
Minutes

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Minutes of a meeting of the London TravelWatch Governance Committee held at 6 Middle Street, London EC1 on 22 March 2011, 14.45 - 16.30 hrs

Present:

Sharon Grant (SG)	Chair
David Barry (DB)	
Terry Bennett (TB)	
Gail Engert (GE)	
Sophia Lambert (SL)	
David Leibling (DL)	

Janet Cooke (JC)	Chief Executive
Patti Tobin (PT)	Director, Finance & Personnel
Peter Ellis (PE)	Senior Finance Officer (minute 4)
Gytha Chinweze (GC)	Executive Assistant

1. Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2011

The Chair deferred approval of the minutes to the next meeting.

3. Matters arising and outstanding actions

SG reported that she had met with Tom Edwards, BBC London's transport correspondent, who had confirmed that he was very interested in the work of London TravelWatch. SG had suggested that he visited London TravelWatch offices to learn more.

DB noted that updating of London TravelWatch's Wikipedia page had been delayed. JC/DB

JC reported that the Policy and Safety Advisor had provided some temporary help in respect of London Underground issues and had accompanied her at a recent

meeting with Mike Brown, Managing Director London Underground. This meeting had been called to discuss London TravelWatch's rising concern about the impact on passengers of what seemed to be an increasing incidence of unplanned disruption on the network.

JC reminded members that the GLA's internal auditors had agreed that the implementation of the two actions arising from the audit of business continuity arrangements could be deferred to October 2011 when the final structure of the organisation would be known. Despite this, however, a request had been received recently from the GLA for London TravelWatch to report back at an earlier date. JC and BD will liaise on this with the current auditors. JC confirmed that a number of planned and unplanned tests had been carried out over the year and that a formal programme of testing had been scheduled. JC agreed to produce a short medium-term risk strategy by mid June 2011 that she can agree with the new internal auditors in advance of the July panel meeting. She would write to the GLA's Executive Director of Secretariat to confirm the position. DL offered to assist with this, if required. **JC**

Members asked for a note on comments they made at the last Governance Committee meeting held on 22 February 2011, on the interim report on the internal review, to be produced as a confidential aide memoire. **JC**

Members noted that they had received the exceptions report for the London TravelWatch workplan 2010-11, as requested.

JC explained that the Bus Surgery at Kingston had been delayed because it had been difficult to secure a date with the borough. The event is now expected to take place in quarter one of the next financial year. JC added that as explained in the exceptions report previously circulated, arrangements had been made early in the year to run a series of joint events with TfL. Subsequently, TfL had put this on hold due to budget pressures. The delay had been compounded by London TravelWatch's own staff changes and competing pressures.

JC confirmed that the Stratford event had been fixed for 24 March 2011 with support from L.B of Newham, TfL, National Express and East Anglia. A further event in L.B. of Ealing would be arranged for later in quarter one of 2011/12.

Members asked JC to note in the end of year report that the business plan had been based on an assumption of full staffing levels and TfL support with respect to these events which had not materialised due to changes internally and within TfL. Members suggested that JC could ask TfL to provide communications staff to support the running of future events. **JC**

4. Finance report

PE presented the Finance report for February 2011 which was noted. He highlighted that the forecast outturn on revenue expenditure for 2010/11 was a favourable variance of £55,000 largely due to a reduction in forecast staff hours and changes in the pay profile. He noted that the forecast reserves at year end were a surplus for the 2010/11 financial year of £69,000 again due to vacant posts. He noted that as requested at the last meeting, the composition of the reserves

had been noted on the monthly management accounts. Members thanked PE for the clear presentation of the accounts.

5. Chief Executive's report

JC informed members that in recent months the majority of her time had been taken up with work on the review. She said that there was a lack of people to whom she could delegate this kind of work and expressed concern that her day to day work was slipping because of this.

JC informed members that the individual estimates for redundancy payments had been circulated to staff and these had been calculated using standard terms. She reported that provisional job descriptions had been developed and be discussed at a staff meeting on 29 March 2011. JC explained that to ensure objectivity an external HR specialist would be assisting with the job matching exercise. The criteria for selecting staff for posts if there were more people than posts will be based on the criteria previously sent to staff in the frequently asked questions paper. Members expressed concern that the anticipated 25% budget cut may not be sufficient and that there were indications that London TravelWatch could be expected to make further cuts which could lead to more redundancies in the future. Members felt that in the interest of honesty and transparency staff should be made aware of this. **JC**

Members agreed to attend a special Governance Committee meeting on 21 April 2011, after the consultation period comes to an end to discuss the outcome of the consultation and to consider the recommendations of the Chief Executive. SG suggested that the Governance Committee could hold a special meeting after the Transport Services meeting on 5 April 2011, if required, in order to progress this matter. JC agreed to contact members if such a meeting was required. **JC**

6. London TravelWatch work plan 2010-11 as at 16 March 2011

Members considered the London TravelWatch work plan 2010-11 as at 16 March 2011 and discussed in particular the areas of the report highlighted as unlikely to meet the agreed milestones by the end of the financial year and the reasons for these. The areas included the following:-

- Conduct audits of the complaints handling systems of transport operators - A follow up audit with LOROL is to be scheduled and costed to take place early in the new financial year
- Arrange two passenger consultation or engagement events/ local or community events – Arrangements had been made but this had been put on hold by TfL due to budget pressures. Delay had been compounded by LTW staff changes. Two events have now been confirmed with a further event in quarter 1 of 2011-12. (see minute 3.7)
- Establish links with 100% of London boroughs – Members agreed that this target was no longer appropriate due to change of guidance from the Assembly Review and should be deleted.
- Monitor the impact of building Crossrail particularly in respect of its impact on bus passengers and the road network - Regular meetings with Crossrail to

monitor the impact of building works had been delayed slightly and the next was now scheduled for March 2011.

- Liaise regularly to avoid duplication of effort between ourselves and the Transport Committee – Members felt that this target had been met.
- Develop a closer relationship with TfL on research into transport users needs and experiences – SG had recently made contact with TfL who had agreed to make public all their research. Members considered that this target had now been met.
- Invest in training and development – Progress on the learning and development plan had been delayed due to the internal organisation review and proposed redundancy programme.
- Explore a market for our services – This had been delayed due to workload associated with the London Assembly and internal reviews. However, negotiations took place with Network Rail on the possible appointment of a secondee.

Members thanked GC for the report.

Members enquired about progress in producing the draft 2011/12 workplan. JC confirmed that she had held a meeting with senior staff recently to discuss this. Members said it was important to identify the work that London TravelWatch will not do and these could include:- unplanned work which takes the focus of the work plan, Route Utilisation Strategies, local borough work, and Local Implementation Plans (LiPs).

Members felt that there needed to be a greater focus on engaging with decision makers and service providers on behalf of transport users; and on raising the profile of London TravelWatch so that travellers feel they are represented. SL offered to produce a preliminary draft 2011/12 work plan for JC before the beginning of the financial year. JC agreed to liaise with her and send her the 3 year work plan, the current work plan and staff ideas to assist with this.

JC/SL

7. Any other business of which advance notice has been given

There were no other business matters.