

2 Apologies for absence

Apologies for lateness were received from the Chief Executive, who was attending a meeting with the Minister of State, Department for Transport.

3 Declarations of interest

Glyn Kyle declared a new standing interest as he had been appointed an independent committee member of Swan Housing Association. There were no further declarations of interest.

4 Chair's activities and Passenger Focus update

The Chair reported that the London TravelWatch 2014-15 business plan had been presented to the Transport Committee of the London Assembly, where it had been welcomed and accepted without debate. The business plan and budget would now be considered by the Mayor's department and would be incorporated as part of the Mayor's budget in Spring 2014.

The Chair said that Anna Walker, Chair of the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR), had briefed him, the Chief Executive and the Director, Policy and Investigation, on the ORR's determination for Network Rail for the period 2014-19. This was important, especially in relation to the promotion of passenger objectives. The briefing had been a useful follow-up from the ORR's recent presentation to the London TravelWatch Board. The Chair noted that London TravelWatch would have liked to see more obligations on Network Rail relating to accessibility and environmental quality.

The Chair said he had visited the Passenger Focus offices in Manchester to meet complaint handling staff. He also attended a series of conferences and a Passenger Focus Board meeting in Cardiff. The conferences were attended by large numbers of rail users from across the region. There was a lot of discussion about rolling stock and the fact that trains were often very short, with passengers standing for journeys in excess of an hour. The conferences also considered the benefits of a single passenger transport authority for Wales.

At the Passenger Focus Board meeting, members discussed franchising and the Department for Transport's commitment to consider the passenger perspective included when assessing the bids. It was agreed that London TravelWatch should be included in these discussions because of the importance of the franchises to passengers in London.

The Chair said there had been some difficult exchanges between Passenger Focus and the Transport Minister in relation to penalty fares. Passenger Focus argued that sometimes passengers who had made minor errors were being penalised with disproportionately heavy fines, but the Minister had not so far been persuaded of the case for a policy change.

The Chair noted that the Chief Executive of Passenger Focus would be taking a four-month sabbatical in the new year.

The Chair said that Transport for London (TfL) had briefed him and the Chief Executive in advance on proposed changes to the night-time operation of the Underground. Members had welcomed the opportunity to discuss the proposals prior to them being made public.

5 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 15 October 2013 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

The minutes of the Governance committee of 23 July 2013 were noted.

6 Matters arising (LTW4454)

It was noted that the work relating to the work of the Roads Task Force had been incorporated into the work programme, rather than the value for money work stream.

It was noted that the discussions with TfL about performance should consider the data itself, not just the targets.

7 Key activities (LTW455)

It was reported that the meeting with Peter Bradley (Head of Stakeholder Engagement at TfL) had been very productive, with Mr Bradley keen to engage with London TravelWatch on improving the transparency of the bus planning process. Several issues had been discussed at the meeting, including proposals to withdraw a part of a central London route (the 159 between Paddington Basin and Marble Arch).

8 London TravelWatch research on London Underground passenger priorities (LTW456)

The Policy Officer presented a report on London TravelWatch's analysis of research into passenger priorities on the London Underground. He said that the report followed up on previous research into bus passenger priorities and added to the body of evidence relating to the aspirations of passengers in London.

The Policy Officer said that the report analysed data compiled by TfL as part of its business planning process. The data gave scores to various aspects of travel, such as cleanliness on trains or station facilities, depending on the importance passengers placed on them. The three most important aspects of travel, safety, reliability and cost, were excluded from the exercise as they would excessively skew the findings.

London TravelWatch's analysis of the data looked at demographic differentials within the samples to identify whether particular priorities were favoured by particular groups of passengers.

The analysis found that on the whole there were few demographic splits, with most issues being prioritised equally among different demographic groups. However,

ride quality was rated more highly by the over 55s than younger passengers, announcements by staff were rated more highly by women than men, and retail facilities, Wi-fi and cashpoints were rated more highly by younger passengers than the over 55s. Retail facilities at stations were valued more highly by passengers starting their journeys in outer London than inner London.

The Policy Officer said he hoped to publish the final document shortly and that he hoped to be able to add to more detailed questions to TfL's business case research in future.

It was noted that only one person in the sample had a disability. It was agreed that the title of the research should be amended to reflect the fact that the primary research was carried out by London Underground, with supplementary analysis by London TravelWatch. It was agreed that the report should explicitly set out why the three biggest priorities for passengers were omitted from the report.

It was noted that the report should be amended to show the sample sizes and explain whether any groups were discounted because the sample size was too small.

It was agreed that the methodology of the report, analysing research already completed by TfL, represented good value for money and gave a useful indication of how passengers viewed the Underground. It had also been useful in prompting TfL to think more closely about how it used the data it gathered.

It was agreed that the Policy Officer would make the small amendments discussed and publish the document to key stakeholders.

Action: Policy Officer

9 Passenger issues at Network Rail

Dave Ward, Route Managing Director for London and the South East at Network Rail, gave a presentation on current issues facing Network Rail passengers. The first area under consideration was the gap between trains and platforms, known as the **platform/train interface** (PTI).

Mr Ward said that many designs of rolling stock operated on the network and that platforms similarly did not comply with a single design. This led to large differences in the possible gaps between trains and platforms. The industry was trying to introduce a maximum distance between the train and platform.

Mr Ward said that around the end of 2012, it was acknowledged that the previous strategy of relying on construction of new platforms and purchase of new rolling stock was too long term. Work had been ongoing during 2013 to agree a national PTI strategy, with cross-industry workshops being held on the subject.

Mr Ward noted that the risk to passengers caused by the PTI was roughly equal for both incidents occurring during boarding and alighting as those not occurring during boarding and alighting. The latter category included falls from the platform onto the track, electric shock and passengers being hit by moving trains while waiting at the platform. He noted that incidents resulting from problems when

boarding and alighting were often caused by passenger behaviour rather than railway infrastructure.

Mr Ward said there were a huge number of platforms that did not conform to current standards and for which the business cases to carry out improvements could not be made. There were difficulties relating to the different rolling stock that called at each platform; measures that would improve the situation in relation to some trains might be detrimental in relation to others. This was in contrast to railways such as London Underground, where only one type of train ran on each platform.

Mr Ward noted that the number of accidents had reduced in 2013, against a background of reduced boarding and dwell times, but increased passenger usage.

Mr Ward said there was a high correlation between the occurrence of accidents and people being under the influence of alcohol. Problems were also caused by people looking at mobile phones while walking around the railway. It was important to seek to change people's behaviour.

There was however also scope to improve consistency across the network. Systemic inconsistencies, such as the varying position of yellow warning lines and cross-hatching at different stations, were problematic. In addition, Mr Ward said that local mitigation measures could also be inconsistent, with not enough intuitive standardised platform architecture to assist passengers in identifying problem areas.

Mr Ward said he was keen to implement a long-term vision but did not want to lose short-term benefits. For example, the incidence of problems at level crossings was on a downward trend following a successful media campaign. He hoped similar results could be obtained in relation to the PTI.

Mr Ward briefed members on a case study at platforms 14 and 15 at Clapham Junction station. These platforms served four types of rolling stock, with the station managed overall by South West Trains but these platforms managed by Southern. The platforms were curved, which resulted in inconsistent stepping distances. In the period 2010-13, 18 board and alighting accidents had been recorded, including one person falling into the gap.

Minor works to the platforms were carried out to reduce the gaps to the new standard. This work resulted in a 70% reduction in the accident rate. The work was cost-effective as it was limited to some changes to the track profile and some alterations to the level of the platform. Mr Ward had now authorised a spend of £600,000 to improve Elephant & Castle station in the same way.

In response to questions, Mr Ward said he hoped to have agreed PTI priorities by the end of January 2014. He said staff were encouraged to assist passengers in known problem areas but the number of passengers at stations such as Clapham Junction and East Croydon, combined with the need to reduce dwell times, meant this was difficult.

A member of the public raised the problem of curvature of a platform 17 at Clapham Junction and of step/gap issues at Tulse Hill. Mr Ward said these would be addressed if funding was agreed to improve these stations.

Mr Ward said he believed the data relating to accidents was reasonable and staff had undergone retraining on the importance of reporting 'near misses', in order to make the best decisions for investment. Network Rail had made a lot of effort to put systems in place to enable good reporting.

A member asked whether Network Rail had looked into the best ways to change passenger behaviour. Mr Ward said that a lot of work had been done in relation to passenger behaviour at level crossings, although less work had been done in relation to stations. On occasion, Network Rail had played classical music to disperse young people in particular areas.

A member noted that some passengers were deterred from using particular stations, or from travelling at all, because of a fear of gaps between the train and platform. This was a significant detriment that should be addressed.

Mr Ward moved on to discuss **wayfinding at stations**. He said that the next meeting about signage in London Bridge station, which was undergoing extensive building works and therefore was difficult for passengers to navigate, would take place in the next few days. Signage was designed around national and international standards and progress was being made.

A member said that a wayfinding consultancy had been hired to assist with wayfinding at London Bridge station but not at Victoria station, even though Victoria was also undergoing considerable construction works. Mr Ward said he was not wholly comfortable with the wayfinding information at either station and further work was needed, although the current position was an improvement on the initial situation. He said that TfL was better than Network Rail on wayfinding.

In relation to **travel demand management (TDM)**, Mr Ward said that the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games had demonstrated how to manage passengers to make best use of the capacity on the network. This required co-ordination by many transport groups and was largely successful in coping with demand. It had been important to capture this good practice as a legacy benefit of the Games and build on it in future.

Mr Ward noted that this year's Christmas travel campaign was integrated across the network for the first time. This was important as extensive disruption was planned across the whole London and South East region over the Christmas break and clear advice to passengers was required.

A member of the public said that work was ongoing to extend the West London Line platforms to eight cars but there were only five-car trains. Mr Ward confirmed that an additional carriage would be added to trains.

In relation to the expected disruption over Christmas, Mr Ward said that TDM was intended to provide passengers with an overall picture of how travel would look over the holidays. It was not intended to provide real-time travel information. Getting to Gatwick station would be difficult and he had worked with the airlines and airports on helping passengers to understand how to catch their flights.

During the recent disruption caused by a storm (which was forecast), passengers had been advised in advance not to try to travel at certain times and this had been well received. He noted that some technologies, such as GPS information on

trains and linkage to signalling systems, did exist but was not installed on the UK network at present.

A member of the public said that Network Rail appeared to have moved away from viewing only the train operators as its customers and now appeared to see passengers as customers too. Mr Ward said the 2012 Games had been a watershed in improving links between passengers and infrastructure providers such as Network Rail.

The Chief Executive asked how train drivers were given information during periods of disruption. Mr Ward said that integration between Network Rail and some train operators was better than others and strategies for keeping passengers informed varied also. He noted that passenger information was the biggest lever on passenger satisfaction and that he would prefer train operators to have integrated information systems rather than bespoke, stand-alone systems.

The Chair thanked Mr Ward for his very interesting and informative presentation.

10 Sir Peter Hendy

Sir Peter Hendy, the Transport Commissioner for London, gave a brief presentation on current issues facing TfL. He said the most significant recent event had been the spending review, where TfL had made a strong case for investment and had been granted a good long-term investment programme. However, the business plan showed a significant real terms reduction for both 2014-15 and 2015-16. Improvements in the tube service were coming as a result of the substantial capital investment and there was a continuing programme to do more with less.

TfL had announced a vision for London Underground which would see a change to the roles of people on trains and in stations. The proposals to open some tube lines during weekend evenings had been widely welcomed and he noted there would be challenges in relation to staff deployment. He said that the programme to increase the use of contactless payments was a good way forward.

A member said that the Board had serious concerns about the proposals to withdraw the ability to pay bus fares in cash. Passengers may be turned off buses for being unable to pay, and less assertive members of the public may not even try to get on them. More widely, the bus service has been very successful in growing passenger numbers and satisfaction over the past decade and there was fear that some of the current bus network would not be maintained.

Sir Peter said processes had always been in place to accept passengers who were unable to make payment. He recognised that a lot of conditions, such as the ability to dip into the Oyster deposit amount, would need to be met before the facility for paying in cash could be removed.

Sir Peter said drivers would ensure that vulnerable or distressed passengers were able to get home. He noted that the demographic of people paying cash tended to be better-off males who had not bothered to buy Oyster cards.

On the wider point, Sir Peter said that the growth in bus use was directly linked to the growth in population. The real cost of buses was in providing the capacity

required for a peak-hours service, which was then used much less at off peak times, and reducing off-peak services gave only a marginal financial benefit. Up to now, services had been preserved and enhanced by very careful management and juggling of timetables and capacity. But London population growth may be such that in the future TfL would run out of the ability to reallocate existing mileage to peak services within existing costs. For example, the cost of peak services as opposed to night bus services were not equal and reduction in night bus services would not save enough money to run an equivalent service in the peak.

Sir Peter said that the average number of passengers per bus was 17, on all services throughout the day. This was twice the national average. Inspection showed that most peak hour services were full.

A member noted that Dave Ward had spoken to the Board about managing passenger demand and asked whether it would be possible for TfL to do more to flatten the peak. Sir Peter said TfL was trying to do this as far as possible but there were limits to what could be achieved. If fares were increased for high peak services, passengers would simply pay the extra, which would not have the desired result of reducing peak congestion.

A member asked whether bus services were planned in response to current and foreseeable need. Sir Peter said future demand was accounted for as far as possible but this could be very unpredictable. For example, when planning routes for school, catchments could vary year on year and it was very difficult to predict which areas pupils would be travelling from for each school.

Sir Peter said TfL was good at spotting options for making services more efficient but there was not enough funding to make frequent new additions to the network. Sir Peter said TfL was working with the NHS to learn more about health-related service provision. It was expensive to service outer-suburban health facilities as they created relatively low levels of demand but spread throughout the day.

In relation to the proposal to begin running some tube services through the night at weekends, Sir Peter said he had given some consideration to the impact this would have on the night bus network and the taxi trade. He thought it may be possible to remove or alter some of the night bus routes through central London. He suggested that members may wish to consult Mike Brown (Managing Director, London Underground) and Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Streets and Surface Transport) together on this issue and that it may be worthwhile to hold a stakeholder meeting.

A member asked how TfL measured crowding, service curtailment and missing stops on the bus network. Sir Peter said that the measurement of bus performance had improved since the introduction of the i-Bus scheme, but it did not measure crowding. TfL did review lost mileage in general to assist with service planning. It would be useful to know about any consistently problematic routes as they could potentially be explained and resolved by the operator. He said he was anxious to ensure the bus service continued to perform well and if more resource were needed for this he would consider it.

A member asked whether the Mayor's ambitious vision for cycling in London was likely to be amended. Sir Peter said the recent spate of cycling accidents was tragic but it would be important to assess the overall trends at the end of the year.

Some useful work had taken place in relation to making HGV drivers more aware of cyclists on the road and there was a need to continue to push messages about cycling safely and obeying the rules. There were no plans to alter the overall cycling vision.

A member noted that failure to repair potholes in footways and carriageways affected all road users and the reduction in targets for road condition was problematic. Sir Peter said TfL had allocated a good fund of money for roads maintenance in the previous year but that road works created difficulties. Road works were being undertaken too frequently and the roads were not being repaired properly after the works. As an example, Tooley Street had been fully rebuilt in 2002 but almost the whole surface had been repaired since then following a series of different road works.

Sir Peter said he wanted to see more creative solutions to problems of access to utility services and welcomed the lane rental scheme as encouraging more efficient use of road space.

The Chair thanked Sir Peter for his thoughtful response to the discussion and said he intended that London TravelWatch should continue to act as a 'critical friend' of TfL, always focusing on the needs and priorities of the travelling public.

11 Any other business

There was no other business.

12 Resolution to move into confidential session

It was resolved, under section 15(2)(b) of schedule 18 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999, that by reason of the confidential nature of the item(s) to be discussed, it was desirable in the public interest that the public should be excluded for a section of the meeting.

During the confidential session, members considered research on passenger attitudes to the travelling environment and reviewed the meeting.