
Secretariat memorandum

Author: Chris Wise

Agenda item: 13
PC088
Drafted: 17.02.16

Current proposals on changes to ticket office hours and ticket office closures

1 Purpose of report

- 1.1. To update members on proposals by four train operators to change ticket office hours or close ticket offices under Schedule 17 of the Ticketing and Settlements Agreement (TSA). The train operators are Great Western Railway, Abellio Greater Anglia, Govia Thameslink Railway and London Underground Limited.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1. That the report is received for information.

3 Great Western Railway stations

- 3.1. In December 2015, Great Western Railway (GWR) submitted a proposal to change the ticket office hours at some of its stations under Schedule 17 of the TSA. Of the affected stations, eight are within London TravelWatch's remit. These stations are (in order from Paddington Station):
- Hanwell
 - Southall
 - Hayes and Harlington
 - West Drayton
 - Iver
 - Langley
 - Slough
 - Windsor & Eton Central
- 3.2. London TravelWatch held a consultation on the proposed changes between 5 and 31 January 2016. We received two responses to the consultation; one objection relating to Hanwell Station and one partial objection relating to Slough Station. We also requested data from GWR about the number and type of ticket transactions at these stations.
- 3.3. Following the consultation, London TravelWatch raised its concerns on 2 February 2016 with GWR for two of the eight affected stations, namely Langley and Slough.
- 3.4. **Langley:** It was proposed that the ticket office close at 14:30 hrs on Saturdays, instead of the current 15:00 hrs closure. However, we noted from the data provided that, on

most Saturdays, there were a very large number of ticket issues between 14:30 hrs and 15:00 hrs – 10 issues on average in 30 minutes, when the Department for Transport (DfT) would expect 6 or fewer for this period before considering closure.

- 3.5. **Slough:** It was proposed that the ticket office open at 07:30 hrs instead of the current 07:00 hrs on Saturdays and close at 21:00 hrs instead of the current 21:30 hrs on Saturdays and Sundays. However, we noted from the data provided that, on most Saturdays, there were a very large number of ticket issues between 07:00 hrs and 07:30 hrs, and 21:00 hrs and 21:30 hrs – 14 issues on average in both 30 minute periods, when the DfT standard would be 6 or fewer for this period before considering closure. On Saturdays, similarly when the ticket office was open between 21:00hrs and 21:30hrs there were an average of 10 issues between 21:00 hrs and 21:30 hrs.
- 3.6. London TravelWatch had no objection to the changes to the remaining six stations as the number of ticket office transactions at these stations are below the 12-per-hour (or 3-per-fifteen minutes) threshold set by the DfT.
- 3.7. As a result of the issues raised by London TravelWatch about Langley and Slough, GWR agreed on 3 February 2016 to withdraw their proposal to change the ticket office hours at these stations. Therefore, the ticket office hours for these two stations will remain as is.

4 Abellio Greater Anglia stations

- 4.1. On 2 February 2016, Abellio Greater Anglia (AGA) submitted a proposal to change the ticket office hours at three of its stations within London TravelWatch's remit under Schedule 17 of the TSA. These stations are (in order from Liverpool Street Station):
 - Harlow Town
 - Sawbridgeworth
 - Bishop's Stortford
- 4.2. The proposed changes affect Sunday ticket office opening times at all three stations.
 - At Harlow Town, it was proposed that the ticket office close at 21:00 hrs instead of the current 21:30 hrs.
 - At Sawbridgeworth, it was proposed that the ticket office close at 17:00 hrs instead of the current 19:40 hrs.
 - At Bishop's Stortford, it was proposed that the ticket office close at 21:00 hrs instead of the current 21:40 hrs.

- 4.3. London TravelWatch did not object to the proposed changes on 3 February 2016 because ticket office transactions for all 3 stations at the above times were below the 12-per-hour (or 3-per-fifteen minutes) threshold set by the DfT.

5 Regulated Stations London Underground stations

- 5.1. London TravelWatch has held a consultation in January 2016 in respect of London Underground Limited's (LUL) proposed ticket office closures for 11 Regulated Stations London Underground (RSLU) stations, which generated a high number of responses.

Having considered the issues and taken into account the impact on passengers, London TravelWatch objected to the proposal.

- 5.2. We have subsequently met with LUL to discuss measures to mitigate disbenefits to passengers resulting from the proposed changes and we await a formal response from LUL laying out these mitigation measures.
- 5.3. Details on the proposed ticket office closures for RSLU stations are presented to members in a separate, confidential report, which will be made public in due course.

6 Forthcoming proposal to close ticket offices at Govia Thameslink Railway stations

- 6.1. Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) has revealed a proposal to close or reduce opening hours of ticket offices at 81 stations, most of which lie within the London Railway Area, which is London TravelWatch's remit for representing National Rail passengers. The dates for the official consultation are yet to be confirmed.
- 6.2. In view of the scale of the proposal, it is recommended that London TravelWatch carry out a consultation with passengers when the formal request is received from GTR.

7 London TravelWatch priority

- 7.1. This issue falls within the core remit of London TravelWatch and the impact of the proposed changes will be substantial amongst the high number of current and future passengers using these stations.

8 Equalities and inclusion implications

- 8.1. Ticket office closures and changes to ticket office hours may have implications for passengers with disabilities.

9 Financial implications

- 9.1. No specific financial implications for London TravelWatch arise from this report.

10 Legal powers

- 10.1. Section 252A of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 places a duty upon London TravelWatch (as the London Transport Users Committee) to keep under review matters affecting the interests of the public in relation to railway passenger and station services provided wholly or partly within the London railway area, and to make representations about them to such persons as it thinks appropriate. The Ticketing and Settlements Agreement gives London TravelWatch a right to consult on proposals to change the opening hours of ticket offices at regulated stations.