

Subject: Bus Network

Report to: Transport Committee

Report of: Executive Director of Secretariat

Date: 11 January 2017

This report will be considered in public

1. Summary

1.1 This report sets out the background to a discussion with guests on bus network planning in London.

2. Recommendation

2.1 **That the Committee notes the report, puts questions on London's bus network to the invited guests and notes the discussion.**

3. Background

- 3.1 The Transport Committee has decided to investigate bus network design. The scope and terms of reference for this investigation have been agreed by the Chair under delegated authority in consultation with party Group Lead Members. The terms of reference for the investigation are:
- To examine current methods used by TfL to manage and plan the bus network.
 - To consider how changes to network planning and design could improve the usage, reliability and efficiency of the bus network.
 - To evaluate best practice in bus network design and consider whether other methods and systems might be feasible in a London context.
- 3.2 Buses are the busiest form of public transport in London. The city has 675 bus routes, with around 9,000 buses in operation and over 19,000 bus stops. Approximately 2.5 billion bus passenger trips are made every year, around double the number made on London Underground. TfL commissions all public bus services in London.

3.3 According to TfL surveys, overall customer satisfaction has remained stable over recent years. In the most recent quarter it was 86 per cent.¹ However, a number of indicators have suggested the performance of the bus network has deteriorated, particularly:

- The number of passenger journeys has started to fall after a long period of increase – in the past year the number of bus journeys made fell by 3.7 per cent. This has had an effect on revenue, which has fallen by two per cent.²
- Excess waiting times for buses have increased from an average of one minute in 2013/14 to 1.2 minutes in 2015/16.³

3.4 TfL is embarking on a major review of the design of London's bus network. The reasons for this were set out by TfL's Managing Director of Planning, Alex Williams, at the Committee's meeting in June:

"There is also a recognition that we need to do a comprehensive review for the network and how it functions in central London versus inner London versus outer London. I think you understand that that is not a quick piece of work. That is a very fundamental review of how the bus network operates in London."

3.5 The introduction of a bus hopper ticket may also enable reform of network design, without adding to the cost of people's journeys. The hopper ticket allows passengers to change buses within one hour without paying extra. Within six weeks of its introduction, ten million journeys have been made using the hopper ticket. It is likely that the impact will grow further in 2018 when unlimited transfers will be allowed within an hour of starting the first journey.

4. Issues for Consideration

The following guests have been invited to participate in the discussion:

- Gareth Powell, Director of Strategy and Service Development, TfL;
- A representative from the Bus Services team, TfL;
- Professor Peter White, University of Westminster;
- A representative of London Borough of Enfield;
- A representative of London Councils;
- A representative of a London bus operator; and
- A representative of Transport Focus.

5. Legal Implications

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

¹ This is based on customers being asked about a range of aspects of their most recent journey, with an aggregate overall score produced. The London Underground had a satisfaction score of 85 per cent, London Overground 84 per cent and the Docklands Light Railway 89 per cent. Transport for London quarterly performance report: Quarter 1 2016/17

² Transport for London quarterly performance report: Quarter 1 2016/17

³ The number of minutes that a passenger has had to wait in excess of the time that they should expect to wait if buses ran as scheduled.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 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 |
|---------------------------------|

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Contact Officer: | Georgie Wells, Assistant Scrutiny Manager |
| Telephone: | 020 7983 4000 |
| E-mail: | scrutiny@london.gov.uk |