
Minutes

Agenda item : 4
Drafted : 22.7.10

**Minutes of the Consumer Affairs Committee meeting held on 14 July 2010
at 6 Middle Street, London EC1**

Contents

- 1 Chair's introduction, pre-meeting announcements and apologies for absence.**
- 2 Declarations of Interest**
- 3 Confirmation of Vice-Chair**
- 4 Minutes**
- 5 Matters arising (CA048)**
- 6 Actions taken (CA049)**
- 7 Casework report (CA050)**
- 8 Casework Manager's report**
- 9 Passengers Rights Project (CA053)**
- 10 Any other business**
- 11 Resolution to move into confidential session**
- 12 Glossary**

Present

Members

David Barry (Chair), Terry Bennett, Daniel Francis (Vice-Chair), Sophia Lambert, Teena Lashmore, Sarah Pond, Sharon Grant (London TravelWatch Chair)

Stakeholder Representatives

Matt Winfield Stakeholder Engagement Manager, Transport for London (TfL)

Secretariat

Janet Cooke	Chief Executive
Bryan Davey	Director, Public Liaison
Mark Donoghue	Committee Administrator
Susan Parnham-McCance	Casework Manager

Minutes

- 1 Chair's introduction, pre-meeting announcements and apologies for absence**

The Chair welcomed members and the stakeholder representative to the meeting. Apologies were received from Lorna Reith.

2 Declarations of interest

There were no additional declarations of interest.

3 Confirmation of Vice-Chair

The Chair noted that at the London TravelWatch board meeting on 25 May 2010, he had been agreed as the Chair of this committee. He thanked the former Chair, Sarah Pond, for her work. It was agreed that the new Vice-Chair would be Daniel Francis.

4 Minutes

The minutes were approved subject to the following amendments :

On item four, paragraph one, the sentence should read as, "A member asked how many appeal cases involving long distance rail journeys originating in London were carried out."

On item five, paragraph three, line two, the word, committee, should be deleted.

On item six, paragraph four, an action needed to be inserted for the future format of reporting on casework performance targets and for monthly reporting.

It was also agreed to look at monthly performance reporting with a possible target date when it could be introduced.

On item three paragraph three, The Director, Public Liaison reported that only a small number of complaints had been received regarding websites. However, he had received some cases recently and would take this issue forward.

Action : Director, Public Liaison

5 Matters arising (CA048)

On item C/12.5.10/4 (To confirm how many appeal cases involving rail journeys originating in London were dealt with), the Director, Public Liaison noted that, as indicated in the Casework Performance report, the number of cases was small. In the last quarter 10% of all appeal cases involved long distance rail journeys originating in London.

A member asked if a disproportionate amount of time was spent on these cases. The Director, Public Liaison noted that the work involved varied between cases. The Chief Executive explained that some cases would involve commuters.

The Chair of London TravelWatch felt that a policy should be developed for these cases. There was an opportunity to change the law with a potential bill on the Greater London Authority (GLA) published in the Autumn. The Mayor's powers may be widened as a result.

Members felt that there was an opportunity to rationalise responsibilities, but that interchanges with Transport for London services should be maintained as being in London TravelWatch's remit and delays which occurred on Transport for London (TfL) services which meant passengers on route for long distance rail journeys missed their connection should be kept.

The Chair noted that the GLA bill could mean that was an opportunity to align the Mayoral and London TravelWatch remits on rail. The Chief Executive reported that any Green Paper on the bill would be responded to irrespective of the current GLA review of London TravelWatch.

The Chair of London TravelWatch asked for a paper to go to the Executive and start discussions with the Department for Transport (DfT) about the synchronicity of remits between London TravelWatch and the Mayor. The Chief Executive would talk to the Director, Public Liaison and Director, Research and Development and circulate a paper to the Executive and members of this committee.

Action : Chief Executive

On C/12.5.10/4 (To obtain a response from First Capital Connect to the Chair of London TravelWatch's letter), the Casework Manager reported that she had asked operators at meetings to let her know about influxes of work. This will reduce the pressure on the operator and London TravelWatch.

Members went on to discuss the demands placed upon London TravelWatch when something similar to the situation at First Capital Connect occurred and alternative methods of income.

On C/12.5.10/7 (To find out how much the passenger expected to receive from the refund, the consequential loss and how this related to the £20 goodwill gesture), the Director, Public Liaison would see if £75 would be sent to the appellant by the operator.

Action : Director, Public Liaison

On C/12.5.10/C3 (To send the How to Complain leaflet to a designer and liaise with a member on the design), the Chief Executive would discuss the publication date with the Communications Officer.

Action : Chief Executive

C/12.5.10/C4 (How much it would cost to join the Helpline's Association), it was agreed not to prioritise this given the current financial pressures.

6 Actions Taken (CA049)

The Chair noted that a formal submission had been made to Ofcom (media and communications regulator) regarding the review of non-geographic call services. The Director, Public Liaison noted that Consumer Focus were disappointed that more organisations had not taken up the call back facility for callers and 0300 over 0843/5 numbers. He reported that London TravelWatch had made its position clear to TfL.

A member noted that this underlined how important it would be to see the equality impact assessment and find out how TfL came to its decision.

It was agreed to write a letter to TfL enclosing the response to Ofcom, copied to Murad Qureshi (London Assembly member) and the Chair of the London Assembly Transport Committee.

Action : Director, Public Liaison

7 Casework report (CA050)

The Director, Public Liaison reported that the performance report was from January to March 2010 and the questionnaire six months (October 2009 to March 2010). Plans are in place to make the database easier to use and help the Casework Officers. Volumes of cases had increased across the board.

A member asked if the list of ethnicity categories in the questionnaire monitoring could be made alphabetical. The Director, Public Liaison agreed.

Action : Director, Public Liaison

On target one, the Director, Public Liaison reported that the performance was now over 95%.

A member asked if performance monitoring of the Casework team took place. The Casework Manager reported that this did. The Director, Public Liaison reported that the improvements to the database would be carried out in the next 2-3 months. The Casework Manager noted that the targets for Casework Officers were not the same as the targets for the Transport Committee. In fact they were slightly less, for example, target one was 4 days for caseworkers, but 5 for the Transport Committee.

The Chair of London TravelWatch noted the fail on the targets, for example, 24 for target two. The Casework Manager noted that there would be a reason for this, but reports are run to correct them.

A member noted that two thirds of enquiries were related to TfL, London Buses and Docklands Light Railway (DLR). The Director, Public Liaison felt that some of this could be explained how the call was logged. He noted that on the DLR there was a specific problem (new ticket machines were not working properly). The TfL figures included congestion charge enquiries. January is a busy month due to the weather and fares changes. There were some minor seasonal fluctuations in work. He expected the number of cases to decline in the next quarter.

The Chair of London TravelWatch felt that London TravelWatch is still not reaching under-represented sections of the population. The Chair noted that he was attending a Haringey public transport users group meeting and would ask about including an article in the Haringey council publication, Haringey People.

8 Casework Manager's report

The Casework Manager updated members on which areas she had prioritised : performance and targets; staff management; and computer systems and management.

Staff are more aware of the importance of performance data. They are expected to work within the agreed time parameters. She believed that the team had under represented their work by as much as 15%. The saturation point for full-time Caseworkers is 48 cases (pro rata for part-time).

She asked that any criticism must go to her first and not to an individual Caseworker. It was agreed that the Chief Executive would send a note to the Board on e-mail etiquette.

Action : Chief Executive

She is also building good working relationships with operators.

The Chair noted that Caseworkers improve the travelling experience actively and thanked them for their work on helping passengers.

9 Passenger Rights Project (CA053)

It was agreed that the paper and item would, as formally proposed, could now be taken in the public session.

The Director, Public Liaison thanked members for their comments. There were 3 approaches for this project : a passenger charter; a user guide; or a consumer leaflet.

It was agreed that the leaflet would be a passenger charter, including information on what to do if your rights are not recognised. It was agreed to have a draft leaflet to the September Consumer Affairs Committee meeting for approval and to then publish it on the website.

Action : Director, Public Liaison

10 Any other business

None.

11 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 discussed the benchmarking report; an audit and the draft GLA performance report.

The next meeting would take place on 15 September 2010.

12 Glossary

DfT	Department for Transport
DLR	Docklands Light Railway
GLA	Greater London Authority
Ofcom	Media and communications regulator
TfL	Transport for London
TOCs	Train Operating Companies