
Secretariat memorandum

Author : Vincent Stops

Agenda item: 14
Ref: PC078
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Confidential: London Assembly letter, 27 November 2015

1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To provide information to help members decide how to respond to the letter appended to this report.
- 1.2 Two other reports (PC078A and PC078B) provide detailed information about road safety and cycle safety. This report gives additional information on specific points raised in the letter.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That members consider the reports and then agree how to respond to the letter from the Chair of the Transport Committee.

3 Points made in the Assembly letter

3.1 **“London TravelWatch has not sufficiently taken the interests of cyclists into consideration.”**

London TravelWatch has previously conducted a stakeholder survey as part of its work to publish our report Cycling in London. We have attended various TfL meetings over a number of years to discuss cycling and cycling safety that are also attended by the London Cycling Campaign, Cycling Tourist Club and many others. On occasion, representatives of the London Cycling Campaign have attended our meetings to give their perspective. We understand what these campaign groups are trying to achieve. However, this has to be balanced against the interest of others using London's streets, particularly pedestrians, bus users and disabled people and our stance on road safety.

3.2 **“London TravelWatch may also want to consider how it gathers the views of London's cyclists to ensure they are reflected fully in your work.”**

London TravelWatch does consider their views, along with those of other transport users. However, we may wish to review whether we want to enhance our activities in this area.

3.3 More work could be done into the collision hotspots such as Oxford Street
Oxford Street is the busiest street in the UK and has many bus services. One would therefore expect it to be a street with high levels of collisions. Local highway authorities along with the Metropolitan Police Service have a duty to investigate collisions on their roads and to implement programmes to address these. This typically involves the investigation of historic clusters (hotspots) of collisions. Local highway authorities will have lists of collision hotspots though they are not published widely. If London TravelWatch was to undertake such work it may require significant resources to do anything more useful than is already done.

4 Equality impacts

4.1 Cycle safety affects both cyclists and non-cyclists in different ways. A balance has to be drawn by policy makers and designers.

5 London TravelWatch priority

5.1 Members have asked that the Board considers the London Assembly letter dated. Members are advised that the primary (legal) responsibility for investigating collisions lies with the local highway authorities and the Metropolitan Police Service whom are both funded to undertake this work.

6 Legal powers

6.1 Section 248 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 places upon London TravelWatch (as the London Transport Users Committee) a duty to consider - and where it appears to the Committee to be desirable, to make recommendations with respect to - any matter affecting the functions of the Greater London Authority or Transport for London which relate to transport (other than of freight).

7 Financial implications

7.1 There is no financial implication for London TravelWatch as a result of this report.

LONDONASSEMBLY

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM, Chair of the Transport Committee

Stephen Locke
Chair, London TravelWatch
169 Union Street
London SE1 0LL

London Assembly
City Hall
The Queen's Walk
London SE1 2AA

27 November 2015

Dear Stephen,

Cycling safety in London

I am writing to follow up our discussion at the Transport Committee meeting on 10 November. Thanks again to you and Janet Cooke for attending and answering Members' questions. On surface transport to Heathrow, which we touched upon briefly at the meeting, the Committee has now made its own submission to the Government and House of Commons Transport Committee, which has been published on our website.¹

The main issue we discussed at the meeting was road safety. Cycling organisations in London have long campaigned to improve the safety of London's roads, and in particular to help reduce the number of collisions between buses and cyclists. Some concerns have been expressed to us that London TravelWatch has not sufficiently taken the interests of cyclists into consideration, when determining the organisation's priorities and policy positions.

The Transport Committee is aware that London TravelWatch has conducted research on cycling safety, and does seek to represent the views of all transport users in London. As we discussed, there are perhaps a number of areas where you may wish to consider how you could enhance your approach in this area.

For instance, the way bus collisions are reported may need to be improved, with Londoners more able to hold operators to account for their safety record. Enhanced information from London TravelWatch could help enable this to happen, as well as feeding in to improved training of drivers. More detailed work could also be done into the collision hotspots (such as Oxford Street) and the balance between the safety of vulnerable road users and the performance of the bus network. London TravelWatch may also want to consider how it gathers the views of London's cyclists, to ensure they are reflected fully in your work, for example to inform responses to consultations on new cycling schemes and the positive drive by the Mayor to reach 'Go Dutch' standards for infrastructure.

¹ <http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor-assembly/london-assembly/publications/surface-access-upgrades-essential-for-a-third-heathrow-runway>

LONDONASSEMBLY

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM, Chair of the Transport Committee

We believe London TravelWatch has a vital part to play in helping identify ways to improve road safety in London for all road users, and hugely value your role in representing all transport users including those on bike and foot. We would welcome any further thoughts you have on this topic, in addition to your answers at the committee meeting.

I look forward to future discussions on this topic, and also reviewing your latest progress report at our next committee meeting.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Valerie Shawcross". The signature is written in a cursive style and is enclosed within a thin, dotted rectangular border.

Valerie Shawcross CBE AM
Chair of the Transport Committee