

Subject: Transport Committee Work in 2012-2016

Report to: Transport Committee

Report of: Executive Director of Secretariat

Date: 9 March 2016

This report will be considered in public.

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out a summary of the work of the Transport Committee during this Mayoral and Assembly term, from May 2012 to March 2016.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 **That the Committee notes this report as a record of its work in the current Assembly term.**

3. Background

- 3.1 The London Assembly Transport Committee examines the strategies, policies and actions of Mayor and Transport for London (TfL). It conducts investigation into specific transport issues, engaging with the Mayor, TfL and a wide range of other experts and stakeholders. The Committee determines its investigation priorities on an annual basis, as well as responding to consultations and emerging transport issues, and undertaking regular monitoring of major transport schemes and programmes.

4. Issues for consideration

- 4.1 Transport issues are of fundamental importance to Londoners. Many of the issues considered by the Committee may remain priorities for the next Assembly. Particular priorities for the next Assembly session may include issues such as the delivery of London Underground upgrades and other rail schemes such as Crossrail 2 and High Speed 2, road safety, traffic congestion, London's bus services, taxi and private hire services, door-to-door services and support for disabled public transport users. The Committee will also examine the new Mayor's transport strategy as this is being developed.

5. Topics investigated by the Transport Committee

- 5.1 The Transport Committee has investigated a wide range of topic in the current Assembly term. The following gives an overview of the major themes of the Committee's work, noting key publications, engagement activity and examples of the Committee's impact.

2012 legacy

- 5.2 The beginning of the Assembly term coincided with the Olympic and Paralympic Games, staged at the Olympic Park in Stratford and other venues across London. Prior to the Games the Committee examined plans for ensuring the effective operation of the transport system during the Games for athletes, officials, and spectators, as well as for the general public not travelling to the Games. In a follow-up report published in 2013, the Committee concluded the transport system had operated effectively and considered what legacy there would be beyond the Games. The report identified key lessons learned, including ways to improve coordination between operators and change the behaviour of transport users. The Committee shared its findings with organisers in Rio de Janeiro, in order to inform the planning of the 2016 Games.

Taxi and private hire services

- 5.3 The Committee's investigation into taxi and private hire services considered issues such as the availability of services, passenger safety, accessibility for disabled people and the use of new technology in the sector. The Committee received over 170 written submissions from members of the public, drivers, operators and other stakeholders during the investigation, which gained considerable attention in the press and on social media. We also commissioned a survey of 1,000 taxi and private hire passengers and focus groups with drivers, and invited stakeholders into City Hall for a 'Dragon's Den-style' session where Members heard about a large number of new ideas for improving the sector.
- 5.4 The final report from the investigation, *Future Proof*, was published in December 2014. We received support from many across the sector and widespread media coverage. The Mayor and TfL responded positively to the report and pledged to implement its recommendations. The Committee has followed up this work on a number of occasions, meeting the Deputy Mayor for Transport and senior TfL officers, and responding to subsequent consultations.
- 5.5 Among TfL's actions in response to the report were the development of a new strategy for taxi and private hire services, increasing the budget for new taxi ranks and publishing a ranks action plan, introducing a new system for passenger complaints, suspending private hire satellite offices, mandating the acceptance of card payments in taxis, and proposing significant amendments to the regulation of the private hire industry.

Rail services

- 5.6 The Committee has undertaken a range of scrutiny work in relation to London's National Rail services. In 2015 the Committee published a report on the devolution of rail passenger franchises in London, calling for TfL to take control of suburban routes on several South London franchises as a way of enhancing capacity, reliability and accessibility. A survey by the Committee showed for the first time that London rail users backed this reform, with 68 per cent wanting TfL to replace their existing operator. The Committee also engaged local authorities and passengers outside London, leading to a significant change in the devolution debate. While Kent County Council had previously opposed rail devolution, in discussions with the Committee the council adopted a more positive

stance on the proposals. This paved the way for a subsequent announcement from the Government and the Mayor they were actively planning for the devolution of suburban rail services to TfL, beginning with the South Eastern franchise from 2018.

- 5.7 Members have monitored the delivery of major upgrades, including Crossrail and the Thameslink programme. In 2014/15 the Committee responded to failings in the delivery of the Thameslink programme, with major disruptions being experienced by passengers into and out of London Bridge station. The Committee questioned Network Rail and operators, hearing about measures being put in place to address problems. The Committee made the case to the Government to reform the passenger compensation regime to make London commuters eligible for journey delay refunds; in the 2015 Spending Review the Chancellor confirmed this change was being introduced.
- 5.8 The Committee has monitored the ongoing delivery of the Crossrail programme, visiting construction sites and receiving regular updates on issues such as construction progress, sustainability, health and safety and employment and skills. The Committee also urged the Government to provide funding to ensure all Crossrail stations would be step-free; in 2014, we were pleased to receive confirmation that this would happen.
- 5.9 The Committee has argued for further investment in London's rail infrastructure, including measures such as four-tracking to Stansted Airport, electrification of the Barking-Gospel Oak line, the extension of the London Overground to Barking Riverside, and major schemes such as Crossrail 2. In its report on rail devolution, the Committee recommended the development of a shared TfL-Network Rail upgrade strategy for London, improving the piecemeal and disjointed planning process. In February 2016, the Chair of Network Rail, Sir Peter Hendy, confirmed that a London strategy would be developed for the first time.

Cycling

- 5.10 The Committee has maintained its focus on cycling safety during this term. Following a period of extensive stakeholder consultation, including an 'open mic' session to capture cyclists' views, the Committee published its report *Gearing up* in November 2013. The report contained seven recommendations addressed to the Mayor, TfL, Government and London boroughs. These recommendations included appointing a Cycling Commissioner, and at least doubling TfL's investment in cycling. The report was acknowledged by the Mayor and TfL as being a substantial influence in the development of the Mayor's Cycling Vision. For instance, it was cited by TfL in successful proposals to its Board to implement the scheme.¹
- 5.11 The Committee has continued to press TfL and the Mayor to address the safety concerns of cyclists. In 2014 it published the findings of a new survey of over 6,300 London cyclists, which found that more than two thirds of respondents had become more concerned about safety in the preceding six months. To launch the update, the Committee held a biking breakfast near Oval Tube station, where cyclists could receive cycling safety checks and markings from the Metropolitan Police Service.
- 5.12 The Committee has continued to regularly question the Mayor's Cycling Commissioner, Andrew Gilligan, TfL and the boroughs over progress in implementing the Mayor's Cycling Vision, including the Cycle Superhighways, Quietways and Mini-Holland programmes. Discussions have covered ways

¹ <https://www.tfl.gov.uk/cdn/static/cms/documents/board-20150204-part-1-item-07a-propose-csh-scheme.pdf>

to increase the diversity of cyclists, co-operation with London's boroughs on cycling delivery, and the mitigation of road space conflict.

London Underground

5.13 The Committee has scrutinised the performance of the Tube and ongoing upgrades on the network. In 2014, the Committee met with TfL and other experts for a wide-ranging discussion on the future of the Tube. Issues explored included service performance, TfL's plan for ticket office closures, the delivery of line and station upgrades and the potential introduction of driverless trains and plans for 24-hour Tube services. Subsequently, Committee Members visited Victoria Underground station to examine progress of upgrade work at the station. The Committee wrote to the Mayor in October 2014 to share the findings of this work, making recommendations on Tube staffing, support for disabled passengers, performance targets, the transparency of TfL's investment programme and the need to strengthen requirements on contractors delivering upgrade work.

5.14 The Committee has followed up this work in discussions with the previous TfL Commissioner, Sir Peter Hendy CBE, and his successor Mike Brown MVO. Key issues discussed at these meetings included:

- The failure of the signalling contract in the Sub-Surface Upgrade Programme. This led to significant cost overruns and delay in the programme. The Committee discussed this with Mike Brown MVO in December 2015, receiving assurances about the revised end-date for the programme.
- Ticket office closures. The Committee discussed this programme with Sir Peter Hendy CBE in February 2015, having obtained evidence that passengers at stations without ticket offices were being directed to travel to other stations. Sir Peter Hendy CBE agreed to investigate this practice, which contravened TfL policy, and it now appears to have ceased.
- The delivery of the night Tube. TfL failed to initiate 24-hour tube services on the date originally planned, following a failure to reach agreement with staff unions. In discussion with Mike Brown MVO in December 2015, the Committee confirmed that TfL was still planning to proceed with the programme but would not set a new launch date until agreement was reached.

5.15 In 2014 the Committee responded to TfL's proposals for the extension of the Bakerloo line into south-east London,² having discussed these proposals with TfL and a range of experts at our meeting on transport infrastructure in October. In our submission we supported the proposed extension of the line, but argued that it needed to be considered as part of wider strategy for improving connectivity in the sub-region and that TfL needed to examine the impact on journey times for people using existing National Rail services in the area.

Bus services

5.16 In 2013/14 the Committee investigated London's bus services. Our final report made a number of recommendations including a new measure of bus crowding, better planning of bus transport to hospitals, improving reliability through more bus priority measures, more orbital and express bus routes, and improved consultation with boroughs and bus users.

² <http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor-assembly/london-assembly/publications/transport/bakerloo-line-extension>

- 5.17 The Mayor and TfL's response to our report³ confirmed a number of new TfL commitments in response to our recommendations, including reforming its current engagement process with boroughs on bus services; participating fully in the working groups planning health service reconfigurations; and delivering more bus priority measures.
- 5.18 Another direct impact of our report was a change to TfL's Business Plan. In the report, we recommended that the Business Plan should demonstrate the cost effectiveness of the bus service. We were concerned that the way TfL reported the cost of concessionary fares was under-valuing the cost effectiveness of buses, relative to other modes. We were therefore pleased to see TfL include information for the first time in its 2014 Business Plan showing that the bus network generates an operating surplus for TfL.⁴

Pedestrian safety

- 5.19 The Committee published the report of its investigation into pedestrian safety, *Feet First*, in April 2014. It showed that following a decade of progress in reducing the number of pedestrians killed or injured, casualty numbers started rising again in 2011. The Committee conducted two site visits, to collision hotspots in Whitechapel and along Oxford Street, accompanied by road safety and disability campaigners, as well as a public meeting and call for evidence. The report made eight recommendations to the Mayor and TfL, including a call for the Mayor to adopt the Vision Zero approach to eliminating road death and injury. To coincide with the release of the report and draw attention to the dangers pedestrian face, Committee Members undertook a photo shoot recreating the iconic Beatles Album cover at Abbey Road.
- 5.20 The investigation received good media coverage and a positive response from stakeholders, with the '20s plenty' campaign calling the report 'truly radical' and that it signalled a major shift in emphasis on reducing pedestrian casualties. The Committee has continued to press TfL on the delivery of its Pedestrian Safety Action Plan and wrote to the Mayor voicing concerns that pedestrian safety issues are still not adequately addressed in TfL's road safety policies. The Committee continues to champion public realm improvements that will enhance walking, and to call for the Mayor and TfL to ensure issues faced by pedestrians are fully considered in the development of new cycling infrastructure.

Door-to-door services

- 5.21 Following an investigation on this topic in the previous Assembly term, the Committee has monitored the performance of London's door-to-door services, which are specialised services for disabled people including Capital Call, Taxicard and Dial-a-Ride. In 2014 the Committee published a follow-up report making a series of recommendations aimed at increasing coordination between services. TfL accepted almost all of the Committee's recommendations. One immediate TfL action was to suspend the planned closure of Capital Call, which the Committee had argued would be inappropriate until a comprehensive door-to-door strategy was confirmed.

³ <http://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/14-05-14-TfL%27s%20response%20to%20the%20LATC%27s%20investigation%20into%20bus%20s%20%20%20.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.tfl.gov.uk/cdn/static/cms/documents/tfl-business-plan-2014.pdf>

- 5.22 TfL incorporated the Committee's other recommendations into a new action plan, arising out the wider Social Needs Transport Review. This included new actions to introduce:
- A single customer feedback and complaints process for Dial-a-Ride, Taxicard and Capital Call;
 - A single set of eligibility criteria and membership process for these services;
 - A single journey booking process for these services; and
 - An extension on the existing five-mile limit for Dial-a-Ride journeys.

TfL customer services

- 5.23 The Committee conducted an investigation into standards of customer service at TfL, led by Valerie Shawcross CBE AM as a Rapporteur. This followed up an earlier report from the Committee on this topic, published in 2012, and included meeting passenger groups and experts, and a visit to Belfast to see how customer services are delivered by Translink, the city's integrated transport body.
- 5.24 The Committee's report published in March 2015, found that TfL had made improvements to its customer service in recent years, for instance by developing its social media presence.⁵ However, there was still a need for an overarching customer charter to set out what passengers can expect from TfL. It also recommended TfL make it easier for passengers to complain, improve the transparency of its customer service performance measures, and designate responsibility for customer service to a member of the TfL Board.
- 5.25 The report had a significant impact on TfL's policies in this area. Most notably, TfL agreed to produce a customer charter for the first time, covering all transport modes and setting out TfL's commitments on areas such as reliability, safety and information.⁶ TfL implemented the recommendation to simplify the menus on its telephone helpline, and in particular to include a complaints option on the main menu. TfL also commissioned an external audit of its complaints system, as recommended in the report.

Motorcycle safety

- 5.26 The Committee has undertaken an investigation into motorcycle safety on London's roads in 2015/16. This followed evidence of an increase in motorcyclist casualties, which grew by around 21 per cent between 2010 and 2014. The Committee met a range of stakeholders including motorcyclists groups, road safety experts and industry representatives. The Committee's investigation was notable for drawing considerable attention to the issue of motorcycle safety, which has in recent years been overlooked in favour of a focus on cycling among the media and policy-makers. The Committee's report, which is being considered under a separate item on this agenda, recommends TfL takes steps to ensure motorcyclists can ride in bus lanes throughout London, and increase take-up of training among young motorcyclists.

Congestion

- 5.27 The Committee has followed up its previous work on tackling road congestion and managing demand for road space. In 2012, the Committee responded to the Mayor's consultation on his Roads Task Force, highlighting the important role the task force should play in developing coherent plans to tackle congestion.

⁵ <http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor-assembly/london-assembly/publications/transport>

⁶ <https://tfl.gov.uk/corporate/about-tfl/how-we-work/our-customer-commitments>

- 5.28 The Committee also submitted a response to TfL's consultation on a package of proposals for new river crossings to mitigate road congestion, including plans for a new road tunnel between Silvertown and the Greenwich peninsula, a new ferry at Gallions Reach, and a toll for new crossings and the Blackwall tunnel. Following a seminar with six expert guests and 80 delegates, the Committee's response highlighted the importance of TfL clearly explaining the potential impacts of the different proposals. The Committee has also pressed the Mayor and TfL to examine and mitigate the congestion impacts of other transport policies, including the delivery of new cycle infrastructure and the expansion of private hire services.
- 5.29 The Committee undertook an investigation into light commercial traffic in 2015/16, following evidence of an increase in van traffic, partially as a result of restrictions on Heavy Goods Vehicles and the growth of internet shopping. In a submission to TfL the Committee urged a focus on re-timing deliveries outside of peak times, the establishment of new delivery consolidation centres and measures to increase Londoners' use of Click and Collect.

Airport capacity

- 5.30 In 2013 the Committee published a report on airport capacity in London. This was intended to feed into the Airports Commission review of this issue led by Sir Howard Davies on behalf of the Government. The report recommended that Sir Howard rule out the expansion of Heathrow Airport, and focus on better utilisation of existing airport capacity, which could be enabled for instance by improving surface transport links to Luton and Stansted.
- 5.31 In 2015 the Airports Commission released its final report, recommending the expansion of Heathrow with the construction of a third runway. The Committee undertook further scrutiny of the Commission's findings, focusing on recommendations about upgrading surface transport access to Heathrow. The Committee wrote to the Government to set out its concerns that the Commission had under-estimated the level of increased demand for surface transport and the level of investment that would be required.

River services

- 5.32 The Committee published a report on London's river transport services towards the end of the Assembly term. In early 2013 the Mayor and TfL published a *River Action Plan*, in line with the Committee's recommendation. This is a strategy for developing river passenger services to increase the number of trips made by river to 12 million by 2020.

8. Legal Implications

The Committee has the power to do what is recommended in this report.

9. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

List of appendices to this report:

None

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of Background Papers: None.

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