

Southeastern:

- 1) Recently we re-launched the Lewisham Station User's Group (LSUG). Can you commit to attending all future LSUG meetings (quarterly) to ensure that residents views are taken into consideration whenever considering changes to scheduling or services at Lewisham? (Councillor Huynh)**

Yes, where we have the capacity to do so.

We engage regularly with many stakeholders across our network including councils, MPs, rail user groups and CRPs. In addition, since last October, we have run Meet the Manager sessions at 19 key stations on our network, including Lewisham, at which we talked to customers in person about the timetable changes, both to share our thinking and hear any feedback or concerns from customers directly.

- 3) Are there any consultations to timetable changes planned for rail services affecting Lewisham borough? (Councillor Hall)**

There are no major changes planned for December 2023 that affect Lewisham.

Looking forward, for minor changes to services (such as those introduced in May) we will continue to engage customers, MPs, and other stakeholders to inform these changes.

In the event of major service revisions, we would expect consultation to apply unless the situation was an emergency one (such as the pandemic).

All networks

- 4) How are you working to improve the quality and amenities of stations across the borough and ensure they are adequate for an inner London Borough. Can you share with us future station improvement roadmaps? (Councillor Walsh)**

We work in partnership with Network Rail (as landlord) to improve the stations on our network. A list of current work in the Lewisham area is set out below.

Lewisham Short Term Interventions

We have recently installed an additional waiting shelter on Platform 4.

Shortly, we will be renewing and revising the wayfinding signage throughout the premises to aid improved passenger movement around the station.

We are working with the DLR to move the gate line on Platform 1 into the concourse area next to the main entrance to improve passenger flow and reduce crowding around the current gates on Platform 1.

National Railway Recovery Fund

We are submitting a bid under the forthcoming National Rail Recovery Fund to relocate staff offices and accommodation to create new space for enhanced passenger facilities, including new toilets, climate-controlled waiting rooms, and retail facilities whilst improving passenger flows in and around Platforms 2 and 3 and the subway leading to Platforms 1 and 4.

We expect to know the outcome of the bid later this year.

Station Feasibility Designs

We are currently undertaking a range of station feasibility design studies aimed at improving 18 stations across our estate, including Catford Bridge

The design for this station focuses on improving the transport interchange between the two Catford stations. These are feasibility designs only, but the output will be submitted as costed bids for funding under the National Railway Recovery Fund.

Any major redevelopment of stations in the borough would be a project undertaken by Network Rail.

Access for All – Hither Green

Hither Green recently received outline planning approval to make the station fully accessible via a new footbridge and lifts to all platforms. Project commencement expected in summer 2023, completion expected in winter 2024. This is a complicated scheme at a challenging site, hence the 19-month programme.

On an additional note, Southeastern will shortly commence works to build an Accessible Toilet at this station.

Access for All – Catford

Network Rail has advised that the work is now complete as of the late May Bank Holiday, bar any snagging items, and the scheme is expected to open in a couple of weeks.

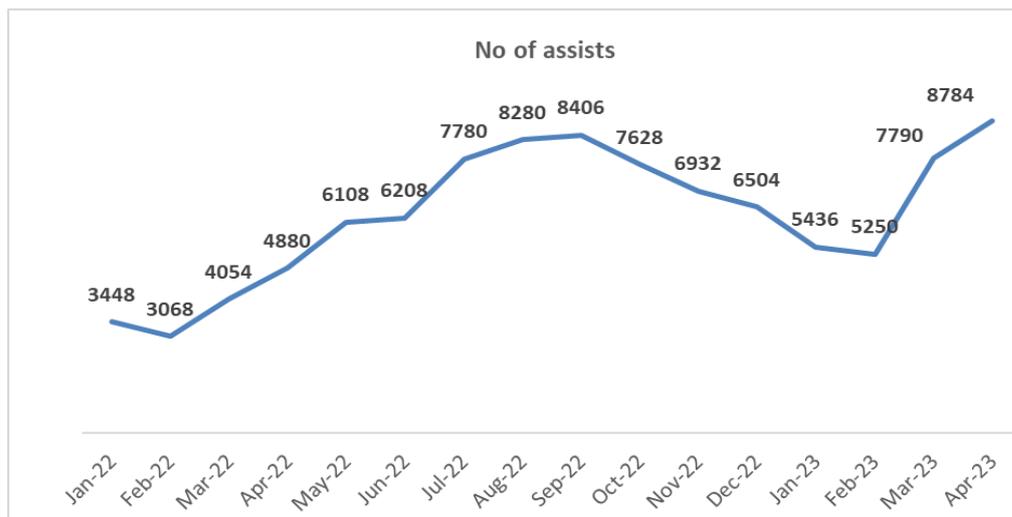
Other councils we work with direct section 106 or CIL funding towards station improvement works. We would like to explore a similar approach with Lewisham Borough Council, not least as the substantial amount of building and development around Lewisham station has contributed significantly to the increased footfall. As a publicly funded train operator that relies on taxpayer subsidy to run our services, it would be beneficial for both Southeastern and the council to work more in partnership. We can achieve more by working together and combining funding for station improvements.

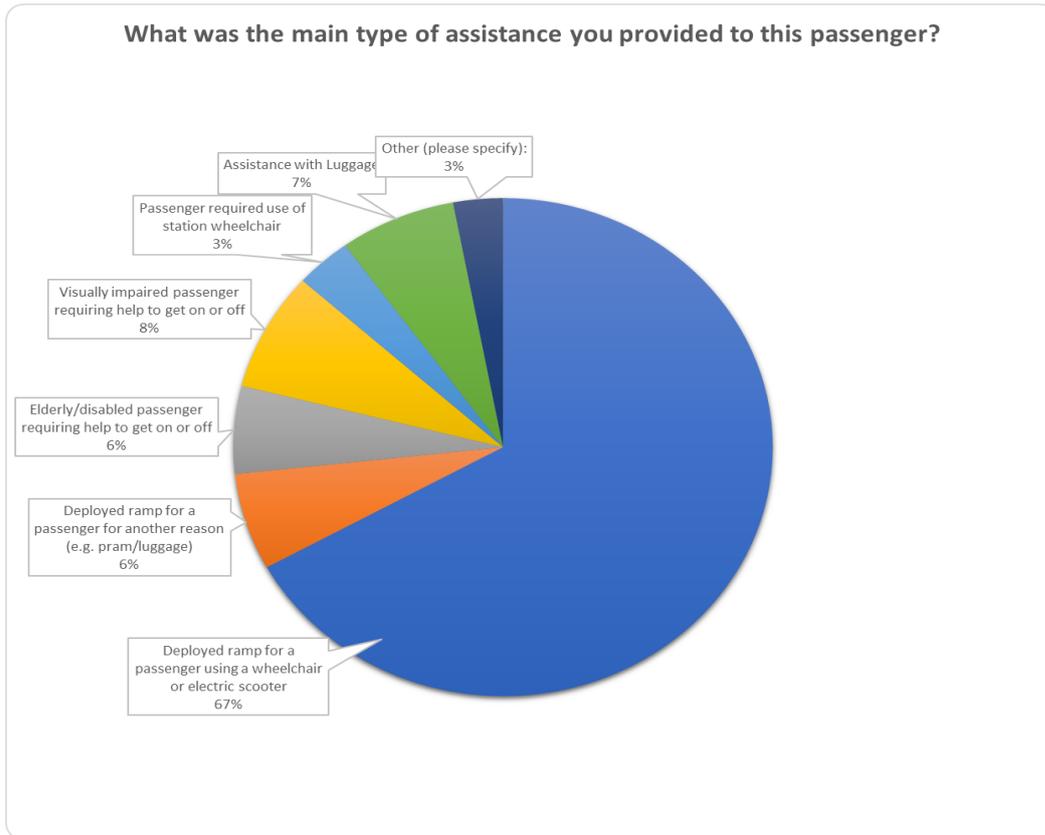
Southeastern + Network Rail + Lewisham Council

7) What is Southeastern doing, in concert with Network Rail and Lewisham Council, to urgently improve capacity, safety and comfort for existing and new rail users starting or interchanging on their journeys at Lewisham station? Who are the official leads at Southeastern (and at Network Rail and Lewisham Council) driving forward much needed upgrades to the station, rolling stock and services to meet user needs and legitimate demands? What are their names, roles, and contact details? Will they undertake to work together to push forward much needed improvements and to make regular public reports on initiatives and actual progress to improve the rail infrastructure and services for Lewisham rail users? (LSUG + Blackheath society)

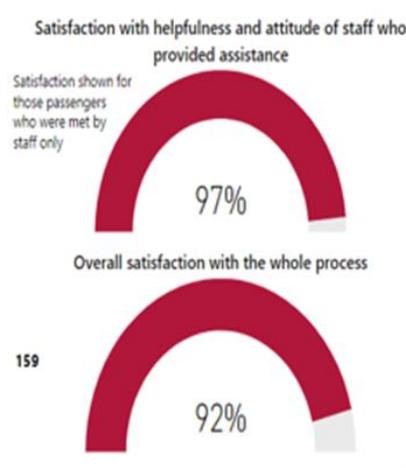
Accessibility

We are doing a lot of work to help people with disabilities and mobility requirements. Since April 2022, we have a 2-hour booking window for all assistance needs that operates 24/7. We have employed more mobile assistance staff including at Waterloo East, London Bridge and (from 27 May) Stratford International. We have seen assists on Southeastern grow faster than on any other major train operators.





We have achieved high levels of customer satisfaction, as measured by ORR - 97% of customers were satisfied with helpfulness of staff, and 92% were satisfied with the overall process.



Security and Safety

Through Operation Barbican we are making the railway safer for customers and colleagues, with extra security staff at 19 stations (including Lewisham) 7 days a week, which has achieved an 80% reduction in reports of workplace violence and reduced incidents of Anti-Social Behaviour. We have also more than doubled the number of incidents being defused by the presence of our teams and denied access to the railway to many more people with poor behaviour.

Furthermore, we have signed a Tripartite Agreement with the British Transport Police and Network Rail which commits us all to addressing anti-social behaviour, crime and safeguarding on our network.

Enhanced customer information

Customers can also now use 'Seatfinder' to check how busy their train will be and later this year we will be launching 'Track and Share' so passengers can be met at their destination on time by friends and family, who can track where the train is. We also have a live map on our website that shows how our service is performing.

Consultation on rolling stock procurement

We are interested in stakeholder views on rolling stock that we are seeking to procure for Metro lines to London terminals, including lines that run through Lewisham.

We are asking stakeholders to fill in a brief [online questionnaire](#). We will be holding an informal 'drop-in' event on 13 June between 13.00-16.30 at the Science Gallery, Great Maze Pond, London SE1 9GU, a few minutes' walk from London Bridge Station.

Station upgrade

We don't undertake major station upgrade work; this is Network Rail, but we will support them in any way we can.

Southeastern will attend LSUG meetings, where we have capacity, to provide periodic updates.

9) What plans are there to reopen the access on platform 4 (rampway) at Lewisham Station and what are the timescales? (Councillor Huynh)

There are no plans currently to re-open this entrance. The station is fully gated and the footpath leading up to Platform 4 has no physical space within railway owned land to build and host a gate line. Hence it is closed off to public use.

If there was a technical solution, such as building a platform area halfway up the embankment, the costs would be prohibitive. It is also doubtful that planning permission would be achievable given the private properties at the foot of the path.

10) Will South Eastern Railway provide an update on their performance this year to date? (Councillor Hall)

Current performance

In terms of reliability, Southeastern was the third best operator nationally in period 1 (1-29 April) at 1.1% compared to the industry average of 3.1%. This is our lowest level of cancellations in six years (excluding the early months of the Covid pandemic). Cancellations in period 2 (30 April to 27 May) were also good (1.6%) which was the third best in the country for the second period running.

In terms of punctuality, in April, almost three quarters of our trains (73.2%) arrived within 59 seconds of their advertised time, and almost 9 in 10 trains (89.7%) within three minutes and over 99% within 15 minutes. This is our best 'on time' performance since April 2022. Last period (30 April – 27 May) we achieved similar levels of good performance with 72.6% of trains arriving within 59 seconds of their advertised time, which remains above the industry average.

Year to date Performance

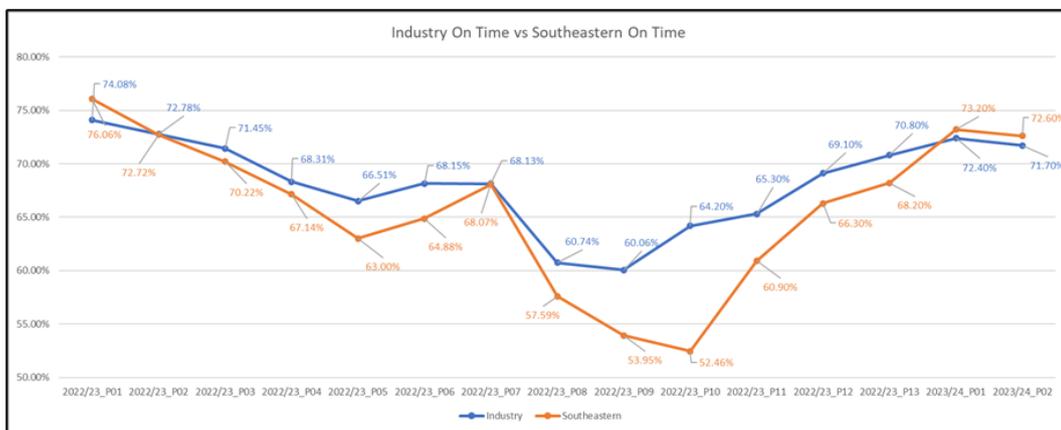
Our year-to-date On-Time performance across our whole network is hitting our target and is 1.2% better than the industry average.

Our year-to-date Metro area On-Time performance (which is more focused on the Lewisham area services) is even better, surpassing all our targets and the rest of the industry by a greater margin.

On incident-free days (e.g., without signalling, track, train, trespass events), our train service now performs well. It is also better able to recover from disruption when incidents do occur. We have more to do, but it's an encouraging sign that customers are seeing the performance benefits of the new timetable.

This year to date (1 April - 27 May) performance (expressed as a % of trains meeting measure)

	Whole network	Metro area	Target	Industry
On Time (within 59s of schedule)	72.9%	73.4%	72.9%	71.7%
Cancellations	1.6%	1.6%	1.9%	3.0%
T-3 (within 3m)	89.6%	90.8%	90.5%	87.9%
T-15 (within 15m)	94.9%	96.0%	99.2%	98.6%



Customer Satisfaction has increased to 87% (our best result since period 7 September 2022).

We remain focused on further improvement, and we are working with Network Rail to ensure more incident-free days to deliver the service our customers expect.

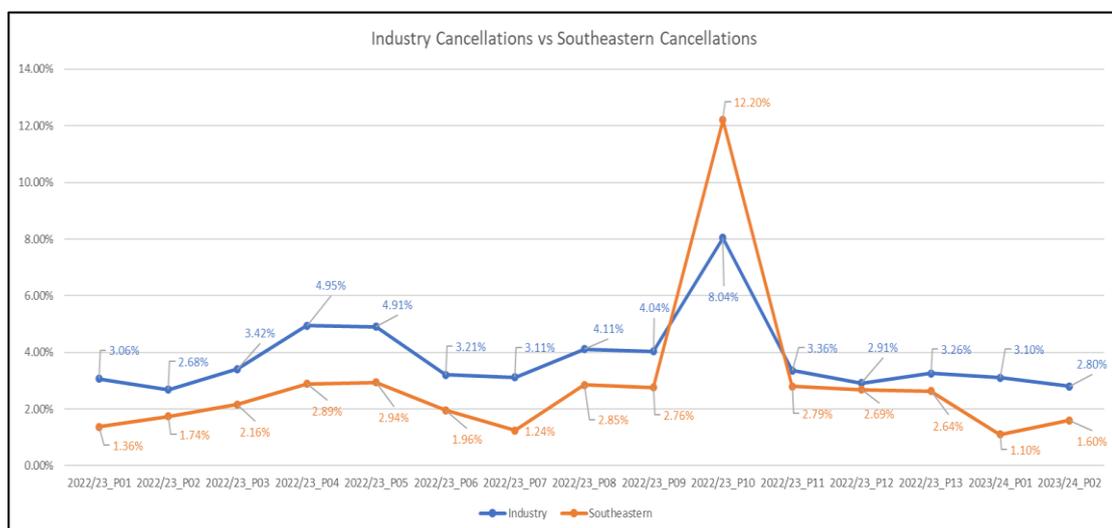
Cancellations

Statistically, Southeastern is a low cancellation railway. Year-to-date we are more than meeting our targets and are performing better than the industry, who on average have more than double the number of cancellations as Southeastern.

Southeastern was the third best train operator nationally for cancellations during periods 1 and 2 (April and May 2023), with cancellations at only 1.1% and 1.6% respectively. April saw our lowest level of cancellations in six years (excluding the early months of the Covid pandemic, when usage dropped to less than 10%).

However, we continue to double down on the causes of cancellation which is most often caused by: points, track circuits and signals remain largest cause of cancellations followed by fleet.

In terms of punctuality, in April, almost three quarters of our trains (73.2%) arrived within 59 seconds of their advertised time, almost 9 in 10 trains (89.7%) within three minutes and over 99% within 15 minutes. This is our best 'on time' performance since April 2022. Last period (30 April – 27 May) we achieved similar levels of good performance with 72.6% of trains arriving within 59 seconds of their advertised time, which remains above the industry average.



11) SouthEastern are aware from Petitions and hundreds of individual letters and emails of the anger at the withdrawal of off peak and weekend services to Charing Cross. SouthEastern’s Managing Director has conceded many times, on the record, that passenger demand is for services to Charing Cross, not to Cannon Street (for which there is almost no demand).

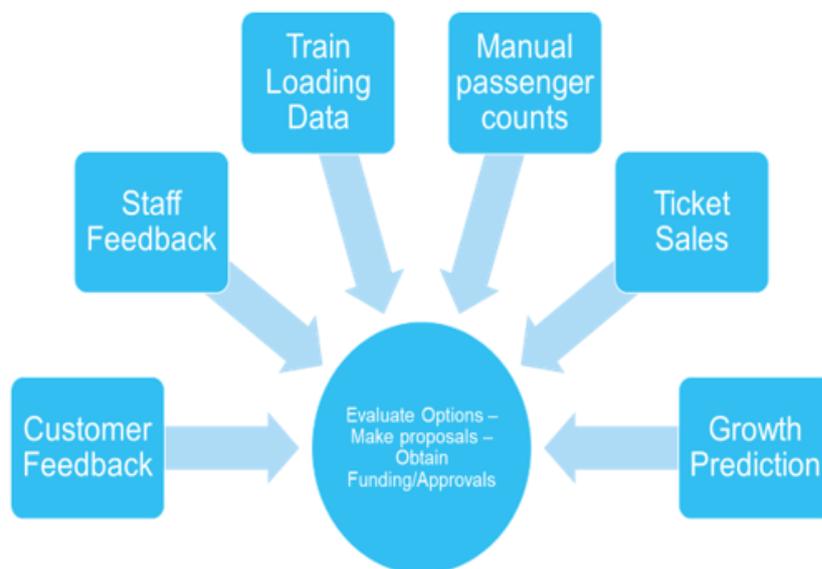
While SouthEastern have in their May timetable added an hourly service to Charing Cross this is a token response to passengers' anger as it fails to meet the needs of Metro passengers.

SouthEastern have stated that there is capacity at the Lewisham Junction Cross Over for an additional service to and from Blackheath (and services up the line) but that an additional service needs to be cost justified.

Why can a Charing Cross service not be introduced immediately by transferring off peak and weekend services from Cannon Street to Charing Cross. Such a change would be at no extra cost?

We are continually reviewing passenger numbers on all our services using equipment on trains that weighs customers at each station. This is supported by manual counting of passengers on and off trains that takes place by an external company twice a year, the most recent of which took place between March and June where the results will be available in August. This takes time to process and often involves several visits to stations if there is disruption on the day that would impact results.

The image below demonstrates the inputs that lead to proposals that require funding.



This approach has led to additional services being introduced in January, February and May 2023 and we are currently reviewing options for December this year. Passenger demand has not yet stabilised, and these interventions are possible due to the simplicity of the current timetable which also provides space for some additional services (based on funding being available, either because passenger income increases, or because a funder such as the DfT agrees to increase funding to provide these services).

Looking forward for minor changes to services (such as those introduced to date) we will continue to engage customers, MPs, and other stakeholders to inform these changes. In the event of major service revisions, we would expect consultation to apply unless the situation was an emergency one (such as the pandemic).

To amend the underlying structure of the timetable (required if amending the operation of services around Lewisham) we would expect consultation to be needed. The December 2022 timetable change needed to deliver a balance of affordability, capacity to meet demand, scalability as well as being reliable and punctual across the entire Southeastern network. It also returned services between Beckenham Junction and Blackfriars (that had not operated for 2 years). We apologised publicly for not consulting on the major timetable change and committed that any further significant change would be consulted.

As mentioned above we continue to monitor passenger numbers, costs to the taxpayer, demand, revenue, reliability, punctuality as well as passenger satisfaction and customer feedback.

Whilst demand is currently not sufficient to cover the cost of further off-peak direct services into Charing Cross on the Bexleyheath line, we are committed to keeping our timetable under review, further enhancing our services, and continuing to improve customer experience. We have already made several changes to the timetable in response to such changes either by adding extra services or adding carriages to busy trains.

The timeframe for minor changes to the December 2023 timetable completes in July 2023 and in October 2023 for May/June 2024 timetable.

12) Can Southeastern please report on how delays and punctuality have been affected by the December timetable change to the Bexleyheath line including in relation to historical benchmarks, and identify what processes are underway to consider whether or not to redistribute trains between the Cannon Street and Charing Cross lines? (Councillor Warner)

In May 2023 we reinstated hourly off-peak Charing Cross services on the Bexleyheath Line, which is now running Charing Cross, Cannon St, and Victoria services in both the peaks and off-peaks.

	Bexleyheath Line Current Period	YTD	Industry average
On Time (within 59s of schedule)	69.4	69.3	71.7
Cancellations	2	1.4	2.8
T-3 (within 3m)	89.5	89.9	87.9
T-15 (within 15m)	99.3	99.5	98.6

Performance on the Bexleyheath Line has improved since the beginning of the year and the percentage of cancellations year-to-date is half the industry average, which is excellent.

Our On Time performance (within 59s) is below the industry average, while our T-3 and T-15 performance (within 3m and 15m respectively) is above industry average, indicating that while there is work to do to make the line more punctual to the minute, the impact of delays has been lessened, with less severe disruption that causes delays of 3 minutes or longer.

13) At a previous meeting (where Southeastern were not present) we asked the following question:

Given the current poor service from Southern Rail into Charing Cross, residents using New Cross Gate station would sometimes walk to New Cross station (6 to 10 minutes) in order to make their journey or, on the reverse journey take a train from Charing Cross to New Cross and walk. However all New Cross services now run to Cannon Street. All Charing Cross services now seem to run fast to Deptford or Lewisham creating significant inconvenience to those living in the New Cross/New Cross Gate area. Is there a possibility that Southeastern services through to Charing Cross, stopping at New Cross, will be restored?

The question was not answered. The written reply simply stated the current position. Can we have an answer please?

Southern have not served Charing Cross since 2009 when the Caterham / Tattenham Corner services were terminated at London Bridge as part of the SLC2 December 2019 timetable change which saw the introduction of Highspeed services.

Southeastern have not had scheduled direct Charing Cross services from St John's or New Cross since 2015 because of the Thameslink works at London Bridge. The crossovers at Spa Road Junction were removed and whilst it is theoretically possible to run from New Cross to Charing Cross it would be against the flow of GTR services and other Southeastern services which, unfortunately, makes it impractical to do so.

Deptford has not had a Charing Cross service since 2015 (nor has Greenwich, Maze Hill or Westcombe Park) because of the Thameslink works.

14) Can SouthEastern please explain why, given the number of employees in their management teams, nobody was available to be briefed and to represent SouthEastern at the last meeting of this committee? (Telegraph Hill)

We have responded to the committee on this question several times. It is not a constructive use of our, or the committee's time, to repeatedly ask and answer the same question. As we have advised previously when this has been queried:

We were not able to attend the November 2022 meeting of the Lewisham Public Transport Liaison Committee, as we were already committed to attend a council meeting in another area that evening. We did, however provide a series of detailed answers to a set of questions asked by the Committee ahead of the meeting. We also offered to meet on a separate occasion, but unfortunately alternative dates were not acceptable to the Committee.

On 14 November 2022, Cllrs Royston, Krupski and Warner, along with Janet Daby MP, Matthew Pennycook MP, Clive Efford MP, and Louie French MP, either joined, or were invited to, a briefing with Southeastern. During this, we committed to briefing Lewisham's Public Transport Liaison committee in early December. The council subsequently cancelled this meeting and unfortunately changed the date of the meeting we were planning to attend in January as well.

We briefed the committee on 15 March 2023 and Cllrs Royston, Krupski and Huynh were in attendance as were the Mayor of Lewisham, Damian Egan, and representatives from the offices of Ellie Reeves MP and Janet Daby MP. We let the council know on the 24 February that we would not be attending the session on 9 March because we had already agreed to brief them on 15 March.

We held a Meet the Manager session at Lewisham Station on 28 March 2023 to which the public, including Councillors, were invited to attend and meet with our senior leadership team.

On 4 April 2023, Southeastern attended a public meeting of Lewisham rail users that was chaired by Vicky Foxcroft MP – Lewisham councillors were invited to the meeting.

Since then, we've met with Vicky Foxcroft MP (along with the LSUG) and Janet Daby MP again.

We regularly get asked by councils and rail user groups across our network for evening meetings, often close together. We want to send the appropriate representatives to brief stakeholders, however, as a small team with finite capacity, it is not always possible to meet every request. Our approach is therefore to accept requests for meetings as fairly and evenly as possible across the SE network, and, in the rare instances where two councils ask to meet us on the same date, we give priority to the first request we receive.

Southeastern's hard-working public employees, who show up every day to serve our customers, can feel discouraged when you criticise the perceived size of our management team. I'm sure this wasn't your intent. Southeastern is a publicly owned rail company. We are striving to deliver a better, more sustainable, and reliable railway while balancing customer demand and the need to spend taxpayers' money wisely.