

MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT LIAISON COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday 12 January 2017

PRESENT: Councillors Curran, Clarke, Hall, Simon Moss (Transport Policy and Development Manager), Sarah Assibey (Committee Support Officer)

Also Present: Carole Davis (TfL), Mike Gibson (Southeastern), Larry Heyman (Thameslink), Angeline Verrillo (Go Ahead London), Conrad Bunyan (Stagecoach), Jamie Williams (Stagecoach), David Mackenzie (Forest Hill Society), Isle Towler (Sydenham Society), Geoffrey Thurley (Ladywell Society)

1. Minutes

RESOLVED the minutes of the last meeting were noted and agreed as a correct record.

2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made

3. Questions Regarding Rail Issues

Response to Question A)

The Committee looked through a written response to this question and summarised the following fundamental points:

- 13,000 took part in the GTR Timetable Consultation.
- Proposals for Sydenham line generated some negative feedback, which Lewisham also opposed.
- The Charing Cross/Waterloo East/ London Bridge service will not be reinstated until January 2018.

The Chair asked that it be noted that the second phase of the consultation for the GTR Timetable is due to take place in late spring/early summer. He requested that members be notified on when this is confirmed, so the committee can prepare, of which Larry Heyman should confirm.

Larry Heyman added that the proposal for the Sydenham line generated probably the largest amount of negative feedback in the whole consultation, which is good news for the Committee. Although the next stage cannot be pre-empted, he believes there may be a change to the original proposal when the second phase of the consultations launch. He strongly encourages that MPs and Councillors should remind GTR colleagues about the local views should they feel it necessary to do so.

Mike Gibson further commented on the franchise of the consultations, stating that there is some anticipation of the Department for Transport (DfT) consultation on the new Southeastern franchise- which should begin in February/March 2017-perhaps this is something Council would want to look into- Simon Moss pointed out that Liam Henderson, the rail expert who attended the December meeting, attended a meeting the same week with the DfT about this. A presentation was given to the DfT on the early issues and opportunities for refranchising mentioned. Simon Moss will be sharing that presentation to Members.

Response to Question b)

The Committee discussed a detailed written response to Question b, which was contained within the agenda for this meeting:

Southeastern put in a submission to the DfT of which they have not been speedy in getting back to Southeastern and they are yet to receive a formal decision. Local MP Heidi Alexander has made representation to the DfT on the behalf of Southeastern. Mike Gibson suggested that if there is anything the Council, and this Committee, would like to do (perhaps a formal letter to Paul Maynard) to which would support Southeastern in this matter, it would be useful and beneficial. In terms of passenger numbers, they have increased by 40% since Southeastern were first awarded a franchise in 2006. Arguably, on the Metro lines the increase has been even more. The peak services in areas such as Lewisham are well over-ran yet it is hard to board the train, let alone get a seat. Particularly as most of the commuters are working people, it is imperative that we get more rolling stock.

Recommended: that the Mayor write to the DfT on behalf of Lewisham regarding the above matter.

Response to Question c)

Carole Davis raised the following points in response to this question:

TfL are about to provide a briefing for Councillors on affected wards along the route of the Bakerloo Line Extension, according to the Projects Team at TfL. The consultation phase will begin in February and will go on until April, but the briefings for Councillors will take place in advance of that. Simon Moss has already been working closely to arrange suitable dates for all Councillors in the wards which are affected. These briefings should provide Councillors with further detail about the happenings of the Extension. The Extension options are currently to run through Old Kent Road and New Cross. No formal word has been given yet as to whether this will extend beyond Lewisham. Simon pointed out that TfL and the GLA are very much aware of the Councils aspiration for the Bakerloo Line Extension to go beyond Lewisham and specifically down the Hayes line, so that point has been made very clearly- although at the moment they are looking at a 'first phase' to Lewisham. The consultation would specifically be about this phase and taking that part of the scheme forward.

Lewisham have been very clear that safeguards have to be in place to enable the Extension to go beyond Lewisham and in the right direction. There are some engineering aspects regarding stopping at Lewisham- for instance, overrun tunnels- so it would need to go beyond Lewisham to navigate effectively. We would want those overrun tunnels to point in the right direction. There is also a big opportunity to improve Lewisham station and to turn it into the interchange that it should be- so building in safeguarding and future measures for that purpose would be relative.

It was recommended that those Councillors attend this Committee meeting when this issue will be discussed.

In regards to its frequency and the timetable, unfortunately there will be no changes to the GTR Timetable until May 2018. What has changed is the number of the new class 7 trains that are operating. There is now also a total of 9 services through the Catford Loop in each direction- 18 services in total. There are a limited number of the Southeastern trains that stop additionally on the Kent mainline to Victoria, stopping at Crofton Park and Bellingham. There is a limited amount in use because of congestion and there is also a limit on how much the journey time can be increased.

At the beginning of the franchise, there was a lot of talk about drivers- Thameslink have been running and are continuing to run, what is largest driver recruitment and training programme on national rail services. 2 years ago in 2015, there were 327 drivers and 18 driver trainees. As of December 2016, there were 370 qualified drivers and 134 trainees. For a driver learning to drive a train from scratch takes typically 14 months and one of the constraints that we've had along the past 2 years and still have to a degree, is the fact that drivers must be trained with good drivers and trainers.

Regarding the new services, one of the key things of interest is how many trains will be called into stations along the Catford Loop during the morning peak and how many trains many will be calling into stations along the Catford Loop, southbound, in the evening peak. Larry will be forwarding a detailed comment of this to the Committee.

The Chair asked the Committee if they had any bus related questions, as there were some bus operators in attendance of the meeting.

Alan Hall raised the issue of the frequency of buses in the south of the borough- in particular, Grove Park, Bellingham and part of Catford, Whitefoot and Verdant Lane). There is a higher demand for some sort of service, perhaps a new one, and Cllr Hall asked if anything can be done in this area. Present bus

operators noted that this is an issue for TfL to look into. Carole Davis stated that the network is under constant review and suggested formally putting such issues forward to TfL whether via email or in writing.

Conrad Bunyan mentioned his companies concern of the number of speed humps on Lewisham bus routes which cause some damage to buses and slow down services, and asked that Lewisham consider and update whether there are any upcoming changes to these speed tables. Simon Moss responded that there is a conflict with the road safety compliance in regards to speed and it is unlikely there will be a reduction on the amount of tables. However, the point of maintenance is useful, and a potential minor redesign could be looked into in the future.

The question of the quality and hybrid buses, every bus company in London is working with TfL to improve their buses, and this will increase over time. This improvement is inclusive of Lewisham buses.

The Chair thanked attendees for coming and encouraged them to put forward any concerns or questions to the clerk or Simon Moss for the next agenda.

The meeting finished at 8:24 p.m.