

NET REVENUE STRATEGY

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In February 2021, the UK Government set out a 4-step road map out of national lockdown measures and, inline we those steps, we set out a gradual return to revenue protection. Our plan was to gradually increase the revenue protection effort at each further step, culminating in a return to pre COVID revenue activities.
- 1.2 On 19th July, we reached the delayed Step 4, which saw the removal of rules relating to social distancing, allowing us to carry out further operations to protect NET revenue.
- 1.3 This report outlines what we are doing, how we are doing it, and why we have chosen this approach. It also describes our flexible strategy for the remainder of 2021 in 3 key areas.
 - July 19th > 31st August - We're back!
 - 1st September > 31st October - Return of Schools & Universities (potentially major events)
 - 1st November > 31st December – Christmas rush
- 1.4 Plans will be under constant review for any changes to customer travel patterns, hot spot fare evasion areas, or any new planned events likely to impact on the network.

2. CUSTOMER FLOW ANALYSIS

- 2.1 Historically, the NET system has been predominately a tidal system, with customers travelling into the city in the morning and exiting the city area in the evenings. It is also recognised however that some tram stops, for example QMC, are busy consistently throughout the day. As the city returns to "life after lockdown" customer flows will continue to be analysed to identify any new trends. We are already starting to see some different behaviour, as customers adjust to new and hybrid ways of working.
- 2.2 The key element is to plan operations at or around these tram stops, to provide customer service advice on ticket purchasing, to prevent opportunist fare evasion, and to target persistent fare evaders by interrupting their travel.

3. WE'RE BACK! 19th JULY > 31st AUGUST

- 3.1 From 19th July, the Revenue Team was deployed across the network to engage and support customers on their journeys. During this period, our key vision and directive was to raise the profile of the revenue team back out on the network in the busiest areas, with a key focus to disrupt casual fare avoidance and persistent fare evasion.
- 3.2 Our first aim has been to ensure that we are checking as many customers across the tram network.

- 3.3 Key support has been provided by the Community Protection Officer team at the majority of our Gateway operations. We have organised this through our regular Transport Hub meetings. Their presence has complimented the work we are doing to make the tram network a more welcoming experience. They have also been able to assist with some customers that have been abusive towards NET employees.
- 3.4 Through the partnership working at the Transport Hub, we organised a Joint Revenue Operation with East Midlands Railway and British Transport Police on 23rd August. This was a really positive operation focussing on the Monday morning rush hour between 0700 and 1000. During this period, we checked almost 800 customers, several warnings were issued but no PFN's on this occasion.

4. RETURN OF SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES

- 4.1 As people started to return to work, children went back to school, and students to university, we adjusted our emphasis in September.
- 4.2 We took an educational approach, advising customers of the appropriate ticket options, remaining aware that there will be a number of differences for customers during this time and that we need to support them.
- 4.3 During this time, we also liaised with our schools and university contacts, to raise the importance of their students purchasing the correct fares. A number of initiatives will also be in place for season passes to further encourage fare compliance.
- 4.4 In addition to this, from the 1st October the Penalty Fare Notice fee was increased from £50 to £70. To facilitate this increase, staff were briefed, a number of signage changes were made, and customer communications were circulated
- 4.5 As concerns over the Covid-19 Pandemic have remained in place, all major events around the city have been cancelled, significantly Goose Fair and Bonfire Night at The Forest, which historically see hundreds of thousands of visitors on the tram network.

5. CHRISTMAS RUSH

- 5.1 The weeks leading up to Christmas are, historically, the busiest on the tram network, and, in previous years, big city centre events have assisted in contributing to increases in patronage levels. Whilst customers are gradually returning to the tram network, a reduced Winter Wonderland this year, and with no plans for New Year's Eve Celebrations in the Square, it can be expected that there will be some impact on patronage levels.

6. SUMMARY

- 6.1 We will continue with high profile revenue operations across the network, including Gateway operations at key stops, where all customers on board trams have their tickets checked and by adopting an educational approach, with ticket checks before boarding where we can advise customers on the best ticket options. We continue to work collaboratively with the Police and Community Policing teams that regularly support our operations, providing reassurance to customers and employees.
- 6.2 Our plans are flexible to meet the changing behaviours in customer journeys and ways of purchasing tickets, which will no doubt continue to evolve in 2022.

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