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## Minutes

Agenda item : 5  
Drafted : 10.5.09

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**Minutes of the meeting of the Access to Transport Committee on 5 May 2009  
held at 6 Middle Street, London EC1**

### Contents

- 1 Chair's introduction, announcements and apologies for absence**
- 2 Declarations of interest**
- 3 Minutes**
- 4 Matters Arising**
- 5 Actions taken**
- 6 Euston to St Pancras pedestrian interchange**
- 7 Bus Stop Accessibility**
- 8 Any other business**
- 9 Resolution to move into confidential session**
- 10 Glossary**

### Present

#### Members

Onjali Bodrul, Kevin Davis, Gail Engert (Chair), Andrew Probert, Lorna Reith, Sharon Grant (London TravelWatch Chair)

#### Guests

Hannah Brown	Traffic Planner, Street Policy, London Borough of Camden
Scott Lester	Head of Responsive Delivery, Transport for London (TfL)
Simon Mouncey	Streets and Surface Liaison Manager, TfL

#### Staff

Chief Executive, Committee Administrator, Senior Committee Administrator, Streets and Surface Transport Officer

**Note :** In these minutes, 'previous Committees' refers to the Transport Accessibility Committee, the Access to Health Care Facilities Taskforce and the Community Safety Taskforce combined, whose remits are henceforth the sole concern of this Access to Transport Committee.

## Minutes

### **1 Chair's introduction, announcements and apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Sarah Pond.

### **2 Declarations of interest**

There were no additional declarations of interest.

### **3 Minutes**

Two amendments to the Transport Accessibility Committee minutes :

- (i) minute 82 the Chair of London TravelWatch gave apologies only for lateness.
- (ii) On page 3, third paragraph should read 'the Chair of the meeting' rather than 'London TravelWatch Chair'.
- (iii) the minute numbers were out on these minutes : there were two number 66s.

On Minute 90, TfL had suggested a speaker on streets audits. It was agreed that this would be pursued and would be added to the matters arising. The Chair also requested feedback from TfL on how much accessibility on the street realm was being encouraged.

**Action : Committee Services**

Members also requested asked for update on Dial-a-Ride and agreed that, as this needed ongoing monitoring it should be included in the work plan. [Post meeting note: this work has been transferred to the Transport Services Committee remit]

The Committee agreed that the confidential minutes presented at the meeting were to be made public. These were for meetings of the following committees and taskforces :

- a. Community Safety Task Force held on 18 November 2008
- b. Transport Accessibility Committee held on 17 December 2008
- c. Access to Health Care Facilities held on 26 February 2009.

A letter to Kingston hospital had been sent (minute 66), and this was the template for a best practice short report to be sent to all hospitals. The Streets and Surface Transport Officer would present this at the next meeting of the Committee. The Committee agreed that this work should be publicised as widely as possible and that a press release on good travel plan practice would be released to promote it.

**Action : Communications Officer**

**4 Matters arising (AT01)**

It was agreed to remove LINKs from the list (AHTF 20) 23.10.07, as this work was dependent on larger scale development of the LINKs programme

The issue of lift signage at stations was raised and TfL committed to assisting the Committee by first outlining the standards and criteria for lift and step-free access. Members also observed that there was a link with the current roll-out of the Access for All programme and so considered that this a good moment to pursue the matter further.

**Action : TfL**

**5 Actions taken (AT02)**

It was agreed to add item 2.3 on the distribution of leaflets to hospitals should be transferred to the Matters Arising report for follow-up.

**6 Euston to St Pancras pedestrian interchange**

The Chair welcomed Hannah Brown from Camden Council to the meeting to discuss the possibility of a marked pedestrian route between Euston and Kings Cross St Pancras stations. The Streets and Surface Transport Officer gave a presentation detailing the proposal, which is available to view on the London TravelWatch website.

Key stakeholders in the matter are Camden, TfL (although not a highway authority), Network Rail, London and Continental, and Eurostar; Eurostar had already expressed an interest in the scheme. The biggest single issue in implementing this scheme would be the security issue of controlling the back entrance of Euston. The route would be signed in both directions, serving passengers from both Euston and Kings Cross St Pancras.

It was known that station and rail operator staff were already informally using the route, but Eurostar had advised its staff not to use the Brill Road route for safety reasons. Lighting is a key issue on both Phoenix Road and Brill Road, but it is anticipated that this would be addressed by the overall redevelopment of the area. The scheme would also address a separate issue about trolleys migrating between stations; level access would provide a way to wheel luggage between the two stations, as well as those with buggies, mobility scooters etc.

Camden Council already aspires to connect the two stations – indeed it is included in one of its planning briefs - but along a different route. Camden's suggestion is to cut a new route in a straight line between Euston and St Pancras, but this is complicated by the need to acquire land, and so is a long term plan that may well take a generation to deliver.

The Streets and Surface Transport Officer pointed out that the fully signed and marked footway does not have to be done at once; improving the footway alone would benefit everyone. Members also suggested that it could be marked in the same way as routes around the Barbican Estate which uses a yellow painted line, or footprints.

Ms Brown confirmed that Camden Council would in the first instance endorse London TravelWatch's quick and relatively cheap suggestion and include it in next year's bid for walking, to start the process of finding funding for the project.

The Committee thanked Hannah Brown and the Streets and Surface Transport Officer for their work on this, and sanctioned officers proceeding with further work on this project.

## **7 Bus Stop Accessibility**

Simon Mouncey and Scott Lester were welcomed to the meeting. Mr Mouncey spoke about signage and services of bus stops, and Mr Lester on the bus stop accessibility programme and how the 25% of stops that do not meet standards will be addressed.

On the key accessibility issue of signage, Mr Mouncey suggested that it was difficult to improve on the current posters and 'spider maps' which had been developed in recent years and rolled out across the capital. However there would be some new information solutions with the 'Countdown 2' system when rolled out in 2010. This would also make use of Mobile telecommunications and that Legible London is also working on signage to bus stops and stations. The Chair commented that signage for buses was a key issue at major interchanges.

In addition, London Buses' Quality Incentive Contracts (QICs) had been upgraded to now there is QICs2. The original QICs were introduced in 2001 as a way of managing independently run bus services. Through the QICs contracts, 35,000 service surveys were completed each year. QICs2 would build on this, and includes a mystery shopping element to specifically capture driver behaviour.

2700 assessments were currently in progress, covering detailed aspects of driver behaviour, including professionalism, uniform, attendance to passengers when boarding, allowing time and completing all transactions before moving off, ticket management, handling disputes, not chatting to passengers next to the cab, and smoothness of driving. Scores are added up by garage and operator, with financial penalties for those who show no improvement.

In terms of wider training, each driver receives five weeks' worth of training on accessibility, and the subsequent BTEC course covers customer services. They are also given separate Independent Disability Advisory Group (IDAG)-approved disability training, which is constantly refreshed whilst they are on the job. The training also includes specific questions regarding passenger communications en route to inform about delays and diversions. Every driver is given

a copy of the 'Big Red Book', and it was pointed out that this did indeed contain a policy regarding guidance for drivers to communicate to passengers when stopping a service short.

However members queried how effective this was, as lack of driver communication it is a major issue for passengers, particularly when the route is curtailed. It was noted that on the underground there has been a marked change in culture with drivers increasingly confident about making clear announcements to passengers. Members felt that in giving instructions to the driver, the garage should also remind the driver to announce to passengers what was happening on the route, and to issue transfer tickets.

TfL confirmed that it was addressing the level of communication available with Central Communications team, which is due to merge with the London Travel Control Centre in 2010. This would fill in the information gaps in these instances, with improved communications for passengers. TfL also resolved to return on the question of whether this specific type of communication was included in training for bus drivers.

**Action : TfL**

Members also suggested that incentives for good performance would be better than penalising the bus company. TfL acknowledged this, and confirmed that drivers do get rewarded but that this was to a large extent dependent on the practice of the local operators.

Scott Lester then presented on bus stop accessibility. His presentation may be found in full on the London TravelWatch website. Please refer to this for detailed statistics, in particular the first four slides for percentages of bus stops which are accessible, and the definition of what constitutes accessibility.

Overall, 41% of bus stops are now fully accessible, 57% of which are on the Transport for London Road Network (TLRN), totalling 2,500 stops. Of the 17,476 bus stops across the London Boroughs, 39% were fully accessible.

One of major challenges in making bus stops accessible was the kerb height at the stop. The bus needs to be able to pull parallel to the kerb so the ramp may be deployed at 8 degrees, so the kerb needs to be 100mm or four inches. Clearly this has immense implications and requires buy-in from all boroughs to undertake works to make sure that all bus stop kerb heights fit these criteria. However, TfL provides funding for boroughs to implement mayoral transport strategy – boroughs may bid each year for funds to improve roads/ kerb heights etc.

Members appreciated this point, but were also concerned about non-wheelchair related accessibility issues, such as seats at bus stops, or lighting, or even a shelter. A high proportion of people with disability issues are not wheelchair users – so seats and shelter at bus stops are what seem to define accessibility.

Mr Lester informed the meeting that the appropriate Highways authority is responsible for the bus stand, (with the exception of TLRN) and in most cases TfL is responsible for the stop and the shelter. TfL undertook to provide figures if possible on this. Scott offered to go back and find the number of stops with shelters and seats. Members also requested more information on solar powered bus stops.

**Action : TfL**

Hail and Ride – there are historical problems with accessibility on these routes. Things don't appear to have changed much – it's a related issue – accessibility from lack of bus stops. Members asked whether there was an accessibility programme for hail and ride.

Mr Lester said that resident groups had requested no stops on Hail and Ride routes. Increased kerb height would help in general, but people do tend to congregate at corners, so it could be

possible, provided the place was marked by lines etc. He also noted that the issue of shelters was complicated by the fact that planning permission was required for their installation.

The Streets and Surface Transport Officer asked what London TravelWatch could do to encourage those boroughs which will have difficulty applying the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) to improve accessibility at their bus stops? How can we put pressure on them?

TfL advised that the best way is to meet the local counsellors, but be aware that there may be some misconception in Boroughs that road clearways 'sterilise' parking spaces. The Streets and Surface Transport Officer agreed - for example, in Waltham Forest residents were determined that fixed stops were not going to be installed in their streets. The same issues in terms of parking were being raised now, post DDA, as were before, and it seemed that TfL continued to negotiate rather than talking about the legal requirements.

Mr Lester confirmed that at present TfL was at this stage interested only in negotiation, and in completing what work was actually possible, to get even 60-80% compliance, and that TfL takes the approach that engineering and design can create solutions. .

The Streets and Surface Transport Officer recommended that the Committee should champion this topic at a legal level if necessary; the Deputy Chair of the Board suggested that if London TravelWatch wished to pursue the legal challenge line, we would need to discover exactly where the problems lie. The Chair thanked Messrs Mouncey and Lester for their time.

## **8 Any other business**

There were no items of other business.

## **9 Resolution to move into confidential session**

The Committee 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 is desirable in the public interest that the public should be excluded for the remainder of the meeting.

In confidential session, the Committee approved the confidential minutes of its meeting held on 22 April 2009, and discussed its future workplan schedule in some detail.

The next meeting of the Access to Transport Committee will be on 7 July 2009 at London TravelWatch offices.

## **10 Glossary**

DDA Disability Discrimination Act

LINKs Local Involvement Networks (a government health and social care initiative)

TfL Transport for London

TLRN Transport for London Road Network