
Minutes

Agenda item : 4
Drafted : 14.5.10

Minutes of a meeting of the Transport Service Committee held on 3 March 2010 at 6 Middle Street, London EC1

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Present

Members : Terry Bennett (Vice Chair); Gail Engert; Teena Lashmore; David Leibling; Lorna Reith (Chair); Sharon Grant (Chair, London TravelWatch)

Guests

David Millard	General Manager, Circle Line & Hammersmith & City Line, London Underground
James Tringham	Stakeholder Communication Executive, London Underground
Frank Ibe	General Manager, District Line, London Underground
Jerry Piper	Performance Manager, London Underground
Matt Ball	Stakeholder Communications, London Underground

Staff

Chief Executive (min. 7 to 11); Committee Administrator; Senior Policy Officer; Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer (min. 10)

Minutes

- 1 **Chair's introduction, pre-meeting announcements and apologies for absence**

The Chair welcomed visitors, members and staff to the fourth meeting of the committee, and made standard housekeeping announcements. No apologies were received.

- 2 **Declarations of interest**

No additional declarations of interest were made. A public record of members' interests may be found on the London TravelWatch website.

3 Minutes

On item 5 members requested that Transport for London (TfL) be asked to also explain what training was available for drivers and lessons learnt from London Underground.

Action : Committee Services

A member asked for clarification on the service the Waterloo and City would operate during the Olympics.

Action : Committee Services

The minutes of the meeting of held on 21 January 2010 were approved and signed for the record.

4 Matters arising (TS026)

21.1.10, Minute 3 (Southeastern timetable December 2009)

The Senior Policy Officer had not yet been able to meet Southeastern.

21.1.10, Minute 3 (Chiltern Railways' Christmas and New Year timetable information)

The Senior Policy Officer had received a response and Chiltern will try and harmonise their publication date with TfL.

A member suggested looking at Christmas and New Year services in November.

The Chair of London TravelWatch reported that she had attended a meeting of the Transport committee on Door-to-Door Transport Services. The data presented appeared not to show the same level of service that Dial-a-Ride presented to this committee in January. Users gave evidence of their experiences of Dial-a-Ride. Members felt that London TravelWatch should focus on the level of service provided to users of this service.

The Transport for London (TfL) performance report had been widely distributed and had been the third most popular document on the London TravelWatch website. The Senior Policy Officer noted that the London Rail station standards report would be published in April. Passenger Focus is currently doing research on what investment passengers want to see.

A member raised the amount of litter at Willesden Junction. The Senior Policy and Policy Officer had met with Network Rail to discuss their role as landlord and responsibilities for station standards. It was agreed that members would notify the Communications team about litter problems at stations. They could then contact the Lead Transport Officer in the relevant borough

5 Actions taken (TS027)

The paper was noted for the record.

6 Franchise consultations

The Senior Policy Officer gave a presentation on this item. His presentation may be viewed in full at <http://www.londontravelwatch.org.uk/document/4110/get>.

The Senior Policy Officer reported that three franchises currently being consulted on: Greater Anglia, Essex Thameside and Intercity East Coast (Stevenage to Kings Cross).

The only issue specifically related to London TravelWatch's remit for the Intercity East Coast franchise was the number of trains which stopped at Stevenage.

On the Greater Anglia franchise London TravelWatch would be making specific points about train performance and disruption from engineering works.

Some stations had a low frequency service, for example, Chingford. The rolling stock on this franchise is nearing its expiry. Whilst new rolling stock will be introduced on the Stansted Express Service, the stock used on that service will need adaption for inner suburban use. There is a need to minimise bus replacement services on this franchise and better information to passengers. A number of stations in the franchise required investment and minimum standards for stations needed to be drawn up based on the London Overground (LOROL) franchise and Better Rail Stations report (Department for Transport)

He was concerned that the franchise could invest in long distance flows as the payback in revenue would be more substantial. There might therefore be less investment at locations within London TravelWatch's remit. He outlined further topics that would form part of London TravelWatch's response, for example, Oyster would need to be available across the network.

The Great Eastern route of the franchise (Liverpool Street to Harold Wood/Upminster) would be covered by Crossrail services. He also felt that the increasing size and scope of Stratford station meant that it should be managed by either Network rail or TfL to resolve the current fragmentation.

Members discussed issues relating to Oyster and decided that this should be discussed at the Fares and Ticketing committee.

Action : Committee Services

They also felt that letters should be sent to the Transport Leads in each part of Local Government within franchise that falls under London TravelWatch's remit.

Action : Communications Team/Senior Policy Officer

The Senior Policy Officer concluded his presentation on this franchise by noting that he would be including a provision on industrial relations. Also he would propose the conversion of the Upminster to Romford to light rail when Crossrail begins. Both items were agreed by members. Members wanted greater incentives not to run buses during rail replacement works.

On the Essex Thameside franchise, the Department for Transport (DfT) were proposing no substantial changes. Security at stations in the evening changes is to be the main focus of the DfT. Security at stations in the evening had been highlighted as a concern by the Police and National Passenger Survey (NPS). Performance needs to now move to a right-time railway (no delays, trains arrive as scheduled at both the terminating location and intermediate points). Station standards minimum needed to be raised and an increase on the

frequency of service to Rainham. London TravelWatch wants to see Oyster available across the network.

Members agreed the proposed responses and thanked the Senior Policy Officer for his work.

7 Northern line upgrade

The Senior Policy Officer reported that he had received notification of the Northern Line closure programme. There will be 65 weekend closures from March 2010 to October 2011 and early closures with the service finishing at 10.30pm. He will be meeting London Underground to discuss the programme further along with the closure programme for the Jubilee Line. He would like to know what members felt and whether compensation should be given to passengers.

Members felt that compensation should not be given to passengers. The Chair of London TravelWatch believed that passengers should not pay more when closures took place. She also felt that there needed to be sufficient mitigating measures.

8 Extended Circle Line 3 month review

The Chair welcomed Mr Millard and Mr Tringham to the meeting. Their presentation may be viewed in full at <http://www.londontravelwatch.org.uk/document/4111/get>.

Mr Millard reported that the change had been made on Sunday 13 December 2009. The new pattern of service had increased the frequency of services to Hammersmith and Barking stations. A full comparison with the service prior to the change requires 6–12 months data.

On the Circle line Excess Waiting Time (EWT) and the effects of train unavailability has fallen since the changes were introduced EWT on the Metropolitan and District Lines had fallen. The improvement on the Circle and Hammersmith & City Lines had been more modest. The adverse weather periods since the new reduced the level of improvement. Mr Millard explained where the EWT was measured on each line and that gaps on the EWT graphs for each line was where there had been no service due to engineering work.

A member asked whether data was available on the number of trains which did not go into the right platform at Edgware Road. Mr Millard replied that 90–95% of trains went into the right platforms, and on some days it was higher. The member followed up by asking when drivers make announcements to passengers if they are not going into the right platform at Edgware Road. Mr Millard responded that drivers make the announcements before they enter the platform.

Mr Millard reported that the Circle and Hammersmith & City Lines platforms at Paddington (platforms 15 and 16) were taking 2 to 2 ½ minutes maximum to clear. London Underground had removed furniture to improve the flow of passengers and the platforms were clear before the next time train entered.

The signage at Edgware Road had been updated and staff were available at platforms to help passengers. A review would take place to see if the balance was correct. The Senior Policy Officer reported that London TravelWatch had received no complaints from passengers on the new pattern of service and Mr Millard noted he had received only a handful of complaints. Mr Tringham noted that the signage at Paddington had been updated (both National Rail and Underground).

Mr Millard reported that Crossrail works would begin at Paddington shortly, with lifts and staircases being installed and a new ticket hall being built. The platforms at Hammersmith station will also be lengthened.

Mr Millard concluded the presentation by noting that the frequency of service was now more robust and ran to time. A six month review of performance takes place in June. New trains would be phased in on the Metropolitan line from September, and on the Circle and Hammersmith & City line 2011, and District line 2013. A signalling upgrade was also scheduled, which will increase capacity. The power supply will also be increased by 20% to meet the new train's requirements.

The Senior Policy Officer asked what the effect has been on the percentage of kilometres operated. Mr Millard reported that this had increased 2-3% on the circle and Hammersmith & City Line. As the weather improved, Mr Millard expected further improvements.

The Chair thanked Mr Millard and Mr Tringham for attending and asked for an update in 6 months. Mr Tringham thanked the Chair and he would take into account the feedback London TravelWatch had provided. He also offered a further site visit to discuss concerns.

Action : Committee Services

9 District line performance

The Chair welcomed Mr Ibe, Mr Piper and Mr Ball to the meeting. Their presentation may be viewed in full at <http://www.londontravelwatch.org.uk/document/4113/get>.

Mr Ibe reported that the District Line is a complicated line. It shares track with other services, for example, with London Overground on the Richmond branch and with the Circle and Hammersmith & City Line. The line has old infrastructure, particularly the signalling system. The trains were refurbished in 2005. The excess journey time for the line had improved. The District line had been below the red line on the graph (which was positive) for most of the past year. The black line on the graph indicated the average performance of the line during the year. The two dips in performance were due to strike action (period 3) and adverse weather (period 9). The scheduled kilometres operated mirrored the excess journey time dips in performance. A large portion of the District line was in the open and was susceptible to weather conditions.

Mr Ibe went on to note that the Circle line timetable had a beneficial impact on the District line's performance (the two lines share track). He noted that some of the assets on the line, for example, signalling were over 60 years old. Mr Ibe noted that renewal and replacement work was taking place, to renew areas of track for a smoother ride and improve signals. He highlighted the effects of the Thames River on rails and ballast. Improvements to drainage had taken place. On real time information he was in favour of targeted information relevant for the individual. Mr Piper noted that on the District line the emphasis was on staff providing information to passengers. They had rolled out the Trackernet system to staff. The Trackernet system allows staff to know how trains are operating in an area. The Trackernet system allows staff to know how trains operating in an area. The challenge for staff is to think about what passengers need to know, particularly with weekend and evening closures.

Staff had been given radios and blackberries with Trackernet for them to use. This has been done as the current District Line systems are not compatible with newer systems. As the majority of the District line is in the open air it is easy to get good reception. Mr Ibe reported that new trains would come into operation from 2013. A new signalling system will be

installed (and integrated across all sub-surface lines) by end of 2018. The power supply will be upgraded so it is more reliable. Mr Piper noted that there new trains will mean improvements to the service.

Mr Ibe explained that the upgrade for e line will be completed by 2018. The closures programme on the District line will be either individual stations or weekends. There will not be long blockades. The Chair asked if the usage of blackberries was monitored. Mr Ibe replied that usage is monitored and data is received on a regular basis. The mystery shopper results for the line had shown that real time information is currently at its highest for 3 years.

The Senior Policy Officer asked what the policy was for staff announcements at stations Mr Ibe replied that station supervisors regularly checked Trackernet to see if there were any gaps in Service. If there were gaps in service, staff are asked to make announcements. If there are not sufficient staff in a station, they will make announcements during peak hours, for example, Aldgate East.

A member asked what the formula was for ongoing maintenance. Mr Ibe reported that they work on a risk based system. Therefore, they concentrate on assets that are more likely to fail and test them more. Signals are reviewed every 12 weeks. If they fail more often, they will look at them more closely. A member asked about recent District line performance. Mr Piper noted that recent performance had been poor since last December. This was due to a number of problems on the Wimbledon branch and the adverse weather.

10 Reducing the number of buses along Oxford Street

The Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer began by explaining the background to this item. Historically TfL planning guidance is based on a range of criteria, for example, responding to demand, etc. In recent years negative publicity has taken place around the number of buses in Oxford Street and the business lobby group London first wanted a reduction in buses in Oxford Street. The London Assembly has carried out a scrutiny on the number of buses in Oxford Street.

The decision had been made to reduce 10% of buses using Oxford Street this year and next year. The route 113 has been the most high profile service to be withdrawn (it will now terminate at Marble Arch). London TravelWatch has received an appeal regarding route 113. Route 15 is being withdrawn from Oxford Street (and will terminate at Regent Street), with the 159 being extended to Paddington Basin. There would be changes to route 25 when debendification takes place (some services will stop at Holborn Circus and others at Oxford Circus). Routes 8 and 55 will also change.

London TravelWatch had not been consulted on the principal of this change. If Oxford Street is emptied of buses, taxis and other traffic will take its place (as the KPMG report noted). Buses take up 42% of traffic movements in Oxford Street, with taxis taking up 37%. Demand for travel is high and curtailing buses will inconvenience people. The bus is the most efficient user of road space and the solution to central London's problems. He thanked Ms Hall for attending the meeting for this item. TfL are going to review the effects of the changes after the 20% reduction. The Chair asked if there was any evidence on whether the people using the taxis were shoppers or travelling elsewhere. The Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer believed that they were travelling elsewhere. Ms Hall noted that TfL are working to improve access to Oxford Street and make it easier to assign people to taxis. She also noted that there were only 2 or 3 major east – west road arteries in London (it is the same for buses and taxis).

The Chair of London TravelWatch expressed concern that these changes had gone through with no major challenges. The most efficient user of road space in London was the bus. Bus passengers were also customers for shops in this area. The Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer noted that John Lewis is now operating its own bus service to and from the Oxford Street location.

Members express concern that no feedback from passengers was being fed into the process and that they may now pay twice for journeys where they used to pay once. The Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer would meet with TfL to discuss this further.

11 Any other business

There was no other business.

12 Resolution to move into confidential session

The Committee resolved, under section 15(b) of schedule 18 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999, that by reason of the confidential nature of the next following item/s, it was desirable in the public interest that the public should be excluded from this part of the meeting.

In confidential session, the Committee reviewed the meeting.

The next Transport Services Committee meeting will be held on 28 May 2010.

13 Glossary

DfT	Department for Transport
LOROL	London Overground
LUL	London Underground
NPS	National Passenger Survey
TfL	Transport for London