

Public Transport Liaison Panel

Meeting held on Wednesday, 27 February 2019 at 9.30 am in Council Chamber - Town Hall

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Muhammad Ali (Chair);
Councillor Nina Degradis (Vice-Chair);
Councillors Ian Parker
Ian Plowright (Planning and Strategic Transport)
John Osborne (Planning and Strategic Transport)
Thomas Downs (Clerk)

East Surrey Transport Committee
Charles King, John Rapp

Mobility Forum
Stephen Aselford

Tram Operations Ltd
Andy Morgan, Helen London

First Group
Ben Groome, Jackie Townsend

Transport for London
Neil Benson, Muhammed Mashud, Michelle Wildish

London Trams
Mark Davis

Govia Thameslink Railway
Yvonne Leslie

Go Ahead London
Allan White

Also Present: Lindsay Williams (Resident), Rae Goonetilleke (Resident)

Apologies: Nick Bland (Arriva London), Richard Simmons (Arriva London)

PART A

1/19 Introductions

The Chair welcomed participants to the meeting and those present introduced themselves.

2/19 Disclosures of interests

There were none.

3/19 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2018 were agreed as an accurate record.

4/19 Any other business

There was none.

5/19 Trams

a) Annual report on progress made against implementation of RAIB safety improvement recommendations following the tragic Sandilands incident

The First Group representative began the item with a presentation, informing the Panel that 19% of all London public transport journeys involved a tram, over the 28 kilometres of existing track; trams were unique in that they were driven using line of sight and had rolling stock. The First Group representative explained that trams were particularly accessible, as they were step free and had buddy spaces; there were some issues around accommodating cyclists, as bikes were not allowed on board trams, but there was a possibility of this changing in the future. The Panel heard that customer satisfaction with the service was around 90%, and that the BAME representation in the organisation was 37.71%. The Panel heard that trams were overseen by the Office of Rail and Road.

Performance on the network had been 99%, with a dip occurring in the week of the 31 December 2018, due to a fire on Ampere Way; other common causes of disruption were cars and lorries blocking access. The Panel learned that performance on the network was a high priority for the operator, and featured in daily discussions.

First Group had been working closely with London Trams on addressing outstanding safety issues, and some of this work had involved supporting drivers with additional training, and regular assessments to review key competencies. The total number of consecutive days that drivers could work had been reduced to eight, with this reducing to five from May 2019 based on data gathered since the installation of the Guardian devices. Drivers had gone on strike over the implementation of the devices, but after consultation with Public Health England (who had determined them to be safe), the strike had ended. A fatigue management procedure had been implemented, which accommodated for issues faced by drivers outside of work, and helped to offer support.

Clockwork Research Ltd had supported improvements to the Fatigue Risk Management System; this had, in part, involved customer service training to help accommodate for disabled passengers and those suffering with dementia, and a fatigue training programme to be rolled out to all staff in 2019. Engagement had been increased with the introduction of a newsletter, staff one to one's and more. This had involved trade unions, who were now in favour of the Guardian devices, and had been feeding back suggestions to First Group.

Guardian devices had now been fitted to all trams, and these alerted drivers to drowsiness, fatigue or distraction. If the device was set off, it would emit a noise and vibrate the driver's seat; simultaneously it would send an alert to the operator. As a result of this, drivers were more aware of fatigue and there was better real time risk control; an unexpected advantage was that it had also improved the posture of drivers, with less reported back pain. This had led to a more open culture around fatigue among staff, and greater access to resources to reduce this. Speed limit adherence had improved, and Transport for London (TfL) were looking at the possibility of implementing the devices in trains and on buses.

In response to queries from the East Surrey Transport Committee representative about the number of drivers self-reporting fatigue since the implementation of the Guardian system, the First Group representative replied that there had been five or six reports, but that there had also been increased reporting around issues that may cause fatigue. There had been 16 Guardian activations over a 12 month period.

In response to queries from the Access Officer about the occurrences of speeding since the implementation of the Guardian system, the First Group representative informed the Panel that speeding had not been a big problem before, but that it had been measured daily with radar guns, covert surveillance and by GPS, and that no incidences of speeding over the tolerance had been found for a long time. The Panel also learned that the speed limit across Europe had dropped from 80 kilometres an hour to 70 kilometres an hour.

The Head of Transport stated that they were pleased about the high rate of customer satisfaction, and hoped that this continued to build. The First Group representative welcomed the Panel to visit and view the progress made on the implementation of the new safety measures.

The Chair queried when there would be KPIs to share once the new procedures and equipment were in place, and there had been a shift in culture, and learned that this would likely be in six months, after the new rosters had been implemented and there was sufficient data from the Guardian devices. The First Group representative shared that since October 2017, alerts had decreased 47% and collisions 27%.

In response to queries from the East Surrey Transport Committee representative about other tram operators adopting the Guardian system, the First Group representative responded that another operator had plans to, in response to a serious response on their network, and after having visited to view the implementation in Croydon. The Panel heard that as other operators were funded by local authorities, they may not have the necessary funds, but that operators in both Hong Kong and Melbourne had plans to adopt the system. There were very few suppliers making similar products. The Chair praised the work done and planned.

The London Trams representative informed the Panel that there were regular updates on the RAIB safety improvements on the TfL website. There would be an over-speeding system to prevent speeding, and it was hoped this would be implemented on all trams before the end of 2019. Glazing films on the windows had been replaced on 14 trams, with one which was 75% thicker, with the rest being re-glazed by the end of February 2019. There would be uninterruptable emergency lighting installed on all trams by the end of summer.

The Panel learned that the Light Rail Safety Body championed by Sarah Jones MP had been funded and held its first meeting in early February. The Body would review safety regulations for tram operators nationally, using the work already done on the London network. The Chair enquired if the Department for Transport funding would be sufficient, and the London Trams representative informed the Panel that additional funding would be used from TfL and the other tram operators, meaning funding should be in place for three years.

b) Synchronisation of on-board announcements

The East Surrey Transport Committee representative introduced this item by informing the Panel that this issue had been raised by a visually impaired colleague, who had repeated issues with trams announcing the wrong station upon arrival.

The London Trams representative thanked the East Surrey Transport Committee representative for bringing the issue to the Panel, and stated that this had been an issue that was worse on older trams. The supplier would be recording new voice data which should address the issue. There were plans to implement driver announcements where there were known issues, but that it should be fully resolved before June 2019. The Panel were asked to report any issues by recording the number of the tram; the Access Officer asked how this would be possible for the visually impaired, and was told that the report lines on platforms could be used.

The Mobility Forum representative asked if it would be possible for the screens inside trams to report issues on other connecting transport links. The London Trams representative replied that this was not currently viable, but that it might be possible to implement something similar at tram stops.

6/19 **Buses**

a) Updates from TfL Actions arising from last meeting

412 Bus - Report back to the Panel on future changes to the route once more data on this route had been collated.

The TfL representative introduced the item by stating that a review of the route had been undertaken, and had found that the route had been reaching capacity at its busiest hours. There had been overcrowding observed in Selsdon on weekday mornings toward Purley, and that possible solutions to this were being considered; these included increasing the capacity of the 412 or the 612. The Access Officer stated that the 612 could often be out of sequence with school opening times, and it was stated that this would be looked into.

The Access Officer asked if it would be viable for one of the routes to run as a school bus during certain hours (as others did in the borough). The TfL representative stated that it was possible, but that it may cause knock on problems; there were eight routes which had been identified to have overcrowding issues, and these included the 289, 466, 410, 468 and 412. The Chair asked if the review of these routes could mean that capacity would be increased, and learned that this was possible.

130 Bus - Report back with progress toward an evidence based solution for the 130 bus route, concerning serving King Henry's Drive from Vulcan Way.

The TfL representative stated that there were no easy solutions to the issue as King Henry's Drive was unsafe for buses. There were a couple of solutions which had been considered, one of these had been to widen the bus, and another to change the route. Rerouting had

seemed like the most viable option but more research needed to be done. The Mobility Forum representative asked if the bus could follow a loop at the end of its journey used by other local routes, and learned that this might be possible. The Chair asked how these decisions were made, and heard that they were based on both demand and the possible socioeconomic benefits.

Action Point: It was agreed that the Access Officer, the Mobility Forum representative and the TfL representative would discuss possible solutions after the meeting.

468 bus – Report back the length that the route would be monitored.

The TfL informed that Panel that more data was needed before a decision could be made and that the Panel would be informed of the outcome at the June 2019 meeting. The East Surrey Transport Committee informed the Panel that the route had a frequency increase in 2017, and then a reduction soon after. There were some parts of the route with no alternative and this had affected the residents greatly. The TfL representative responded that frequency needed to match demand, and this did cause some fluctuations in the service. It was suggested that surveys would be done in areas where there was known overcrowding.

Action Point: For TfL to report back the outcome of the 468 bus review.

b) Bus services in the Town Centre

The TfL representative informed the Panel that the Town Centre bus services consultation had concluded in January 2019, with a number of different communities having been reached out too. Over 1500 responses had been received and were being analysed for a report to be released in mid-2019. The East Surrey Transport Committee representative raised concerns about the distance that users with mobility issues would need to travel between bus stops to change routes and possible reduced access to Fairfield Halls. The TfL representative replied that operators were assessing whether it was viable to continue to have the 75 bus serve Fairfield would be viable. The East Surrey Transport Committee representative commented that the plans to remove the 264 from the Town Centre would leave no direct route to St. George's Hospital.

In response to questions from the Mobility Forum representative about the possibility of grouping certain bus stops together, the TfL representative said that it may be possible for this to be implemented and would be looked in to.

The Head of Transport and Chair thanked the East Surrey Transport Committee for their report, and informed the Panel the council's report to TfL had been broader. The Head of Transport echoed the need to accommodate less mobile users, suggesting that the solution may not be buses, but something else that might better fit the agenda of Healthy Streets. The Head of Transport expressed hopes that the current planned changes would only be in place as long as they were fit for purpose, and that as the Town Centre changed, so would services. The Chair agreed on the need to consider less mobile users, and the accommodation of Healthy Streets, and queried where the savings made from the reduced services would be spent, as greater capacity was needed in the south of the borough. The TfL representative informed the Panel that any savings made would be redeployed in the borough.

The Mobility Forum representative asked about the possibility of moving Poplar Walk bus stops into West Croydon Bus Station, and the TfL representative replied that this would be fed back. The Access Officer asked whether the police and schools had been talked to as part of the consultation, and learned that schools had been written to and meetings with the council's safety team had taken place. Forecasts for demand in the borough had been undertaken and fed into the consultation.

c) Thornton Heath bus garage – (Update)

The Chair and TfL representative read sections from the following written response provided by Arriva in advance of the meeting:

“View on situation since last meeting and changes:

Whilst the volume of observations has continued, they have now begun to include bus dwell times across all periods of the day, and list numerous items which are associated with the operation of high frequency bus routes on a busy arterial route. The observations have also included route 109 operated by Abellio.

Since the last meeting we have continued to deal with any staff failing to follow company procedures, and where possible (subject to staff availability) have also positioned a company official to oversee the vehicle run-ins and re-educate staff drivers, shunters and engineers alike. I would stress that not every observation listed by the complainant is evidence of staff failing to comply with correct procedures.

We have also had a new manager appointed to our contract cleaners (who manage the vehicle run-ins) and they are proving to be a great help in structuring the approach to the run-in, and we believe with the

schedule changes due to come in on 2nd March 2019, we should see further improvements.

We have had our fuel delivery system checked and serviced to ensure that the speed of fuel delivery is at its optimum, thus reducing the time it takes to refuel buses and get them into the garage.

What is capacity for holding buses in this garage as determined by the lease?

I will have to contact the Arriva property department to confirm this, however the complainant's continued suggestion that the garage was built with a capacity of 40 buses is incorrect. Irrespective of this point as previously agreed in mediation we have finalised a change to the schedules which comes into effect on Saturday 2nd March 2019 and transfers four buses to our Norwood garage site. Whilst there is a cost implication to this we are confident it will take some pressure off the evening run-in at its busiest period. In addition to this we have adjusted the schedule of the four night buses on route 64 to be cleaned and fuelled after the morning peak removing four vehicles movements in and four out alleviating some of the pressures during the morning run out."

The resident informed the Panel that they had witnessed in-service buses using the road for crew changes. Run-ins had been taking up five blocks on the road, and there had been noise from both of these and idling buses. Other buses had been forced to stop in the road, as access had been blocked by parked buses, with people boarding the bus in the middle of the street. Another resident agreed with this, adding that they had heard a number of complaints, with these escalating in the previous two months.

The Chair expressed dissatisfaction at Arriva having not attended the meeting, and informed the Panel that they had met with representatives after the previous meeting and agreed an action plan. The Chair requested that there be an update on these at the June 2019 meeting; the Panel heard that the Head of Performance for TfL had been contacted over the issue. The TfL representative informed the Panel that senior management and the council were still looking for solutions.

d) Consultation on routes 404 and 434

The TfL representative informed the Panel that the consultations had ended in February 2019, and had received over 600 responses. The data would be analysed and fed into a report on next steps by mid-2019, with the recommendations implemented by summer 2019. In response to queries from the Chair on what the proposed changes were, the Panel heard that there were plans to increase the frequency

of both routes, with the 404 serving additional bus stops, and the 434 being diverted.

The East Surrey Transport Committee representative stated that they liked the ideas, but raised the possibility of issues with diverting the 434; the TfL representative replied that these had come through in the consultation.

Action Point: For TfL to report back on the outcome of the report, following the consultation on the 404 and 434 bus routes.

e) Oasis school – changes to route 466 and 60

The TfL representative stated that the proposed changes to these routes would likely be beneficial to pupils at Oasis School, but that there were possible issues for students at Coulsdon Sixth Form; they went on to add that service increases for the 466 seemed justified, but that there might be other solutions. The Panel heard that before any increases to the 466 frequency were implemented, there would be a resurveying of Coulsdon Sixth Form in reply to concerns raised by the East Surrey Transport Committee representative.

Action Point: For TfL to report back on changes to the 466 and 60 bus routes concerning Oasis School.

f) Capacity for route 166 in summer on Saturdays and Sundays

The TfL representative informed the Panel that increases to the 166 were being considered and that there would be an update at the next meeting. The solutions being considered included use of larger buses or more buses on the route. The Chair stated that the changes should be viable as the demand was clearly there, and the East Surrey Transport Committee representative added that for many people on the route the bus was unusable, due to the increased tourist demand in summer.

Action Point: For TfL to report back on any planned changes to the 166 during summer.

a) Update on reintroduction of full timetable and off-peak services

The Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) representative informed the Panel that the next timetable change was planned for May 2019 with some small changes and additional weekend services. The Chair queried whether the introduction would be smoother than the initial changes, and was told that they should be similar to the changes in December 2018, which had caused minimal disruption.

The Head of Transport informed the Panel that Overground services out of West Croydon had good performance until the initial timetable change, but this had since suffered. The Chair agreed and stated that timetable changes made elsewhere had knock on effects to Croydon services, and asked how much of this was due to timetable changes. The GTR representative stated that the changes should not affect other services negatively if they ran as intended, and should actually have a net positive effect. The TfL representative stated that they would bring an update on Overground performance to the next meeting.

Action Point: For TfL to bring an update on Overground performance to the next meeting.

b) Update on Access for All bids - Selhurst, Coulsdon South, Reedham, Waddon, West Croydon and Norwood Junction Stations.

The GTR representative informed the Panel that feedback on all Access for All bids would be available from the Department for Transport in April 2019. A bid for Selhurst had been approved in the previous tranche of funding and was being undertaken by Network Rail. The bid for Coulsdon South had been delayed, as plans had needed to be redrawn to avoid the destruction of a minicab office, and still needed to be ratified by the council planning department.

The Access Officer asked about a penalty fine which GTR had incurred in 2018. It had been specified that the penalty fine would be spent on passenger improvements. The Access Officer and Mobility Forum representative asked if this could be spent on a second entrance for Norbury station, and were told that this would be fed back. The GTR representative informed the Panel that the total fine had been £15m, but this was for the entire network, and would be allocated in conjunction with the Department for Transport.

The TfL representative informed the Panel that work had been done with the council and Network Rail on the Norwood Junction bid, to ensure it was viable with a strong case.

The TfL representative stated that the West Croydon bid had not been prioritised as it already had step free access, and others did not. The Chair questioned the legitimacy of the claim of step free access, stating that the ramp was often unattended, that going through the car park was dangerous, and agreed with the Mobility Forum representative that the signage was not clear. The TfL representative agreed on the need for additional signage, but stressed the need for council permission to add this outside of the station.

The East Surrey Transport Committee representative agreed with the access problems to West Croydon, and asked about the possibility of passengers being able to stay on trains that went between platforms 1 and 4. The Access Officer agreed this could be a good idea, but may need permission from the rail regulator.

The Chair thanked TfL for their willingness to find a solution in relation to West Croydon, and stated Network Rail would need to be included in any discussions which involved the car park.

Action Point: For TfL and GTR to feedback the outcome of the Access for All bids at the next meeting.

c) Lack of through trains from stations north of Norwood Junction to Purley between 06.00 and 08.15

The GTR representative stated that the timetable was still being worked on and that there would still be some gaps in service, but that they would see what could be done in this case.

The East Surrey Transport Committee representative informed the Panel that they believed there needed to be more interchanges on the same platform to allow better disabled access to East Croydon from stations north of Norwood Junction.

d) Automatic Numberplate Recognition in station car parks

The GTR representative informed the Panel that Automatic Numberplate Recognition had been installed at some car parks, and there had been some initial problems. There had been some instances of incorrect ticketing, with specific issues around tenancy in Coulsdon. A waiting limit of twenty minutes had been implemented to ease this, and network disruption was now being cross referenced to avoid

ticketing those picking up from the station. The head of stations at GTR would be developing a solution to the tenancy issues.

The East Surrey Transport Committee representative stated that they felt the implementation had been rushed, but did not disagree with it in principle.

e) Ticket Vending Machines – The ability to purchase tickets for a journey starting at a station other than the one the machine is located at; One day Bus and Tram tickets

The GTR representative told the Panel that a solution to being able to purchase tickets for a journey starting at a station other than the one the machine is located at had been worked on and tested; this had gone live in January 2019. A solution to one day bus and tram tickets was being worked on.

The East Surrey Transport Committee representative welcomed this, but requested it be better publicised.

8/19 Items for next meeting

The Chair invited the Panel to submit any items they would like discussed before the 1 June 2019 for the next meeting.

9/19 Date of next meeting

18 June 2019

The meeting ended at 11.32 am

Signed:

Date:

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