
Minutes

Agenda item : 4
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Minutes of a meeting of the Transport Service Committee held on 20 May 2009 at 6 Middle Street, London EC1

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Present

Members: Terry Bennett, Gail Engert, Teena Lashmore, David Leibling (Vice Chair), Andrew Probert, Lorna Reith (Chair), Sharon Grant

Guests

Julie Dixon	Head of Stakeholder Management – TfL London Rail
Matt Winfield	Manager, Stakeholder Relations, Transport for London (TfL)
James Tringham	Stakeholder Communications, London Underground
Tony Matthews	Performance Manager for Hammersmith and Circle Lines, London Underground

Three members of the public.

Staff

Chief Executive; Committee Administrator; Rail and Underground Policy Officer; Research and Development Policy Assistant (minute 8); Senior Committee Administrator

Minutes

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

The Chair welcomed visitors, members and staff to the first meeting of the new committee, and made standard housekeeping announcements. All members were present.

- 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 Matters Arising (TS001)

It was suggested that para 2.1 which listed the Docklands Light Railway presenters' recommendations from the Board meeting on 17 March 2009 be included on the list of requests for research by TfL, and they were all seen as examples of good practice to be taken forward.

4 London Overground Closures from Autumn 2009

The Chair welcomed Julie Dixon, for a discussion on how passenger information, alternative travel arrangements, and dovetailing arrangements with other lines/modes will be managed for the duration of forthcoming London Overground closures. The full presentation to accompany this item may be found on the [London TravelWatch website](#).

The main sections affected will be:

Wembley – Queens Park Sundays Sept 2009, 1 week Dec – Jan 2009 / 10, 14
Sundays Jan – April 2010

Gospel Oak - Stratford 16 weeks Dec 2009 – April 2010

Clapham Junction – Olympia / Willesden 9 weekends April – June 2010 .

An overview and schedule for works and testing of rolling stock was given; new trains were undergoing testing and scheduled to be in full operation by spring 2010. Note that the launch date is early July 2009 rather than the 3 June date listed on the slides.

Network Rail would deliver the new infrastructure, whilst TfL handles community liaison and information sharing. 190 new signals were to be installed, with 7000m of new track and 14000 m of new overhead line. The longest single closure was to be Gospel Oak to Stratford, for a total of 16 weeks in 2010.

The key issues were to keep passengers informed both ahead of and during the work, about alternative routes. TfL was already negotiating the integration of road networks with the closures, and ticket acceptance on alternative routes. It was unclear as to whether the Wembley – Queens Park closure (Dec 09 – Jan-Apr 10) would affect the line into Euston, or how it would affect the Bakerloo line, and Ms Dixon was asked to return a definitive answer on this to the Committee.

Action : TfL to respond

TfL's previous experience of managing similar works had indicated that newspaper advertising of closures information was not picked up by passengers, but that passenger information sessions at stations were successful in getting the message across. To this end TfL was also working closely with schools, colleges, large employers and hospitals to accommodate staff in particular for the duration of the closures. Major events at Wembley were included in the planning.

The Chair thanked Ms Dixon and invited comments and questions from members and the floor. Members suggested that an 020- or 0800- number was preferable to an expensive 0845- number as most people would use their mobiles to call the customer service helpline.

Action : TfL to respond

Members also queried whether local hospitals would include travel leaflets with appointment notices/cards to accommodate infrequent passengers or those with access issues?

Action : TfL to respond

Referring to long term plans, the Rail and Underground Policy Officer reminded Ms. Dixon of London TravelWatch's aspiration for the Euston-Watford service to be 4 trains per hour (tph) rather than TfL's intention to continue the present 3 tph.

He also suggested that, whilst London TravelWatch does not usually comment on the detail of the design of alternative bus services (because in order to do so it would require specific local expertise and greater staff resources given the overall volume of rail replacement services), in this case it might be sensible to do so, given that the Overground services to be replaced are successful precisely because they cut through complex road networks, providing a unique line of transport through the area. Previous consultations with local user groups on similar projects had been very successful. One of the reasons to include this on the agenda was to give members the opportunity to become more involved in the design of the replacement routes, particularly when replacements were during weekdays, at peak times. The Chair duly asked whether in this case it was appropriate for the Committee to become so involved but members did not take up the invitation.

There was then a query about the effect on freight trains, given that the statistics indicated better freight performance at peak times than off peak. TfL was aware of this paradox, and was particularly keen to see the electrification of the Gospel Oak to Barking line, which would give more flexibility for freight, at an estimated cost of £40m.

A member of the public asked about the numerous outlets for provision of weekend closures information, and that sources sometimes contradicted each other. Ms Dixon acknowledged this as a valid point, and agreed that compared with the standard of information provided by London Underground, London Overground had some way to go.

5 Extended Circle line (TS002)

The Chair welcomed James Tringham and Tony Matthews to present on and discuss on the implementation plans for the Extended Circle Line.

At the beginning of this item the Rail and Underground Policy Officer paid tribute to the former Head of Service Development at London Underground, Phil McKenna, who was the prime mover behind the extended Circle line proposal. London TravelWatch had been sad to hear that Mr. McKenna had suffered a stroke in March 2009 and passed away a few weeks before this meeting. During 25 years with London Underground he had been responsible for major changes in timetable philosophy, with outer London in particular benefitting from much improved service frequencies. He had worked closely with London TravelWatch and its predecessors and always took our comments seriously.

The full presentation to accompany this item may be found on the London TravelWatch website. Benefits for passengers would include additional services on the Hammersmith branch, and Circle line performance would improve. This was only the first stage of the upgrade of the Circle and Hammersmith lines, preparing the network for future infrastructure work which will be happening later.

LUL had taken up London TravelWatch's suggestion to run trial operations over three weekends in June (2) and October (1), which would be carefully monitored, and provide

experiential and signalling system data. The second and third trials would function as fixing points having gathered data from the first trial.

Key messages for passengers throughout the trials will be localised. At Euston Square and King's Cross for example, passengers will be told that all westbound trains go to Hammersmith and so they must change at Edgware Road to continue around the Circle Line. Additional staff would be provided to assist passengers for the initial period of the permanent service, with a view taken after that as to whether staff would be better deployed elsewhere.

The Chair queried whether Paddington station had the capacity to cope with the flow of the interchange. Mr Tringham responded that it would be busy, but no worse than at present. He agreed that signage is crucial, but walking distances between lines would actually be improved. Sign options would be shared, with one in the London Underground style, the other in National Rail style, and where possible, maps located close to signs. At Hammersmith, the signage will also be altered to include the Circle line.

At Edgware Road, announcements would be continued and interchanges made clear, including advance announcements on trains for those arriving from each direction. Congestion control strategies were also being planned. Members were keen that passengers at Paddington (Praed St.) should be advised to wait for trains giving cross-platform interchange at Edgware Road rather than taking one that would require use of the stairs. They also indicated that train drivers had a part to play in this, and gave the example that passengers with baggage are better served by step free interchanges, but as they do not consider themselves as disabled may not check disabled access.

Announcements at Aldgate about the first train out were also to be improved. Inner Circle trains will change their destination to Hammersmith as they pass through Aldgate.

LUL agreed that passenger information was critical to the success of the changes and to the Rail and Underground Policy Officer's request that London TravelWatch would be invited to comment on the draft of the scripts being given to drivers to help ensure they are meaningful to passengers. The Rail and Underground Policy Officer also suggested that automated announcements be linked to train arrivals at Paddington, and station staff should be better informed.

As there is no major infrastructure work this project is relatively inexpensive. It is a cheap way of benefiting passengers, even though a lot of expertise and resources were being channelled into it in the short term. Regarding the Metropolitan line, there would be some minor changes in the peaks, with the provision of an additional train every hour to Aldgate, and a slight increase on the trunk service between Wembley Park and Baker Street.

Members asked how the sign changes at stations would be managed. LU indicated that some will change overnight e.g. tube maps. Maps inside trains take 2-3 days to change, and stations sign changes take a bit longer. The usual process is that the new signs are installed with a temporary paper image of the old one over the top, which is then peeled off at the appropriate time. It has been found that this works well in that it alerts passengers to the prospect of signs changing.

Members raised the point that the eastbound sample station diagram of the Circle line needed to be looped back up – James Tringham agreed to take this back for consideration, and to provide alternative diagram proposals as soon as possible for London TravelWatch's comment.

Action : LUL

Members expressed concern about how passengers travelling eastbound on the Hammersmith branch would know whether an approaching train is Circle line or for Plaistow or Barking, and suggested that dot matrix indicators (DMIs) be installed to improve information in this area.

The Chair and members thanked the speakers for their time and detailed response to queries.

6 Underground / Docklands Light Railway performance indicators (TS003)

The Chair introduced this as looking at what information is available, what is necessary for us to do performance management exercise.

The purpose here was to select a relatively small number of indicators which will give the performance information required. Masses of data are available, and may be seen in almost any format. What we want needs to be coordinated with other committees and so will go to the Board once this committee has made its selection.

Members discussed what they needed to see in performance data and advised the Rail and Underground Officer as follows :

- Excess journey times
- Charter refunds – another measure of performance
- Number of complaints received – to compare with our appeals
- Difference between inner and outer London stations services – eg ticket machines; cleanliness; individual station performance;
- Crowding
 - Number of station closures for crowding
- Asset performance
 - Escalators and lifts – e.g. how many have been out of commission for more than three months / six months etc? and by line or by station
 - Information systems; platform indicators; CCTV
 - Ticket machines
- Performance per line
- Customer satisfaction
 - By line for :
 - Cleanliness
 - Graffiti
 - Litter

The preference was for 3 years' comparison data to allow for analysis of trends.

7 Buses Quality of Service performance indicators (TS004)

This was much the same exercise as item 6, looking specifically at buses. A huge amount of detailed data is available - e.g. there was almost a 10% difference in perception of Safety and security for example was much lower where there was no shelter.

It was suggested that this should also be a quarterly report. Looking at the following :

- Customer service ones – see the report that was presented in this paper? This gives quarterly info and is presented quickly after the event.

- Early bus turnaround
- Complaints profile - Number of complaints received – to compare with our appeals
- Perception of safety and security per route may be available.
- 10 best and worst routes for :
 - Excess Waiting time
 - dead mileage – is this something that TfL does already?
 - Safety and security (incl in the customer satisfaction paper TS004)
- Three year period was preferred to monitor trains
- Reports by geographical area and operator were seen to be useful.
- Split by day and night routes

8 Quarterly National Rail Performance Report

Members indicated that this is a useful report, but needs to be reconsidered in terms of its call on London TravelWatch's resources.

It was agreed to discontinue any information on inter-city train operating companies (TOCs) and any others which are not part of London TravelWatch's key priorities. The Research and Development Policy Assistant indicated that producing graphs is not time consuming, but it does take time to chase train operators for their statistics and commentaries.

Members agreed with the suggestion that we should focus our resources on identifying operators who are not doing well and focus on those when asking for commentaries. If the worst were primarily under Passenger Focus, the information should be passed to them.

We are more interested in London-specific issues and include DfT data on crowding.

Members asked about the distribution of the report, and were told that it goes to all TOCS and all London Assembly members.

All agreed it would be better to do quarterly report, based on exceptions, and that publication should not be held up where information is not supplied on time. The research and development team would incorporate this into its workplan.

9 Southeastern timetable changes and new services – December 2009

A new timetable for the entire Southeastern network was due to be introduced in December 2009 with the start of domestic high speed services from Kent. Commuters on this new route would be from outside London TravelWatch's area, although Stratford station is within it.

Some existing commuting from Kent will transfer away from existing routes, releasing capacity to improve metro services.

The Rail and Underground Policy Officer explained that several years ago, the then Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) consulted on and produced a specification for this new timetable. Since then Southeastern had been converting the new specification into a new timetable, taking on board controversial or unpopular issues and making some changes for the better

The net result of the new timetable would be that almost all lines in the London TravelWatch area would be either no worse, or better, both in peak and off-peak. Notable improvements were noted : the Orpington – Grove Park section would become 4 tph off-peak , and have some peak trains via Lewisham, thus enabling interchange for DLR to Canary Wharf.

The most controversial part of the original SRA plan, from London TravelWatch's point of view, was that all trains on the Greenwich line would have gone to Cannon Street, all day. Southeastern has now found a way of continuing the Charing X service on that line in the peaks. The downsides are :

- That this will only apply in the peaks – off peak will all go to Cannon Street albeit at 6 tph compared with 4 tph now.
- The Woolwich - Blackheath section currently has 2 tph off-peak (which will remain) and 3 tph in the peaks. This link will cease in the peaks. The main users on this section of line are those going to Lewisham. These passengers will be able to go via Greenwich and change there to the DLR. However those going to Blackheath would face difficulties.

The Rail and Underground Policy Officer observed that - given the overall improvements - it would not be realistic at this stage to make this a major issue.

Members asked if there would be later last trains. The Rail and Underground Policy Officer said he thought not, but would check and report back. (Post-meeting note – Last trains in the metro area will be largely the same as now.).

10 Any other business

None.

11 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 is desirable in the public interest that the public should be excluded from the meeting.

In confidential session the Committee reviewed the meeting, planned a site visit to the extended Circle Line and discussed the Committee's forthcoming work plan.

The next Transport Services Committee meeting will be held on 14 July 2009.

12 Glossary

LOROL	London Overground Rail Operations Limited
TfL	Transport for London
LUL	London Underground Limited
DLR	Docklands Light Railway
tph	trains per hour
TOC	train operating company