

Transport for London

Minutes of the Surface Advisory Panel

Boardroom, 14th Floor, Windsor House, London
10.00am, Tuesday 6 November 2007

Members

Peter Hendy	Chair, Commissioner
Dave Wetzel	Vice Chair, Board Member
David Brown	Managing Director, Surface Transport
Christopher Garnett	Board Member
Kirsten Hearn	Board Member
Paul Moore	Board Member
Patrick O'Keeffe	Board Member
Tony West	Board Member

In Attendance

Lord Toby Harris	Board Adviser (for part)
Lynn Sloman	Board Adviser

Staff

Peter Brown	Chief Operating Officer, Streets
Howard Carter	General Counsel
Stephen Critchley	Chief Finance Officer
Ellen Howard	Director of Corporate Governance
Chris Lines	Head of London Road Safety Unit
Ed Thompson	Director of Taxi and Private Hire
Sue Riley	Secretariat

18/11/07 Apologies and Declarations of Interest

Apologies for absence were received from Bryan Heiser, Shiria Khatun and Steve Allen, whom Stephen Critchley was representing.

No declarations of interests were made.

19/11/07 Minutes of the Meeting Held on 9 May 2007

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 May 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair, subject to the following amendments:

a) Minimising Pedestrian Guardrail – Risk Assessment Methodology Update (Minute Reference 13/05/07)

'The application of the methodology would not mean the removal of the guardrail in all instances, only when it was safe and appropriate to do so *and taking into consideration sensitive locations such as schools*'.

b) Managing Director's Report (Minute Reference 16/05/07)

'The Commissioner stated that he would report to the Mayor on the time taken to implement the No. 38 bus priority scheme, *and that a report be submitted to a future meeting on this issue*'.
[ACTION: Dick Hallé]

20/11/07 **Matters Arising and Actions List**

There were no outstanding actions.

The Panel noted the report.

21/11/07 **Low Carbon Bus and Taxi Initiatives – Progress Update**

David Brown gave a presentation on low carbon initiatives across the Surface Transport Directorate. It was noted that 25 hybrid vehicles were expected in fleet by the end of the financial year, and not 15, as stated in the presentation.

It was suggested that consideration be given to an ultra light transit scheme in place of buses as a carbon neutral alternative. Members were advised that this option had been independently reviewed and not considered viable. However, it was agreed that officers would consider ultra light rail as a public transport option for the Thames Gateway Bridge.
[ACTION: Michèle Dix/Malcolm Murray Clark]

The Chair stressed the importance of TfL pump priming the market for hybrid vehicles, and the technological and commercial advantages in the future if the technology was introduced into London on a large scale. Hybrid technology was considered as a stepping stone to further future technological improvements. Technological changes were also improving the environmental performance of traditional combustion engines.

David Brown said that manufacturers looking to hybrid HGVs would substantially reduce the unit cost. The residual value of the vehicles would also increase as the life cycle became longer. Opportunities would continue to be taken to seek press coverage of TfL's pioneering work in this area. Hydrogen re-fuelling stations would be available for appropriate vehicles in use during the Olympic Games.

David Brown informed the Panel that an holistic approach with regard to emissions was being taken by TfL to influence taxi drivers' behaviour. This has included not only mid-year inspections for all taxis, which requires vehicles to pass emissions tests, but also education in, for example, eco-driving.

The Chair said that the maximum age of taxi and private hire vehicles was an issue for review because old vehicles released more fumes. David Brown stressed that all parts of the private hire vehicle market needed attention in order to reduce emissions. Members were keen for TfL to take a 'carrot and stick' approach in terms of tackling emissions via congestion charge reductions and registration fees.

Members raised the issue of vehicle weight reductions as a way of reducing emissions, but this was counterbalanced against limitations in engine and body manufacturing processes. The introduction of improved safety systems and air conditioning also contributed to vehicle weight.

The Panel noted the report.

22/11/07 Intelligent Speed Adaptation Update

Chris Lines presented the report. The Panel was informed that TfL was a world leader on this issue and was looking to use Intelligent Speed Adaptation (ISA) to improve road safety further. TfL's role in the scheme was to collate a digital speed limit map of London, in collaboration with the Boroughs. As well as improving road safety, it was also anticipated that reducing road speeds could also reduce emissions.

The Panel was advised that due to the complexity of fitting the equipment to vehicles, and the need for complete reliability and safety assurances before the system could be launched or made public, it was anticipated that a year would be required for testing the system.

There was unlikely to be support for mandatory introduction, but benefits could be gained from voluntary adoption by employers to help fulfil their duty of care to their staff, and the potential cost savings in fuel consumption and reduced insurance premiums. TfL would consider introducing ISA for its own vehicles, once the trial was complete, as well as buses, taxis and PHVs.

As a form of speed control, ISA could be preferable to speed cameras, which were costly and geographically limited. It would also act as a 'black box' recorder in the vehicle, which could provide information on accidents and incidents, which could prove invaluable for employers.

The Chair said that TfL would encourage the Government to include a reference to ISA as part of its forthcoming review of the National Road Safety Strategy.

The Panel noted the report.

23/11/07 Taxi and Private Hire Licence Fees

Ed Thompson introduced the report. He said that TfL was in the process of checking the claims that high specification cars were being registered as taxis to avoid paying the congestion charge and initial indications were that the claims were not well founded.

The Chair highlighted the lack of recognition from the press and public of the successful registration of all previously unlicensed private hire vehicles in London by TfL, and the introduction of the safer night travel text service.

Members requested that officers look into whether hands free mobile equipment was checked during safety inspections of cabs and taxis. **[ACTION: Ed Thompson]**

The Panel noted the update on taxi and PHV licence fees.

24/11/07 Managing Director's Report

David Brown presented the report.

A406 Bounds Green: It was reported that it was expected that planning consent would be granted once a section 106 planning agreement had been concluded and that a small number of objections had been made to Compulsory Purchase and Side Road Orders. Members stressed the importance of early dialogue and engagement with any concerned parties.

London River Services: It was reported that under the new contract for Catamaran Cruisers the frequency of passenger services would be increased. David Brown agreed to circulate a note to Members on accessibility of river services and how this could be incorporated into the tendering process and on the provision of travel information on river transport services. **[ACTION: David Brown]**

London Buses Operations: Members discussed the public and press misconceptions surrounding the link between bendy buses and passenger injuries. The Mayor had been vocal in addressing such claims.

Cycling, Walking and Accessibility: It was reported that the feasibility study on a potential cycle hire scheme for London would be submitted to the Panel meeting in February 2008. **[ACTION: David Brown]**

Dial-A-Ride: Members noted that requests for Dial-a-Ride journeys were down, but officers anticipated that bookings would increase once passengers had become accustomed to the new booking system, and now charges were removed. Officers were congratulated on the 100 per cent MOT pass rate for the vehicles.

Financial Performance Report: Dave Wetzel sought clarification on the figures set out on page 25 of the report in relation to Bus Network Income and Bus Network Operation Costs, and Stephen Critchley agreed to confirm the figures. **[ACTION: Stephen Critchley]**

Percentage of Scheduled Service Operated: Members congratulated TfL officers on the significant improvements in the reliability and regularity of bus services.

TfL's Children's Traffic Club: Members particularly welcomed the recent initiatives, set out in the report, on road safety and TfL's Children's Traffic Club.

Greenwich Waterfront Transit Phase 1: Members were advised that a report would be submitted to the next TfL Board meeting, requesting approval for an application to the Secretary of State for Compulsory Purchase Orders to acquire areas of land for the scheme.

The Panel noted the report.

25/11/07 Any Other Business

The Chair updated the Panel on discussions with the DfT on the proposed Crossrail Heads of Terms. Progress had been made in several areas.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 12.45pm.

The next scheduled meeting would be held on Wednesday 13 February 2008 at 10.00am.

Chair: _____

Date: _____