



SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE B

MINUTES of the Scrutiny Sub-Committee B held on Wednesday May 13 2009 at 7.00 pm at Town Hall, Peckham Road, London SE5 8UB

PRESENT: Councillor David Hubber (Chair)
Councillor Althea Smith
Councillor Denise Capstick
Councillor Jenny Jones
Councillor Lorraine Zuleta

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillor Toby Eckersley
Councillor Caroline Pidgeon

OFFICER SUPPORT: Andrew Boag, Consultation Manager, Transport for London
Patrick Horan, Chair & Access Officer, Southwark Disablement Association
Barbara Selby, Head of Transport Planning
Cheryl Powell, Scrutiny Manager

1. APOLOGIES

1.1 Apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Denise Capstick.

2. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT

2.1 There were none.

3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

3.1 There were none.

4. MINUTES

4.1 The minutes of the meeting held on March 26 2009 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

5. BUS SERVICES IN SOUTHWARK - CONSULTATION RESPONSES

5.1 The sub-committee reviewed comments submitted by members of the public and elected members.

RESOLVED: To note the report.

6. BUS SERVICES IN SOUTHWARK - EVIDENCE GATHERING

6.1 Councillor Hubber discussed how the meeting should be divided to obtain the best possible evidence from the invited witnesses. He suggested the first half of the meeting should discuss bus services in general, with the second half concentrating on routes in the borough.

6.2 Councillor Hubber introduced members of the witness panel invited to give evidence to the sub-committee, these being

- Andrew Boag – Consultation Manager, Transport for London (Surface Transport Communications)
- Councillor Toby Eckersley
- Councillor Caroline Pidgeon – London Assembly Member
- Barbara Selby – Head of Transport Planning (Southwark Council)
- Patrick Horan – Chair & Access Officer: Southwark Disablement Association

6.3 Mr Boag provided the sub-committee with a statistical synopsis to London's bus services by saying that

- there are more than 8,000 buses running using 700 routes
- there are 130 night services
- six million passengers use London's buses everyday (the largest number since 1962)
- 71% passengers use London's buses since 1991

6.4 Mr. Boag discussed an accessibility policy Transport for London (TfL) is currently championing. All buses have a ramp that is working. During the morning checks, if it's not working then that particular bus is cancelled. London's bus fleets are now 100% accessible, ahead of the Government's 2016 target, although there is still much to do.

6.5 Councillor Pidgeon stated that the role of the GLA's Transport Committee is to hold the Mayor to account. Although they have no direct control over the capital's transport infrastructure they do have a duty to represent all Londoners. In this

instance the Transport Committee has composed a variety of scrutiny reports considering the many aspect of London's transport infrastructure. Holding the Mayor to Account, the Committee have considered and commented on Public Private Partnership (PPP) Contracts, Door to Door transport, the passenger experience and the more recent and topical issue of the impact of the extreme weather on London Transport.

- 6.6 Mr. Bog discussed close liaison between TfL and Southwark's Transport Planning Department when plotting and reconfiguring routes within the Borough. Mr. Boag stated that the ultimate role is to find out what the aspirations of the bus users are. Throughout the process of network planning, Mr. Boag informed the sub-committee that TfL get a feel for where people want to go, therefore TfL attempt to get involved in the planning and consultative process as early as possible. Mr. Boag stated TfL do not want to alter (orbital) routes too much as routes such as the 12, 36 and the 53 are very much fixed in peoples minds. Shorter routes such as the 42, P45 and the 199 as well as North to South routes are always a challenge for both TfL and Southwark's' transport planning department.
- 6.7 Councillor Hubber enquired about how and if bus derivers are regulate by their individual bus timetables.
- 6.8 Mr. Boag informed the sub-committee that on the more frequent routes (i.e. those where buses run every 10-12 minutes) a time table is not published, there fore there is no point in insisting in on a timely service on these route. The 301 for instance is a classic example whereby the operator is not the most effective and should be doing better. The Go Ahead Group runs the best service in the borough and it can be concluded that the performance is about the internal culture of the operator and the service they are willing to provide, it's not always about whether the service is running on time.
- 6.9 Mr. Boag discussed the implications of implementing the Countdown e-timetable and its associated iBus system. With iBus, GPS provides information of the buses location. Station masters can now predict the buses estimated time of arrival at any given point on its route. Although still in the initial phases of implementation, Mr. Boag stated this system would not be the saviour of buses running late against their published timetables. This is simply due to Traffic engineering. Mr. Boag asked the sub-committee to consider the traffic system at Euston Way and Marylebone way known as the Green Wave for car drivers. For bus drivers this is a particularly difficult part of London to negotiate due to the "stop – start" effect. Mr. Boag assured the sub-committee that TfL are actively working with the Borough's Traffic Engineers to resolve this.
- 6.10 In terms of Route specific issues, Mr. Boag discussed:
- **Route 42.** There have been numerous requests for this route to be extended from its present terminus at Denmark Hill, Sunray Avenue, to provide new links and to enable removal of the unsatisfactory bus stand in Sunray Avenue. TfL recognises the desire to improve bus links to the Dulwich Community Hospital in East Dulwich Grove for the benefit of local residents and those travelling from there to Kings College Hospital. In 2006 consideration was given to extending the route to East Dulwich, Goose Green via North Dulwich and East

Dulwich Grove with buses standing in Spurling Road. Southwark Council was unwilling to introduce the necessary parking restrictions to facilitate this following opposition from residents, so the proposal was abandoned.

There have been many calls for the route to continue further to Dog Kennel Hill, Sainsbury's where a new bus stand has been provided by the supermarket. However this would require two additional buses, compared to one for Spurling Road, to maintain the same service frequency. This virtually doubles the cost of the extension and means it does not meet our business case criteria. Reducing the frequency of the service to provide the extension without extra buses is not an option as the 42 is a busy route. The current position is that TfL can only review the case for an extension to East Dulwich and Sainsbury's if evidence of additional demand is provided. We will also examine any other proposals for providing the links requested.

- **Route 343.** The main issue is the reliability and capacity of this route, particularly over the section between Peckham and Elephant & Castle. TfL is monitoring this service closely. We are aware that there have been a number of complaints and will be review the long term development of bus routes in the Southampton Way area in the light of the abandonment of Cross River tram scheme.
- **Rotherhithe and Bermondsey area routes - C10, 78, 188 & 381.** Additional buses are running on routes C10 & 381 during the closure of the East London Line and we are aware that the C10 is running close to capacity over much of its length. We have considered using longer single deck buses or double deck buses on the C10 but physical constraints currently prevent anything larger being used. Route 78 may be suitable for double deck vehicles and we will consider this option when the route is reviewed later this year to address complaints about crowding on this route. The Bermondsey Community Council requested improved links from the St James's Road area to Guy's Hospital and London Bridge. While the 381 provides this link it takes a circuitous route via the Rotherhithe peninsular.

6.11 Councillor Hubber expressed the sub-committee's gratitude to Councillors Eckersley and Pidgeon, Ms. Selby, Mr. Boag and Mr. Horan for their contributions to this item.

RESOLVED: That the evidence taken at this meeting is assimilated on to the sub-committee's final report.

7. WORK PROGRAMME

7.1 The sub-committee reviewed the work programme.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 8:45pm.