

NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

GREATER NOTTINGHAM LIGHT RAPID TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held at LB 32 - Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3NG on 13 December 2016 from 14.04 - 15.49

Membership (Elected Members)

Present

Councillor Steve Young (Chair)
Councillor Josh Cook (Vice Chair)
(minute 13b-19 inclusive)
Councillor Richard Butler
Councillor Steve Calvert
Councillor Richard Jackson
Councillor Sarah Piper
(minute 11-16 inclusive)
Councillor John Wilkinson

Absent

Councillor Alex Ball
Councillor Corall Jenkins
Councillor John Wilmott

Membership (Independent Representatives)(✓ indicates present)

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| ✓ PEDALS | Hugh McClintock |
| Nottingham Trent University | Chris Roy |
| ✓ Nottingham Campaign for Better Transport | Alan Marshall |
| Nottingham Transport Partnership | Gary Smerdon-White |
| Nottingham Chamber of Commerce | Vacant |
| ✓ Nottinghamshire Federation of Small Businesses | Justin Donne |
| Travel Watch East Midlands | Stephen Abbott |

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Mike Mabey) Nottingham Trams
Joanne Bentley)

Steve Tough) Nottingham City Council, NET Project Office
Andy Holdstock)

Lorraine Pulford - Access to Transport
Catherine Ziane-Pryor - Governance Officer

11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor John Wilmott –other County Council business
Councillor Corall Jenkins – other City Council business
Councillor Alex Ball – personal
Adrian Wallace (Chief Executive of Tramlink Nottingham Ltd)
Christopher Roy
Gary Smerdon-White
Stephen Abbott

12 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

a Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2016 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

b Matters Arising

Minute 8, Cyclists on Chilwell Road/High Road – The Committee were informed by Hugh McClintock, that PEDALS continued to maintain a record on their web pages of cyclist incidents reported to them in the Chilwell High Road Area. A particular area of on-going concern is the axis of the curb in front of the Central College site where cyclists are unable to cross the track at a right angle which causes problems, particularly when wet or icy and if they are followed closely by vehicles. It would be far safer if cyclists were routed away from this area of road/track. It is noted that incidents are highlighted and discussed with Steve Tough, NET Project Team Leader, at informal but regular meetings.

Minute 7b, NET Operational Performance and Progress Update – Alan Marshall queried why no specific statements of patronage have been made available, commenting that the figures presented previously and in the agenda do not provide complete information and there has been no reference as to how patronage meets projected passenger numbers. The Committee needs to have an understanding of patronage, particularly with regard to the impact of the new line extension in light of potential further extensions. NET Project Team colleagues responded that whilst the suggestion of providing more detailed patronage information would be put forward, Tramlink may consider that this information is commercially sensitive, and may choose not to release it.

Minute 10, Future Meeting Dates – Some Councillors and representative group members were concerned that the meeting scheduled for 13 September 2016 had been cancelled, particularly following a tram related fatality in August and the safety concerns raised by the Croydon tram crash. With such incidents, it is essential that the Committee can be informed of resulting safety measures.

RESOLVED for Mike Mabey to request that Tramlink respond at the next meeting to the request for patronage and projected patronage details.

13 MEMBERSHIP

RESOLVED to note and welcome Justin Donne as the new representative of the Federation of Small Businesses.

14 NET OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESS UPDATE

Mike Mabey, Nottingham Tram Limited, presented the Operational Performance and Progress Update, and highlighted the following points which are further detailed in the report:

- (i) from June to October reliability across the network was 99.5% and punctuality was 98.3%;

- (ii) on 15 August 2016 a man was struck by a tram and later died. The incident continues to be investigated by the Police, the Rail Accident Investigation Branch and the Office of the Rail Regulator. An inquest is scheduled for February 2017;
- (iii) group ticket availability has been extended and also aligned to City events;
- (iv) a 'short hop' ticket costing £1 has been introduced for travel within the City Centre;
- (v) the child age limit has been raised from 16 to 18 years of age;
- (vi) further travel options, including a Robin Hood and tram season tickets, are now available to students;
- (vii) the Tram has worked closely with major event organisers to promote tram travel and provided 'here to help' ambassadors at the busiest tram stops to assist new users during events;
- (viii) during the Robin Hood Marathon the Tram and Nottingham City Transport operated in partnership a special ticketing arrangement to minimise travel disruption for passengers;
- (ix) the Clifton park and ride site was transformed into a drive-in cinema for a weekend in September;
- (x) a record number of passengers used the tram during Goose Fair with additional services and conductors with hand held ticket machines provided during peak times;
- (xi) there has been increased community involvement with event sponsorship, participation and information sessions;
- (xii) NET has been named the 'Most Improved Service' at the 2016 Global Light Rail Awards.

Members of the Committee welcomed the update and made the following comments:

- (a) there needs to be scrutiny of when things don't go as planned, not just relating to NET, but with a wider, national view. There is no mention on the agenda about the Croydon tram incident or any specific references to safety issues/concerns/measures. Future agenda should include an item on Safety Matters;
- (b) the reliability figure of 99.5% is accepted, but when there are problems, there is capacity for better management, including improved communication and customer service. For instance, when replacement bus services are operating there needs to be adequate bus capacity and signage or directions to inform and guide passengers to where they need to go. This Advisory Committee would like to see a more scrutiny based approach which considers processes and procedures when they aren't working well;
- (c) more detailed performance information would be welcomed, including by journey and/or line, to better understand where and when the internal and external issues occur.

Mike Mabey responded as follows:

- (d) whilst it was not possible to provide all information requested during meetings, where specific issues and concerns were submitted in advance of meetings, they could be properly investigated and responded to within the agenda reports. Points raised which could not be responded to during the meeting will be fed back to Nottingham Trams;
- (e) following the issue of advice to all UK tram operators by the Office of Rail and Road, as a result of the Croydon tram incident, Nottingham Trams have reviewed speed limits and are undertaking increased checks of tram speeds. It is anticipated that further recommendations will emerge once the investigations in Croydon have concluded;
- (f) it is not appropriate to comment on the fatality at David's Lane at this time as it is currently being investigated by the Police, the Rail Accident Investigation Branch and the Office of Rail and Road;
- (g) further to the few operator failures, there is an impact on performance which is beyond the control of the operator, such as road traffic incidents, the recent demonstration on the tram tracks at the Theatre Royal stop, and the vandalism of tram windows whilst in operation. Nottingham Trams try to optimise headways to enable minor delays to be absorbed without impacting on the timetable;
- (h) the minimum rest period for Nottingham Tram drivers is 14 hours between shifts. This exceeds the 12 hours recommended by the Office of Rail and Road.

RESOLVED

- (1) to note the operational and performance update;**
- (2) for future agenda to include the following items:**
 - (a) safety matters, including recommendations following the Croydon Rail Crash;**
 - (b) operational issues, with issues of concern notified to the Governance Officer a minimum of 3 weeks prior to the meeting, to enable the Nottingham Trams to investigate and provide a written response.**

15 TRAMLINK CUSTOMER SURVEY

To support the information available within the report, Joanne Bentley, the Tram Customer Service Manager, delivered a presentation on the survey, which was undertaken in May 2016, and highlighted the following points:

- overall satisfaction increased from 92% to 98%;
- very satisfied element nearly doubled to 62%;
- satisfaction at the tram stop improved from 74% to 92%;
- overall on-board satisfaction improved from 76% to 97.8%;
- 98.7% of users would recommend the tram to a friend or family member;

- satisfaction with customer service was 79%;
- brand awareness continues to rise;
- understanding of tram service frequency and prices is good;
- not needing to catch the tram and general convenience are the main reasons cited for not trying the tram or using the tram more;
- 44% of those surveyed were unable to identify anything that would increase use of the tram;
- 15% would use the tram more often if there were extensions to the network;
- the website and the tram stop remain the principal source for tram information with 60% of potential users using the website to gain information;
- 30% of passengers surveyed formerly travelled by car either for part (park and ride) or all of their journey;
- the survey was undertaken throughout the day, including rush hour and off-peak times;
- passengers were asked what they did and didn't like about the Tram.

Members of the Committee Commented:

- (a) when the tram jolted, when stopping/starting or during a journey, it was very unpleasant for passengers, some of whom were unbalanced and fell down. In addition to better driving, more prominent signage encouraging passengers to hold on could be helpful;
- (b) something to indicate to passengers which side of the tram the doors will open at the next stop would be helpful;
- (c) appropriate air conditioning, particularly during extreme heat and cold is essential to retain passengers;
- (d) Nottingham City Buses often have announcements for 'remove feet from seats'. This should be considered for trams;
- (e) the carpark at the Hucknall stop is very full and often overflows and at Butler's Hill the surrounding streets are often filled with non-resident cars. If the success of the Tram is to be built on, how does Nottingham Trams intend to respond?
- (f) it could be beneficial if the an update from the NET Partnership Board was presented to the Advisory Committee at each meeting;
- (g) it's surprising that the issue of the 'next stop' buttons not working wasn't raised during the survey.

Mike Mabey and Steve Tough responded to comments and questions as follows:

- (h) with regard to the jolting of the tram, two announcements warn passengers that the tram is about to stop or start. The addition of 'please hold tight' is currently being considered by the Health and Safety Team. The issue arises as the new and old trams operate differently with regard to traction power. Drivers are trained to provide a smooth ride and, where drivers are identified as having issues in this area, they are retrained appropriately;

- (i) with regard to the Hucknall Park and Ride capacity, several car parking spaces were temporarily lost as a result of recent works by Network Rail. Possible measures to increase parking capacity on Line One are being considered;
- (j) The 'next stop' buttons only operate when the tram has reached specific speed and/or is a set distance from the next stop. It is appreciated that this can be frustrating for passengers but the system is linked to the GPS of the Tram System and cannot be separated.
- (k) the City Council, in conjunction with neighbouring local authorities, is looking at a number of possible line extensions, including to and over the High Speed (rail line) 2 (HS2) site, to Derby, East Midlands Airport and Long Eaton. Lines to Gedling and Kimberley could also be feasible but it is still very early in the process and transport models need to be created before route options can be tested. The HS2 route will be the subject of a Hybrid Bill in Parliament in 2019 so it's important that plans can be put in place at an early stage to facilitate tram access;
- (l) routing a tram line directly to East Midland's Airport from Clifton is unlikely to be a favoured option as the majority of the route would run through largely unoccupied areas of countryside;
- (m) Midlands Connect is a new organisation consisting of 28 Local Authorities, and 10 Local Enterprise Partnerships, formed to improve local transport within the West and East Midlands and has been allocated £12,000 000 from Central Government towards improving road and rail networks. It is anticipated that some funding may be accessible towards tram associated works.

RESOLVED

- (1) to note the results of the customer survey;**
- (2) for an update item from the NET Partnership Board to be included on future agenda.**

16 PEDESTRIAN ACCESS BETWEEN THE QMC TRAM STOP, MAIN QMC BUILDING AND THE TREATMENT CENTRE

Steve Tough, NET Project Team Leader, presented the report which updated Board members on the progress of linking the Queen's Medical Centre (QMC) tram stop directly to the QMC Treatment Centre.

Highlighted points included:

- the covered walkway will be 90 metres long and 8m from the ground;
- there will be 7 supporting columns;
- the walkway will be wide enough for two wheelchairs to pass and will have a 1/30 gradient;
- there will be seats at intervals for people who need to rest;
- the covering will be poly carbonate with opaque curved roof;
- the walkway will cost approximately £1.5 m and links into level 'B; of the hospital;

- there will be a volunteer desk at the entrance to the hospital to welcome and help direct people to where they need to go;
- the construction of the walkway is not predicted to cause any disruption to the tram and the lift and stairs will remain operational;
- sections of the walkway will be prebuilt and lifted into place;
- all trees felled to the south side of the walkway will be replaced in a more suitable location.

The Committee's questions and comments were responded to as follows:

- (a) the new access structure will be the insurance and maintenance responsibility of the Hospital Trust;
- (b) the walkway will meet the tram stop beside the lift. Thorough risk assessments are being undertaken on every aspect of the walkway.

RESOLVED to note the update.

17 TRAM NOISE COMPLAINT

It is noted that whilst the complaint letter was dated as October, unfortunately it has not been sent directly to the Chair and as Officers had only recently been made aware of the letter, there had not been sufficient time to compile a formal response. However, Officers were able to provide a verbal response to the Committee and would provide an update to a future meeting. A formal response would also be sent to the complainant.

Steve Tough, NET Project Team Leader, presented the following response:

- (a) a senior NET Project Team member is acting as the lead contact and has been liaising with the complainant for some time, including visiting the property to experience the issue.;
- (b) the issue raised focuses on the squealing of tram wheels as the tram travels around a bend. This can be compounded by many factors;
- (c) unfortunately, track squealing happens on most tram routes internationally. Investigations in this vicinity are on-going, however no faults have been found to date;
- (d) noise tests have been undertaken on the track and, in line with the assessments specified within the Noise and Vibration Policy of the scheme, have not resulted in a noise level which would validate mitigation. However, it is acknowledged that the noise remains a significant issue for the complainant;
- (e) the operator and the tram supplier are currently undertaking trials of different wheel profiles to ascertain if this can reduce the impact of the issue;
- (f) the operator is also monitoring the effects of friction modifiers on other tram systems;
- (g) the complainant continues to pursue the complaint and brings it to the Committee as it has not been possible to resolve the issues to the extent desired by the complainant.

Members of the Committee commented as follows:

- (h) it is a concern that this citizen initially complained 16 months ago. The Committee requested assurance that all future issues can be resolved much faster;
- (i) the proposal to retro fit the older style wheels on the newer trams is not totally convincing as there were many complaints about noise issues from the older trams too.

RESOLVED for a letter of response to be sent to the complainant from the Chair of the Board, to include:

- (a) expression of the Committee's disappointment that the issue is taking so long to be resolved;**
- (b) explanation of the assessments and investigations undertaken to date to resolve the complaint;**
- (c) stating that the Committee will consider the findings of the technical investigations before responding further.**

18 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED to note that the next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for Tuesday 14 March 2017 at 2pm in Loxley House.