
Secretariat memorandum

Author: Vincent Stops

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PC143

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Social needs transport

1 Purpose of report

- 1.1. To provide background on TfL's services to passengers needing assistance to use bus services.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1. That members note the report as a basis for discussion with TfL officers.

3 Background

- 3.1. TfL provides a number of services for passengers needing assistance to travel by bus. These are now described by TfL as 'Assisted Transport Services'. A strategy for development was approved by TfL's Board in June 2018 and is cited in the Mayor's Transport Strategy. The 'roadmap' is an incremental approach to creating a better and simpler service for users of all London's assisted transport services, whoever might be providing them. This would not be confined to TfL services, but also include services provided by the NHS and local authorities. This would all be the subject of pilot schemes, for example a pilot in one borough is suggested for integrating non-emergency patient transport services.
- 3.2. Members will know that London TravelWatch wants all of London's bus services to be fully accessible. All of the buses are and there has been good success in systematically improving bus stops. 95% of stops are fully accessible, i.e. the kerb is an appropriate height, there are waiting restrictions in place and there are no impediments to passengers getting on and off the bus.
- 3.3. However, there are many bus services that are described as 'Hail and Ride' services that do not have fixed bus stops and so are inaccessible. Some of these buses even stop in the middle of the road because they can't get to the kerb. London TravelWatch has advocated for fixed, and therefore accessible, stops to be introduced so that these services can be used by everyone. There would also be other benefits. For example promotion of bus services and their operation if fixed stops were introduced.
- 3.4. TfL also wants to see fixed stops introduced, but must effectively have the support of the London boroughs. This can be problematic because the introduction of bus stops is often resisted by residents concerned about the reallocation of kerbside parking to bus stop use. London TravelWatch is presently undertaking research to highlight these issues.

- 3.5. There are, of course many other ways TfL assists users. One is to provide training and mentoring services for potential bus passengers who either don't qualify for assisted services or want to use mainstream bus services.

4 Equalities and inclusion implications

- 4.1. The provision of social needs transport enables individuals with mobility impairments or illnesses to travel and thereby access other social, employment and health services.

5 Legal powers

- 5.1. Section 248 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 requires London TravelWatch (as the London Transport Users Committee) to consider, and where it appears to it to be desirable, to make recommendations with respect to any service or facility provided by or for (or in the case of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles, licensed by) Transport for London, other than a matter relating to the transportation of freight, if it has been the subject of representations made by or on behalf of users of that service or facility.

6 Financial implications

- 6.1. No implications of this nature arise directly from this report.