
Minutes

Agenda item: 2
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Minutes of the Policy Committee meeting held on 20 June 2017

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Present

Members

Glyn Kyle, Stephen Locke, Abdi Osman, John Stewart (Chair)

In attendance

Chris Loder	Head of Service Strategy, South West Trains
Stuart Reid	Travel Demand Management Programme Manager, 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
Vincent Stops	Policy Officer

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

Apologies for absence were received from Jackie Ballard, Alan Benson and Richard Dilks.

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 considered. It was agreed that they should be amended to reflect that London TravelWatch supported the proposed Bakerloo line extension and that support was not conditional on achieving an additional station at Bricklayer's Arms. The minutes would be amended and presented to the next meeting of the Policy Committee for consideration.

5 Matters arising (PC110)

Members welcomed the Policy Officer's submission of the bus safety research project to the Road Safety Trust. The Policy Officer (VS) said that he had developed a strong relationship with Loughborough University and he hoped to receive a decision on funding for the project in October.

The Chief Executive said that the passenger satisfaction questionnaire had been revised and would be sent to complainants from July 2017. Its wording was in line with the questionnaire used by Transport Focus.

Action: Casework Manager

The Director, Policy and Investigation, said that he had incorporated various comments into the report on small stations and that it was now almost ready for publication. He hoped it would be published before the summer break.

Action: Director, Policy and Investigation

Members noted that the position in relation to Piccadilly line reliability was unsatisfactory. The Policy Officer said Transport for London was undertaking an

internal review and the issue would be considered again at a future Board or Policy Committee meeting.

Action: Executive Assistant

6 Key activities (PC111)

It was noted that Val Shawcross was Deputy Mayor for Transport, not Deputy Mayor of London as listed.

The Director, Policy and Investigation, said that Mark Evers from TfL had also attended the meeting with 2CV and had given London TravelWatch feedback on the outcomes of research into passenger aspirations for assistance at London Underground stations. The Director, Policy and Investigation, said he had been disappointed that TfL had not involved London TravelWatch in producing the brief for the research. London TravelWatch's support for the closure of ticket offices was conditional on passengers being able to access information so understanding passenger feedback on the 'focal point' trials was very important.

The Policy Officer (VS) said that plans for the redevelopment of Camden station were progressing. Previous plans had led to local objections over their size so the new proposals had been scaled back. If the development went ahead it should alleviate to problem of overcrowding at Camden station and reduce periods of closure.

The Chief Executive said that London TravelWatch and Transport Focus were continuing to provide assistance and challenge to the proposed Rail Ombudsman scheme. It was noted that in order to become a formal Ombudsman the scheme would need to meet several regulations such as independence from the industry, the industry being unable to unseat the Ombudsman and the Ombudsman being able to decide its own scope. The scheme as currently proposed did not appear to meet these requirements. In addition, the current scheme appeared very expensive to administer and also confusing for passengers. There was still a lot of work to be done to ensure the scheme worked in the best way for passengers.

7 Waterloo station works

The Chair welcomed Chris Loder, Head of Service strategy at South West Trains, to the meeting. Mr Loder gave a presentation on forthcoming works at Waterloo station.

Mr Loder said that the works would represent the largest infrastructure project at Waterloo station for decades and were necessary to alleviate crowding on platforms. They would also enable operation of a 10-car service on the suburban network to Wimbledon, Guildford, Hampton Court and Woking.

Waterloo was the largest station in the UK and the busiest station in Europe. It had seen significant passenger growth, with passenger journeys increasing from 108 million in 1996 to 237 million now.

Mr Loder said that the tracks at Waterloo International were being re-laid and that during the works services would be shuffled across towards the International

platforms to enable work to be carried out on platforms at the other end of the station. Following the works, all the platforms at Waterloo would be capable of serving trains at least 10 cars long, whereas currently platforms 1-4 were only 8 cars long.

During the works, capacity at Waterloo station would be significantly reduced. There was usually a dip in demand during August, when the works would be taking place, but the reduction in capacity was greater than the usual dip in demand. Therefore there was likely to be crowding at the station while the works were underway.

Other stations on the network would be affected by the works. Vauxhall would be inaccessible to around 75% of passengers who normally used it and stations such as Clapham Junction, Wimbledon and Surbiton would also be affected. South West Trains intended to recruit an additional 500 staff in August to assist and would be encouraging passengers to take alternative routes.

Mr Loder said that Queenstown Road and Norbiton stations and the whole Chesington line would be closed. Earlsfield would have only an off-peak service. Arrangements were being made at these stations for alternative transport.

Other stations were being fully or partially closed over the bank holiday weekend, including Waterloo East, Charing Cross, Cannon Street, Euston and London Bridge. This would add to the challenge faced by passengers in completing their journeys.

Mr Loder said that South West Trains had produced communications material on the closures. Transport Focus had carried out research for South West Trains which showed that the messages were reaching a high proportion of passengers.

Members asked how non-commuters were being informed of the closures and how signage was being managed. Mr Loder said that there had been considerable investment in signs, queue management and one-way systems in some stations. Some stations, such as Surbiton, had been identified as high risk and more information was being provided to passengers there. The biggest impact at Clapham Junction would be on platform 11 at the evening peak, as it was very narrow. Evening peak trains from Waterloo would not be advertised as calling at Clapham Junction if they were due in to platform 11; passengers from Waterloo to Clapham Junction would be advised to use alternative services that served different platforms.

In response to a question, Mr Loder said that he was confident that the project would be completed on time, but contingencies were in place to deal with different eventualities. He had discussed the provision of necessary signalling equipment with Network Rail and had no reason to believe there would be any delay.

The Policy Officer (VS) said that passengers who used London Bridge station during disruption found it useful when staff at the station gave information using megaphones. In addition, the hoarding at the Eurostar platforms gave useful details but would benefit from being updated to continue to attract passengers' attention. Mr Loder said that megaphones would be used at Waterloo and that there would be a considerable increase in the number of staff at the station to

manage the crowds. He noted that the works at London Bridge and Waterloo were not similar as Waterloo was much less complicated.

The Chair thanked Mr Loder for his useful and informative presentation.

8 Travel Demand Management Board

The Chair welcomed Stuart Reid, Travel Demand Management (TDM) Programme Director at Transport for London, to the meeting. Mr Reid gave a presentation on the work of the TDM board.

Mr Reid said that the TDM board sought to manage demand from passengers during period of disruption, arising either from planned works and events or demand exceeding capacity. He said that in the last year, 50 events and works had been supported by TDM work, an example being sending text messages to people driving in the area of Tower Bridge when it was closed in 2016.

Mr Reid said that passengers were able to see material improvements to the journeys by making fairly modest changes to their travel plans, such as travelling 15 minutes earlier or later.

In response to a question, Mr Reid said he had liaised with the behavioural insight team at the Cabinet Office and been able to make use of their knowledge to inform the TDM work. He said that passengers' responses to interventions varied and some interventions worked better than others, but none had failed overall.

Mr Reid said that the likelihood of a passenger being receptive to interventions was more related to attitude than demographics and that the TDM programme used a range of media to try to influence behaviour. He said that some passengers preferred to receive information at the moment of arriving at the gateline whereas others wanted information in advance at the time of planning the journey.

The Director, Policy and Investigation, said that when the Hammersmith & City line was closed, the TDM group was able to analyse passengers' actual journeys to find how they were using the system. Some were undertaking unexpected journeys, such as interchanging at Brixton, and this information was useful in working out how to manage people's travelling in future.

The Chief Executive welcomed the progress the TDM board had made over the last four years in improving communications with passengers. However, she remained disappointed that more had not been done in relation to unplanned disruption, where lessons were not being learnt as well as they could be. She urged more focus on this in future.

Mr Reid said he was happy to keep up pressure in relation to disruption caused by unplanned works. He said more could always be done but some lessons had been learnt, such as the need to de-scope works to ensure they finished in time. He said that if works did overrun, there was a much better response at an operational level now.

The Chair thanked Mr Reid for updating members on this work.

9 Crossrail 2 (PC112)

The Director, Policy and Investigation, gave a report to update members on the importance of the Crossrail 2 proposals. Members noted that the case for Crossrail 2 was strong and that London TravelWatch had previously endorsed the proposals. Crossrail 2 would lead to increased capacity and connectivity and would unlock development areas. It had received support from government to date but did not appear in the Conservative party manifesto or the recent budget speech. There was concern that the project might be shelved.

It was agreed that London TravelWatch would continue to active in its support for Crossrail 2, including, if necessary, writing to the Transport Minister and issuing press releases. Crossrail 2 presented benefits for passengers across London and the south east and should be progressed.

Action: Communications Officer

10 National Rail performance report (PC113)

The Director, Policy and Investigation, presented a report on the performance of National Rail operators for the period January to March 2017. He said there had been some notable improvements but Go Ahead companies, Govia Thameslink Railway and Southeastern, were at the bottom of performance tables. The causes of disruption in this period were similar to those in previous reports.

The Director, Policy and Investigation, noted that the problems occurring on GTR had a greater impact because the intensity of services, constraints on infrastructure and staffing problems led to less resilience and longer to recover after disruption.

Members noted that it was important to use the right performance measures to understand the accurate passenger experience of performance. The Director, Policy and Investigation, said that the Public Performance Measure enabled comparison across periods. It measured performance against the timetable published at 10.00 pm on the day before, which meant that changes on the day of operation would count as failing. However, it may not be the best performance measure of urban railways as there was no distinction between peak and off-peak services. In addition, trains that were removed from the timetable before 10.00 pm on the night before they were due to run were not included in the PPM. This was unsatisfactory as it did not reflect the passenger experience. It was noted that Transport Focus was giving greater prominence to Right Time Arrivals as its performance measure and it was agreed that officers would consider this further.

Action: Director, Policy and Investigation

11 Transport for London performance report (PC114)

The Policy Officer (VS) presented a report on the performance of Transport for London services over the period January to March 2017. He said that TfL had now committed to publishing performance data for Streets on a given schedule for the rest of the year, meaning there was less likelihood of delay.

He said he continued to have concerns about the level of congestion on streets and the knock-on impact on bus services. It was worrying that speeds had reduced and that TfL planned to maintain speeds at this lower level. Members noted that bus priority measures had not been taken forward alongside carriageway reductions for Cycle Superhighways and that 83 bus routes were not currently meeting their contracted standard. This was a major problem for passengers and the performance report should be very clear that the position was unsatisfactory.

12 Casework performance report (PC115)

The Casework Manager presented a report on the performance of transport operators in responding to casework for the period January to March 2017. She said that complaints had increased during the period and she had found that London TravelWatch's number was featured prominently on TfL's website. Once this was resolved, the casework team was able to focus once more on core appeals activity.

The time taken for TfL to respond to enquiries from caseworkers had increased during this period as TfL staff were focusing on resolving problems caused by the Croydon tram derailment. These cases were mostly now closed and TfL's response time now seemed to be coming back to previous levels.

Members noted that the Office of Rail and Road was beginning to take a more active role in relation to poor complaint handling by train operators. There was some concern among members of the ORR's consumer panel that guidance set by the ORR was not being met in all cases. It was noted that the ORR could undertake compliance proceedings against train operators for failures in complaint handling as these formed part of operators' licences.

13 Metropolitan line extension (PC116)

The Director, Policy and Investigation, said that the proposed extension of the Metropolitan line to Watford High Street was important both to the local residents in the area and also to improve connectivity given the increased use of Watford Junction station during the Euston works. Watford should be considered as part of the London travel area, although it fell just outside the TfL boundary. It was concerning that funding difficulties seemed to be threatening the future of the project.

It was agreed that London TravelWatch continued to strongly support the extension and hoped to see the problems resolved. It was agreed that officers would write to the Mayor of London, the Chair of Transport for London, the Secretary of State for Transport and local Watford elected representatives to call for progress on behalf of passengers.

Action: Director, Policy and Investigation

14 Any other business

There was no other business.

15 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.