London TravelWatch

Secretariat memorandum

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South West Trains Ticket Vending Machine improvements

1   Purpose of report

1.1.   To provide an update to members on South West Trains' planned developments for their Ticket Vending Machines (TVMs). This is attached at appendix A, in the form of an e-mail from South West Trains to London TravelWatch, received on 18 June 2009.

2   Recommendations

2.1.   That the report is received for information.

3   Equalities and inclusion implications

3.1   Not applicable – report is for information only.

4   Financial implications

4.1   Not applicable – report is for information only

5   Legal powers

5.1   Section 252A of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 places a duty upon London TravelWatch (as the London Transport Users Committee) to keep under review matters affecting the interests of the public in relation to railway passenger and station services provided wholly or partly within the London railway area, and to make representations about them to such persons as it thinks appropriate.

Appendix:

When TVMs were implemented, we filtered the list of destinations that is available from central industry systems. This removed the 'sillies' such as 'World Rowing Championships' etc, but we also had to be realistic over the amount of data we could maintain, so using sales data we limited the destination set to stations where we actually sell tickets to. Using this method Grimsby Docks gets excluded because in reality no-one travels there from our patch, but common destinations are available. The last time I checked, we served more than 99% of destinations that passengers originating on SWT travel to.

Later this year we will get from the supplier a new tool that will allow us to control the destination list more easily, but more importantly will provide the opportunity to inform the user of the TVM that the choice of ticket that they are about to make may be or maybe not appropriate for them. For example, it will be possible to tag a ticket selection of say, Guildford to Aberdeen made at 2300 with a message to say that it is unlikely that there will be suitable trains to travel on at this time of day. Where the application is even more appropriate is that we will be able to give greater clarity over the choice of routes that face users of the machine. Currently these are described in rail industry jargon and mean something to a ticket clerk, but do nothing but confuse the passenger. It is our current intention to expand the destination list at this point because we will be able to provide more information about the passenger's selection.

The new application does offer quite a few changes that hopefully will be of interest to London Travelwatch. We have under development new high contrast screens to improve usability for the partially sighted, a new set of screens intended to help users unfamiliar with the machine through the selection process and a 'Which Zone do I need?' feature to help the selection of the correct Travelcard Zone.