

Transport for London

Minutes of the Customer Service and Operational Performance Panel

**Teams Virtual Meeting
10.00am, Thursday 7 October 2021**

Members

Dr Mee Ling Ng OBE (Chair)
Anne McMeel
Dr Lynn Sloman MBE

Executive Committee

Howard Carter General Counsel
Vernon Everitt Managing Director Customers, Communication and Technology
Andy Lord Managing Director, London Underground and TfL Engineering (up to Minute 31/10/21)

Other Staff

Sophie Achillini Diversity and Inclusion Lead (for Minute 34/10/21)
Bob Blitz Bus Network Planning Manager (for Minute 32/10/21)
Mark Evers Chief Customer Officer, Customers, Communication and Technology
Geoff Hobbs Director, Public Transport Service Planning
Marcia Williams Director, Diversity, Inclusion and Talent (for Minute 34/10/21)
Shamus Kenny Head of Secretariat
Jamie Mordue Secretariat Officer

27/10/21 Apologies for Absence and Announcements

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded those present that safety was paramount at TfL and encouraged Members to raise any safety issues during discussions on a relevant item or with TfL staff after the meeting.

As the number of Members who were able to attend the meeting in person fell below the quorum, the meeting was held via Microsoft Teams and streamed on TfL's YouTube channel.

Apologies for absence had been received from Bronwen Handyside. On behalf of the Panel, the Chair wished her a speedy recovery. Gareth Powell, Managing Director Surface Transport was unable to attend but was represented by Geoff Hobbs.

28/10/21 Declarations of Interest

Since the last meeting, Dr Lynn Sloman MBE had been appointed as the Chair of the Welsh Government's Roads Review Panel and her biography and register of interests had been updated.

Members confirmed that their declarations of interests, as provided to the Secretariat and published on tfl.gov.uk, were up to date and there were no interests to declare that related specifically to items on the agenda.

29/10/21 Minutes of the Meeting of the Panel held on 14 July 2021

The Chair, following consultation with the Panel, approved the minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2021 as a correct record. The minutes would be provided to the Chair for signature at a future date.

30/10/21 Matters Arising and Actions List

Howard Carter introduced the item.

The Panel noted the Actions List.

31/10/21 Customer Services and Operational Performance Report – Quarter 1 2021/22

Vernon Everitt introduced the paper, which provided the quarterly Customer Service and Operational Performance report for the first time since February 2020. The format of the report had been updated.

The new report format allowed for a better focus on the Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS) outcomes within the remit of the Panel and to the TfL Scorecard metrics. Key themes that had an impact on customers or operations would continue to be shared with the Panel, although the data might be shared in other quarterly reports.

The Panel noted that some data sets did not necessarily lend themselves to periodic reporting. For example, information on Active Travel and accessibility were thought to be better suited to more detailed standalone papers or deep dives.

There had been a significant increase in public transport usage to 60 per cent of normal ridership during the week, compared to five per cent in March 2020. The bus network regularly saw 75 per cent of normal ridership during the week. Both network use and bus ridership were higher on the weekends.

Andy Lord noted that the Waterloo & City line had reopened in the morning and evening peaks, and TfL would continue to review demand. A good service had been maintained on the London Underground (LU) over the period, albeit with an increase in planned engineering works on weekends and despite an increase in the number of staff being contacted through the NHS Covid-19 app.

Step-free access had been completed at the 89th LU station at Osterley, in addition to those on the TfL Rail network. The Northern Line Extension had recently opened, which required large collaborative efforts across TfL, and was generating positive feedback. Turn-up-and-go (TUAG) services had been reintroduced in the summer and work was ongoing towards the phased reintroduction of the Night Tube. Andy Lord thanked colleagues for helping TfL play a big part in the Paralympian homecoming event.

Geoff Hobbs told the Panel that bus performance data tended to follow the pattern of the coronavirus pandemic and associated restrictions. The bus care score performed well and was above target for the TfL Scorecard. The removal of capacity limits, on 17 May 2021, made operating conditions more readily achieved.

London Overground and Docklands Light Railway had performed well and service levels had returned to pre-pandemic levels.

Members welcomed the return of the quarterly report and noted that data on safety was reported to the Safety, Sustainability and Human Resources Panel (SSHRP). Where it fell within the Panel's remit, information would continue to be shared and the Director of Compliance, Policing, Operations and Security would also regularly attend future meetings.

The Panel asked that some data sets relating to Healthy Streets be reintroduced to the report, such as: Santander Cycle usage, cycle loads in central London (to understand how the use of streets was changing), air quality (particularly relating to the Ultra Low Emission Zone) and bus speed data. The Panel asked whether data could be included that showed any differences between the different regions in London, whether that be between inner and outer London or other regional definitions. **[Action: Vernon Everitt]**

Members noted that the percentage of disabled Londoners that agreed that 'TfL cares about its customers' was consistently lower than the comparative score for all Londoners and was decreasing. It was thought that this may relate to the impact of the lockdown, the general availability of public transport, government messaging or the suspension of TUAG services. Data would be monitored to determine whether any other longer-term themes could be identified.

Although demand was increasing week on week, it was likely to remain below previously anticipated recovery trajectory levels. This was largely a result of delays to coming out of lockdown, lower than anticipated commuter demand and no international tourism. Further to this, as people socialised more, there was an increase in non-Covid illnesses, which meant people would work from home.

It was not clear why the number of customers agreeing that 'TfL has friendly and helpful staff' had declined over the previous period, while other metrics had improved. Staff would monitor results to see whether any contributing factors could be identified, such as lower staffing levels in specific areas reducing customer confidence and the recent resumption of more revenue enforcement activities,.

The length of time taken to answer calls received through TfL's contact centres had increased, due to the increased complexity of the issues being raised, callers seeking more reassurance and guidance around rule changes and a decrease in staff availability. Driver and operator licensing queries were now permanently dealt with by email.

Trials for electric scooter use on roads and cycleways would last a year and the results would be shared with SSHRP. Updates on non-customer facing technology were typically reported to the Programmes and Investment Committee.

There had been several adverse weather events that had impacted services. The most disruptive was in July 2021, which led to 29 LU stations being closed and a District line train being surrounded by water. In the morning of 5 October 2021, one month's worth of rain fell, which caused flooding at Knightsbridge station. The infrastructure coped well and staff had reopened the station by 8.00am. TfL would look at innovative ways to stop water getting into stations, what could be done to maintain track drainage and how it could ensure that sewers and drains outside of stations were clear. The Panel thanked staff for their efforts to keep the network operating, despite the impact of recent adverse weather conditions.

The Panel noted the paper.

32/10/21 Bus Services to London's Hospitals

Geoff Hobbs and Bob Blitz introduced the paper, which provided an update on bus services to London's hospitals.

A new 456 route to North Middlesex University Hospital (Edmonton) with direct links to Winchmore Hill and Enfield had been introduced and had received good support from the borough. Route 324 had been extended from Stanmore to the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital. Route H22 had been extended from Twickenham to West Middlesex Hospital, which was an outcome of requests received during consultation on restructuring the scheme; the extension retained links that were broken by a restructuring of route 110 and created new links to the hospital from the Whitton area.

The scheme for Royal Marsden Hospital (Sutton) and the associated London Cancer Hub and new Sutton acute care hospital had been amended following a wider review of bus links in the Sutton area.

TfL continued to run temporary services to Finchley Memorial Hospital and the Night route N20 extension from Barnet Church to serve Barnet Hospital. TfL would consult on making these permanent later in 2021.

Of the seven top priority actions identified in 2017, five had been completed and good progress had been made on one more. Of the eight lower priority actions, four had been completed and four were in progress.

It was estimated that each one per cent increase in service volume resulted in a 0.6 per cent increase in demand. It was difficult to determine to what extent the improved links to hospitals had resulted in passengers changing their mode of transport, particularly due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on all travel patterns and a reliance on ticket data. At an appropriate time in the future, TfL would look to conduct a more structured survey to determine whether improved bus links had caused a modal shift. Analysis would be shared at a future meeting of the Panel. **[Action: Bob Blitz]**

The Panel thanked the team for their work and noted that the work done prior to the pandemic played a crucial role in enabling key workers to get to work.

The Panel noted the paper.

33/10/21 Winning Back Our Customers

Vernon Everitt introduced the report, which set out the actions TfL was taking to win customers back to public transport and make more extensive use of walking and cycling facilities.

An increase in public transport usage was being observed and three quarters of Londoners had used the public transport network in the previous 28 days. Leisure travel had recovered more sharply and there was a clear distinction between travel for work and leisure.

Many Londoners had said that they would use public transport more when they had a reason to travel. TfL was encouraging travel via a marketing campaign to promote what makes London a great place to live, work and visit.

Customer feedback highlighted that customers wanted to travel on a network that was safe, clean and orderly. TfL had responded by making the wearing of face coverings a condition of carriage; carrying out visible cleaning across the network; running a near full service to ensure customers could continue to turn up and go; providing customers with information about travelling during quieter times via the TfL Go app; and using marketing campaigns to promote our safety measures and reassure customers.

Face coverings played an important part in increasing customers' confidence. Legislation that mandated face coverings on public transport expired in July 2021 and TfL was no longer able to enforce face coverings using criminal sanctions. TfL had made wearing a face covering a condition of carriage, which allowed TfL to refuse entry to the network.

Overall, there had been a decrease in the number of customers observed to be wearing a face covering whilst on the network. The latest research showed that over 90 per cent of customers knew that wearing a face covering was a condition of carriage and 72 per cent reported that they did so on a regular basis. There was potential for some confusion, as there were different rules for different transport operators, and more was needed to be done to reach those in the 16-24 age groups. Five hundred enforcement officers conducted targeted operations across London, particularly in areas where high non-compliance had been reported.

Members supported customers being encouraged to wear a face covering to normalise being considerate of other passengers and to conceptualise wearing a face covering as contributing to a shared endeavour. TfL was working with businesses to help get the message to their employees and had increased the frequency of in station announcements. Bus drivers were encouraged to make announcements where they felt it was needed or helpful.

It was noted that face covering usage was one layer of protection for customers. Anti-viral cleaners were used, UV lights on escalators and ventilation also helped to

maintain cleanliness. Imperial College London had conducted regular testing of touch surfaces on TfL services and no trace of the coronavirus was found.

Nine key, top level areas of focus had been identified to encourage customers back to the public transport network. Further information on these would be presented at future meetings of the Panel and, where possible, would include differences between inner and outer London. **[Action: Vernon Everitt]**

The Panel noted the paper.

34/10/21 Enterprise Risk Update – Disparity Leading to Unequal or Unfair Outcomes (ER11)

Marcia Williams introduced the paper, which provided an update against Enterprise Risk 11 (ER11) – Disparity Leading to Unequal or Unfair Outcomes.

TfL's new Vision and Values were launched on 15 September 2021 and had been created from what TfL's workforce said TfL's future should look like and how they said colleagues should work together to achieve it.

An updated set of organisational equality objectives, which set out the actions TfL will take over the next four years, had been agreed and would be published during autumn 2021. A briefing for all Members on the Action for Inclusion Programme would be arranged ahead of its publication, which was scheduled for January 2022.

[Action: Marica Williams]

Guidance had established that Equality Impact Assessments should be carried out at different stages of projects, so that they formed an active part of design thinking and risk management. It was also important to consider how different schemes and interventions linked together, to understand the cumulative impacts on different communities.

The Panel noted the paper and exempt supplementary information on Part 2 of the agenda.

35/10/21 Members' Suggestions for Future Discussion Items

Howard Carter introduced the Forward Plan.

The Panel noted the paper.

36/10/21 Any Other Business

There was no urgent business.

37/10/21 Date of Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting was due to be held on Tuesday 7 December 2021 at 10.00am.

38/10/21 Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Panel agreed to exclude the press and public from the meeting, in accordance with paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), when it considered the exempt information in relation to the item on Enterprise Risk Update – Disparity Leading to Unequal or Unfair Outcomes (ER11).

The meeting closed at 12.07pm.

Chair:



Date:
