

## LONDON TRAVELWATCH PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT (TO 31.3.11)

### Report received from the Chief Executive of London TravelWatch – June 2011

#### Financial Outturn

1. Subject to audit, the financial position as at the end of March 2011 is summarised below:

	Original Budget	Revised Budget	Actual Spend/ Income to date	Variance against revised budget
	£	£	£	£
<b>REVENUE EXPENDITURE</b>				
Chairman, Members & Staff Costs	1,205,310	1,205,091	1,145,938	<b>(59,153)</b>
Accommodation costs	217,801	217,801	212,012	<b>(5,789)</b>
Supplies & Services	144,160	144,378	168,347	<b>23,969</b>
Depreciation	35,730	35,730	38,540	<b>2,810</b>
<b>Total Revenue Expenditure</b>	<b>1,603,000</b>	<b>1,603,000</b>	<b>1,564,837</b>	<b>(38,163)</b>
<b>CAPITAL EXPENDITURE</b>				
Asset Replacement	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Furniture & Equipment	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Other	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Capital Expenditure</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Capital &amp; Revenue Expenditure</b>	<b>1,603,000</b>	<b>1,603,000</b>	<b>1,564,837</b>	<b>(38,163)</b>
<b>INCOME</b>				
Greater London Authority Funding	1,603,000	1,603,000	1,603,000	<b>0</b>
Passenger Focus	0	0	26,087	<b>(26,087)</b>
Bank Interest Receivable	0	0	64	<b>(64)</b>
Other income	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>1,603,000</b>	<b>1,603,000</b>	<b>1,629,151</b>	<b>(26,151)</b>
<b>Revenue surplus transfer to general reserve</b>			<b>64,314</b>	

2. There was an underspend against the revenue expenditure budget mainly attributable to reduced staff costs because of the recruitment freeze and staff departures and small savings against the accommodation budget, which was partly offset by extra costs for supplies and services such as IT and legal and professional services, also depreciation charged exceeded the budget.
3. Income was higher than budgeted by £26,087 due to receipt of income from staff costs recharged to Passenger Focus.
4. There was no provision for capital expenditure in the budget and no actual capital expenditure.
5. The revenue surplus transfer to general reserve is added to the opening surplus at 1 April 2010 and will be used to help meet redundancy costs as a result of the restructuring in 2011/12.

### **Risk Areas**

6. No financial risks were identified to the accounts for 2010-11.

### **Headline achievements, progress and slippage against the business plan**

7. This section of the report highlights achievements between April 2010 and March 2011. It also reports progress against London TravelWatch's key performance indicators and progress towards meeting them.
8. London TravelWatch has had a successful year and continued to improve its performance against a wide range of indicators, most notably in respect of its casework turnaround times where improvement has been dramatic. The fact that this continued improvement has taken place against the background of such uncertainty for the organisation, and when it has been carrying a number of vacancies, is a real testament to the commitment of its staff and Board to achieve outcomes for passengers.
9. A major focus for the organisation during the year was supporting and responding to the London Assembly's review of London TravelWatch. London TravelWatch engaged constructively throughout the process to ensure that the review was properly informed, providing comprehensive and accurate background material for GLA officers in a timely manner. When the report was published London TravelWatch's Board carefully considered the points made within it. Subsequently its Chair, Deputy Chair and Chief Executive have been working with the Transport Committee's implementation group to take forward the recommendations made in the report. Obviously this work, which was not anticipated in the business plan for 2010-11, has been extremely time consuming, particularly for London TravelWatch's senior members and staff.
10. As well as working to improve overall performance and develop new ways of working, London TravelWatch conducted its own comprehensive internal review of its remit, costs and processes. The overall objective was to find ways to cut fixed costs by streamlining and refining core activities and outsourcing non-essential functions, while ensuring that the two key services of casework and research were protected.
11. The Board also reviewed its own structure and substantially reduced the number of meetings it holds. It halved the number of its committees from four to two and agreed that

these should meet four times each year rather than six, as had previously been the case. London TravelWatch has sought to improve public engagement with its work through the involvement of high-profile speakers at its meetings and the use of platforms such as Twitter.

12. London TravelWatch continued to brief its Board members on topical issues throughout the year, and Board members were able directly to question senior transport figures on matters of concern to passengers. Members made regular visits to familiarise themselves with London's transport services, for example to the Leabridge interchange and bus depot and Queens Hospital to consider the ease of transferring from one transport mode to another, as well as exploring 'Drive Green', an innovation for improving standards of bus driving, a subject about which it receives many complaints.
13. The only area of slippage against the business plan is liaison work with local boroughs. Much of the strategic engagement with London Boroughs has in recent years been undertaken at Board member level. However, following the London Assembly review, the Board of London TravelWatch has been halved, and no longer has the capacity to engage at member level with London boroughs and has now ceased to engage with London boroughs individually.

### **Progress against London TravelWatch's suite of key performance indicators**

14. The indicators overleaf show the organisation's performance in its handling of casework over the period from July 2007 to March 2011. In accordance with the new arrangements agreed in the revised Memorandum of Understanding, it now presents casework performance data on a quarterly basis.
15. The demand for London TravelWatch's services steadied over the 2010/11 period. However, cases are becoming more complex in nature especially as often there is more than one transport mode involved in a single complaint. As austerity measures bite and operators reduce staff or outsource customer services, caseworkers have to be even more persuasive when making an appeal to secure successful outcomes for the passenger. More people use mobile technology to make complaints, increasing considerably the dialogue involved within each case. Nevertheless, performance of the casework team against time turnaround targets continued to improve.

### **Main issues raised by passengers**

16. Since their introduction, as part of the roll out of Oyster pay as you go (PAYG) on National Rail in January 2010, London TravelWatch has campaigned against Oyster Extension Permits (OEPs). It considered that the requirement for passengers with their season ticket loaded onto an Oyster card, as well as additional PAYG credit, to obtain a permit to travel beyond their usual zone on National Rail services introduced an unnecessary element of complexity to the ticketing system that was unlikely to be understood by passengers.
17. Using evidence from its appeal casework that passengers were not being made aware of the requirement to have an OEP and were as a result being given penalty fares, London TravelWatch maintained pressure on the train companies to review the scheme. This included making a referral under consumer law to the Office of Rail Regulation. It believes that its work contributed substantially to the decision of the train companies to review the scheme and to agree at the Mayor's Rail Summit to withdraw them from 22 May 2011.

18. Issues relating to fares, retailing and refunds have always been a prime concern raised in passenger appeals. With the successful uptake of Oyster in London, Oyster issues increasingly comprise the bulk of London TravelWatch's cases. Although they provide a convenient journey for most passengers, the system for resolving complaints is complex. This, coupled with TfL's refusal to supply information under data protection, means that cases become unnecessarily protracted. London TravelWatch is currently working with TfL to find a solution to this problem.
19. Issues raised in bus complaints are varied. Often complaints focus on driver behaviour, whether it relates to interactions with the driver, driving standards or how the driver interprets procedures. But passengers also raise concerns when they perceive that services are unreliable or because of difficulties they face when buses terminate short of their advertised destination.
20. Transport users also complain when they do not receive the service they expect from operators in a wide variety of other respects. Passengers are often unclear as to their rights if their ticket is lost or stolen, or are confused as to whether they are entitled to refunds for issues that may be outside the operators' control. London TravelWatch is keen to ensure that operators better advise passengers about their rights under the terms and conditions of carriage prior to purchase.
21. Many complaints were received in the winter about Southeastern's performance. In some cases passengers were so aggrieved they presented London TravelWatch with detailed logs on the frequency of delays and lack of information from staff, particularly during the snowy weather, in order to make their case.

PI no.	Indicator	Performance											2010/11 Target	Variance at Mar 11
		July/Dec 07	Jan/June 08	July/Sep 08	Oct/Mar 09	Apr/Sep 09	Oct/Dec 09	Jan/Mar 10	Apr/Jun 10	Jul/Sep 10	Oct/Dec 10	Jan/Mar 11		
1a	% of newly received cases recorded and acknowledged by LTW within 5 days	79%	69.5%	82.5%	90.5%	96.4%	97.5%	94.9%	98.9%	99.7%	99.6%	100%	100%	N/A
1b	% of newly received referred to relevant operator within 5 days	76%	65.3%	73.5%	69.5%	75.3%	75.1%	75.3%	88.7%	98.2%	96.2%	98%	75%	+ 23
<b>2</b>			<b>% of replies from operators considered, decision taken on further action within three days of receipt</b>											
2a	Reply within ten working days of receipt if no further action required	79%	70.2%	83.8%	67.1%	76.7%	78.5%	77.2%	88.7%	93.9%	93.6%	97.5%	90%	+7.5
2b	Reply within 20 working days of receipt if no further action required	89%	85.7%	91.9%	82.6%	87.2%	89.5%	88.1%	95%	97.1%	97%	99%	100%	- 1
<b>3</b>			<b>% replies to cases dealt with direct without referral to an operator</b>											
3a	Reply within ten working days of receipt if no further action required	92%	87.6%	79.8%	88.0%	94.8%	87.5%	87.2%	97.8%	99.4%	100%	100%	90%	+10
3b	Reply within 20 working days of receipt if no further action required	97%	92.9%	98.4%	97.2%	97.3%	97.2%	95.2%	98.4%	100%	100%	100%	100%	N/A
4	Mean score for respondents to LTW survey expressing satisfaction with outcome of case	65	66	72	79	66	50*	46*	66	73	70	+3		
5	Mean score for respondents to LTW survey expressing satisfaction with the speed of response	68	63	74	78	72	60*	61*	72	78	72	+6		
6	Mean score for	74	78	79	84	76	63*	61*	75	83	79	+4		

PI no.	Indicator	Performance											2010/11 Target	Variance at Mar 11
		July/Dec 07	Jan/June 08	July/Sep 08	Oct/Mar 09	Apr/Sep 09	Oct/Dec 09	Jan/Mar 10	Apr/June 10	Jul/Sept 10	Oct/Dec 10	Jan/Mar 11		
	respondents to LTW survey expressing satisfaction with handling of case													
7	No. of complaints received relating to LTW's service standards	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A
8	% of complaints received relating to LTW's service standards fully responded to within 20 working days or the first meeting of the Consumer Affairs Committee after receipt of the complaint if a decision is taken that member input is needed.	0	0	100%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100%	N/A

\* Data relates to appeals only. During 2008/09 London TravelWatch changed its reporting periods of casework to fit with the reporting periods of the GLA.

22. In previous years London TravelWatch has carried out work on 0845 numbers and accessibility, arguing that operators need to allow passengers to make complaints by phoning numbers charged at standard rather than premium rates. The organisation has raised concerns that the higher costs associated with 0845 numbers discourages complaints, particularly from those on low incomes. As a matter of principle London TravelWatch believes that making a complaint should be a penalty free process, and complainants should not be discouraged from making complaints by fear of high call charges. Accordingly, London TravelWatch has welcomed the review of such numbers being conducted by the Regulator, as well as the fact that London Assembly members are also speaking out on this issue.

### Communications and stakeholder engagement

23. The following performance indicators relate to London TravelWatch's external communications and stakeholder liaison activities.

PI no.	Indicator	Performance 2007/08	Performance 2008/09	Performance 2009/10	Performance 2010/11	2010/11 Target	Variance
9	Average number of unique visitors to LTW website per calendar month	6983	7559	9096	8119	9551 (5% inc)	-15% Points
10	Number of people signed up to receive e-newsletter	1080	1275	1421	1592	1492 (5% inc)	+7% Points
11	Local engagement with each London borough individually	45%	34%	100%	Nil	100%	Nil
12	Number of local passenger events held	1	0	2	2	2	0

24. Two passenger engagement events were held. An open Board meeting in Greenwich last summer was attended by local passenger groups, the press and local borough councillors who took the opportunity to speak out on local transport concerns and to hear from the Olympic Delivery Authority about the transport plans that were being put in place in advance of the 2012 Olympics. A transport users' 'surgery' was held at Stratford in March, talking to transport users about local issues. The surgery was a very successful event run with the support of the London Borough of Newham, Transport for London, National Express East Anglia and Transport for All, which helped London TravelWatch to better understand the concerns of local people. More such events will take place in other areas around London in 2011/2012.
25. London TravelWatch made major changes to its website during the year to both streamline its appearance and make it simpler to navigate for the public. This appears to have resulted in a large drop in traffic which the organisation suspects may be because fewer people now visit it in error. However discussions with its website provider continue to identify how best to increase the number of visits from the travelling public.
26. The organisation continued to receive good local press coverage of its activities. This helps transport users in the area to understand how London TravelWatch's work directly impacts on their daily experience.

## Research and Development

27. The following performance indicators relate to the research and development aspects of London TravelWatch's work during 2010/11.

PI no.	Indicator	Performance 2007/08	Performance 2008/09	Performance 2009/10	Performance 2010/11	2010/11 Target	Variance
13	% of requests for written / oral submissions met by the agreed deadline	100%	100%	100%	100% (4)	100%	Nil
14	Number of research projects completed	2	2	3	2	2	Nil
15	Number of research projects completed in collaboration with Passenger Focus	1	2	2	2	2	Nil

28. London TravelWatch published research into passenger attitudes to First Class Travel in order to encourage informed debate about better management of capacity and overcrowding on trains in London. It used this evidence to argue that train companies should declassify first class on short suburban journeys to give customers better value for money, which they are now starting to do.
29. Concerned that many passengers are being charged more than they should be, during the year London TravelWatch began research on to ascertain why so many journeys made on Oyster PAYG are left 'incomplete' by passengers and to identify practical solutions to address this.
30. The organisation completed its London Station Standards Report to promote good practice at National Rail and London Underground stations. This included the results of joint research into the views of passengers at Clapham Junction, Barking and Luton stations which was conducted in partnership with Passenger Focus. It also worked with Passenger Focus and the First Group to research the compensation schemes used by train companies, exploring when and how passengers are compensated and identifying passenger demand for improvements to Passenger Charters.
31. Where these impacted adversely on passengers, London TravelWatch continued to give substantial input into proposals by operators to reduce their services, for example by challenging proposals to reduce ticket opening hours by London Midland and Chiltern Railways. It also challenged TfL on proposed withdrawal of services, such as the mobility bus and changes to eligibility criteria for Dial-A-Ride services.
32. London TravelWatch maintained a watching brief on the policy of reducing the number of buses travelling along Oxford Street and continued to highlight the implications of this for bus passengers.



33. London TravelWatch continued to monitor the progress of the tube upgrade programme including the impact of closures and the provision of replacement services; the progress of the Thameslink upgrade programme and works at London Bridge as well as the impact of the building of Crossrail on passengers, and to represent the passenger perspective to the relevant infrastructure providers and operators.
34. It also sought service improvements from London Underground to minimise the impact of changes to the arrangements in Victoria Underground station during escalator replacement work, as well as in respect of the Northern line upgrade closure programme.
35. London TravelWatch continued to engage with TfL on bus routing issues and achieved a number of successes for passengers. Successes include the 320 extension to Catford Bridge station, the 412 extension to Purley Hospital from Purley Cross and retaining the night bus within New Addington.
36. It continued to press TfL to address regulatory issues in relation to taxis. In particular that it require black cab drivers to display a photo ID and a visible complaints poster in their vehicle. Progress has been slower than hoped but subject to consultations both measures should be implemented later in the year.
37. For several years London TravelWatch has been promoting the development of a high quality walking route between Euston and St Pancras Stations in order to provide passengers with an alternative option to continue their journey rather than have to walk along the busy Euston Road or negotiate the equally busy Underground to cover such a short distance. It was pleased that Camden Council has now started to implement this scheme.
38. London TravelWatch contributed to the Government's report on value for money in the rail industry and called for a strategic fares review to ensure that passengers get best value for money and that the system is fair across London.
39. Promoting accessibility on public transport is a priority for London TravelWatch and it was particularly pleased that the Inspector picked up some of the recommendations regarding bus priority and accessible bus stops which it made as part of the London Plan public examination.
40. London TravelWatch's 'Surface Transport Design Forum' (a group representing elderly, disabled and buggy users) contributed on two occasions to the New Bus for London consultation process. There were positive outcomes in terms of the access to the wheelchair bay, better located horizontal handles on the staircase and the use of a staircase design that members had previously promoted for London's buses.
41. London TravelWatch continued to press for better access to health care facilities and its work led to the adoption of its best practice guidance on travel plans for hospitals by the Health4NEL project. The Joint North East London Primary Care Trusts also adopted a requirement for high quality travel plans as part of the commissioning of healthcare.
42. Where they impact on passengers in London, London TravelWatch continues to respond to Network Rail's route utilisation strategy (RUS) consultations. These strategies set out the priorities for rail investment over the next 30 years, and establish priorities for improvement in rail services. In particular, it responded to RUSs for the West Midlands and Chilterns route, West Coast Mainlines, London and South East strategy. Often the focus of these documents is on improving long distance journeys and London

TravelWatch therefore uses the opportunity to ensure that greater emphasis is placed on improving services in and around London.

43. London TravelWatch continued to work closely with the London Assembly by responding fully to all requests from its committees for assistance with their scrutinies. It responded to the Transport Committee's scrutinies into the accessibility of the transport network in London and also on its Walking Rapportuership and the interim report on Winter Resilience. It also contributed to the House of Commons Select Committee on Transport Enquiry into Transport and the Economy; on Congestion & Traffic Management and the impact of recent weather conditions on transport in London, putting across the passenger view.
44. In this reporting period London TravelWatch responded to a total of 283 consultations compared to 466 the previous year, almost 40% fewer, reflecting a change in emphasis in the organisation that allows it to focus more on statutory requirements and work identified in its business plan.

### Corporate health

45. The following relates to London TravelWatch's performance against the GLA's own corporate health performance indicators.

PI no.	Indicator	Performance 2008/09	Performance 2009/10	Performance 2010/11	2010/11 target	Variance
16	The number of working days /shifts lost to sickness absence per staff member	22.4	16.1	6.8	6	-0.8
17	% of employees that are women	50%	50%	59%	52%	7%
18	% of employees from ethnic minority backgrounds	19.2%	27%	33%	26%	7%
19	% of employees declaring that they meet the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 definition and /or have declared themselves disabled.	26.9%	15%	11.5%	13%	-1.5%
20	% of undisputed invoices for commercial goods and services paid within 30 days of receipt or within agreed payment terms	98.4%	98%	99.5%	90%	7%

46. The average number of working days lost to sickness absence during 2010-11 has improved considerably in comparison to the previous year, resulting in London TravelWatch almost reaching its target. This has been achieved not only as a result of several long term sick absence cases being resolved and the introduction of a pro-active occupational health management referral programme, but also through implementing recommendations made in a sickness absence / attendance management benchmarking report it commissioned in May 2010.
47. London TravelWatch was successful in achieving re-accreditation status against the Investors in People Standard in August 2010, demonstrating that the organisation is improving business performance through its people. The Assessor confirmed that there is "... a clearer 'golden thread' between LTW priorities, team goals and individual objectives. This combined with a more open leadership and talented people with a 'can-do' mindset has created a successful organisation of which they are justifiably proud."
48. The focus and direction for investment in training, learning and development this year has been driven by London TravelWatch's internal review and its subsequent planning for a major organisational restructure. The need for a comprehensive staff and member training/development programme was identified to take account of system change, a reduced workforce, knowledge management continuity and shared skills set expansion.

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**London TravelWatch**