable difficulty in using ticket machines, especially if they have learning difficulties or dyslexia and the needs of these passengers will have to be further considered.

- 5.2 In relation to Bank station, providing an accessible route to the Northern line platforms allows this major central London interchange to be used by a wider group of passengers, including those with mobility impairments.

6 London TravelWatch priority

- 6.1 This issue falls within the core remit of London TravelWatch and the impact of such a project will be substantial amongst a large proportion of London's transport users.

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. The Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 requires that regard is paid to the desirability of including among the members of London TravelWatch one or more people with experience of working with disabled persons.

8 Financial implications

- 8.1 There is no financial implication on London TravelWatch as a result of this report.