MDA No.: 1930

Title: London TravelWatch Board Recruitment

1. Executive Summary

1.1 At the Transport Committee meeting on 24 June 2026 the Committee resolved:

That the Committee authorises the Chief Officer, or the person they delegate authority to, to:

(a) Engage an external recruitment agency to support the Assembly with the forthcoming London TravelWatch Board recruitment exercise, up to a maximum value of £50,000; and

(b) Make necessary arrangements and associated decisions up to the final stage of recruitment, where shortlisted candidates will be interviewed and appointment decisions made, in liaison with Transport Committee party Group Lead Members.

2. Decision

2.1 **That the Chair, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, authorises the Chief Officer, or the person they delegate authority to, to:**

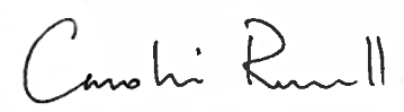
(a) Engage an external recruitment agency to support the Assembly with the forthcoming London TravelWatch Board recruitment exercise, up to a maximum value of £50,000; and

(b) Make necessary arrangements and associated decisions up to the final stage of recruitment, where shortlisted candidates will be interviewed and appointment decisions made, in liaison with Transport Committee party Group Lead Members.

Assembly Member

I confirm that I do not have any disclosable pecuniary interests in the proposed decision and take the decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct for elected Members of the Authority.

The above request has my approval.

Signature: 

Printed Name: **Caroline Russell AM, Chair of the Transport Committee**

Date: 16 November 2026

3. Decision by an Assembly Member under Delegated Authority

Background and proposed next steps:

3.1 The London Assembly has delegated authority to the Transport Committee to deal with matters relating to London TravelWatch (LTW), the statutory watchdog for transport users in the capital. The appointment of the London TravelWatch Chair and Board Members is a statutory responsibility of the London Assembly (s247 of the GLA Act 1999).

3.2 On 31 December 2026, the terms of office for two LTW Board Members will come to an end. Subsequently, the Chair of LTW wishes to establish the position of Deputy Chair. The London Assembly is therefore required, in the 2026 calendar year, to undertake a board recruitment exercise. It is proposed that there will be one recruitment round.

3.3 It is therefore proposed that the Chief Officer (or the person they delegate authority to) be authorised to engage an external recruitment agency to support the Assembly with this recruitment exercise, up to a maximum expenditure of £50,000. Costs are expected to come in well below that threshold, but they give some leeway to test the current market.

3.4 It is further proposed that the Chief Officer (or the person they delegate authority to) be authorised to make all necessary arrangements and associated decisions up to the final stage of recruitment where shortlisted candidates will be interviewed and appointment decisions made, in liaison with party Group Lead Members of the Transport Committee.

3.5 Any final, formal decision regarding appointment to the LTW Board will be for the Transport Committee to determine in due course, following consultation with the Secretary of State for Transport.

3.6 It is expected that funding to engage a professional recruitment firm will need to be met from the Assembly reserves and the final costs are anticipated to be below the £50,000 proposed for authorisation.

3.7 The exercise of delegated authority will be formally noted at the Transport Committee's next appropriate meeting.

Confirmation that appropriate delegated authority exists for this decision:

Signature (Committee Services): *Hannah Barlow*

Printed Name: Hannah Barlow, Principal Committee Manager

Date: 16 November 2026

Financial Implications: NOT REQUIRED

Note: Finance comments and signature are required only where there are financial implications arising or the potential for financial implications.

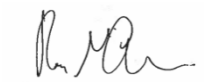
Signature (Finance): Not Required

Printed Name: N/A

Date: N/A

Legal Implications:

The Chair of the Transport Committee has the power to make the decision set out in this report.

Signature (Legal): 

Printed Name: Rory Mckenna

Date: 16 November 2026

Supporting Detail / List of Consultees:

- Elly Baker AM (Deputy Chair)
- Thomas Turrell AM
- Hina Bokhari OBE AM
- Keith Prince AM

4. Public Access to Information

4.1 Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the FoIA, or the EIR and will be made available on the GLA Website, usually within one working day of approval.

4.2 If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary.

4.3 **Note**: this form (Part 1) will either be published within one working day after it has been approved or on the defer date.

Part 1 - Deferral:

Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? NO

If yes, until what date:

Part 2 – Sensitive Information:

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under FoIA or EIR should be included in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a part 2 form? NO

Lead Officer / Author

Signature: Hannah Barlow

Printed Name: Hannah Barlow

Job Title: Principal Committee Manager

Date: 16 November 2026

Countersigned by Executive Director:

Signature: 

Printed Name: Helen Ewan

Date: 16 November 2026

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Caroline Russell AM
Chair of the Transport Committee

The Rt Hon Heidi Alexander MP
Secretary of State
Department for Transport

(Sent by email) 16 November 2026

Dear Secretary of State,

London TravelWatch Board Appointments

As you will be aware, the London Assembly is responsible for the appointment of Members to the Board of London TravelWatch (LTW), the statutory watchdog for transport users in the capital. The appointment of LTW Board Members is a statutory responsibility of the London Assembly (s247 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 as amended).

Last week we held interviews for two roles on the LTW Board. The interview panel (which included Members of the London Assembly's Transport Committee and the Chair of London TravelWatch) was very pleased by the quality and expertise of the candidates who came forward for interview. The panel has recommended the appointment of one Deputy Chair: **Debs Persaud**, and one new Board Member: **Yvonne Howard**. Bographies of the two recommended appointees are attached.

The Panel considered the two recommended candidates to be outstanding and clearly appointable, having given particular consideration to how the individuals would bring the right balance of skills to the Board as a whole.

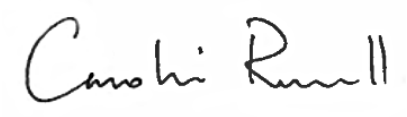
- **Debs Persaud** is a disability rights activist and currently Chair of Transport for All. She is also an independent board member at the National Centre for Accessible Transport and sits on the Consumer Panel of the Civil Aviation Authority. The Panel noted that Debs understood and cherished the value of LTW as an independent and apolitical organisation and demonstrated outstanding partnering skills, drawing on persuasive real experiences.
- **Yvonne Howard** is an equalities and inclusion specialist with extensive experience in working with complex organisations to understand their barriers to inclusion. She brings over 20 years of senior leadership in large, politically scrutinised public organisations, including as Interim Director of Group Equality and Inclusion and Head of Accessibility and Planning at

Transport for London. The Panel were impressed with Yvonne's compelling and relevant experience of people with different protected characteristics using London's transport system, and her very clear and empathetic model for engaging both stakeholders and transport users. The Panel felt that Yvonne would bring value and depth to the Board.

This letter is to consult you on these appointments, in accordance with section 247 and Schedule 18 [paragraph 1-4, 6(a), 7(a) and 10 of the GLA Act 1999 as amended.

We are keen to start the onboarding process for these roles as soon as possible, so would very much appreciate an early reply to this letter. The Chair of LondonTravelWatch, Tricia Hayes, would be happy to answer any questions about the chosen candidates or the interview process and can be contacted at Tricia.Hayes@Londontravelwatch.org.uk. Alternatively, please contact Hannah Barlow, Principal Committee Manager at hannah.barlow@london.gov.uk with your response or if you require any further information.

Yours,



Caroline Russell AM
Chair of the Transport Committee