
Minutes

Agenda item: 4
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Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 15 March 2022 virtually over Zoom

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Present

Members

Alan Benson, Tiffany Lam, Arthur Leathley (Chair), Susan Stockwell

Secretariat in attendance

Emma Gibson	Chief Executive
Susan James	Head of Casework
Shahid Mohammed	Finance Manager (item 11)
Luke Muskett	Communications Officer

1. Chair's introduction and pre-meeting announcements

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting.

2. Apologies for absence

There were apologies for absence from Priya Khullar, Karen McArthur and Laura Osborne.

3. Declarations of interest

There were no additional declarations of interest to declare.

4. Chair's activities and Transport Focus update

The Chair said that he and the Chief Executive had met with Helen Ewen, the Executive Director at the London Assembly and were trying to arrange a meeting between the London TravelWatch Board and the GLA Transport Committee.

5. Change to the collaboration agreement

The Board approved the change to the collaboration agreement stating that Emma Gibson had been appointed as the Chief Executive of London TravelWatch, replacing the former CEO Anthony Smith.

6. Chief Executive's report (LTW678)

The Chief Executive gave a summary of her report to the Board. The Chair asked when the ticket office consultations would begin. The Chief Executive replied that they had not been given a date by the train companies or the Department for Transport as of yet, but it was likely to be soon. She said that London TravelWatch would have to think about bringing in additional staff to assist with the consultation, particularly because it was likely that many of the ticket office consultations would begin at the same time.

7. Casework reports (LTW679)

The Head of Casework gave a summary of her report. A member asked if she was expecting the number of appeals to increase throughout the year and whether the team had enough capacity to cater for that. The Head of Casework replied that it was impossible for her to predict due to the uncertainty around Covid and whether any additional variants arose. She said that leisure travel was recovering more strongly than commuter travel and leisure travellers had higher expectations when travelling by rail and therefore more likely to complain if things went wrong. She

continued that since Covid commuter travellers had also become much less willing to accept a substandard service. This was resulting in a higher proportion of them making a complaint than had been the case prior to the pandemic.

The Chair asked if there had been any recent changes to the Rail Ombudsman. The Head of Casework replied that she had recently found out that some complaint appeals for both TfL Rail and TfL Overground would be moving from London TravelWatch to the Rail Ombudsman from 1 April 2022. She had a meeting with the Rail Ombudsman that afternoon to ensure that London TravelWatch had the correct information to signpost passengers to the right place.

8. Siwan Hayward

Siwan Hayward, Director of Compliance, Policing, Operations and Security at Transport for London, gave an overview of her work at Transport for London, particularly in relation to the organisation's work on personal security. A member asked Ms Hayward how her team worked with the Metropolitan Police and British Transport Police. He also asked her if she could say more about the guidance from TfL that people should speak to a member of TfL staff, be it a bus driver, member of the London Underground etc., if they felt unsafe.

Ms Hayward replied said that the Metropolitan Police and the British Transport Police had a dedicated command team that worked alongside TfL and were collocated in the same building as them. She added that there was a healthy tension in the relationship as TfL pushed them to always improve their performance. On the second question, she said that frontline staff received specific training on how to provide support to passengers that might be in a dangerous situation. She acknowledged that there had been instances where the level of support provided by frontline staff had not always been to the level expected, and when examples of that occurred, they would be investigated.

A member asked what work TfL was doing to show that public transport was safe in order to attract more people onto the network. Ms Hayward replied that TfL spent considerable resource promoting the fact that the network was safe, through advertising, social media, and press work. TfL also had an outreach programme where staff would go into schools across London to promote public transport and to tell children about the measures that were in place to protect them when they made journey.

A member asked what measures TfL had in place to measure the safety concerns of night-time workers who relied on services such as the Night Tube and night

buses. She also asked what was being done in terms of improving the safety of TfL staff given the reported rise in assaults of TfL staff during the pandemic. Ms Hayward said that the numbers of reported crimes on the Night Tube and night buses were very low and there were many pre-emptive measures such as CCTV and visible staff at stations that prevented crimes from taking place. To improve the safety of their staff, TfL was in the process of rolling out a provision of body worn cameras that would be worn by anyone who was in a frontline role. Ms Hayward added that insight that they had gathered from Virgin Trains showed that incidents of assault and abuse to staff fell by approximately 40% when they were equipped with body worn cameras.

9. Finance report (LTW681)

The Finance Manager presented his report which was noted by the Board.

10. Communications update (LTW680)

The Chief Executive gave a summary of the Communications update report in the absence of the Policy and Communications Manager, which was noted by the Board.

11. Any other business

There was no further business to discuss.

12. Resolution to move into confidential session

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 a section of the meeting.