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## Minutes

Agenda item: 4  
Drafted 06.11.17

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**Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 24 October 2017 at 169 Union Street, London SE1 0LL**

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### Present

#### Members

Jackie Ballard, Alan Benson, Richard Dilks, Glyn Kyle, Arthur Leathley (Chair), Abdu Osman, John Stewart

#### Guests

Dave Penney                      Managing Director, Chiltern Rail (Item 8)

#### Secretariat

Tim Bellenger	Director, Policy and Investigation
Janet Cooke	Chief Executive
Richard Freeston-Clough	Communications Manager
Sharon Malley	Executive Assistant
Vincent Stops	Policy Officer

### **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 those standing declarations recorded on the London TravelWatch website.

### **4 Chair's activities and Transport Focus update**

The Chair said that he had now been in post for around three weeks. In that time he had attended a meeting with Nick Brown of Govia Thameslink Railway, which had been positive, especially in relation to Southern. He had held individual introductory meetings with Assembly Members Keith Prince, Caroline Pidgeon and Caroline Russell.

The Chair said that he had received a welcome letter from Mike Brown, London's Transport Commissioner, and should be having an introductory meeting with him in due course.

The Chair said that in his role as a board member of Transport Focus he had held an introductory discussion with the Transport Focus Chair, who had confirmed that he was always keen to receive input on behalf of London's passengers.

The Chair said that when he was on leave the Chief Executive and John Stewart had attended a meeting of the London Assembly Transport Committee and presented London TravelWatch's 2018-19 business plan. John Stewart said that the meeting had been positive and the questions from Assembly Members were sympathetic. Assembly members had focused on ways of increasing engagement with bus passengers and how TfL was following up the recommendations made in London TravelWatch's report on London Underground ticket office closures.

The Chair had attended the Department for Transport Rail Day with the Chief Executive and the Communications Manager, which had been useful.

### **5 Minutes of the Board meeting held on 11 July 2017 and Governance committee**

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 11 July 2017 were agreed and signed as a correct record. The minutes of the Governance Committee of 9 May 2017 were noted.

### **6 Matters arising (LTW560)**

Members asked whether there had been any progress on the issue of step-free access to the Central line platforms at Bank Underground station. The Director, Policy and Investigation, said there was nothing further to report at present and he would continue to press this with TfL and report to members with updates. The Chief Executive said that Mark Evers had been invited to a board meeting in the new year to report on progress with ticket office issues and Bank station could also be raised at that meeting.

## **7 Key activities (LTW561)**

The Director, Policy and Investigation, said that the Govia Thameslink Railway stakeholder session had been interesting. It was a consultation about the 2018 timetable and was done well in advance, with clear feedback about how comments had been handled. This was encouraging for the future.

The Director, Policy and Investigation, said there would be a lot of rail engineering works over the Christmas 2017 holiday period, including London Bridge, where engineering works would hopefully be finally completed. London TravelWatch's website would signpost transport users to sources of information on the works.

Members noted that it was important that station staff were aware of accessibility implications during disruption, especially when accessible routes were temporarily replaced by non-accessible routes. The Chief Executive said this would be raised at the next meeting of the Travel Demand Management board.

**Action: Policy Officer (VS)**

The Director, Policy and Investigation, said there was a requirement in London Overground's concession that it should look at ticket office opening hours and as a result TfL wanted to change its ticket retailing. London Overground was beginning this process by discussing the issue with London TravelWatch and the unions and formulating its ideas. The Director, Policy and Investigation, expected London Overground to bring proposals forward in the next few months.

The Director, Policy and Investigation, said there would be a partial closure of Paddington station over the Christmas period, but trains would not be terminating at Ealing Broadway this year. Some long-distance services would run to Marylebone via Oxford and Bicester from the West Country. These would be 14-hour round trips but there were no facilities at Marylebone to service train toilets. Consideration was being given to waiving charges for using toilets at Marylebone and also a 'go before you go' campaign.

The Chief Executive noted that the attendance at party conferences had been at transport-related fringe events to learn more about future transport policy direction.

## **8 Chiltern Rail**

The Chair welcomed Dave Penney, Managing Director of Chiltern Rail, to the meeting. Mr Penney gave a presentation on Chiltern's routes in the London rail area and the challenges it faced.

Mr Penney said that demand for Chiltern routes was continuing to grow. There was a focus on increasing the capacity of the network in order to meet that demand, which included extending platforms to enable the running of longer trains.

Mr Penney recognised that Marylebone was used by many passengers as a connection to the rest of the city. He said that a significant challenge was to improve the connectivity of Marylebone.

Marylebone station was reaching capacity and would need intervention in four to five years. There needed to be a longer term vision for the station. The escalators would need to be refurbished in 2018 and alternative arrangements via Baker Street would be put in place then. It was possible to improve bus and pedestrian connections to Baker Street.

Mr Penney said that it was currently possible to connect Chiltern to HS2 and Crossrail at Old Oak Common. He was lobbying to maintain that link as proposed plans would sever it. He was also looking at ways to improve the connection to London Heathrow Airport.

Mr Penney said that ticket retailing had been changed in a small number of stations, so that tickets were now sold by staff on concourses. The change had been very popular with passengers. However, it was not possible to introduce the changes in all stations as the layout and configuration of stations did not always work.

Mr Penney said Chiltern was upgrading the ticket vending machines at its stations and was also looking at ways to increase smart ticketing options. He said he was proud of the growth of the network and high levels of customer satisfaction but recognised the continual challenge of meeting growing demand. He welcomed the constructive engagement he experienced with London TravelWatch.

Members asked whether there was potential for increasing off-peak levels of service for Chiltern stations in the Harrow area. Mr Penney said the level of service at smaller stations was an issue of ongoing debate. There were some constraints in increasing service at some stations, due to timetabling and platform lengths. Some work on this was underway, but there would still be tension between increasing services at smaller stations and serving the network as a whole.

Members asked whether there were plans to improve the system of assisted travel, which required passengers with accessibility issues to book assistance in advance. They also asked about the language used, and whether 'alight' could be replaced by 'get off' and whether 'best fares' always meant 'lowest fares'.

Mr Penney said that a turn-up-and-go assisted travel service was a challenge in unstaffed stations but more practicable at staffed stations. It was also more difficult with driver-only operated trains. This was something that Chiltern was giving some thought to.

Members noted that Chiltern currently offered a turn-up-and-go service at three of its staffed stations but not at all its staffed stations. Mr Penney said that the layout of some stations precluded turn-up-and-go, even if staff were available. For example, at Gerard's Cross, staff were in a ticket office some distance from the platforms so it was difficult for them to assist passengers on the platforms. Members noted that Chiltern deserved credit for adopting turn-up-and-go at the three stations at present and that this was industry-leading. However, they would like to see more.

On the 'best fares', Mr Penney said that he recognised that fares could be complicated and he supported the removal of some of the barriers to paying, such as making it easier to buy tickets and enabling retrospective payment for tickets.

Members highlighted the need to improve connectivity between Marylebone and Baker Street stations, including improving the walking route between them. Mr Penney said that Marylebone was unusual among London terminal stations as it was operated by Chiltern rather than Network Rail.

Mr Penney reiterated that the current plans for HS2 included the severing of the line between joining the Chiltern route to Old Oak Common but did not include provision for reconnection in future. Chiltern was focusing its lobbying on the DfT for the provision of a proper connection to Old Oak Common in the future.

Members asked whether passengers were easily able to locate staff in stations when they were based on the concourse rather than the ticket office. Mr Penney said that the use of mobile staff was being trialled at two stations, with two staff in each, one selling tickets and the other on the barrier. Customer feedback had been very positive but each station needed its own tailored approach.

The Chief Executive noted that the air quality around Marylebone station was very poor and that this could be attributed to the diesel trains that called there. She asked whether the number of diesel trains could be reduced. Mr Penney said that Chiltern would be the last big diesel operator in London and was aware of the environmental implications of this. He said that new rolling stock and electrification could help, as would reviewing dwell times and how long the engines should stay running while trains were waiting at the station. He confirmed that he was now in regular contact with the local residents' group.

The Chair invited Graham Larkbey, a Chiltern rail user, to comment. Mr Larkbey said that users of Chiltern's smaller London stations were not happy with their level of service. Chiltern performed well in many areas, which made it more regrettable that its attitude towards London suburban services seemed so poor and infrequent, particularly out of peak hours.

Mr Larkbey said that Chiltern seemed to hide behind the minimum service standards outlined in the franchise agreement but these were now out of date. He welcomed Chiltern's consideration of platform extensions as this could lead to more efficient timetables. He thought there could be scope to work with TfL and the boroughs for funding.

Mr Penney said that Chiltern had always taken an interest in serving all the stations on its routes. However there were significant restrictions on line and train capacity and timetable decisions needed to accommodate them. He said that investing in the smaller stations would increase the flexibility in service patterns and he hoped to increase passenger numbers in the longer term.

The Chair thanked Mr Penney for attending and noted that London TravelWatch would be interested to follow up on issues such as accessibility, language and service patterns.

## **9 Piccadilly line reliability (LTW562)**

The Director, Policy and Investigation, presented a report on recent reliability of the Piccadilly Underground service. The performance had deteriorated following

problems with the train wheels, which had distorted out of shape as a result of slipping on leaf fall.

Members noted that London TravelWatch's focus was on the passenger detriment resulting from the poor performance. London TravelWatch should not be distracted by discussions about engineering solutions. It was agreed that a future meeting would consider the resilience of the rail and Underground network over the 2017/18 autumn and winter period.

**Action: Executive Assistant**

**10 Business plan (LTW563)**

The business plan and budget bid for 2018/19 was noted. The Chief Executive said that specific targets arising from the plan would be formulated in due course so that the focus would be on tangible outcomes. The plan would also be revised to include specific reference to representing bus users.

**11 Any other business**

Members gave a vote of thanks to Johnnet Hamilton for her assistance to London TravelWatch during her time at TfL.

**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.

During the confidential session, members considered the confidential minutes, bus station standards and bus occupant safety research, and reviewed the meeting.