

TRANSPORT FOR LONDON

ENVIRONMENT, CORPORATE AND PLANNING PANEL

**SUBJECT: MAYOR'S TRANSPORT STRATEGY ACCESSIBILITY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

**DATE: 10 FEBRUARY 2011**

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**1 PURPOSE AND DECISION REQUIRED**

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to seek the Panel's support for the development of a 'Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS) Accessibility Implementation Plan' document which will expand on the existing implementation plan within the published MTS.
- 1.2 The MTS sets out the strategy for improving the accessibility of the transport system, including enhancing the physical accessibility of the system, enhancing information provision, staff service and attitudinal behaviour, and door-to-door transport, but only at a London-wide level.
- 1.3 This expanded 'MTS Accessibility Implementation Plan' document would provide greater spatial detail on the committed programme of improvements to 2015 (being clear that there is no possibility of any additional funding for any further improvements in this period), and potential value-for-money improvements beyond 2015 to 2031 (being mindful of possibly declining levels of government funding during that period).
- 1.4 Within this context of reduced levels of long term funding, the 'MTS Accessibility Implementation Plan' would:
  - (a) seek to identify the best value for money and affordable solutions to improving accessibility across London, including considering the possible merits of lower cost innovative solutions;
  - (b) provide greater clarity for stakeholders on the current and future programme of improvements, and contribute to the further development of the sub regional transport plans;
  - (c) respond to the London Assembly's recent report on this subject, calling for the development of a physical accessibility strategy, which would be the subject of public consultation;
  - (d) contribute to the GLA's development of London Plan supplementary planning guidance (SPG) concerning 'Accessible London', expected to commence soon; and
  - (e) help shape TfL's input to the government's next High Level Output Specification which will determine Access for All investment in National Rail stations between 2014 and 2019, and help build the case for other investment beyond 2015.

## **2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The MTS, published in May 2010, sets out five proposals for a more accessible transport system, which are summarised below:
- (a) Enhancing the physical accessibility of the transport system;
  - (b) Improving information to remove barriers to travel;
  - (c) Improving staff service and the attitudes of customers;
  - (d) Greater staff availability to provide direct assistance to customers and enhancing staff training; and
  - (e) Support for door to door services for people with mobility problems who require this form of transport service.
- 2.2 The MTS also sets out an Accessibility Implementation Plan (Figure 87, MTS) which provides a short description of relevant schemes, their phasing and funding status.
- 2.3 The London Assembly Transport Committee announced in February 2010 it was to conduct a scrutiny of the accessibility of the transport system, and published its report, 'Accessibility of the Transport Network', in November 2010.
- 2.4 The London Assembly made four recommendations in its report, including that TfL should develop and publish a physical accessibility strategy by June 2011, for public consultation, saying this should be done in conjunction with Network Rail, the train operating companies and London Boroughs. Other recommendations concern bus operations, rail and tube operations, and information provision. The recommendations are set out in full in Appendix 1.
- 2.5 While London now has an accessibility strategy contained within the MTS, TfL will respond to the Assembly report indicating that it does see merit in developing the strategy further, for the reasons set out in paragraph 1.4 of this paper.

## **3 SCOPE OF WORK**

- 3.1 The 'MTS Accessibility Implementation Plan' would take forward the first four of the MTS proposals (i.e. excluding door to door services, which have already been the subject to extensive review), whose scope matches that of the recommendations made by the London Assembly, and set out:
- (a) the context, including the MTS policy and London Plan demographic change (there will be both more younger and older people in London by 2031, making improvements to accessibility even more necessary to achieving the Mayor's vision set out in the London Plan and the goals of the MTS);
  - (b) recent improvements to the physical accessibility of London's transport system and streets;

- (c) the funded plan to 2015. The document would describe the committed funding and schemes in more detail, highlighting the benefits of these through case studies;
- (d) options beyond 2015, including further improvements to:
  - (i) information provision, such as easy to access information and assistance with planning a journey such as through the online Journey Planner;
  - (ii) customer service, such as through staff training and provision of staff to assist customers with mobility impairments;
  - (iii) the physical accessibility of rail and tube stations, integrated with MTS proposals for congestion relief schemes, strategic interchanges and new lines and extensions (about 37 per cent of rail and tube stations will be step free following TfL business plan investment, Crossrail and the current national rail Access for All programme. Those that are step free will be unevenly distributed across London);
  - (iv) bus stop accessibility improvements (and a better understanding of how to measure this), and bus driver training;
  - (v) street accessibility, potentially including shared spaces; and
- (e) outcomes of the funded plan and of the potential improvements beyond, including reductions in relative journey time between physically accessible routes and the fastest routes.

3.2 A cross-TfL working group has been established to undertake this work. The group includes representatives from Surface Transport, London Rail, London Underground, Planning, Marketing & Communications, and Equality and Inclusion.

3.3 There would be three interwoven strands of work to take this forward:

- (a) **Analysis and Research** – A significant amount of data, analysis and research has already been completed on this topic and this would provide a valuable resource for this strategy. This includes a significant number of customer research studies on the needs of travellers with disabilities as well as the impact of different interventions TfL is currently employing to improve accessibility and journey experience for these groups. The London Travel Demand Survey also provides a valuable resource to enable further understanding of the travel patterns of these three groups. It is not thought necessary to conduct further studies or customer research at this stage, rather to consolidate what has already been done;
- (b) **Implementation plan development** – Further developing the implementation plan in the MTS, in line with Proposals 40-43, using the scope outlined above; and
- (c) **Consultation** – As this is a development of the existing MTS, which was subject to extensive consultation, it is proposed that further consultation is kept to a minimum. TfL will consult London boroughs

(ideally collectively via London Councils), Network Rail, and a few key stakeholders, but not the general public. Internally, TfL would seek views from the Independent Disability Advisory Group and use information from last year's MTS public consultation responses.

- 3.4 It is not proposed for there to be a high profile launch of the document, however, it would be written in such a way that it could be made publicly available on the TfL website. It is intended to make the document available to the London Assembly in response to their report recommendation.

## **4 PROCUREMENT**

- 4.1 Existing data will be analysed in-house. No new research would be carried out and information would be received through revisiting feedback from last year's MTS consultation responses.

## **5 EQUALITY AND INCLUSION**

- 5.1 This takes forward the Accessibility Implementation Plan in the MTS, developing the Mayor's proposals for a physically accessible transport system (as required by the GLA Act 1999). This would also support the Mayor's Equal Life Chances for All policy.
- 5.2 The implementation plan would be developed in line with policies in the MTS and the TfL Disability and Deaf Equality Scheme, the London Plan, as well as with reference to the Olympic/Paralympic accessibility legacy, and the Access for All programme. The London Plan SPG on Accessibility is being developed in 2011 and this would help inform the Accessibility Implementation Plan and vice versa.

## **6 RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS**

### **Implementation plan development and publication**

- 6.1 No further funding will be required as much of the work is to be done with existing data and information.
- 6.2 The document would be published electronically, but not printed.

### **Implementation plan delivery**

- 6.3 There would be no additional funding or resource requirements for TfL to 2015 as the implementation plan to that date would only include those improvements that are already funded.
- 6.4 Beyond 2015, the implementation plan would be based on the schemes already included in the MTS. It would assume that the new lines and extensions, congestion relief schemes and strategic interchanges named in the MTS would all be made step-free. Because these schemes are not distributed evenly across London (being, for example, where there is most need to improve connectivity or provide further capacity), the implementation plan would then seek to add further "stand-alone" step-free stations to ensure an equitable balance across London, in accordance with Proposal 40 of the MTS.

- 6.5 Many of these stand-alone station step-free schemes would be on the National Rail network. There is an opportunity to influence DfT funding for these stations through the rail Access for All programme. The government's next High Level Output Specification (HLOS2) for Control Period 5 (2014-2019) will determine the funding provision for the Access for All programme. The HLOS will be announced in summer 2012, and London Rail intends to publish its recommendations for Control Period 5 in spring 2011, in order to influence Network Rail's Initial Strategic Business Plan (September 2011). Developing an Accessibility Implementation Plan now would be beneficial in helping to influence funding in this regard. Lobbying for HLOS2 funding in London will be an ongoing activity over the next 18 months.
- 6.6 The developed document would make it clear that there is currently no agreed funding beyond 2015 and that stakeholders' expectations should be realistic given the national economic conditions.

## **7 RECOMMENDATION**

- 7.1 The Panel is asked to:
- (a) AGREE the proposed scope and approach to the MTS Accessibility Implementation Plan; and
  - (b) NOTE that a draft of the document will be submitted to the Panel for review at its meeting on 18 May 2011, with the intention of providing a final version to the London Assembly in June 2011.

## **8 CONTACT**

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**Recommendations made by the London Assembly report 'Accessibility of the transport network', November 2010**

**Recommendation 1: By June 2011, TfL should:**

- (a) in conjunction with relevant organisations including Network Rail, the train operating companies and London Boroughs, use the Committee's information on the numbers of people with reduced mobility and their location to develop its physical accessibility strategy post 2018;
- (b) Publish its physical accessibility strategy for consultation with people with reduced mobility and relevant organisations. The strategy should set out the plans for improving accessibility until 2018 and the options for providing further step-free stations and fully accessible bus stops thereafter; and
- (c) Publish details of the organisations and individuals it will consult and how in relation to its physical accessibility strategy. This should include clarification on the future of its Independent Disability Advisory Committee.

**Recommendation 2: By June 2011, TfL should enhance pre-journey information and support for people with reduced mobility by:**

- (a) Including details on its online Journey Planner of the heights of steps and platforms at Tube and Overground rails stations, the accessibility of bus stops and possible national rail service options;
- (b) Streamlining, in consultation with relevant groups, the range of publications and maps about accessibility;
- (c) Publishing all its data relating to the accessibility of transport services on the London Datastore; and
- (d) Extending, in collaboration with relevant organisations including London Boroughs as appropriate, its travel assistance scheme so it supports more than 10,000 journeys p.a. by people with reduced mobility in 2011/12 and each year thereafter.

**Recommendation 3: By June 2011, TfL should enhance the accessibility of Tube and Overground rail for people with reduced mobility by:**

- (a) Providing alternatives to step-free access including allowing people to use manual ramps wherever possible on the Tube and Overground rail networks. For example, at terminating stations;
- (b) Introducing a minimum set of criteria for the accessibility features at a Tube station and an Overground rail station;
- (c) Working in partnership with disability groups to put in place a programme of accessibility audits for all stations. These should assess

how far stations meet the minimum set of criteria and where they do not identify any low cost solutions. TfL should publish the findings from these audits;

- (d) Publishing its assessment of the impact on people with reduced mobility of proposals to reduce staff at Tube stations and the measures it intends to put in place to mitigate the impact; and
- (e) Appointing an existing member of staff to act as an “accessibility champion” at each interchange station to ensure a co-ordinated approach to accessibility across different transport modes and operators. These “accessibility champions” should organise training for all staff at each station which ensures they are familiar with the accessibility of all modes and can assist people with reduced mobility in relation to any service.

**Recommendation 4: By June 2011, TfL should enhance the accessibility of buses for people with reduced mobility by:**

- (a) Redeveloping the disability awareness training provided to bus drivers, and to trainers providing this training, so it is more practical than theory-based. It should involve people with reduced mobility sharing their experiences directly or through videos;
- (b) Improving guidance for bus drivers including the information in the Big Red Book about the service standards for people with reduced mobility including which specific scooters are permitted;
- (c) Introducing specific performance targets for bus drivers on the service to be provided to people with reduced mobility;
- (d) Displaying individual bus drivers’ ID so it is easier for people with reduced mobility to report any issues;
- (e) Introducing more publicity on buses about who is entitled to use the accessibility bay and the bus service standards. This should include the services relating to the lbus system and bus drivers allowing people to settle in their seats; and
- (f) Exploring the scope to include in the new bus for London and future buses more flip-up seats or other provision for more people with reduced mobility.