TfL Response to London Assembly Transport Committee Report on Future Transport

May 2018

Introduction

In February 2018, the London Assembly Transport Committee published a report, 'Future Transport – How is London Responding to Technological Innovation?'

The report makes a number of recommendations to improve how we plan, monitor, and respond to the challenges and opportunities of technological change in the capital. Our responses to these recommendations are set out below.

Recommendation 1

Transport for London (TfL) should establish an advisory panel, with the Department for Transport (DfT), London boroughs and other key stakeholders, to have input and oversee the work of the Transport Innovation directorate. This panel and Transport Innovation officers should be asked to regularly update TfL Board on emerging technological trends in the transport sector and lead a discussion on action TfL needs to take in preparation. We ask the Mayor and TfL to confirm by the end of May 2018 whether a panel will be established and what process will be put in place to update the TfL Board.

TfL Response

We agree that there should be a number of ways in which our stakeholders can influence the work of the Transport Innovation directorate, although we feel that this should not be confined to a single group or advisory panel.

We engage frequently with the market on new and emerging technologies and business models, and actively encourage and seek out businesses looking to expand into the London market or develop new services. We also work closely with a wide range of stakeholders, including London boroughs, the DfT, academics, innovators and other organisations on horizon scanning and emerging policies and technologies. This includes work on dockless bikes, demand responsive transport, connected and autonomous vehicles (CAVs) and drones. In addition, we work with London's Chief Digital Officer and his team to use digital technology to keep London at the forefront of innovation.

There are a number of mechanisms in place to ensure that the TfL Board is engaged in this to create a two-way flow of ideas and options for progress. The TfL Board, for example, examines TfL's developing approaches to safety, customer service, ticketing and engineering as part of the existing committee and panel arrangements. Given their wide-ranging background, the TfL Board offers an invaluable source of insight into the practical application of new and innovative approaches. We are therefore content with existing Governance arrangements, but will of course keep this under review as part of pursuing continuous improvement.

Recommendation 2

To ensure the introduction of CAVs is beneficial for London, the Mayor and TfL should produce an update to their car club strategy in 2018/19 which reflects the new Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS) and specifically considers how to embed car sharing in the context of the potential emergence of connected and autonomous vehicles. The Transport Innovation directorate and advisory panel should have input to the modified strategy. We ask the Mayor and TfL to confirm by the end of May 2018 that this work is underway.

TfL Response

We agree that the car club strategy has proved an important initiative that has shaped our collective work with car club operators and interested stakeholders. Through the strategy we have established agreed targets for membership of car clubs in London, and for deploying Ultra Low Emission Vehicles in car club fleets.

This policy direction is reflected in the Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS), which highlights the role of more efficient use of vehicles in future. The new MTS (proposal 106) also commits us to ensuring that potential impact of CAVS is considered alongside the other policies and proposals in the strategy. We will consider the potential impact of CAVS on car clubs as part of this.

Recommendation 3

The Mayor and TfL should consider the potential development and impact of autonomous bus technology on London. A review of this area should be undertaken during 2018/19 and the potential implications for London's existing bus network, including risks of changing the way bus services are staffed. We ask the Mayor and TfL to confirm by the end of May 2018 that this work is underway.

TfL Response

Current plans do not involve looking at fully autonomous bus technology. Drivers on TfL buses are an important part of ensuring a good customer experience on the network by promoting safety, wellbeing and providing communication, alongside their role in revenue collection.

We are seeing an increase in more incremental autonomous technologies, often referred to as advanced driver assistance systems, or ADAS, and as part of our Vision Zero plan we will make use of these to reduce accidents and road danger.

ADAS forms a significant part of our new Bus Safety Standard, a suite of technology and vehicle design features that will be added to the Bus Vehicle Specification for all new London buses. A number of safety measures use autonomous technologies and ADAS, including intelligent speed assistance (ISA) and autonomous emergency braking (AEB). These technologies help to avoid and mitigate against human factors in collisions, as well as improving driver performance. The rollout of ISA on new buses has already begun, with trials of AEB currently underway. The results are being closely monitored and regular updates will be made to the TfL Board.

Recommendation 4

TfL and boroughs should consider whether to introduce a London-wide licensing regime for dockless cycle hire. This could involve a small number of operators being granted permission to operate across London. Licensing requirements could specify commitments to provide services in outer London boroughs, and adherence to the terms of TfL's code of practice for operators. We ask the Mayor and TfL to confirm by the end of May 2018 that discussions on this proposal are underway.

TfL Response

Dockless cycle hire has the potential to make cycling more accessible and attractive for Londoners. While we welcome responsible bike hire initiatives, dockless bike operators need to work with TfL and London boroughs to make sure that schemes do not have a negative impact on other people walking, cycling or otherwise using streets, or result in unlawful highway obstruction.

We are working closely with London boroughs to ensure dockless cycle hire aligns with these goals. We have been engaging with London Councils, the DfT and dockless operators themselves since trials began, and will continue to do so. The responsibilities of the boroughs - as the highway authorities for their own road networks - are key when considering regulation and enforcement.

London's first dockless bike operators to launch with agreement from boroughs began operating in September 2017. Our approach has been to take a co-ordinating role, setting standards. To this end, and as noted in the Assembly's report, we published a Code of Practice to set a benchmark for operations. We are updating the Code of Practice based on operational feedback from London boroughs, and will keep the document under review.

Recommendation 5

The Mayor and TfL should engage in discussions with the Government, boroughs and operators to develop the principles of a new regulatory regime for demand-responsive bus services. These should include requirements to serve areas with less dense public transport coverage, and ensure accessibility for older and disabled passengers. Thereafter the Mayor and TfL should implement these principles where possible, and ask the Government to make the necessary legislative changes. We ask the Mayor and TfL to confirm by the end of May 2018 its plans to initiate these discussions.

TfL Response

In line with the MTS, we are exploring how demand-responsive bus services could improve London's public transport network, including through the development of plans for trials. Our main focus is on how to serve difficult to reach areas, particularly in outer London, and how such services could support inclusion, accessibility, safety and environmental performance. The services would not replace any existing TfL services, and would complement the London bus network. Through engagement with Government, boroughs and operators, we have undertaken three main activities on demand responsive services to date:

1) In March 2018, we issued a Market Sounding Questionnaire to establish market interest to deliver a small TfL demand-responsive bus trial. This will focus on areas of outer London where car dependency is highest. A trial will help us set standards for a potential future

service, including the use of concessions (such as the Freedom Pass), driver pay, wheelchair access and customer service.

2) Current legislation was introduced before new technologies were developed and TfL recognises the need for clarity on what is now required to ensure the highest possible standards are maintained. We are reviewing the London Service Permit statutory guidance to enable more scope to regulate these services within the current legislative framework, and without adversely affecting traditional services. Subject to consultation, revised guidance should be issued by December 2018.

3) TfL is preparing for demand-responsive services to emerge in other areas, including Private Hire Vehicles (PHV). This is why, in February 2018, we published a policy statement setting out how private hire and ride-sharing services will operate in the future. This stated that we will consider making use of the Transport Act 1985 and the Private Hire Vehicles (London) Act 1998 to set regulations for ride-sharing. We will also publicly consult on proposals for regulations to cover new, novel or ridesharing services, as described in TfL's recent policy paper. This consultation will build on the improvements to standards and safety set out in the Mayor's Taxi and Private Hire Action Plan. As part of this process, we will be seeking to achieve more consistency between PHV regulations and the London Service Permit regime.

We will continue to work closely with the Government in this area. We plan to publish guidance jointly with the DfT on ride-sharing in taxis and PHVs. We will also contribute to the Government's 'Future of Urban Mobility' strategy, expected later in 2018.

Recommendation 6

TfL should continue to make its data open for use by app developers, but seek to enter reciprocal agreements whereby data produced by apps powered by underlying TfL data is shared with TfL. This should be a requirement for existing apps using TfL data and new apps to do so. This principle should also be in the Mayor's upcoming Smart London plan. We ask the Mayor and TfL to confirm by the end of May 2018 what steps they are taking to deliver this.

TfL Response

Releasing our data in an open format for anyone to use, free of charge, generates around £130m a year of economic benefits and savings to London and we continue to work in partnership with the developer community to use our open data to deliver new products that improve journeys and support innovation. Around 14,400 open data users are currently registered for TfL's Unified API, from app developers to academic institutions and sat-nav providers. These developers have created more than 650 apps for users to choose from, and products powered by our open data are regularly used by 42 per cent of Londoners.

We are keen to continue our close work with the developer community, and we are currently exploring how we can establish more data partnerships. We are eager to work with developers to explore how we can receive appropriate data and statistics back from those developers who consume our services. As part of this, London's Chief Digital Officer recently completed a Listening Exercise to inform development of the Smart London Plan, which will launch this year. We will continue to work with developers and the GLA to create an eco-system in which data is shared

between TfL, developers and others.

Recommendation 7

The Mayor and TfL should seek to understand the likely scale and impact of commercial drone use in London, both airborne and ground-based. Any existing use of drones in London should be monitored, and discussions should take place with the logistics and retail industries and other stakeholders. TfL should produce new projections for drone use in London to inform continued debate about how to regulate and manage their operations. We ask the Mayor and TfL to produce initial findings and projections by the end of May 2018.

TfL Response

We are actively engaging with stakeholders to understand the scale and impact of commercial drone use in London. We are leading a London task force as part of the Nesta Flying High Challenge. Nesta are a global innovation foundation, and Flying High is the first programme of its kind to convene city leaders, regulators, public services, businesses and industry around the future of drones in cities.

This programme will help us to understand the risks, concerns and opportunities of this rapidly-evolving area and to work out what future policy and strategy is required to ensure that any future drone in London supports the aims of the MTS. Flying High continues our engagement with the DfT, the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and the National Air Traffic Control Service (NATS) on the upcoming Drone (Regulation) Bill 2017-19. This Bill will consider the impact of drones on London's skies, and how they should be managed in the future. Nesta will publish outputs from the first phase of the Flying High Challenge in July 2018 and their vision will be shared with the London Assembly.

We have actively engaged with the various companies wishing to trial delivery robots – otherwise known as ground-based drones – in London, to understand their plans. In this work, we recognise the risks they could create for accessibility and active travel and that questions remain around their legality. We have therefore called on the DfT to clarify the legal status of delivery robots, so we can understand whether or not legislation would be required to permit their use on the pavement. If it becomes clear that delivery robots can lawfully operate in pedestrian areas, we will work closely with boroughs and London Councils to gather evidence and develop policies to ensure any deployment of such technology in London is safe, and is implemented in a way that is consistent with the goals of the MTS.

Recommendation 8

The Mayor and TfL should proactively engage in discussions with the Government, London Boroughs, the drone industry, National Air Traffic Services and other relevant stakeholders about the future control system for drones in London, ahead of the expected publication of the Government's draft Drone Bill in Spring 2018. TfL's aim should be to agree a common set of principles for a new control system, including the necessity for new TfL powers in this area. Consideration should also be given to the need for an integrated control system for ground-based autonomous vehicles and airborne drones, and how this could be implemented. We ask the Mayor and TfL to update the committee by the end of May 2018 with details of discussions they are undertaking.

TfL Response

As mentioned in our response to recommendation 7, we are involved in the Nesta Flying High Challenge and are working closely with stakeholders, including the emergency services and academic institutions, to investigate drone use in London. This will be the main source of evidence that we will use in our response to the current Drone (Regulation) Bill. In addition, we are joining the British Standards Institute committee responsible for the development and implementation of British Standards for Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (drones).

This is a new and developing area of technology. As it progresses, we will use our voice to influence policy and regulation at a local, national and global level. Consistent with MTS policy and our safety-first approach to CAVs, we will work with relevant bodies to understand and, where appropriate, shape practical solutions for both ground and aerial vehicles.