

Passenger Contact Group

Minutes

Date: 13 November 2017
Location: Meeting Room A, Piccadilly Gate, Manchester, M1 2WD
Time: 1200-1400

In attendance

Marian Lauder	ML	Chair
William Powell	WP	Board member
David Sidebottom	DS	Director
Jon Carter	JC	Head of business services
Michelle Calvert	MC	Business services executive
Kate O'Reilly	KO	Contact team manager

Item Subject

A Standing items

1 Chair's opening remarks: declaration of interests and apologies

ML welcomed WP to his first PCG meeting and updated the team on the way in which the group has changed over the past couple of years. No declarations of interest were declared. It was noted that we are a committee member down. Membership will be discussed with the Chair of Transport Focus, Jeff Halliwell.

2 Minutes from previous meeting:

These were noted and agreed.

3 Action matrix

The action matrix was discussed. PCG 1718-007 (NRCoT) would remain on the matrix for the time being, as there had been no progress by RDG. The other items were agreed as 'complete, delete'.

4 Updated terms of reference

ML talked through the minor changes to this document. WP questioned the number of meetings per year and if there was a need for an additional meeting this year due to developments and demand. JC will tweak the wording to add flexibility to the number of meetings that may be required.

1718-010	13/11/17	Terms of reference	Adjust wording to allow agility to the number of annual meetings	JC	Jan 18
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B Rail Passenger Ombudsman Scheme

1 Update as provided to Board

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- 2 Penalty Fares – recruitment of Independent Appeals Panel
- 3 Penalty Fares – revised non-Statutory Guidance
- 4 Risks
- 5 ORR CHP Consultation: Transport Focus response

The logistics of the bidder's day was discussed. The limited contact that the bidders will have with the Contact Team was noted, this will be as unobtrusive to their work as possible. This will be a good opportunity to introduce ourselves to the potential providers and show them how we work. The process, including the invitation to tender etc, was discussed and the timeline as it stands. It was noted that this will be a longer process than originally expected, with the launch date possibly being September 2018; how we prepare for this was discussed. JC noted that we will be invited to review the bids, this may be a role for the PCG, although this is unlikely.

The way in which changes to the CEO team will affect the Ombudsman project was noted by JC, and the way in which we continue resourcing this workstream was discussed.

DS gave an update on our work with Resolver and Virgin Trains East Coast (VTEC). The potential benefits of this partnership were discussed. Staff and Board have been given an update on this development. The impact of Resolver on the Ombudsman ITT was discussed and any changes this may bring to our IT systems. There will be more opportunity to explore this further with the Board at the ME the following day.

JC will update the group on developments after the bidder's day.

JC gave an update on the IAP recruitment. There are still issues to be resolved, including confirmation of funding, before the campaign can be launched. The Group noted JC's somewhat robust approach to getting these issues resolved, but agreed it was necessary. He may have to escalate within DfT. ML noted the importance of making all partners aware of the work that has already been done by us on this campaign, and the limited detail in the information pack for applicants on how the panel would actually work. This could negatively affect TF's reputation.

How we handle cases which come to us from the third tier appeal process was explored. The timeline was discussed, however this is still subject to many issues being resolved.

The non-statutory guidance was discussed and the comments made by Mike Hewitson. The Group **agreed** with these comments. JC will update the group out of meeting on any developments of this document.

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The risk register was discussed, this document will be added to the Ombudsman Project Initiation Document (PID). The risks were **agreed**, including the red risk of reputation, which was explored further.

The consultation of the CHP from ORR was presented by JC. The importance of the feedback loop was noted.

1718-011	13/11/17	IAP operations	MT to discuss and determine the approach in respect of further appeals to Transport Focus after third tier IAP	JC	Jan 18
1718-012	13/11/17	Penalty fares non-statutory guidance	Circulate to Group on next iteration	JC	Jan 18

C Contact Team Operations and Performance

1 To note and discuss report from Contact Team Manager

The effect of long term sickness on the team was discussed, and its likely impact on operations. The team has been brought up to strength through a combination of core and RPOS funding. The incentivisation to close cases to hit the target of having only 500 active cases by Christmas appears to be working.

AS and DS will continue to have one to one discussions with TOC's regarding their complaints handling to see if they can make a difference. The way in which their performance has a knock on effect to our own was explained by DS. The data on TOC's own passenger satisfaction on complaints published by ORR – which appears dreadfully low - was also discussed.

The result of this month's 63% passenger satisfaction was explained by DS. The survey stopped working during April, June and July, which has had a negative effect on our passenger satisfaction percentage points. The group agreed that due to the technical problems, the percentage should be replaced with 'N/A' while the results are recalibrated.

ML congratulated the team on their excellent work.

1718-013	13/11/17	Customer Satisfaction	Percentages for June/July should be replaced with 'N/A' while the results are recalibrated	KO	Mar 18
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2 **Ventrica contract**

DS introduced WP to Ventrica, our work with them, and our current contract. Due to the impact of the Ombudsman on our working arrangements DS proposed that the best course of action would be for the renewal of this contract. ML noted that extending a contract yearly would not be considered best practice, however in this case the reasons for a further year's extension were understandable.

The group **agreed** the contract should be extended by one year. This would be proposed at the Board meeting the following day.

3 **Team recovery plan – 500 by Christmas**

What happens after Christmas and the possible impact on the Contact team was discussed, including new targets.

Any other business

It was agreed that a meeting before May would be essential. JC and MCa will arrange the next meeting for March 2018.

Next scheduled meeting (now)

Tuesday 13 May 2018, 1230-1430, London

Signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting:

Marian Lauder
Chair

Date: _____