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## Confidential Minutes

Agenda item: 12  
Drafted: 17.11.15

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### Confidential minutes of the Policy committee held on 20 October 2015 at 169 Union Street, London SE1 0LL

These minutes are in addition to the public minutes of a meeting of the Committee on the same date. In that meeting it was 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 was desirable in the public interest that the public should be excluded for this part of the meeting.

### Contents

- 1 Confidential minutes and matters arising**
- 2 Transport affordability research (PC065)**
- 3 Future rail travel pricing policy**
- 4 Meeting review**

### Present

#### Members

Chris Brown, Richard Dilks, Glyn Kyle, Stephen Locke, Abdikafi Rage, John Stewart (Chair), Ruth Thompson

#### Secretariat

Tim Bellenger	Director, Policy & Investigation
Janet Cooke	Chief Executive
Richard Freeston-Clough	Communications Officer
Sharon Malley	Executive Assistant
Robert Nichols	Policy Officer (RN)
Vincent Stops	Policy Officer (VS)
Chris Wise	Policy Officer (CW)

### Minutes

#### 1 Confidential minutes, declarations of interest and matters arising

The confidential minutes of the Policy committee held on 16 June 2015 were agreed and signed as a correct record. There were no matters arising or additional declarations of interest.

#### 2 Transport affordability research (PC065)

The Policy Officer (CW) presented a report on the initial findings of research into transport affordability in London. The findings were based on qualitative research but some quantitative data was now also coming through.

The Policy Officer (CW) said that most people chose to take a commute that would be quickest rather than cheapest but a minority of people chose their transport mode based on cost rather than speed. There was a feeling of resignation about the high costs of transport and the condition of the commute and this often dominated the conversations.

Focus groups had been carried out among people in work while the depth interviews were with job seekers. There was little awareness among both groups of Job Centre Plus concessionary fares and a lot of concern about the future costs of travel.

The research found that bus use was higher among the lower social grades although most people still wanted the quickest journey regardless of costs. People who live in outer London spent close to 10% of their earnings on transport.

When asked for suggestions for improvement, respondents sought discounted and flexible tickets to enable cheaper travel.

The Policy Officer (CW) said that the process with the research company BDRC had been challenging and BDRC had needed a lot of guidance about what London TravelWatch was looking for. The researchers focused more on satisfaction than affordability and did not narrow down enough on lower income issues.

Members noted that the project partners (London TravelWatch, London Councils and Trust for London) had provided a clear brief to BDRC and were disappointed with the findings that had been returned. However, it was noted that among the findings were some useful pieces of information, which would lead to a reasonable final product.

The Chief Executive said that all three research companies interviewed had been disappointing. The particular problem in relation to BDRC may have been that they also did the National Rail Passenger Survey and that they may have approached this research through that prism.

There was concern that the findings of the research did not reflect the reality of the situation for many transport users in low-paid jobs. There had not been enough probing of the sacrifices people on low incomes made in order to be able to afford travel to work and not enough focus on the impact of travel costs on the low paid.

Members noted the importance of demonstrating to project partners the value of working with London TravelWatch and the need for the published report to reflect well on all parties.

It was noted that the full report would not be ready for Living Wage Week, although some headline findings might be available. The report would be presented as part of a bigger picture that could contribute to a debate rather than resolve it.

### **3 Future rail travel pricing policy**

The Director, Policy and Investigation, had hoped to be able to report on changes to future rail travel pricing policy but this information was not yet available.

#### **4 Meeting review**

Members agreed that it had been important to move the discussion of the transport affordability research into the confidential part of the meeting as discussing it in public would have led to a reputational risk.

It was agreed that the Hounslow proposal could be seen as politically sensitive and it would be a reputational risk for London TravelWatch to be seen fully supporting it. London TravelWatch should aim to ensure that the option was kept under consideration by relevant decision makers.

It was noted that, to avoid the risk of being seen to be over familiar with decision makers, use of first names should be avoided and full names or job titles should be used instead.

No specific media opportunities were identified as arising from the meeting.