

Transport for London

Minutes of the Customer Service and Operational Performance Panel

**Conference Rooms 1 and 2, Ground Floor, Palestra,
197 Blackfriars Road, London, SE1 8NJ
10:30am, Wednesday 22 March 2023**

Members

Dr Mee Ling Ng OBE (Chair)
Marie Pye (Vice-Chair)
Anne McMeel
Dr Lynn Sloman MBE
Peter Strachan
Cllr Kieron Williams (from Minute 05/03/23 (part))

Executive Committee

Glynn Barton	Interim Chief Operating Officer
Howard Carter	General Counsel
Alex Williams	Chief Customer and Strategy Officer

Other Staff

Thomas Ableman	Director of Strategy and Innovation
Mike Beevor	Senior Policy Manager, Innovation
Tom Cunnington	Head of Buses, Business Development
Amanda Hopkins	Head of Business Strategy, London Underground Business Strategy
Emma Strain	Director of Customer
Zoe Manzoor	Senior Committee Officer

01/03/23 Apologies for Absence and Chair's Announcements

An apology for absence had been received from Bronwen Handyside. The meeting was quorate.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, including Emma Strain, the new Director of Customer (from April 2023) who was attending her first meeting of the Panel. The meeting was also being broadcast live to TfL's YouTube channel to ensure the public and press could observe the proceedings.

The Chair 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 the appropriate member of the Executive Committee after the meeting.

02/03/23 Declarations of Interest

Members confirmed that their declarations of interests, as published on tfl.gov.uk, were up to date. It was noted that there had been one update since the last meeting. Dr Lynn Sloman MBE was no longer the Chair of the Welsh Government's Roads Review Panel, as that review had been completed.

There were no interests to declare that related specifically to items on the agenda.

03/03/23 Minutes of the Meeting of the Panel held on 6 December 2022

The minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 6 December 2022 were approved as a correct record and the Chair was authorised to sign them.

04/03/23 Matters Arising and Actions List

Howard Carter introduced the paper, which set out progress against actions agreed at previous meetings of the Panel.

The Panel noted the updated Actions List.

05/03/23 Customer Service and Operational Performance Report - Quarter 3 2022/23

Alex Williams and Glynn Barton presented the Customer Service and Operational Performance Report for Quarter 3 of 2022/23 (18 September to 10 December 2022).

Passenger journey numbers across the network had continued to recover and remained on an upward trajectory. Performance for the quarter had been slightly affected by several days of industrial action. Demand had remained strongest at the weekend and was also good during weekdays other than Fridays. The feedback from businesses indicated that 'hybrid' working would continue in the future. An informal discussion on TfL's planned approach to winning back customers had been arranged for Board Members.

Members noted an ongoing issue with bus operator availability, due to a mixture of sickness, vacancies and industrial action. These issues were industry wide, but TfL had introduced measures to help address them, including a healthcare initiative, to support and provide advice to drivers. Operators were also making positive progress with recruiting new bus drivers and the feedback indicated that the training programmes were full.

The Panel had recently visited the Jubilee line depot in Stratford and had noted the challenges with fleet availability. The level of scheduled services operated on the Underground had improved to 90.8 per cent in this quarter and remained on target for year end.

The Elizabeth line continued to perform well but had experienced a slight dip in this quarter, with a public performance level of 90.7 per cent. This was due to such factors as industrial action and the complexities of working with a shared infrastructure. TfL had a good working relationship with Network Rail and would continue to take a proactive approach to ensuring services operated smoothly.

Woolwich Ferry availability stood at 68.8 per cent this quarter. This was due to infrastructure issues and crew resources. However, good progress had been made in addressing this.

Tram performance for the quarter had also slightly fallen below target, with 91.3 per cent of scheduled services operated. TfL would continue to work to improve the reliability of the service. Good progress had been made with recruiting and retaining specialist staff, improving fleet availability, securing resources and with implementing the tram replacement programme. In view of the challenges and underperformance in this area, Glynn Barton would include a visit to the tram depot as part of the programme of Board visits. **[Action: Glynn Barton]**

A deep dive on the customer care score was scheduled for the July 2023 meeting of the Panel. It was agreed that the narrative and the graphs under the section 'TfL cares about its customers' would be reviewed to ensure the lines in the graph matched the narrative.

It was also highlighted that the contact centres had continued to perform well. The Panel was pleased to note that good progress had been made with responding to seasonal peaks in demand around photocards. A significant amount of work had been carried out to apply the lessons learnt from last year regarding managing these peaks. Preparations were also underway to ensure that the contact centre lines supporting the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) were ready, in operational terms, for the forthcoming expansion. A separate briefing was being arranged for Board Members covering operational readiness for the ULEZ.

The Panel also referred to the TfL GO app, and the measures to improve the quality of information on cycle routes, to help cyclists to choose a suitable and safe route for cycle trips. Members supported further engagement with London boroughs on providing information on priority cycle routes. It was also suggested that the app should include the needs of the different groups of cycling customers. An update would be provided on the development of TfL GO app including an update on the cycling app. **[Action: Alex Williams]**

Members discussed concerns about how litter in the vicinity of stations could make public transport feel less welcoming and safe. Glynn Barton would look further into issues with litter on the public realm around stations under the control of third parties affecting TfL customers and provide an update to Members. **[Action: Glynn Barton]**

Glynn Barton would report back on the ticketing arrangements for continuous travel between the Elizabeth line non-Oyster Card zones (such as beyond West Drayton in Zone 6) to Oyster Card zones, including the use of a Freedom Pass on such routes. **[Action: Glynn Barton]**

Members also expressed an interest in gaining a greater understanding of the traffic signal time savings work. Following a brief overview by officers of the process to measure the benefits, Glynn Barton offered the Panel the opportunity to visit a nearby traffic junction to provide insights to the details of the traffic signal time savings work.

[Action: Glynn Barton]

The Panel noted the paper.

06/03/23 Electrified Travel Devices (Micromobility)

Alex Williams, Thomas Ableman and Mike Beevor presented this item. At the meeting of the Panel on 17 March 2022, an update was sought on the rise of electrified travel devices, and this matter had also been raised at meetings of the Board. The paper provided an update on TfL's strategic approach to the issues raised and how it sought to manage the risk to pedestrians. It also provided an update on the London e-scooter trial and proposals for legislation.

Thomas Ableman and Mike Beevor presented the report, highlighting the current legal status of electrified travel devices. It was illegal to use e-scooters on public roads, other than as part of the authorised Department for Transport (DfT) trials. Currently, there were no specific safety standards that applied to such devices. TfL's approach was to strongly support the Metropolitan Police in enforcing the ban on illegal use.

TfL was working with local authorities, such as Bristol, and with strategic transport authorities, to develop proposals for future legislation, as set out in the report published by the Urban Transport Group. The DfT had expressed an intention to bring forward primary legislation covering electrified travel devices and safety standards, although there was no information on the timeline for this. The Panel supported TfL continuing to work for the introduction of this legislation. A report would be published on the evaluation of the DfT trial in due course.

It was also confirmed that TfL was in the process of re-tendering the operating contracts for the trial. As part of the tendering process, the team would run tests on proposed technology to track pavement use to measure its effectiveness, as this was a major concern, including for the Panel. It was also noted that a local authority was exploring the merits of introducing barriers to demarcate parking bays for e-devices to stop them falling on the pavements.

As the e-bike market was entirely unregulated, and practices varied in different boroughs, TfL was looking at how lessons learned from the e-scooter trial, including on safety, could be applied to the e-bike market.

TfL was also exploring options with other cycle app providers to improve the cycle way finding information on the TfL Go app, including the option of using Open Street Map.

Members discussed the impact of the increase in the use of the electrified travel devices on public health, given the potential for them to provide an easy substitute for active travel options. It was also noted that they may provide a connector to public transport and a substitute for vehicle use, which could both potentially be of benefit. It was suggested that the team should work with public health to further consider the public health impacts and they should be involved in the work to frame legislation.

In terms of monitoring the use of electric travel devices, it was noted that the team collected information from the trials. However, the availability of information beyond that which had been obtained through the trials was severely limited, due to the absence of legislation. The team wished to obtain wider data on the use of all forms of the devices by mode, to fully assess the impacts, for example on mode shifts, which was presently unavailable. The introduction of the regulations would likely enable this data to be more widely available.

In relation to the injury levels, it was confirmed that the team gathered data from the NHS. It appeared that most injuries were to the riders. Safety issues were within the remit of the Safety, Sustainability and Human Resources Panel.

The Panel also discussed the engagement with retailers around the quality of the products and providing information on the legality of use in public spaces.

The Panel would receive a further update on electrified travel devices at an appropriate time.

The Panel noted the paper.

07/03/23 TfL International Benchmarking Report 2023

Alex Williams and Thomas Ableman presented this item, which provided a high-level overview of TfL's customer delivery performance against international benchmarks. The paper highlighted successes, as well as areas for improvement, and signposted subjects for potential benchmarking focus in 2023 and beyond. Members recognised that benchmarking scores could be impacted by structural issues, such as the age of different networks, which had to be considered when comparing performance and cost.

The report showed that TfL's post-coronavirus pandemic recovery was broadly in line with recovery rates in the peer group. TfL would continue to look at best practices around revenue recovery, including trends on metro ridership recovery levels in Europe to identify good practice. It was also noted that customers priorities had remained static.

The Panel noted that the Independent Investment Programme Advisory Group (IIPAG) had presented the findings of its review of the International Benchmarking report to the Audit and Assurance Committee. IIPAG had commended TfL's engagement in benchmarking and concluded that benchmarking would help in the development of future business plans and individual Investment Programme business cases.

The Panel welcomed the positive findings in terms of bus carbon emissions, given that London buses were among the best performers in the peer group.

The study showed that the Underground network had a lower percentage of step-free stations than most international comparators. While progress had been made on delivering step-free access, and work was underway to identify priorities in this area, future improvements would mainly be funded as part of developments through TTL

Properties Limited and by funding secured by third-parties in relation to other schemes.

The Panel discussed the comparisons on fare revenue, particularly the insights from other countries regarding concessionary fare schemes for people on low incomes. The Panel encouraged staff to gather more information on such work.

The Panel also discussed the variations in the operation of revenue protection schemes in other countries and noted that TfL was looking at this for any lessons that could be learnt.

TfL also liaised with tram providers around the UK, outside the formal benchmarking group, to explore best practice.

It was also noted that the Mayor had written to the Secretary of State for Transport in relation to the potential delays to HS2 reaching Euston and the issue of making Old Oak Common station step-free.

The Panel noted the paper.

08/03/23 Bus Action Plan Update

Tom Cunnington presented the report on the delivery of the Bus Action Plan. The presentation provided an update on the challenges to delivering the Plan, including the delays due to the May 2022 local elections and funding uncertainties. It also set out progress with delivering the planned key achievements in 2022/23. The service had delivered a significant number of improvements during this period. The rest of the projects were either in progress or in the delivery plan for 2023/24. TfL was awaiting the evidence from the trial of the 63 bus route before taking proposals forward. At the suggestion of the Chair, tracking information would be included in future reports setting out delivery against objectives. **[Action: Tom Cunnington]**

The Panel noted the planned improvements and changes in Sutton and stressed the importance of delivering a public campaign to highlight the benefits prior to the extension of the Ultra Low Emission Zone. The provision of countdown signs was also seen as very important, especially for people who did not have access to alternative means of accessing live bus times. Consideration would continue to be given to the merits of providing green roofs on bus stops.

The Panel was reassured that bus services remained a key priority for TfL. As an example of this, TfL was working with boroughs on a range of initiatives to improve services.

The Panel noted the paper.

09/03/23 Members' Suggestions for Future Discussion Items

Howard Carter introduced the forward plan. No additional suggestions were raised for the forward plan or for informal briefings, other than those already noted during the meeting.

The Panel noted the forward plan.

10/03/23 Any Other Business the Chair Considers Urgent

There was no other urgent business to discuss.

11/03/23 Date of Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Panel would be held on Wednesday 12 July 2023 at 10:30am.

The meeting finished at 12:30pm.

Chair: _____

Date: _____