
Minutes

Agenda item: 2
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Minutes of the Policy Committee meeting held on 14 March 2017

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Present

Members

Jackie Ballard, Alan Benson, Richard Dilks, Glyn Kyle, Stephen Locke, John Stewart (Chair)

In attendance

Mike Brown	Commissioner for Transport, Transport for London
Alex Williams	Transport for London

Secretariat

Tim Bellenger	Director, Policy & Investigation
Janet Cooke	Chief Executive
Richard Freeston-Clough	Communications Officer
Susan James	Casework Manager
Sharon Malley	Executive Assistant

Minutes

1 **Chair's introduction and pre-meeting announcements**

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting and made the standard safety announcements.

2 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

3 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest in addition to the standing declarations available on London TravelWatch's website.

4 Minutes

The minutes of the Policy committee on 25 October 2016 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

5 Matters arising (PC104)

It was noted that the consultation currently underway Heathrow Airport did not include reference to linking Crossrail to Terminal 5 and only an oblique reference to the southern rail access route. The Director, Policy and Investigation, said he would respond to the consultation and raise these issues.

Action: Director, Policy and Investigation

In relation to the National Rail performance report, the Director, Policy and Investigation, said that London TravelWatch now had disaggregated data for Govia Thameslink Railway's different routes within the franchise but that peak-hours data was not available.

It was noted that the minutes referred to measures of crowding on National Rail. The Office of Rail and Road consumer panel had considered a report on crowding that said the ORR was looking at both the causes of crowding and the detriment it led to. London TravelWatch should monitor the outcomes of this project.

Action: Director, Policy and Investigation

It was noted that TfL had reduced the profile of the help and contact information on its website. This would be raised with the Customer Experience team at the next opportunity.

Action: Director, Policy and Investigation

6 Key activities (PC105)

The Chief Executive said that the meeting with John Gill of Network Rail had been productive. She said that Network Rail had appointed consultants to look at wayfinding at London Bridge station who had asked London TravelWatch for its views. This was frustrating as London TravelWatch had already suggested several interventions in this area directly to Network Rail but they had not been taken up.

The Director, Policy and Investigation, said that the meeting on Kingston bus station had been interesting with a useful discussion about the operation of the

station from the passenger perspective. The design of the bus station was complicated by issues such as the Surrey buses not having centre doors. The Chief Executive noted that TfL's approach recognised London TravelWatch's calls for service standards for bus stations and that London TravelWatch's work in this area was leading to benefits for passengers.

It was noted that the issue of gaps between trains and platforms was increasing in profile and the London TravelWatch continued to press for progress. The Director, Policy and Investigation, confirmed that train operating companies kept statistics on falls that caused delays in excess of two minutes as part of the delay attribution process.

7 Bakerloo line extension (PC106)

The Director, Policy and Investigation, presented a report on Transport for London's proposals for the extension of the Bakerloo line and London TravelWatch's response.

TfL's proposal was for a single route, which was the northern one of the two previously considered options. This alignment was chosen because of its development potential, its faster journey times and the fact that the southern option, via Camberwell, would be improved by Crossrail.

The route beyond Lewisham was still under discussion but the Bakerloo line tunnel would emerge near the National Rail lines so it should be relatively straightforward in future to join the underground line to the National Rail infrastructure. The Director, Policy and Investigation, noted that the location of proposed stations was in or near supermarket car parks, which meant there was the opportunity for more intensive redevelopment following the building of the stations. The Director, Policy and Investigation, said that the current plans included a vent shaft at the Bricklayer's Arms roundabout and that London TravelWatch may want to suggest that this should be upgraded to a full station.

It was agreed that London TravelWatch should support the proposals as set out and not make support conditional on achieving a station at Bricklayer's Arms. London TravelWatch's consultation response would show strong support for the extension in general and suggest inclusion of a Bricklayer's Arms station as a beneficial extra.

Action: Director, Policy and Investigation

8 Transport aspects of air quality (PC107)

The Director, Policy and Investigation, presented a report on how transport in London affected air quality. He noted that air quality did not fall directly within London TravelWatch's remit but it did have an impact on transport users and transport was linked to air quality. It was important to draw the issue to members' attention because it was a priority of the Mayor of London and because of the potential expansion of airport capacity and its knock-on impact on the road network.

One relevant issue was the licensing of taxi cabs around airports. Minicabs were able to take passengers to airports but were not able to ply for hire after dropping off so made the return journey empty. This was both an inefficient use of road space and had a detrimental impact on air quality. It was hoped that airports would develop a co-ordination system to reduce empty running.

Members noted that the report was not as supportive of electric vehicles as it might be and said that electric charging points were no more intrusive than petrol stations. It was important that charging infrastructure did not obstruct pedestrians but the overall view towards electric vehicles should be more positive.

It was agreed that London TravelWatch would follow up the issue of taxis at airports in its response to a current consultation.

Action: Director, Policy and Investigation

9 National Rail performance report (PC108)

The Director, Policy and Investigation, presented a report on the performance of National Rail for the period October to December 2016. He said the report highlighted the very poor performance of the Govia Thameslink Railway and Go Ahead franchises over the quarter. Problems were affecting all elements of the franchises, particularly Southern but also Thameslink and Gatwick Express.

It was agreed that it would be useful to see statistics for the GTR franchise that included the number of trains withdrawn from the timetable alongside performance measures for the services that remained. It was important not to allow GTR to continue to lay the blame on outside agencies.

It was noted that the disaggregated routes should be labelled to show that they are all operated under the same overall franchise, to enable users to understand responsibility for problems.

It was noted that the performance of the Southern route would be subject to further consideration following the publication of the government-commissioned review by Chris Gibb.

10 Casework performance report (PC109)

The Casework Manager presented a report on the performance of transport operators in responding to casework for the period October to December 2016. She said that it had been an interesting period for the casework team because the Consumer Rights Act was now in place caseworkers were able to use it as leverage during discussions with operators.

The Casework Manager highlighted the trends over the period and noted that performance had slipped at TfL following the tram derailment. This was because TfL staff had focused on their work as the contact point for affected passengers, which led to delays in other areas. While this was disappointing in the short term, it was expected to improve in due course.

11 Commissioner for Transport

The Commissioner for Transport at TfL, Mike Brown, and his colleague Alex Williams were welcomed to the meeting. Mr Brown acknowledged the impact of the tram derailment at Croydon and recognised the importance of the implications for passenger safety.

Mr Brown gave a presentation on transport issues currently facing London. He said that the Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS) set out the priorities for transport over the next 25 years. The MTS went beyond the remit of TfL but it was TfL's role to implement the MTS via a five-year business plan.

The MTS was the policy framework for transport providers and assisted with investment decisions such the introduction of new transport infrastructure. The strategy sought to address the challenge of growing demand and frequent crowding problems.

Mr Brown said that there were signs that bus patronage was reducing, which was possibly caused by slower journey times, and this was concerning. He said that jobs were predicted to remain in the central areas and it would be important that transport links were provided from these commercial locations to new housing developments so that residents would be able to access employment.

Mr Williams said that in 2000, nearly 50% of trips in London were made by car and that public transport was poor and unmodernised. Today, 63% of trips were by walking, cycling or public transport. The challenge for the future was to lift sustainable modes to 70% of trips. This may involve management of transport demand by methods such as road pricing.

The MTS sought to address the challenges of providing transport infrastructure in outer London as it grew denser. The MTS would focus on mode shift to support growth, developing a transport network that encouraged physical activity, and would lead to a reduction in emissions and improvements to air quality. Mr Williams said that the MTS would be published in draft form in May then subject to consultation and would be finalised later in the year.

Members noted that buses were the most used transport mode in London and that ridership was reducing, journey time reliability was declining and congestion was increasing. Members asked what the future for buses was, particularly in outer London where the dynamics were very different to the centre.

Mr Brown said that the introduction of the Elizabeth line would have an impact on bus use in the Oxford Street area and it provided an opportunity to reconfigure bus routes. There had been no serious review of the bus network in decades, despite changes to traffic arrangements in London such as growth in freight and 'white van' users. The Hopper ticket and information available on apps had changed the way people used buses. Oxford Street was difficult because TfL did not want Marble Arch to become a bus park for terminating services. In outer London, it was important to check that the right number of radial routes were offered, and that connections were provided to hospitals. Mr Williams said that the MTS would emphasise the importance of bus priority to improve reliability.

Members highlighted the importance of Network Rail services in London's transport infrastructure. Mr Brown agreed and said that it was devastating that TfL did not have greater control over rail in south London and that the issue was one of enforcing improved reliability. He said that TfL would continue to promote the need for devolution as franchises came up for renewal and that there was a case to be made for devolution in relation to the South West franchise because of the relationship with Crossrail 2. TfL would continue to emphasise the benefits of devolution in a logical, non- emotive way.

Members raised concern that Network Rail had divided its routes into segments and that there were six such segments in London, which could lead to fragmentation and a lack of holistic thinking. There was no focus on London in any of those segments. Mr Brown said that TfL was keen that National Rail services worked for passengers and this was one of the issues he had raised with the Network Rail Chief Executive. He would keep the issue under review.

The Chief Executive said that London TravelWatch had been disappointed by the DfT's decision not to introduce devolution on the South East franchise and that the focus now was on ensuring that the new franchise delivered the same benefits for passengers as would have happened under devolution. She hoped TfL would work with the DfT to make this happen. Mr Brown said he supported the aspiration but TfL was unwilling to be associated with projects it had no control over and no means of fixing in the event of problems.

In response to a comment in support of road pricing, Mr Brown said that the MTS did include a policy on road pricing and that it was a tool that may need to be used. There may also need to be a review of the operation of the congestion zone.

Members asked about TfL's procedures for addressing accessibility standards on buses. Mr Brown said he was aware of the significance of the issue for individuals affected. He hoped to follow up all complaints but knew that the system was not perfect. He would like to see consistent training for all drivers regardless of which bus company they worked for, with particular focus on the allocation of space within buses. TfL was always open to suggestions about how to improve and was also planning to improve accessibility to London Underground stations.

Members asked whether TfL experienced difficulties in securing key staff. Mr Brown said that TfL was an attractive employer but there was a risk that without a secure pipeline of future major projects, resources would relocate to other areas and countries. He did not want to see a return to the days of low investment in London.

In response to a question, Mr Brown said that London TravelWatch should focus on the day to day reality of people's experiences. There was a concern that the detrimental nature of the commute in London was taken less seriously than elsewhere, with people travelling further to work in London and in poorer conditions than in other places. Attention should be given to this.

The Chair thanked Mr Brown and Mr Williams for attending and answers members' questions.

12 Any other business

There was no other business.

13 Resolution to move into confidential session

The meeting 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, that it was desirable in the public interest that the public should be excluded from the meeting.

In confidential session, members reviewed financial or reputational risks posed by the meeting and considered an update on the Rail Passenger Redress Scheme.