

Minutes

Minutes of Passenger Focus Board

Date: Wednesday 10 May
Location: Whittles House, 14 Pentonville Road, London, N1 9HF
Time: 1030 – 1600

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Present

Board Members

Colin Foxall	CF	Chairman (Items 1 to 8.1 only)
David Burton	DB	
Brian Cooke	BC	Item 1 and Item 5 onwards
Phil Davis	PD	Item 3.2 onwards
Kate Gordon	KG	
James King	JK	
Derek Langslow	DL	

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Deryk Mead	DM	
Bill Samuel	BS	
Barbara Saunders	BSA	
Marc Seale	MS	
Stella Mair Thomas	ST	
Nigel Walmsley	NW	
Executive		
Kafil Badar	KB	Business Planning Manager
Nigel Holden	NH	Finance Director (item 4)
Vinita Nawathe	VN	Policy and Research Director (Items 3 and 5 only)
Rachel King	RK	Policy and Research Adviser (Item 5 only)
Anthony Smith	AS	Chief Executive (Items 1 to 8.1 only)
Caroline Jones	CJ	Communications Director (items 4 and 8 only)
Nicola Wilkie	NW	PA to Chairman and Chief Executive (minute taker)
Mark Woodbridge	MW	Passenger Link Director (item 4 and 8 only)
Apologies		
Christine Knights	CK	
Jessica Barrow	JB	

Welcome and Apologies

There were no apologies.

Board closed session

Members held a closed session, at which AS was present.

1. Minutes of Meeting held 7-8 March 2006

1.1 Members agreed the minutes of the meeting held 7-8 March 2006.

1.2 With reference to minute 1.2, Bill Samuel (BS), Kate Gordon (KG) and CF agreed to meet to consider the existing procurement procedures for research issues.

Action: The Policy and Research Director (VN) to be asked to progress the issue (BM 024)

2. Action Matrix

2.1 Members discussed the issue of TOC complaint data and agreed that Barbara Saunders (BS) should meet with the Passenger Contact Manager, Ashley Grumble, to discuss the issue and to report to the June Board meeting.

Action: The Communications Director (CJ) was asked to progress the issue (BM 020)

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3. POLICY

3.1 **Review of Fares Conference** AS said the overall feedback from those attending the conference was positive. However, Barry Doe, a columnist for Rail magazine, had been critical of the organisation's stance on saver tickets.

3.2 Members discussed the issue and felt that the factual inaccuracies in Barry Doe's article should be addressed.

Action: AS to respond with a letter for publication to Rail magazine to address the issues within the article (BM 025)

3.3 **Next step on fares** CF and AS spoke to the papers and updated members as to the latest developments about the fares issue.

3.4 Members discussed the content of the letter to be sent to the Secretary of State and CF said the letter was a first draft, written in advance of the publication of a further tranche of research.

3.5 Members debated the inclusion of subjects such as modal shift (including social inclusion) and the rejection of automatic above inflation fares increases on particular lines within the letter.

3.6 Nigel Walmsley said the letter should state that Passenger Focus expects "the vast majority of tickets to remain protected".

3.7 Members agreed that the letter, once amended, should be in the public domain. CF said Passenger Focus would campaign against the deregulation of the current fares structure, and that this position may result in the Board receiving increased correspondence on the subject.

Action: AS to recirculate the amended letter to Board members, in preparation for submission to the Secretary of State (BM 026)

4. PERFORMANCE

4.1 **Finance Update** Nigel Holden (NH) spoke to the papers and Members noted that both the DfT and the Scottish Executive were content at the progress of the organisation.

4.2 CF asked Board members to reflect upon what they felt had not gone well for the organisation during 2005-6, and let him know, in order to inform Management Board's work.

4.3 AS said he felt such year end summaries would benefit from the inclusion of information confirming whether the organisation's challenges had been met, not purely what the challenges were and how they were to be met.

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4.4 **Communications update** Caroline Jones (CJ) spoke to the papers.

4.5 Members discussed the papers. BS and Stella Thomas (ST) requested further information on complaint outcomes and the geographical spread of website users respectively and CJ undertook to provide the additional information.

Action: CJ to provide additional information on complaints and website use to Board members (BM 020)

4.6 **Audit Committee update** Derek Langslow (DL) spoke to the papers, noting that the Audit Committee wished to see a review of the office refurbishment project, and that the Committee had taken the view that the high cost of this year's audit should substantially reduce next year.

4.7 Marc Seale (MS) wished to see the NAO self evaluation audit papers brought to the Board, as well as the creation of an action matrix for the Audit Committee. DL advised MS that the NAO papers had been taken at the start of the new organisation to establish the Audit Committee. DL asked the Board to note the specific areas on the agenda as circulated, namely items 3.5, 4.1, 5.1 and 6.6. MS was advised that an action matrix was already in place for the Audit Committee and would be included as part of future updates to the Board.

Action: Kafil Badar (KB) to note these documents for the next Board meeting (BM 027)

4.8 **Remuneration Committee** NW spoke to the papers. He noted that the Committee performed an advisory role for the submission of pay issues to the Department for Transport. The board **noted** the Committee's Terms of Reference.

5. POLICY

5.1 **Review of Mayor's Powers** VN spoke to the papers, noting that the proposals were in line with PTEs' current working practices.

5.2 Members debated the issue, commenting on projected boundaries, the powers of regional bodies and councils in the issue and the involvement of Network Rail, ORR and the DfT.

5.3 CF said it was important for the Board to establish that the powers would benefit passengers, not disadvantage them and that the Passenger Focus response should be relevant to both the existing consultation paper and any future possible developments

5.4 CF said he wished to see Passenger Focus become a mandatory consultee, observing the effect of any change to the Mayor's Powers on both sides of the proposed boundary. The Board agreed that any further extension of boundaries may raise governance issues.

5.5 Brian Cooke said he had reservations about Passenger Focus requesting a full Board position on the TfL Board, in order to represent the passenger interest that is rarely raised within the paper. An observatory role might be easier for the organisation to secure.

Action: CF asked that further research is carried out by the Policy and Research team into the roles of PTEs, with respect to their impact and interaction with external bodies (BM 028)

VN to circulate a redrafted paper, reflecting the Board's discussions, to Members
BC to circulate London TravelWatch's response to the Review to Board Members
(BM 029)

6. Public Accounts Committee report

6.1 AS spoke to the papers. The report had been superseded by the DTI consultation, "Strengthen and Streamline Consumer Advocacy".

6.2 CF said he felt greater links were being established between consumer representation and social inclusion.

6.3 The Board noted the report and endorsed the proposed level of response to the DTI consultation.

7. Network Rail membership

7.1 CF explained the issue and said he felt Network Rail wished to see a Passenger Focus Board member as the organisation's representative.

7.2 Members debated the issue of whether the organisation should be represented on Network Rail's membership structure, the benefits to Passenger Focus versus the potential compromising of the organisation's position. The Chairman recommended Passenger Focus' continued involvement.

7.3 AS said a paper would be circulated to Board members, to help inform their decision and CF said he would speak to the Chairman of Network Rail to inform him of the level of debate taking place at Board level about Passenger Focus' involvement.

Action: AS to circulate the Network Rail letters about the Network Rail Corporate Membership Board structure to Board members (BM 030)

7.4 CF said the deadline for applications was 31 May 2006. He said the organisation may wish to nominate a Board member and reserve the right to withdraw the individual should Passenger Focus not be content.

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8. PLANNING

8.1 **Member involvement** AS spoke to the papers. Members supported the creation of the production log, which would be circulated to members when updated.

8.2 **Annual report and timetable** CJ spoke to the timetable circulated, and said the draft report would be circulated to Board members for discussion at the June Board meeting.

8.3 CJ said the publication of the Annual Report would provide profile raising opportunities. This, and the option of a digest of the Annual Report, would be reviewed by the Executive and presented to Members at the June Board meeting.

Action: CJ to update the plan and timetable for the publication and launch of the Annual Report for the June Board meeting and consider the option of an Annual Report digest (BM 031)

8.4 **Launch evaluation** CJ spoke to the papers, which were **noted** by the Board.

8.5 **Communication strategy** CJ spoke to the papers circulated, noting that the policy was reflective of the business plan.

8.6 Members discussed the audience categories and BS wished to see further evidence of how the organisation intended to move from a reactive to proactive stance.

8.7 DL said the communication strategy must reflect in more depth the work of the organisation and Members requested that the strategy be amended and brought back to the June Board meeting.

Action: CJ to update the communications strategy, to reflect the Board's discussion, for consideration at the June Board meeting (BM 012)

8.8 **Passenger and stakeholder survey** CJ spoke to the papers circulated and members discussed the most appropriate sample size for the surveys, the options for interviews to take place and the range of people to be interviewed.

8.9 In the absence of the Chairman and CEO, DL requested that CJ and AS provide options to reflect the sample sizes and associated costs to aid the Board's discussions of the issue and that a revised paper is presented to the June Board meeting.

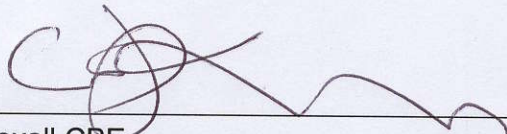
9. Any Other Business

9.1 KB informed Board members that details of their remuneration and terms of employment would be included in the organisation's Passenger Focus.

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Nicola Wilkie

Nicola Wilkie
PA to the Chairman and Chief Executive, Passenger
Focus (Minute Taker)



Colin Foxall CBE
Chairman, Passenger Focus

10 May 2006

Date

13 June 2006

Date