

Board Meeting	Date	19/07/23	Time	09.30-13.00	Venue	The Watershed, Bristol
----------------------	-------------	-----------------	-------------	--------------------	--------------	-------------------------------

Time	Item	Subject	Leading
Part A Public Affairs			
09.30	1	Chair's welcome and opening remarks; apologies and introductions; declarations of conflicts of interest.	Nigel Stevens Chair
09.35	2	Overview of current work at Transport Focus to represent the interests of transport users in the Bristol City and West of England Region	David Sidebottom Director, Transport Focus
<i>Championing the needs of transport users today</i>			
09:45	4	Rail - delivery, performance and priorities	Mark Hopwood CBE Managing Director, Great Western Railway Marcus Jones Western Route Director, Network Rail
10.10	5	The importance of local bus services; concessionary travel and barriers to bus use	Linda McCord Senior Stakeholder Manager, Transport Focus
10.20	6	Bus services – delivery, performance and priorities	Rob Pymm Commercial Director, First West of England
10.30	7	Integrated bus operations and the Bus Enhanced Partnership	Peter Mann Head of Integrated Transport WECA

10.40 8 **Strategic roads in the West of England – delivery, performance and priorities**

Jason Hones
Regional Director, National Highways
Chair

10.50 **Questions and panel discussion**

11.15 Break

Ensuring transport users are at the centre of policy making and decisions for tomorrow

11.30 9 **Bristol Transport Board and the One City Plan – the vision to 2050**

Melanie Watson
Co-chair, Bristol Transport Board
Transport Focus

11.40 10 **Metro West and strategic transport plans for the West of England**

Malcolm Parsons
Head of Capital Delivery, WECA, and
Industry Programme Director, Network Rail
Chair

11.55 11 Questions and discussion

Inspiring future thinking

12.15 12 **The future of Transport**

Ian Wright
Head of innovation and partnerships
Transport Focus

12.20 13 Discussion

Part B		Corporate affairs			
12.40	1	Public Board meeting minutes: March 2023	Nigel Stevens	Approval	✓
	2	<u>Committee meeting minutes:</u>			
	2.1	Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (April and June 2023)	Kate Denham	Information	✓
	2.2	Statistics Governance Group (redacted) (March and June 2023)	Anthony Smith	Information	✓
	2.3	Passenger Contact Group (redacted) (April 2023)	CIr William Powell	Information	✓
	3	<u>Reports from subsidiaries:</u>			
	3.1	Transport Focus Scotland (June 2023)	Nigel Stevens	Information	✓
	4	<u>For noting by the Board</u>			
		<i>Items previously discussed and approved out of meeting or in private session:</i>	Nigel Stevens	Ratification	
	4.1	BRD2223-020 (SRUS 2023-24)			✓
	4.2	BRD2324-001 (Manchester Office)			✓
	4.3	BRD2324-002 (Transport Focus Wales Ltd: parent company guarantee)			✓
	4.4	BRD2324-003 (Transport Fous / London TravelWatch Collaboration Agreement 2023-24)			✓
	4.5	BRD2324-004 (riding, walking and wheeling research 2023-25)			✓
	4.6	BRD2324-005 (annual report and accounts 2022-23)			✓
	5	<u>Items for approval</u>			
	5.1	None			
	6	<u>Any other (public) business</u>	Nigel Stevens		
12.55		Closing remarks	Nigel Stevens		

Transport Focus Board Meeting: minutes

Date	Wednesday 29 March 2023
Time	0945-1300
Venue	Piccadilly Gate, Manchester
Classification	Not protectively marked

Attended

Board members

Nigel Stevens	NS	Chair
Cllr William Powell	WP	Board member for Wales
Kate Denham	KD	Board member
Keith Richards OBE	KR	Board member
Theo de Pencier	TdP	Board member
Rob Wilson	RW	Board member
Arthur Leathley	AL	Board member for London
Trisha McAuley OBE	TM	Board member for Scotland

Management and other staff in attendance

Anthony Smith	AS	Chief Executive
Jon Carter	JC	Head of Board and Governance
Guy Dangerfield	GD	Head of Strategy
David Beer	DB	Senior Manager Wales
Michelle Roles	MR	Stakeholder Manager Wales
Colette Gill	MM	Senior Communications Officer
Keith Bailey	KB	Senior Insight Advisor

Guests and speakers

Vernon Everitt	VE	Transport Commissioner, Greater Manchester
Stephen Rhodes	SR	Director Bus TfGM
Richard Nickson	RN	Programme Director, Cycling and Walking
Lucy Kennon	LK	Head of Resilience and Business Continuity
Guillaume Chanussot	GC	Managing Director Keolis Amey Metrolink
Bruce Parker	BP	Head of Planning and Development, Operations NW, National Highways
Peter Boulton	PB	Head of Highways, TfGM
Andy Mellors	AM	Managing Director, Avanti West Coast
Nick Donovan	ND	Managing Director, Northern
Matthew Golton	MG	Managing Director, Transpennine Express

Event production team

Luke Bodin	LB	Director, BA Events
------------	----	---------------------

Members of the public:	Around 30 stakeholders /members of the public attended in person, and 632 logged into the proceedings live streamed, of which 372 watched most of the meeting.
Apologies	None

Part A Public Affairs

1 Chair’s welcome and opening remarks; apologies and introductions; declarations of conflicts of interest.

Nigel Stevens (NS) opened the meeting and thanked those present and viewing online for joining. He noted that the meeting would be focusing on the North West and Manchester in particular and issues facing passengers across the region.

The meeting was a formal Board meeting, and as such some formal Board business was to be discussed at the end of proceedings.

No declarations of conflicts of interest were made.

2 Overview of current work at Transport Focus

David Sidebottom (DS) summarised the work and research Transport Focus is doing on behalf of transport users across Greater Manchester, working in a critical friend capacity with Greater Manchester and local operators. The new bus passenger satisfaction survey has now been launched. For a few years now Transport Focus has had a seat on the Greater Manchester Transport Board, filled by DS currently. DS expressed Transport Focus’ keenness to develop our approach of “can we do more to help as the voice of the passenger across Greater Manchester”

NS introduced, and thanked Vernon Everitt for attending, to give the keynote address.

3 Keynote address: Vernon Everitt, Transport Commissioner, Greater Manchester

Vernon Everitt explained the vision and plans for the city region’s transport strategy bringing together all modes of public transport and active travel to encourage more people to use them. The region’s transformational Bee Network would also integrate fares, ticketing and information, delivering and enabling more jobs, businesses, homes and social inclusion.

He believed there is a large and continuously growing market to attract, with approx. 1 million journeys a day that could switch over to public transport or active travel. The £2 bus fare cap was discussed, contributing to the 10% increase in bus patronage between September and December 2022, estimating that around 5% of that increase was due to the £2 flat fee.

It was explained that franchising will happen in 3 tranches across Greater Manchester, starting on the 24th September 2023 (NW Manchester) with 50 zero emission buses. March 2024 will see the NE of Greater Manchester have their services franchised, with the remaining areas completed by January 2025. On rail, TfGM is currently looking at which local suburban rail services might be integrated into the Bee network by 2030.

It is believed then that the integrated network within GM would help simplify cross border issues; VE believes it will subsequently be much easier to connect Manchester with Liverpool, Leeds and out to Sheffield offering a simplified transport system across the region.

The core issues of the Bee Network are funding and increasing ridership. There are plans to reintroduce the 1am end time of Metrolink later this year to aid the late night economy. There is confidence that the revenue will increase by marketing the network effectively. Government support will nonetheless be needed. Road congestion is being tackled by coordination of road works, among other measures. Rail stations will be co-branded. A formal vehicle is being considered for the redevelopment of central Manchester rail stations which have not kept pace with other commercial developments in the surrounding area. A segmented view is being taken to promote passenger growth. Customer complaint handling will also be integrated – with a one stop shop complaints and feedback process. A “Get on Board” campaign is being launched to promote public transport.

Q & A with Vernon Everett

Q: Arthur Leathley (AL) asked what learnings can be taken from past experience in London and what improvements Manchester will gain as a result? Secondly on the financing, how does the revenue stack up against such a large area with only 3m users versus London which has 9 million over a similar area.

A: VE noted that the costs of integrated network aren't as high in Greater Manchester and small relative to London, with massive upside revenue opportunity given the growing population and current heavy reliance on car travel given the absence of an integrated transport network. Manchester differs from London significantly with the working from home culture whereby more people in Manchester need to travel and be in work so there is a huge commuter and leisure market. With technology (especially in London) a lot of the work is managing legacy – which is not the case in Greater Manchester where 2-3 generations of technology can be skipped over. The new buses, for example, are highly accessible for wheelchair users.

Q: Rob Wilson (RW) asked if the financially non sustainable improvements which are reliant on the tax payer to subsidise pose a risk if the economy suffers. Has any consideration been given to congestion charging zones similar to those in London to aid the funding?

A: VE confirmed that there is no public transport network anywhere that doesn't rely in some way on revenue and capital support of some description. With the existing support that is already in place eg bus service operational support grant by Government, Greater Manchester is committing to covering their operating costs in due course (which is the definition of financial sustainability in London). The spread of this would be determined by a wide range of factors. There is no way congestion charging can be contemplated in Greater Manchester until there is a decent public transport service offering in place (reliable, affordable, turn up and go).

Q: Keith Richards (KR) Asked what the opportunities are in terms of improving accessibility? Policies of operators often provide the hurdles (eg bicycles on public Transport). How is this monitored moving forwards?

Q: Trisha McAuley (TM) What is the risk that people will not transfer from car to public transport but will simply move between different modes of public transport?

A: VE referred to a current review of policy to identify barriers which should deal with both these questions.

[routine fire alarm test]

4 Bee Network Implementation: Bus franchising and Customer Experience - Stephen Rhodes Director, Bus TfGM

Stephen Rhodes (SR) commented on a number of issues that it is hoped will make a big difference to the customer experience. He highlighted the yellow co-branding of the network, placing accountability on GMCA/TfGM, and creating opportunities. The 3 phase plan of rollout prioritises stabilisation around the current network, which will transition 'as is' so there will be no significant changes to routes or timetables on day one. Public and customer levels of input will be vastly increased via the Bee Network Customer Charter, gaining a real time voice and feedback from the customer. Looking ahead, TfGM is developing and putting in place a GM Bus Plan, which pulls together ambitions and plans for how we further develop the network and services as they move forward. Repositioning the transport sector as something to be proud of is a key part of franchising.

5 Bee Network: cycling and wheeling Richard Nickson Programme Director, Cycling and Walking

Richard Nickson (RN) discussed the development of the principle of universal accessibility, encompassing walking, wheeling and cycling. TfGM are unrelentingly unapologetic about the drive for a quality transport network. In terms of scale of investment, the figure is currently running at a capital programme of £250m on a network that will eventually cost at least £1.6b-£2b. The indirect cost of not delivering an active network is greater in terms of health, economy and congestion. So far £140m has been invested. He summarised the success of the Cycle Hire scheme, through which behaviour change is delivered by supporting people to gain access to the ability to walk, wheel and cycle through various programmes. Currently a Design Guide is being developed, which will go further and faster than national guidance, picking up the position on universal accessibility in terms of access for all.

Customer network satisfaction has gone up 7% since 2018, and design of network satisfaction is up 88%. Satisfaction with the condition of the network is up 18%. The Network is carrying an estimated 1m customers per week which is 9% higher per week than pre-pandemic levels. The Active network has seen a 39% weekend increase in walking wheeling and cycling. There is however, some anti-social behaviour associated with putting facilities into the public domain.

6 **Safety on the Bee Network - Lucy Kennon Head of Resilience and Business Continuity**

Lucy Kennon (LK) explained that Greater Manchester works within a well-established TravelSafe Partnership led by TfGM and GMP which brings all the operators around the table and is built around collaboration and common strategic aims. A tactical menu of options has been developed that can be drawn upon dependant on the issue, this includes weekly specialist operations, prevention and intervention activities, deterrents and information dissemination. Transport has been established as a virtual 11th district by GM Police, which is pivotal as it recognises the significance of the network as the thread that connects all of GM together, we also benefit from a dedicated GMP transport unit. LK also discussed Operation AVRO, a police-led initiative to tackle criminality, now forming part of the annual TravelSafe calendar.

Education and behaviour change must have a proactive approach to it. Adopting 'hard' enforcement in the first instance is not always proportionate, cost effective or having the desired effect in combating anti social behaviour. So a strategic partnership has been formed with Foundation 92 – a local charity delivering youth mentoring and community engagement predominately through sport. The Home Office Safer Street Funds have provided access to pockets of funds enabling the partnership to focus on specialist subjects such as women and girls safety, missile throwing and youth ASB and look for novel ways to help prevent or deter behaviours. There is a need to undertake consistent and regular outward facing communications – to tell customers what is being done to make them feel safe, as sometimes perceptions of safety are not based on real experiences.

7 **Metrolink: performance update - Guillaume Chanussot, Managing Director Keolis Amey Metrolink**

Guillaume Chanussot (GC) discussed Metrolink performance, where patronage is increasing due to the resilience of the Metrolink service, with services running at 99% reliability. Providing a high level of passenger satisfaction led to being named Light Rail Operator of the Year, whilst also seamlessly introducing a new route with 27 new trains.

GC described the main challenges being with recruitment, training and retention along with cost inflation, anti-social behaviour and vandalism. Metrolink are working with key partners on the issue of vandalism and anti-social behaviour (which incur high costs) to keep passengers safe and feeling safe.

GC outlined Metrolink's Target vision as a Customer Centric Sustainable Partnership, delivering the fundamentals of quality of service, increased paid patronage and network integration.

GC concluded that Metrolink want to be a proactive contributor to the wider transport system, exploring opportunities of new ways of delivering a better service; if there is a strong transport offering it will create passenger demand.

8 National Highways - Bruce Parker Head of Planning and Development, Operations NW, National Highways and Peter Boulton, Head of Highways, TfGM

BP and PB talked about the Strategic Route Network (SRN) running close or through urban areas, which differs to other areas in the UK, incorporating 12 motorway and trunk roads, with a high inter-connectivity between the key and strategic route networks, highlighted by the high number of junctions joining the two.

The GM Highways Strategy Board was set up in 2015, as a recognition of the inter-urban nature of the SRN and KRN, which is 5% of the road network but carries 70% of peak traffic including most bus routes. The Board was set up between National Highways, GM Police and TfGM and meets on a quarterly basis and comprises 5 working groups. Some of the key successes were discussed which included TfGM, National Highways and GM Police control room integration, mirror messaging, major works co-ordination and traffic signals strategies.

9 Question and Answer Session

Q: NS asked the panel how the balance is maintained, both in funding and management terms, so that the eye is not take off the users needs for today as much as tomorrow?

A: VE recognised the challenge of simultaneously running and changing. The dynamic will change from September when traffic congestion and buses need to be considered and the greater the integration of the network going forward.

Q: Kate Denham (KD) asked how realistic it is to get to a place where there is a “turn up and go” service within this particular conurbation.

A: SR believed that frequency sells – and bus services have been stepped up to every 15 minutes along main corridors (as a minimum). Going forward there will be trade-offs to be made between frequency and more routes. Performance regimes keep operators incentivised to run reliable services. VE added that the key feedback gained from passenger surveys is that journey time reliability is most important, although frequency is not far behind. Through the network review, services will be reviewed as a whole going forward and strengthened where possible. GC noted that tram service provide a peak service all day.

Q: Cllr William Powell (WP) asked SR what are the key tools being used to increase patronage especially amongst those currently not passengers. He also asked LK are there any barriers in sharing data collected from CCTV safety cameras.

A: SR replied that visibility and credibility are key, in particular getting the Bee Network on everyone's radar.

LK confirmed that CCTV is extensive, as a safety feature, and is also shared with the police by operators to aid the pursuit of justice outcomes where appropriate. Data sharing is a barrier at times and one of the biggest areas to work on is around juveniles, and strengthening the data sharing agreements within working partnerships to secure the appropriate outcomes.

Q: Online Viewer – what is the ambition for accessibility in Manchester over the next 5 -10 years?

A: VE answered that the integration of the various modes gives the opportunity to look at this in a joined-up way for the first time. Money has been made available through the Access For All Programme for rail stations a number of which have been prioritised. Accessibility is a core element of the Bee Network and will continue to be so. RN added the 650km of cycling and walking routes are being reviewed for pinch points, narrowings and overcoming severance points.

Q: Theo de Pencier (TdP) asked if freight needs to be better integrated with necessary decisions on access, curb space and night-time deliveries.

A: VE confirmed there is a specific freight strategy for the region, recognising that all of the commercial centres of GM need to be serviced and this is a work in progress. RN added that GM has the second largest delivery network after London for cargo bike deliveries.

Q: Rob Wilson (RW) asked RN specifically what is being done to build-in cycling safety features within the transport network.

A: RN replied that he and PB chair the Road Danger Reduction Approach, moving towards a zero vision strategy across Greater Manchester. The principle approach is around the quality of the network, so above certain threshold only segregated schemes will be delivered. Tackling junctions is critical, as is making neighbourhoods safe at a local level. Segregation is critical in this respect.

Q: A representative from the Mid Cheshire Rail Users Group asked whether Sunday services would be scrapped and replaced by Saturday services.

A: VE recognised the challenge and explained that this is the first time that everything can be planned together, giving an opportunity to analyse markets properly and lay on the provision that the city really needs; this work is being undertaken and being looked at.

Q: Question from the floor: asked about the challenges around deregulation and the subsidised bus network reintroduction.

A: SR replied that a holistic approach is needed to analyse the data collected and how services can be put in and frequencies increased. VE added that foundations are being

laid for the future and that revenues can be increased by increasing customer use as services are gradually improved.

NS thanked the panel for their contribution and adjourned the meeting for a 10 minute break.

Part B Rail

1 NS welcome everyone back into the room and online for the next session, and invited Andy Mellors to kick off the session.

2 **Andy Mellors – Managing Director, Avanti West Coast**

Andy Mellors (AM) reflected on a difficult time over the last 6-8 months and apologised for the inconvenience and frustration customers have incurred, but believes Avanti have turned a corner with the performance of services and more capacity provided. Train cancellations have been driven down since the new timetable was implemented in December 2022 although there is still more to do going forward. The performance improvement has been delivered by a forensic approach to planning and staffing. Currently, Avanti have unprecedented levels of recruitment going on; this process has also attracted 1500 applications from women into the driver grade which goes along way to improving diversity. Priorities are to build on these improvements, but challenges remain around a number of factors, including residual staff availability matters, which is being proactively managed working with colleagues and Unions. Growing the rail industry and delivering a better railway is important, in terms of the quality of the product and trains that are provided.

The Pendolino train refurbishment programme is at the half way mark (£117m investment in the fleet) gaining good feedback from customers. The first batch of Hitachi trains are also expected imminently to replace older stock (£350m worth of investment) which includes the North Wales diesel train route. Station improvements are also being undertaken at Manchester Piccadilly, Wigan, Liverpool Lime Street and Liverpool stations.

AM wanted to address a key point made by customers, that of advance ticket availability, and was pleased to announce that weekday tickets are now available 12 weeks in advance with weekend tickets available 8 weeks in advance, in line with industry standards. The train planning team has been provided with additional resource to recover the position following industrial action and engineering work. The new Super fare product has received attention in the media, and is popular with customers, as it allows flexible travel according to capacity on the day of travel.

3 **Nick Donovan – Managing Director, Northern**

Nick Donovan (ND) introduced the Customer Insight Programme, which includes a post travel survey running since 2021 receiving typically 8000 responses per month, providing detailed insight, and a Northerneers Panel with 1000 members, enabling the opportunity to

build specific focus groups. Northern now have data available for the first time enabling net promoter scores (0-10 recommendation scores) to be viewed by line routes and at a granular level. An accessibility panel is also used to promote initiatives such as the Autism Friendly Scheme. QR codes are also being trialled around the North East for instant feedback.

ND highlighted 3 priorities for Northern; train service performance, value for money and business/crowding of services.

On current performance, ND conceded that improvement is needed, with a figure of 3.8% on cancellations in period 11, increasing slightly in Period 12 due to severe weather. So although there is more to do, this shows a reasonably solid performance.

There has been an enormous focus on resource planning managing, over the last 2-3 years, to increase drivers competency levels around route knowledge and knowledge of the 13 different traction types. There are currently just under 1800 drivers against a resource need of 1600 to run the network, with about 160 drivers in basic training at any one time, making Northern the largest operator in terms of a throughput of drivers into the industry.

The challenges being faced within resourcing include sickness and absence, which is hurting the business, and proving both difficult to manage and costly. Given the workforce terms and conditions, 95% of train crews have Sunday as a voluntary day in the working week which, if operating a 7 day railway, is not sustainable in the longer term and needs to be addressed.

Looking forward, ND wanted to acknowledge the strength and depth of the 7, 000 strong team at Northern, attracting great skills sets from other sectors into the business.

New trains are in service and running successfully. Back-office facilities have had investment, and the engineering area of the business is a key focus in terms of modernising systems and training, to increase the availability and reliability of the fleet.

Importantly, there is an efficiency programme; every route at Northern is subsidised, and focus is given to where that money goes. Out of date back-office systems are being reviewed to streamline efficiency going forward.

4 Matthew Golton – Managing Director, TransPennine Express (TPE)

Matthew Golton (MG) introduced himself and apologised to customers for recent service delivery not being good enough. Prior to Autumn 2021 TPE was delivering its best service in a decade with the accolade of Train Operator of the Year. In late January a focused recovery plan was offered to the Government, since which, on-the-day cancellations have been reduced by over a third, and pre-planned cancellations have been reduced by 13% - a 20% improvement overall in cancellations.

MG recorded his thanks to colleagues at Network Rail, as well as train operator colleagues, who have given critical support, including ticket acceptance.

The TransPennine route upgrade is in the middle of very major works, seeing a doubling of planned disruption this year to passenger journeys, and MG reiterated that it is important that customers are looked after during this period.

Much focus in the past year has been around providing customers with confidence to come back to the railway post COVID, including offering a 'My Station View' facility to ease navigational anxiety. The use of body cameras has been extended amongst colleagues to support them in handling and preventing more challenging discussions. Underpinning everything is continuous investment in staff, training and their working environment.

David Sidebottom concluded. It was, he said, good to hear some acknowledgement of what has been a tough time for passengers. He noted that it is research-proven that reliability drives passenger numbers, and poor information drives dissatisfaction. Working in partnership with Transport Focus can help build trust and confidence, grow the railway and encourage the levelling up agenda across the North.

5 Question and Answer Session

Q: TM asked about Avanti on-board service; what plans are there in place to ensure levels of on board service return to normal?

A: AM explained that the immediate, priority, focus has been on restoring punctuality and reliability over the last 6 months at Avanti. It is apparent there is more work to be done in terms of fitness for purpose of the on-board offer, with a plan in place to deliver improvements. There is a specification and this must be delivered against.

ND added that Northern prides itself on the visibility of front line train crew. Train presentation scores are near record highs. On-train contact levels are 3 times higher than pre-pandemic.

Q: Question from the floor: what can customers expect over the next 6 months in terms of improvements to changes and cancellations and how these are communicated to the customer?

A: AM stressed the importance of building on the improvements made recently. Despite some headwind over the summer, with annual leave and new train training to be undertaken, there is a determination to maximise the drivers that are available to operate services, along with the recruitment of unprecedented numbers of new train drivers, including to address almost a third of drivers approaching retirement age. This will result in the consolidation of recent improvements whilst moving forward. ND was unapologetic in highlighting some big wins within Northern in terms of delivery, including, 3,000 additional services per week added into the December 2022 timetable; interim results suggest this timetable is more reliable. It is important to celebrate the positive feedback that customers are providing for Northern which is now in revenue growth, despite slightly softer volumes. MG added they have more train crew in TPE currently than ever previously. He confirmed that TPE timetable will not be changing in May, but will change in December when there is greater confidence in sustainable reliability.

Q: Online question: are the recovery plans public documents?

A: MG confirmed that as far as TPE was concerned, the plans currently exist between the operator and the DfT, but a précis will be included in the end of year report to stakeholders, expected in the next week or two.

Q: KD asked about what is being done to regain lost passengers, how they are being engaged and how success is being measured in this respect.

A: MG explained that there are two types of passengers, those that are still with rail, and those that need encouraging to return. TPE have frozen their advanced fares this year as a conscious decision to that end and are talking to Transport Focus about how best to encourage lost passengers back.

A marketing campaign will be necessary when a certain level of reliability has been reached. It is thought the leisure market has the potential to be bigger than it was pre-pandemic, whilst the business and commuting market has come back more strongly.

AM feels they are further along that journey of customer confidence and consistent delivery of the timetable. Avanti are also talking to DfT about future marketing plans, overlaid on national marketing campaigns.

Q: A representative from the Community Rail Network asked how could investing in community rail partnerships and supporting station groups/volunteers help passengers?

A: MG was pleased to be involved in the past year in getting TPE's new Newcastle – Edinburgh services going – joining up communities on the route including a new station at Reston. This joining up of the dots responded to a call from local community campaigners. The growth in new rail journeys is a testament to the people who did not give up and felt the railway needs to serve us differently. Community rail partnerships provide insight that is needed and give ministers and MP's a reason to say yes. AM added that he was at Runcorn station where the repurposed 1st class lounge is now a popular community space. Although Avanti are playing their part there is always more that can be done.

Q: Question from the floor: how accurate are the cancellation and delay statistics, in reflecting the delivery of a service to as many people as possible? For example, starting short of origin, terminating short of destination, diversion and skipping stops to make up time. How are these reflected in the statistics?

A: Anthony Smith answered that it is crucial that people can trust the data that is in the public domain. The industry is on a journey to get accurate data that reflects the passenger experience, rather than measuring the metal. MG added that the DfT and Regulator see everything and have all the figures and it is important for them to do so. The absolute motivating factor is around advance notice to the customer.

NS thanked all guest speakers, and hoped their comments provided some hope, despite the long and tough road for all those involved; there is still a long way to go. Passengers also need to know there is hope and that the industry, with Transport Focus helping whenever and wherever it can, is doing everything possible to deliver improvements, and the quicker the better.

Part C Corporate affairs

1 Board meeting minutes: November 2022, Cardiff

The Board **approved** these minutes.

2 Committee meeting minutes:

2.1 Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (January 2023)

The minutes were **noted**. KD also noted that the Transport Focus conduct policy was reviewed; it is always useful to have a reminder of the Nolan Principles and for them to be front of mind for all Board Members and senior staff.

2.2 Statistics Governance Group (December 2022)

The minutes were **noted**.

3 Reports from subsidiaries:

3.1 Transport Focus Wales (January and March 2023)

The minutes were **noted**.

3.2 Transport Focus Scotland (February 2023)

The minutes were **noted**.

4 For noting by the Board

Items previously discussed and approved out of meeting or in private session were **approved**:

4.1 BRD2223-015 (Lorry drivers facilities roll-out)

4.2 BRD2223-016 (GBRT Customer community)

4.3 BRD2223-017 (Isles of Scilly transport research)

4.4 BRD2223-018 (Your Bus Journey 2022-23)

4.5 BRD2223-019 (Your Bus Journey 2023-24)

5 Items for approval

5.1 Indicative budget 2023-24

The Board **approved** the indicative budget for 2023-24, as presented by NH. He confirmed that the funding available is £6.6m (as 2022-23) so an effective real-time inflation based cut, but in this respect Transport Focus was in a very similar position to other bodies. The detailed workplan was in development and would be the subject of discussion at the April Board meeting.

6 Any other (public) business

There being no further business, public or otherwise, NS thanked everyone for attending, and expressed his gratitude to all the speakers and the planning team for a very useful event.

Signed as an accurate record of the meeting.

Nigel Stevens, Chair

Date

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

Tuesday 18 April 2023: 1000-1200 hrs
MS Teams



Minutes

Present**Board Members**

Kate Denham	KD	Board member, Chair
Theo de Pencier	TdP	Board member
Arthur Leathley	AL	Board member London

Management Team

Anthony Smith	AS	Chief Executive & Accounting Officer
Nigel Holden	NH	Corporate Services Director
Shahid Mohammed	SM	Finance Manager

Staff and Other attendees

Aaron Condron	AC	Head of Internal Audit, GIAA
Martin Burgess	MB	Engagement Director, NAO
Natasha Alvarado	NA	Senior Governance and Board Advisor
Caren Watchus	CW	Board and Governance Executive

Apologies

Jon Carter	JC	Head of Board and Governance
------------	----	------------------------------

Preliminary**1 Chair's opening remarks, apologies, declarations of conflict of interest**

KD welcomed everyone to the meeting and recorded apologies from JC. There were no declarations of interest.

A Finance and statutory reporting**A1 Year to Date Finance Report**

SM reported that draft accounts to the end of March indicate a surplus of £179k. The 2% variance is attributable to several factors. £40k was set aside for ticket office closures which did not happen within the period. The closures are likely to happen in the incoming year, so the provision will be rolled forward. There was also underspend in the budget allocated for the Reset and a £30k underspend in the budget for Your Bus Journey.

A2 Governance statement V2 (draft)

SM noted that version 2 of the governance statement will be updated once data from the audit completion report is available. Subject to no requests for major changes following circulation of the draft, the governance statement will be included within the annual accounts.

B Business performance management and internal audit**B1 Project management update**

NH provided an update on the review of the way in which project work is documented. A new simplified version will shortly be piloted. Changes include, for example, an open question format rather than selection from a drop-down list. The format also builds in a board paper summary, as agreed with members of the Committee in previous discussions. This should ensure a more succinct approach, with a focus on priorities and project recommendations. JC is reviewing data protection issues.

The Committee agreed that it would be useful to circulate a draft of the document for early input by members (**Action NH**). KD commented that she would like to see a joined-up approach within the document for data protection and equality impact assessment. Boxing off these issues in separate parts of the document is less likely to encourage mindful consideration.

NH will ask the Business Improvement team to develop a simpler approach for project managers to capture lessons learned, so that these can be applied quickly going forward to the next project (**Action NH**). Thinking and discussion on lessons learned should happen in a timely manner. Important points get lost if reflection is left until the end of a project.

B2 Business planning: work delivery plan

AS reported that Hazel Phillips and colleagues have worked hard to develop an updated two-part work plan. The first part of the work plan is designed for publication. The second is a more detailed working document, which outlines work on a team-by-team basis. NH has reviewed the updated work plan in some detail.

AS commented that the new approach has involved a great deal of thought and care in drafting to ensure that the flow is clear. The focus has been on maintaining continuity from top level down, feeding through to team and then to individual objectives. The planning cycle should be easier for next year, given that much of the thinking about process has now been done. One recommendation is to start the process early. The new approach has been refreshing and has made people think differently.

B3 Internal audit**B3.1 Internal audit progress report**

AC provided an update on reporting for the 2022/23 year. All field work is complete and 3 of 4 reports for the year are now issued as "Final". The 4th report on assurance mapping has been issued in draft and should be finalised by the end of April. Terms of reference have also been issued for the governance review in the next financial year. An annual opinion report is being drafted to align with the annual accounts timetable and will be with NH by the end of April. The draft assurance map, setting out a baseline on assurance, has been shared with NH and JC.

B3.2 Internal audit reports

- Reset Programme

AC noted that it was agreed that the Reset programme review would provide advice and support rather than assurance. Support was delivered by the programme project management

team in the form of an agreed set of actions from preparatory phase through to delivery. The team was supported by specialists in organising challenge groups and programme planning. The review made some recommendations for refinements, such as setting out the purpose of the Reset, defining success criteria and dependencies, setting out the MI to support delivery and managing delivery risks.

AL enquired about success criteria, particularly on whether they should have been introduced at an earlier stage in the process to provide a clearer understanding of what success will look like and how it will be measured. NH stated that early success criteria were in place and were refined as the programme progressed. There were two sets of success criteria, one for the delivery programme itself and the other related to the overall outcome that the programme should achieve. AS added that the programme aims have now been refined, which ties into the success criteria, with the ultimate success criteria being to make more of a difference to transport users.

One of the recurring uncertainties during planning of the Reset programme related to future funding. AS reported that this has been addressed, with a plan in place for delivery within existing resource levels and a plan that can be scaled up if further funding becomes available. AL commented on the need for the Reset to maintain focus on the external audience.

B3.3 Final internal audit plan 2023/24

KD asked for thoughts on how well the audit report process had worked, given that this was the first report of its kind, with a portion of the audit budget allocated in a different way. NH reported that the process had been very useful, with a number of timely and proportionate recommendations that could be implemented. The process was not onerous and most of the information requested was reasonably readily available. AC commented that the team who delivered the advisory report was selected for its experience of formative/ live programme reporting.

KD added that there is a balance to be achieved in the amount of auditing that is proportionate and valuable. Transport Focus is engaged and interested in using the time available to achieve maximum value and impact. AC confirmed that the assurance report will include a map and a report summarising the observations. In common with many organisations, there is a tendency within Transport Focus for assurance to be reactive rather than planned and for more focus on some areas of assurance than others.

AC sought ARAC approval for the 2023/24 audit plan. It was agreed that AC and NH will review the audit plan in light of any issues raised in the assurance report and come back to the Committee if they felt any changes should be considered (**Action AC, NH**). The Committee **approved** the 2023/24 audit plan.

B3.4 GIAA MoU

The GIAA MoU was noted.

B3.5 GIAA Internal Audit Charter

The GIAA Internal Audit Charter was noted.

C Risk**C1 Strategic opportunities and risks**

A meeting has not taken place on this item. AS will organise this as a priority once the Board has provided feedback on the work plan, then ARAC will have a detailed discussion about risk at its next meeting.

C2 Team risks: Communications

KD deferred the team risks discussion to a future meeting due to an over run on another item.

C3 Website accessibility

SN informed the Committee that a website accessibility update paper had been circulated. The website is the shop window for Transport Focus and often the first point of contact to the organisation.

Following on from a spot check by the Cabinet Office in 2021, the Communications team worked with a website agency to address the issues raised and then commissioned an agency to do a website accessibility audit. The agency's recommendations have now been implemented and a further audit is scheduled to take place in 3 weeks. Web forms have caused some problems and to date this has not been resolved. SN will work with colleagues to try to address the problem internally. SN also confirmed that accessibility and user experience are tested for all common devices.

The Comms team now intends to carry out regular website audits, rather than wait for feedback from the Cabinet Office. All public sector organisations must achieve AA accessibility rating, which Transport Focus has in place. The Cabinet Office's digital team reports upwards on non-compliant public organisations.

The EIA on website accessibility, stating that there will be no impact on anyone with disabilities, was challenged. EIA issues have been raised at a number of Committee meetings and there is a broader concern that limited thought is being given to responses. KD created an EIA template and will discuss with JC with a view to circulation. AS will raise the issue of EIAs with the management team at its next meeting. **(Action AS)**.

It was agreed that overall, the website performs well. There are no plans to allocate additional resources to website development, but this could be reviewed again after the Reset.

C4 Information Risk**C4.1 Q4 Information risk report**

It was agreed that any questions on this item will be taken up with JC via email on his return.

C4.2 Recent response to a GDPR rights request

The Committee **noted** the comprehensive response.

D Staffing and remuneration**D1 Staff forum update (including notes of most recent meeting)**

The staff forum has been asked to put forward a volunteer to present to the Committee. The presentation will be an item at the next meeting (**Action AS**).

AS reported that staff enjoy the learning and development opportunity of the forum. Issues brought forward tend to be quite practical, typically expense claims, expense claim limits etc. Staff create their own agenda for discussion and the chair of the forum is regularly rotated. Co-working trials in Manchester generated some staff feedback around future ways of working. A co-working hub has become available in Birmingham and Guy Dangerfield's team has organised a visit.

The staff forum discussion on future ways of working also flagged the need for some clarity and direction. AS plans to circulate a paper to the management team outlining the expectation of a high level of commitment to getting staff together. The paper is not prescriptive and does not mandate specific arrangements. Its focus is on getting people together for a purpose. The Committee noted that the next step should be that team leaders set out plans detailing when, why and where their team will come together.

D2 Q4 Absence and diversity report

Staff absence is slightly higher this quarter due to one case of long-term sickness, which is being managed. Covid is still a recurring issue but is not causing a disruption to the business.

Diversity data is collected from staff willing to share information and then benchmarked against national data. Some 34% of staff are aged 55 or over. The staff age profile will be considered as part of the Reset plan.

When asked about ethnicity, 14% of respondents choose the "prefer not to say" option. In future, this question will include an open box response option, since a drop-down list may mean some staff feel excluded if their ethnic identity is not accurately reflected in the pre-selected options (**Action NH**).

D3 Staff development update

AS reported that the management team tries to be proactive in identifying development opportunities for staff progression. This opinion is supported by the staff survey. SN is leaving the Comms team, so Kieran Watkins will act up as Head of Comms, pending longer term decisions about the structure of the Comms team. A number of senior staff have been on leadership training and development courses e.g., the Windsor Training Course and report that they have brought back actionable tools that they can use in the workplace.

D4 Pay remit update for 2023

Guidance on public sector pay sets a 4.5% cap, with an additional 0.5% for lower pay bands. NH proposed that a 4.5% pay review is put forward as soon as possible, given the lengthy timescales involved for approval. The risk is that, should circumstances change later in the year, Transport Focus would be committed to this figure. The Committee agreed.

E Governance and scrutiny**E1 Call centre contract procurement**

NH reported that a new call centre contract will be in place by 1st April 2024. A competition award process is appropriate, given that the current contract has been in place for some years.

Crown Commercial Services has 14 pre-qualified suppliers in the contact centre category. The budget is currently £140k, split roughly equally between Transport Focus and London TravelWatch. The contract award will be for 3 years with an option to extend for 1 year. The assumption is that all suppliers will offer a variety of channels, including digital options. NH is currently engaging with CCS suppliers to get a better understanding of what should be included in the specification. AL suggested that a LTW board member (Priya Khullar) with experience in the digital contact centre sector may be able to provide some useful guidance for the specification.

E2 Annual review: interests (note: Spring 23 update in progress)

KD will follow-up directly with JC.

E3 Annual review: gifts & hospitality (2022-23 extract from live register)

CW reported that JC wished to remind the Committee of the need to declare any such items. The Committee **noted** the report.

E4 TF-LTW DRAFT Collaboration Agreement for 2023-24

NH has worked with Michael Roberts (MR) of LTW on the final draft document, with figures updated to reflect activity in 2023-24. The Committee agreed that the relationship with MR is open and positive. There are ongoing reciprocal visits between both organisations and AS visits LTW at least once a month.

The Committee discussed the value of expanding informal collaboration between both organisation at board level. AS will discuss this further with MR, including proposing a meeting of both boards (**Action AS**).

F Standing Items**F1 Minutes from previous meetings****F1.1 January 2023**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2023 were **agreed** as a true and accurate record.

F2 Action Matrix

There were no outstanding items.

F3 Meetings of subsidiary undertakings**F3.1 Transport Focus Scotland Ltd****Business meeting notes (February 2023)**

The business meeting notes of February 2023 were **noted**.

F3.2 Transport Focus Wales Ltd**Business meeting notes (March 2023)**

The business meeting notes of March 2023 were **noted**.

Other

1 Any other business

No other business

2 Close

The meeting concluded at 1140 hrs.

Summary of Actions

Mtg	Ref	Date	Issue	Action	Owner	Due
AC	2324-001	April 23	Project management update	Circulate draft of the project management workbook document to the Committee.	NH	May 23
AC	2324-002	April 23	Project management update	Request that the Business Improvement team develops the format for early capture of lessons learned within the project management workbook	NH	Jun 23
AC	2324-003	April 23	Strategic opportunities and risks EIA: staff	Management team briefing on EIA completion	AS	Jun 23
AC	2324-004	April 23	Staff forum	Staff forum member to present to next Committee meeting	AS/NH	May 23
AC	2324-005	April 23	Diversity report	Include an open-ended response option on ethnicity	NH	Jul 23
AC	2324-006	April 23	TF LTW collaboration	Propose a meeting of both boards	AS	May 23

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

Tuesday 13 June 2023

MS Teams

Minutes

Present

Board

Nigel Stevens	NS	Board Member, Chair Transport Focus
Kate Denham	KT	Board Member, Chair ARAC
Arthur Leathley	AL	Board Member
Theo de Pencier	TdP	Board Member

Management team

Anthony Smith	AS	Chief Executive
Nigel Holden	NH	Corporate Services Director
Shahid Mohammed	SM	Finance Manager

Other attendees

Martin Burgess	MB	Engagement Director, NAO
Hazel Phillips	HP	Public Affairs Advisor
Aaron Condron	AC	Head of Internal Audit, GIAA
Caren Watchus	CW	Board and Governance Executive

Apologies

Jon Carter	JC	Head of Board and Governance
------------	----	------------------------------

1 Chair’s welcome: apologies and opening remarks

KD welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from JC.

2 To discuss the format and contents of the annual report and accounts for 2022-23

AS introduced the final draft of the Annual Report and Accounts for 2022-23. KD asked for comments. The Committee agreed that the report was well drafted. AL will follow up with HP on minor typographical amendments.

3 To note the annual internal audit opinion for 2022-23 of the Head of Internal Audit

AC noted that the overall opinion provided was of “Moderate Assurance” and made the following comments:

- Transport Focus has retained a Moderate Assurance opinion for several years

- The opinion indicates that some improvements are required but overall, the framework of governance, risk and control is working well
- AC noted that no significant weaknesses had been highlighted and no high priority actions had been recommended
- The report deals with a number of themes, primarily the Reset programme, succession planning and assurance mapping
- The Reset programme has been an area of focus for the organisation and an early review was positive. Although there are still actions to deliver within the Reset, these should not be a distraction from the core activities of Transport Focus
- Reviews of procurement and succession activities found a number of examples of good practice and due diligence in how they are managed
- Assurance mapping will be discussed in greater detail with the Committee at its next meeting in July but there is good evidence of assurance activity across the organisation. Further work could be done to ensure that assurance planning and delivery is risk based
- Timely closure of agreed actions also requires greater focus
- AC commented that there were many positive findings by GIAA, leading to the Moderate Assurance opinion

AL enquired how the Reset programme review was conducted, whether at a single point in time or as a continuous study. The review took place as the Reset programme was being shaped and designed, with a recommended action plan as an output of the work. Whilst no further formal assurance review of the programme is planned, AC stated that GIAA could review progress against the action plan if requested by Transport Focus.

KD asked how a Moderate Assurance opinion fits within the overall rating system. AC confirmed that there are four levels of assurance – Substantial, Moderate, Limited and Unsatisfactory. The “Substantial” rating is very difficult to achieve, with no organisations within the DfT family currently holding a Substantial Assurance opinion. The green rating tends to be easier to achieve for smaller organisations with less complex structures. KD stated that a “Moderate Assurance” opinion appeared to be a fair reflection for Transport Focus.

The Committee **noted** the 2022-23 Head of Internal Audit Opinion.

4 To note the audit completion report, letter of representation and proposed Auditor’s Report to both Houses of Parliament (including opinions on regularity and any other matters raised by the Comptroller and Auditor General) and to note any response by the Corporate Services Director

MB confirmed that the annual audit report is substantially complete, subject to any unexpected developments between this point and final report sign-off. Sign-off is recommended. The report highlights responses against three corporate risks for the organisation, two of which relate to fraud and the third to the expenditure profile, which is heavily loaded towards the end of the financial year. There are no indications of concern on the fraud risks. The audit process has examined year end expenditure to ensure that it has been reported in the correct periods.

There are no errors or adjustments to report. MB thanked NH and SM for providing a clear and accurate set of accounts that were straightforward to audit.

Board members commented that the accounts were clear and thanked MB and the finance team. NH also thanked MB and the rest of the audit team. The letter of representation needs to be signed off by AS, along with the annual report and accounts. There is no significant change to the letter of representation from previous years.

The Committee **noted** the audit completion report, letter of representation and proposed Auditor's report and the response of NH.

5 To consider whether any material or significant unadjusted misstatements (i.e. other than those considered to be appropriately not corrected) set out in the *Identified Misstatements* section of the completion report should be corrected (if not, reasons must be recorded).

There were no unadjusted misstatements to correct.

6 To endorse the Governance Statement within the annual report and accounts.

AS reported that every effort is made to ensure that governance within the organisation is as good as it can be, proportional to resources and the risk environment. He commented on the input this year to the governance framework from JC's and NH's teams. He confirmed that the governance statement is a fair reflection of the governance work of the last year and the controls in place.

The Committee **endorsed** the Governance Statement.

7 To agree the format and contents of the annual report and accounts for 2022-23 and, if so agreed, to RESOLVE to propose to the Board that the annual report and accounts be adopted.

TdP proposed and AL seconded that the Committee agree the format and contents of the Annual Report and Accounts for 2022-23 and **RESOLVED** to propose to the Board that the annual report and accounts be adopted.

The Committee unanimously **agreed**.

8 Any other business

Additional comments were, firstly, that MB's reference to the review of end-of-year expenditure was reassuring and then that the amount of budget spent externally on user insight is very high as a proportion of overall budget. Consideration should be given to the time and resources spent on procurement and contract management.

The meeting concluded at 1425 hrs.

Date of next meeting:

Wednesday, 12th July 1030-1230

Signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting:

Kate Denham, Chair

Date

Statistics Governance Group

Date	15 March 2023
Time	0930-1100/1130
Venue	Zoom
Classification	V 3.1 (redacted)

Attended

Board members:

Rob Wilson	RW	Board Member, Transport Focus, Chair
Trisha McAuley OBE	TM	Board Member, Transport Focus

Management and other staff in attendance:

Jon Carter	JC	Head of Board and Governance
Louise Coward	LCd	Head of Insight
Robert Pain	RP	Senior Insight Advisor
Murray Leader	ML	Senior Insight Advisor
Toby Cotton	TC	Senior Insight Advisor
Jo Curran	JCu	Insight Freelancer
Jags Lota	JL	Insight Advisor
Caren Watchus	CW	Board and Governance Executive

Apologies

Alan Benson MBE	AB	Board Member, London TravelWatch
Anthony Smith	AS	Chief Executive
David Greeno	DG	Senior Insight Advisor

Item Subject

A Standing items

1 Chair's opening remarks; apologies and introductions

RW welcomed everyone. Apologies had been received from Alan Benson, Anthony Smith and David Greeno.

2 Minutes from previous meeting: December 2022

TM noted that her name had been incorrectly spelt and that a freelance contact had been incorrectly attributed to her.

JC apologised and assured the group that this would be rectified.

3 Outstanding actions

LCd reported on the following outstanding actions:

- Digital exclusion – The Insight team’s workload has not allowed them to address this subject sooner, but the team are addressing digital exclusion when surveying and have this topic on their upcoming team away day agenda.

Action: LCd will update the group on this subject at the next SGG meeting in June 2023.

- Insight audit action update –

Action: LCd will present an update to the group regarding this subject at the next SGG meeting in June 2023.

JC reported that work continues on the Equalities Impact Assessments. He explained that it is a subject that needs careful consideration and is being incorporated into the next workbook. JC confirmed that it is very much a work in progress and that it will be available in May / June 2023

B Overview of progress and plans

1 General update

LCd reported that the Insight team are working on the following:

- The GBRTT community is up and running well, with 40 community members recruited.
- The Isles of Scilly project has gone ahead with post arriving there successfully and 13 responses received so far.
- The team are working closely with the DfT, both on the repeat of the delay and compensation work, which is completed every 3 years to produce benchmarks, and managing the project on defining what cleanliness and safety look and feel like to rail users.
- The DfT has also approached Transport Focus to look at what travel plans people have for both the Coronation and Eurovision weekends.

LCd gave an update on the freelance situation.

Ex-Transport Focus Insight Advisor, [redacted] has now relocated to New Zealand and has started work as a freelancer and is a great addition to the team. Her knowledge and experience mean the Insight team are able to give her work they wouldn’t normally involve a freelancer in. [redacted] is in addition to the two existing freelancers who are still being heavily utilised and with whom the team are on good terms. Two additional freelancers are also available to help should the need arise.

RW asked what TF will be able to provide to the DfT regarding the Coronation and Eurovision events. It was confirmed that Omnibus will be used to screen 2000 people on their travel plans for the weekends in question.

Comms are looking ahead to generate social media content about people's plans along with how the rail network are coping with it. Using Omnibus for this research will provide a lot of valuable data at a low cost.

A discussion over increasing the sample size from 2000 confirmed that the size is large enough for national data but, if budgets allows, a greater number would allow more in depth research groups.

C Rail Passenger Satisfaction

1 Update on plans for measurement of rail passenger experience

LCd spoke in DG's absence. The paper submitted is comprehensive and there wasn't anything to add since it had been written. The project is moving ahead in an organised way without any concerns and progress is good. There is a lot of pressure that the time frame is adhered to and results will be available as outlined.

D Bus Passenger Satisfaction

1 Your Bus Journey update

RP updated the group that there have been a few situations where the field work company is struggling to get the work booked out in a couple of areas.

- Recruitment of interviewers in both East and West Sussex is ongoing.

RP is constantly reviewing these situations and their progress. The risks around this issue are expected to be increased during the next project review sessions. Now that the survey is spread across the year, it is a more manageable task than the previous format with a heavy workload in a relatively short space of time. The aim is to get a quarter of all the field work done in all areas by the end of March. The £2 fare cap has now been extended to June, which lessens the pressure to get an even share for each area within the critical offer period. The research is giving us more information than in the past, with more raw data collected. Verbatim comments are being looked at and shared with each area every week. Local stakeholder managers have decided whether they want to see the comments every week or every month.

RW asked how the size of this survey compares to previous years. The largest survey in the past has been circa 50,000 responses. This year's will be smaller at around 36,000. This year, we do not have the traditional extra coverage from bus operators and previously, large metropolitan areas had larger sample sizes.

Themes coming through in the survey are similar to past years, there is a bigger issue around reliability of services and reduction in the number of services. Satisfaction levels are provisionally at 83% which is not a huge variance on previous years where they were 87-89%. Flat fare questions are not specifically asked about, as this survey is running throughout the whole year.

RP raised the issue around the timing of results. There is a lot of pressure on local authorities to provide updates on how services are doing after a year of funding,

which falls between April and July, depending on the Local Authority. This pressure is around the extension of funding and proving the benefits of the survey. The official timeline for a first set of published results by TF is expected to be in August, with six months of research. TF will need to come to an organisation wide decision, as to whether people can release information based on very early provisional unweighted data and whether that is the correct thing to bring to the public sphere, before TF has said anything publicly about the survey results.

TM asked whether this was discussed at the time of inception. Are there agreements in place and if so, have these been adhered to? RP explained that a pro forma was sent to each of the areas to complete, which includes publication rights, but that there has always been a difficulty in getting completed pro formas returned to TF. These will be chased up. It was also felt that a conversation with the DfT would be helpful to explain the situation and request flexibility on timings of customer metrics, given that TF will have their results one month after DfTs July update deadline.

RW suggested there be a minimum level of information needed before anything is released or concluded.

2 Governance issues discussion (local authority funding)

Governance around the use of public money was raised at the board meeting in response to the paper that was circulated, in particular, support given to Local Authorities. It was decided that a clear set of rules of engagement would be outlined in a governance paper. The discussion raised several points such as different levels of support, boundaries of support and instances of exception, consistent decision making, what our contributions cover and risks.

Action: LCd will provide an early draft of a governance paper in mid to late May, which will be finalised and then agreed at the group's June meeting.

E Omnibus

1 Weekly rail and bus survey tracker

ML updated the group that going forward bus and rail surveys will be scaled back. Rail and bus surveys will be conducted every other week until the end of July when Your Bus Journey launches. The bus survey section will then cease with rail surveys continuing until the following March/April when Your Rail Journey is expected to start producing results after their pilot phase. The reporting of results will remain as it has been in the latter half of the 2022-23 year at every 4 weeks.

RW asked if concluding these surveys will leave any gaps in research and knowledge. ML reported that the stakeholders have been well briefed and that this is the best value for money option going forward and a fair balance between more information and more money. LCd confirmed it will only be switched off when we have a suitable replacement measure. If stakeholders require it to continue then it can do so for as long as needed, as the cost per week is relatively small.

F Strategic Road Users Survey (SRUS)

1 General update and future planning

JCu updated the group that the January data is now in the hub after well over 800 responses that month. The final reports are almost ready for stakeholder feedback. Last weekend an Omnibus survey ran to give a snap shot of the profile of SRN drivers, results are yet to be analysed.

TC updated the group that the Dartford charge pilot is due to end this week, at which point SRUS will revert back to it's original format without the additional recruitment drive. It has been decided that this is not the best way to contact people who do not have a Dart Charge account. A 10% reponse rate has been received from people who have been contacted directly via emails supplied by Dart Charge, giving us a finished sample of 500-1000 per month.

RW asked whether the subject of Smart Motorways is being looked at. The group was updated that a survey has just been completed on Smart Motorways and that the perception of safety survey results are to be published on 4 May 2023, along with reports from National Highways and the DfT which require ministerial approval. RW asked whether the report would be seen by the board before publication due to its sensitive nature? TC stated that this could not be confirmed at that time.

G Logistics and Coach Manager Survey

1 Logistics and Coach Manager Survey update

ML updated the group that since the last meeting, wave 7 has been completed. Wave 8 is on schedule and going to plan. This is a pocket survey, modest in numbers, but produces strong data and highlights the low levels of satisfaction with the SRN amongst this group. Rising costs need to be considered for the coming year as the current budget of £75k is already under pressure and, amongst other things, rising postage costs will impact mailing rates. It was stated that we do not want a scaling back of the survey if that will compromise the robust nature and quality of the data. Guy Dangerfield is leading the relationship with the DfT on this.

RW asked what reaction did we get from National Highways? They are serious about the survey and have a consultancy looking at the whole freight experience. RW noted that he would be interested in seeing what feedback we get from our stakeholders going forward.

Action: RW stated that TF should give thought to obtaining additional funding for the survey and that the relevant group members need to give this thought.

H Motorway Services User Survey (MSUS)

1 General update

ML updated the group that in 2022 an updated methodology was introduced of an initial set of questions that were shorter, but around the core metrics, and then a more detailed survey face to face or through email or SMS prompting. This worked well last year with good take up. This year, essentially, it will be the same methodology with some tactical updates. The four big operators have agreed to funding the survey and 122 of 131 MSAs are included.

JC noted that Louise Collins has been asked to update the board on this survey, in Manchester next week.

I Transport User Panel

1 Re-profiling the existing panel and recruiting new panel members

The re-profiling of the panel has started and will close off at the end of March 2023. Of the c. 23,000 email addresses on record, c.7,000 have reconfirmed their consent so far.

Of the 3 methodologies used during the 3-day recruitment test, the face to face short recruitment survey proved the most effective. As of Monday (13/03/23), 108 people have signed up using the tablet. 10 people signed up after looking at a leaflet and 8 as a result of following the QR code on the banners. We are expecting 200-300 new signups at the end of the whole process. 52 people have signed up via the Your Bus journey Survey website link, which proves that it is worth directing people to the panel on the back of surveys.

Action: RW asked TC to consider the option of linking up with a commercial organisation with a panel and to bring his thoughts to the next meeting.

J Any other business

Close

Date of next meeting: Friday 16 June 2023 at 1000 to 1200 hrs.

Statistics Governance Group

16th June 2023

Zoom

Minutes

Present

Board members

Rob Wilson	RW	Board member, Chair
Trisha McAuley OBE	TM	Board member
Alan Benson MBE	AB	Board member, London TravelWatch

Management and other staff

Anthony Smith	AS	Chief Executive
Jon Carter	JC	Head of Board and Governance
Louise Coward	LCd	Head of Insight
Robert Pain	RP	Senior Insight Advisor
Toby Cotton	TC	Senior Insight Advisor
David Greeno	DG	Senior Insight Advisor
Jo Curran	JCu	Insight Advisor
Caren Watchus	CW	Board and Governance Executive

Classification

V2.1 (redacted)

A Standing items

A1 Chair's Opening Remarks, apologies and introductions

RW welcomed everyone. There were no apologies.

A2 Minutes from previous meeting: March 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2023 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

A3 Outstanding actions

RW commented that there were a number of outstanding actions, some of which would be covered in the updates.

B Overview of Progress and Plans

B1 General update including Diversity and Inclusion

LCd reported a busy period within Insight. The team is currently developing the rail survey, alongside partners. Due to the awayday, LCd was unable to attend the Social Research Association conference, which had diversity and inclusion as its main theme. She will follow up to get the conference papers. Transport Focus has been asked by _____ to provide insight into patient travel for

appointments. This will involve capturing the views of transport users with very specific requirements, including those who are vulnerable or disabled. It will be challenging but will also be a blueprint for embedding diversity and inclusion in future methodologies.

Responses to the team's 2022 Insight products audit is still a work progress, in conjunction with the Business Improvement Team. RW asked for an email update to the Group within the next week (**Action** LCd). The audit findings are necessary to provide clarity on research priorities and outputs and in demonstrating impact.

The Group asked whether, for the , the Transport User Panel will be sufficiently representative of relevant vulnerable groups. LCd reported that panel responses will be supplemented by other approaches, including qualitative research, to give a fuller picture. AB commented on the potential value of this work, with the likelihood of an increase in similar work going forward. As this is a specialist area, consideration might be given to engaging a specialist advisor to embed into the project team. The multi-faceted nature of the should provide a foundation for the development of a systematic Equality and Inclusion research sampling approach that can then be widely applied. The Workbook for the is being finalised; there is still time to consider whether external expertise could be embedded within the team and how this would be financed.

It was noted that the Insight team is extremely busy and capacity should be monitored.

C Rail Passenger Satisfaction

C1 Industry survey on passenger experience

DG reported that field trials for the survey will be finalised this weekend. The aim is for partner sign-off on the various reports by September, a transition survey in November with the full survey planned for March/ April 2024. The agency is working on recommendations for weighting, which will be put to the partners. Work has started on the Transition Survey; bidding for the survey is likely to happen later this year. GBRTT is very involved and on board.

The Group commented that the Rail Passenger Survey may face some challenge when it goes live and asked for reassurance on the robustness of the Equality Impact Assessment. DG was asked for confirmation that the ongoing work on weighting includes advice on meaningful samples in Scotland and Wales. The Group then asked whether it was the intention for the survey to go beyond the numbers needed to provide a representative sample of passengers with a disability, to demonstrate that accessibility is fully addressed. The point was made that there has not been a large-scale survey of rail passengers since the start of Covid and that progress for the Department to commission another survey is slow.

DG stated that GBRTT recently had meetings in Scotland and Wales. He will follow up with GBRTT to confirm that the weighting issue has been addressed (**Action** DG).

D Bus Passenger Satisfaction

D1 Your Bus Journey update

RP reported that overall field work response rates are average. Some areas struggle due to difficulty in recruiting field workers or getting people to respond, particularly in rural locations. Progress is being monitored. The aim now is to complete half of the field work to provide end of June interim results. An online dashboard was released in May along with webinar guidance on how to interpret the data. This dashboard provides access to provisional survey results as they become available. Companies now have access to their own results and a comparative England average figure.

Results are similar to the findings in the Bus Passenger Survey, although overall satisfaction (83%) is lower than in the Bus Passenger Survey (89%). There is a more significant difference at a regional level, where issues such as driver shortages have affected reliability and frequency. The aim is to have half of the responses from bus stop interviews and half on board, as there are slight differences in results depending on the setting, which in turn has weighting implications. Interim results should be released in August and full year results in February. RP is working with the Comms team on a publication plan, with the intention of holding back on some data from the interim report, so that the final report has maximum impact.

The Group commented on the detailed work that had gone into the survey. RW asked about feedback from companies on the survey findings. RP reported that there has been some liaison to check that companies can use the dashboard and to provide them with video guidance. He has been asked if the survey will be widened to include more questions and if the raw data can be made available. In some instances, there has not been enough data to show for a particular four-week block in an area. The issue is being managed with the agency; the latest results include new data for each area.

D2 Governance issues discussion (local authority funding)

A draft paper has been shared with the Group. RP stated that further work on the paper will focus on how to deal with exceptions to the general process. The paper also details the different levels of sign-off authorisation needed.

TM commented on the need for governance controls relating to consistency in approach. Transport Focus needs to avoid any external perception of difference in how it treats local authorities or others. RW stated that this new governance process will provide a clear audit trail, demonstrating consistency and transparency in the process, should there ever be a challenge from a local authority or other third party. RP will finalise the paper over the next week and send to JC for circulation to the Group (**Action** RP, JC).

E Omnibus

E1 Weekly rail and bus survey tracker

ML reported that the tracker question set was reduced at the beginning of the financial year and the survey now takes place fortnightly, rather than weekly (as was the case previously for rail). A report is produced every four weeks. Results are published and disseminated to stakeholders quickly. The bus survey will continue until the Your Bus Journey Survey results kick in, with the rail survey continuing until the end of the financial year. Rail's Train Operating Companies (TOC) report will be published in September and will include 24 sets of data (12 previous and 12 new sets).

The Group asked about the impact of the tracker survey. ML's view was that the very frequent nature of the survey contributes to the Transport Focus profile, ensuring that it has a presence in the transport conversation. It is widely used and accepted as the industry standard. The data is very recent and can be used to point to movements in satisfaction. The Group agreed that the report is valued by the industry; it is embedded in decision-making, measures performance at granular level and helps drive debate.

F Strategic Road User's Survey (SRUS)

F1 General update and future planning

JCu reported that April data is in the hub; she is working with Comms for the annual report. Some recent work on key drivers analysis found that nothing has changed since last year; journey time is still the key factor in driving satisfaction. National Highways asked Transport Focus if verbatim survey responses had been coded into themes using software. They were considering doing this themselves if it was not already being done. JCu is compiling a response to National Highways based on her discussions with the Insight team. LCd confirmed that her team has software that can be used for coding verbatim feedback from surveys and social media. The team could consider charging for bespoke requests but to date, where verbatim coding has been done, it has been as part of ongoing Transport Focus survey work.

G Logistics and Coach Manager Survey

G1 Logistics and Coach Manager Survey update

ML reported that, since the last update, Wave 8 is now complete. Response rates are in line with previous waves. A concern was raised at the last meeting over postage cost increases and whether this would prompt the agency to reduce survey numbers. ML confirmed that the agency had taken the decision to maintain the numbers of postal surveys. Wave 9 is currently in the field, slightly later than normal due to bank holidays. The report for full year results is underway and a digital only version will be available by the end of June. National Highways continue to be interested in the results

H Motorway Services User Survey (MSUS)

H1 General Update

ML reported that the MSUS is currently in the field. The same methodology is being used as last year; the survey continues to evolve and there have been a number of tactical enhancements across all aspects of the survey, for example on email wording, on approach technique and questions on electric vehicle trends. The survey went into field on 17 May 2023 and will be finished by 3 July 2023, with an additional mop-up week. Field work is going well, and numbers are in line with targets. Quite a bit of work went into interviewer briefings and moving teams around, which appears to have paid off. A publication event is planned for 5 October 2023. This work has driven the focus on the rest stop issue. No-one wants to come out bottom on the survey, so operators take it seriously and change happens as a result.

I Transport User Panel

I1 General Update

Recruitment is now complete, with a settled panel of 8,000 + people. TC is satisfied that the necessary GDPR arrangements are in place. Profile information has been updated, including age, gender, disability status etc. Some work has just been completed with the panel to update information on those eligible to hold a concessionary pass for buses. The survey was sent to over 6,700 panel members who use buses; the response rate was 38%, which indicates that the panel is well engaged. The report is now complete and has been shared with colleagues for Comms planning. The Panel will also be used for the . JL has joined the Insight team, so resources have increased.

The Group began by commenting on the value of the panel as an agile tool for generating feedback and asked whether its use could be further optimised. TC cautioned that the panel is not statistically representative. He suggested that external support in weighting the panel data would be useful, given that its makeup is somewhat skewed towards the older population and towards males. On expanding panel numbers, consideration could be given to using other surveys as part of the panel recruitment process, for example, providing links from an online survey through to panel recruitment.

The Group asked for thoughts on the cost/ benefit of an internal panel, such as the Transport User Panel, versus an externally sourced panel. TC reported that, in addition to staff time input, Transport Focus pays an annual licence for software, which includes a notional cost per completed interview, up to an agreed total.

Final points to note were that Your Bus Journey Survey is recruiting new people to the panel via a sign-up page at the end of the survey; then, a suggestion that it would be useful to check out other organisations with their own panel, such . LCd referred to recently purchased software that has increased the Insight team's capability to undertake in-house research, which could include carrying out very tailored pieces of work with screened panel groups.

J Any other business

RW thanked the Insight team for the update reports. The meeting concluded at 1140 hrs.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 12th September at 1000 to 1200 hrs.

Signed as an accurate record of the meeting.

Rob Wilson, Chair

Date

Annex: Summary of Actions

Mtg	Ref	Date	Issue	Action	Owner	Due
SGG	2324-001	Jun 23	Insight audit	Email update to the group on audit progress.	LCd	Jul 23
SGG	2324-002	Jun 23	Rail Passenger Satisfaction Survey	Seek confirmation from GBRTT that weighting has been considered for the survey in Scotland and Wales.	DG	Jul 23
SGG	2324-003	Jun 23	Governance paper (local authority funding)	Finalise the governance paper and email to JC for distribution to the Group.	RP	Jul 23

Passenger Contact Group Minutes



Date: Friday 21 April 2023
Location: Video Conference
Time: 1000-1148
Classification: V 3.1 (redacted)

Attended

Cllr William Powell	WP	Board member for Wales (Chair)
Keith Richards OBE	KR	Board member, Transport Focus
Arthur Leathley	AL	Board member for London, Chair, London TravelWatch
Priya Khullar	PK	Board member, London TravelWatch
Jon Carter	JC	Head of board and governance, Transport Focus
Linda McCord	LM	Senior stakeholder manager, Transport Focus
Susan James	SJ	Head of casework, London TravelWatch
Caren Watchus	CW	Board and governance executive, Transport Focus
Apologies		
None		

Item	Subject
------	---------

A	Standing items
----------	-----------------------

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

WP welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly Caren Watchus and Karen Thompson (Minute Taker) who were attending their first meeting. There were no apologies.

WP called for declarations of interests. KR stated that he had been appointed Chair of the National Centre for Accessible Transport.

2	Minutes from previous meeting: October 2022
----------	--

The minutes were approved.

Passenger Contact Group Minutes



3 Action Matrix (no items on matrix)

It was confirmed that no actions are outstanding.

B The Rail Ombudsman

1 Scheme Council and transition update

LM informed the Group that Matthew Campbell-Hill, as the new Chair of the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC), is also the new Chair of the Rail Ombudsman Council

LM updated the Group on two further points. The ORR will award the new Rail Ombudsman contract in May 2023, with the provider to be in place by the summer.

SJ advised that a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) will be agreed between London TravelWatch, Transport Focus and the Rail Ombudsman appointed for the forthcoming contract. The MoU will outline how data from the Rail Ombudsman would be shared. An MoU will be drafted by SJ with input from JC. JC commented that given the potential for sharing data containing personal details, relevant provisions need to be agreed in the MoU. Implications for data sharing with the Transport Focus contact centre provider under a new contract also need to be considered. It was agreed that the Group would review the MoU before signing.

Action: SJ & JC to draft an MoU for review by the Group.

WP enquired about availability of minutes from the Scheme Council for external interested parties. KR confirmed that ORR has been asked to provide recent minutes on its website. Historical minutes should also be made available on the website in due course. WP requested that a link to publicly available minutes from the Scheme Council be circulated to the Group.

Action: LM to circulate link to Scheme Council minutes.

KR drew the Group's attention to the Rail Ombudsman's Customer Experience Survey report as a useful intelligence source in tracking consumer expectations and understanding of the Ombudsman Scheme. This led to a wider discussion of the challenges of managing consumer expectations and improving passenger understanding of the role of the Rail Ombudsman.

Action: KR to circulate link to Rail Ombudsman's Customer Experience Survey.

Passenger Contact Group Minutes



C Casework

1 Quarterly casework report

WP thanked SJ for her casework report. The Group acknowledged the excellent work being done by caseworkers and the challenges they face when the outcome does not favour the consumer. Consumer feedback does not always reflect the level of effort or input made by caseworkers on their behalf. The report's findings showed that 50% of respondent ratings about caseworker support were good or excellent, 25% were neutral and 25% poor. SJ flagged that, where caseworkers have been unable to help passengers, she could confirm that all written responses provided a clear explanation but that adding a heading regarding the reasons might help to ensure passengers focus on them. It was agreed that the casework report should in future include a glossary of terms together with a foreword outlining the Transport Focus and London TravelWatch remit.

Action: SJ will include a glossary in future casework reports and a foreword on the Transport Focus remit.

The instructive value of the insight contained in the casework report was noted. It was agreed that there would be merit in sharing its findings with a wider audience, including the Transport Focus Board.

Actions:

LM to consider a coffee and learn session to share learning from the latest casework report.

JC to consider how best to present the casework report to the Transport Focus Board.

2 Casework review update

The action points from the previously completed review have been progressed. Recent staff training sessions were positively received, particularly the learning around appeals. Following on from an excellent meeting with Mike Hewitson, LM and SJ are defining those issues that Transport Focus believes should be appealed and developing added-value resources for caseworkers. The output will be a library of case studies that provide clarity on the Transport Focus position on particular issues and should be available by the end of May 2023.

Group discussion on the update emphasised the importance of conveying empathy and respect to consumers, and reassuring them that their voice has been heard. Consumers should be aware that their input contributes to an ongoing process of improvement within the industry, even if a specific complaint has not been resolved to the individual's satisfaction.

Passenger Contact Group Minutes



WP thanked both LM and SJ for their contribution to the casework agenda items.

D New / other business

1 Contact centre retender update

LM confirmed to the group that, further to the Board's instructions, Transport Focus intends to retender its contact centre service requirement, with the successful bidder to be in place by April 2024. The current provider, , has held the contract for a number of years; the service will now be retendered in line with good procurement practice.

Crown Commercial Services (CCS) has 14 potential providers on its framework. A review of all 14 websites by SJ and LM suggests that this provides a reasonable mix in terms of size and existing contract base. This feedback addressed a previous concern raised by AL that CCS framework suppliers may not reflect the range of choice available in the wider marketplace. A draft tender specification has been circulated to the Group for feedback and will then be sent out to all 14 companies.

LM confirmed that guidance was sought from the commercial services team at DfT, the outturn of which was that all 14 providers will be invited to submit an Expression of Interest (EoI), with a view to shortlisting 4 or 5 organisations to proceed to tender stage. Whilst this creates a significant workload, it also provides reassurance that the tender process is not in any way restrictive. EoI responses should generate useful insight into possible service innovations that could be considered for the tender stage, depending on affordability.

PK enquired about the proposed timelines for the tender process. LM outlined the following sequence, highlighting the limited scope for slippage.

- Finalise EoI specification (initial draft has been circulated to the Board)
- EoI invitations to 14 potential suppliers (end of April 2023)
- EoI responses (end of May 2023)
- Shortlist agreed and detailed tender specification agreed (end of June 2023)
- Visits and discussions with all shortlisted suppliers (July & August 2023)
- Decision on preferred supplier and Board sign-off (September 2023)
- Transition period begins (November 2023)
- New contract begins (April 2023)

WP enquired about Board oversight of the tender process. It was confirmed that both the Transport Focus Board and the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee are

Passenger Contact Group Minutes



aware of progress to date and have had an opportunity to provide input. Timeline and capacity limitations preclude the possibility of early market engagement activity. Several alternatives were then put forward by the Group:

- Identify a contact centre sector expert who could provide advice and challenge at the evaluation stage.
- Organise internal workshops for Staff and Board input following EoI responses.
- PK highlighted her recent insight into some of the digital innovation in this space.

It was agreed that PK will assist in reviewing EoI responses. The EoI specification will be a high-level document allowing for responses to provide a good sense of the innovations now available for consideration.

Action:

LM / PK to liaise on providing input to EoI response assessment.

SJ raised several concerns that should be addressed in the tender assessment criteria e.g., , the risk of digital exclusion and service supplier approach to upskilling its staff for delivery of the contract. The ensuing discussion on digital exclusion concluded that the same consumers would be likely to access the service in different ways at various touch points, depending on the issue. Any future solution must offer balanced, multi-channel options. Other points raised in relation to the tender specification included the need for the new contract to reflect key learning outcomes to date and for a provider with experience of handling complaints from the general public. Whilst a provider with previous transport sector experience may be useful, this should be balanced against the potential for conflict of interest

2 Any other business

WP concluded the meeting with a summary of the agreed actions on the retender process and thanked everyone for their contributions.

A summer meeting may be required to review tender progress.

Passenger Contact Group Minutes



Summary of Actions:

Mtg	Ref	Date	Issue	Action	Owner	Due
PCG	2324-001	Apr 23	MoU with new Ombudsman provider re access to data	Draft and circulate to Group for comment	JC / SJ	Jun 23
PCG	2324-002	Apr 23	Ombudsman Scheme Council Minutes	Circulate link	LM	May 23
PCG	2324-003	Apr 23	Ombudsman customer experience survey	Circulate link	KR	May 23
PCG	2324-004	Apr 23	Future casework reports	Include glossary and forward to include TF/LTW remit	SJ	Jul 23
PCG	2324-005	Apr 23	Casework report: learnings	Consider coffee and learn session	LM	May 23
PCG	2324-006	Apr 23	Casework report: learnings	Consider how to present to Transport Focus Board	JC	May 23

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 11 October 2023 1000-1200



Transport Focus Scotland Ltd

8th June 2023

MS Teams

Minutes

Attended

Nigel Stevens	NS	Chair
Trisha McAuley	TM	Board Member
Anthony Smith	AS	Chief Executive & Accounting Officer
Nigel Holden	NH	Corporate Services Director
Robert Samson	RS	Senior Stakeholder Manager
David Sidebottom	DS	Director
Caren Watchus	CW	Board and Governance Executive

Apologies

Jon Carter	JC	Head of Board and Governance
------------	----	------------------------------

A Introductory

A1 Chair's Opening Remarks

NS welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received from JC.

A2 Notes from previous meeting (February 2023)

The minutes of the meeting held on 9th February 2023 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

A3 Actions

There were no observations on the actions.

B Current issues and work across modes in Scotland

NS proposed that the discussion begin with an update on events in Scotland. RS informed the group that he had had the opportunity to have two very positive conversations with the new Transport Minister, Kevin Stewart, with a further formal meeting between the Minister, TM and RS scheduled to take place later this month. Unfortunately, the Minister unexpectedly announced his resignation two days ago (06/06/23). There is no indication yet as to who will replace him.

The Caledonian Sleeper usually achieves between 90-100% passenger occupancy levels, even though it is moving to an operator of last resort. The TFSL contract for managing the standalone passenger satisfaction survey will be rolled forward for another 12 months. A meeting is scheduled for later in June between Caledonian Sleeper, RS and colleagues from the Insight team to discuss potential enhancements to the survey going forward.

ScotRail recently invested in a large-scale advertising campaign, which has seen passenger numbers increase and revenue increase beyond target levels. TFSL has given evidence to the Scottish Parliament inquiry into ScotRail. During the inquiry both RS and Alex Hynes of ScotRail were asked about the Stakeholder User panel referred to in the TFSL evidence. TFSL now intends to meet with Alex Hynes to discuss strengthening the panel. **(Action: RS)**

TM reported that she had intended to raise the National Transport Strategy with the Transport Minister, in particular, discussion about decarbonisation and social justice passenger issues. She suggested that the TFSL strategy should consider how to stimulate more political action around these points. RS commented that work is going on behind the scenes, for example, a Fair Fares Review will be published later this year.

The group discussed the marked difference between the quality of rail service in Scotland and England, with Scotland performing better on a number of service indicators. Consideration was given to the best way to bring the performance gap to the attention of the UK government, for example, comparisons could be more deliberately drawn out of the Insight data.

There should be an opportunity for Transport Focus to expand its role in Scotland and Wales and operate differently than in England, given the separate transport environments and funding models. How Transport Focus might re-position itself in different environments relates well to the ongoing strategy work in England and Scotland. In relation to driving the agenda for change, one example to consider is that whilst Transport Focus can't make a difference to service reliability, it can drive improvement in disruption management.

TFSL has been invited to take part in the Scottish Government's Bus Pass subsidy work and to comment on its community engagement strategy. The half yearly results of the Your Bus Journey subsidy will be published soon, so RS and DS are working on a Comms plan for Scotland. Transport Scotland responded very positively to the new dashboard format for research feedback.

Ferry services to the islands have been very unreliable. One island will have no service for a month, which is really difficult for residents and means that no tourists can visit. There is no specific passenger voice from the Islands, which should present an opportunity for TFSL. The forthcoming Isles of Scilly report may be useful to bring to the Scottish Government as a template for a similar piece of work in Scotland.

NS outlined the key take-away points from the discussion on the transport environment in Scotland; ScotRail performance is encouraging, which presents an opportunity for Transport Focus to benchmark and present findings to the UK Parliament; the need to re-engage with

the current Scottish Parliament and to build relationships for any future parliament; the Isles of Scilly Report will be used as a tool for re-engagement and to demonstrate Transport Focus credentials.

B1 Scotland Workplan – Develop strategic roadmap/ plan for maximising impact

NS commented that the Workplan detail is very useful and now needs to be integrated into the wider UK Workplan. It should mirror the tabular format and presentation of the wider Workplan (**Action DS**). Outputs from the Staff Awayday next week will feed into the Scotland Workplan. NS would also like to see some commentary on the strategic ambition of TFSL, linking back to the earlier discussion on re-positioning and widening its role (**Action DS, RS**).

B2 Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee, Scottish Parliament – Inquiry ScotRail Trains Ltd

RS reported that TFSL gave evidence to the inquiry on ScotRail's passenger performance over the last 12 months. The evidence was positively received. As discussed above, the inquiry would like to see an enhanced Stakeholder panel. This had been proposed by TM some time ago in a paper to ScotRail, so it was noted that the cross-party Committee's role in challenging government policy may be useful to TFSL in driving change. It was agreed that a plan would be drawn up for profile building e.g., Board attendance at roundtable regional events. It should be a sister document to the Stakeholder Engagement Plan being developed by Louise Collins (**Action TM, RS, DS**).

The ScotRail CP7 business plan has not yet been published and there are some concerns about future funding levels to deliver their ambitions.

B3 Bus Taskforce – Community Engagement Strategy

TFSL has been heavily engaged with the Bus Taskforce, including in the drafting of the community engagement strategy, which refers specifically to the Insight work by TFSL. RS is working to ensure that the strategy is balanced in representing both the individual passenger and the specific agendas of different community groups, who may or may not be passengers. Future Bus Taskforce funding may be an issue, depending on the priorities of a new transport minister.

Caledonian Sleeper – Development of new guest satisfaction survey

There was nothing further to add to the earlier discussion of the proposal for enhancing the guest satisfaction survey.

C Business Update

C1 Stakeholder Update

This item was discussed at the outset of the meeting. NS requested that the Business Update item be moved to the top of the agenda going forward and the name be changed to reflect today's wider discussion (**Action RS**).

TFSL is a dormant company. This will remain the case, unless TFSL begins to generate revenue from third party sources.

C2 Scotland Board Member's Update

TM reported she had chaired the Rail Scotland Conference, which went very well. A dinner is planned for September, including a panel discussion which TM will chair. TM will arrange for NS and RS to attend (**Action TM**). Otherwise, TM updates have been covered in the initial discussions.

C3 Any other business

TM requested that an action log be included at the end of the minutes. CW stated that a new standardised format for all minutes has been developed. It includes an action log, which then feeds through into the consolidated action matrix.

The meeting concluded at 1100 hrs.

Signed as an accurate record of the meeting.

Nigel Stevens, Chair


Date

Annex: Summary of Actions

Mtg	Ref	Date	Issue	Action	Owner	Due
TFSL	2324-001	08/06/23	ScotRail	Arrange meeting between TFSL and Alex Hynes.	RS	Sep 23
TFSL	2324-002	08/06/23	Scotland Workplan	Present in the tabular led format used in the wider UK Workplan.	DS	Sep 23
TFSL	2324-003	08/06/23	Scotland Workplan	Add commentary on TFSL strategic ambition in Scotland	DS & RS	Sep 23
TFSL	2324-004	08/06/23	Stakeholder Engagement	Liaise with Louise Collins to develop a Stakeholder Engagement Plan for Scotland	TM, DS, & RS	Sep 23
TFSL	2324-005	08/06/23	Agenda	Move Business Update to the top of the current issues items and rename to reflect the wider context discussion.	RS	Sep 23
TFSL	2324-006	08/06/23	Rail Scotland Conference dinner in September	Arrange invitations for NS & RS	TM	Jul 23


**ANNEX TO BOARD MEETING MINUTES;
RECORD OF BOARD APPROVAL(S) FOR PROJECT FRAMEWORK PURPOSES**

Meeting date	28 March 2023
Venue / location	Piccadilly Gate, Manchester
Approval reference	March 2023-01

Proposal reference	BRD223-020
Project code (if project)	#212
Title	SRUS 2023-24
Project category	A: DfT Core Budget Must do
Project sponsor	Guy Dangerfield
Project manager	Louise Coward
Total direct costs	£570,000
Board observations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future proposals requiring Board approval must be explicit in terms of the ask, the total cost, and whether the cost is pre-budgeted. • Work on equalities screening must be improved (the current screen is being updated) but the approach must be based on how we ensure we <i>understand</i> the need to better promote equality of opportunity and <i>what we propose to do about it</i>.
Outcome	Approved, with reservations as set out above
Chair signature	
Approval registered by	Jon Carter; this approval will be included on the next (public) Board meeting agenda.


**ANNEX TO BOARD MEETING MINUTES;
RECORD OF BOARD APPROVAL(S) FOR PROJECT FRAMEWORK PURPOSES**

Meeting date	25 April 2023
Venue / location	Video conference
Approval reference	BRD2324-001

Proposal reference	C1 Apr 23 PBM
Project code (if project)	n/a
Title	Future of the Manchester Office
Project category	n/a
Project sponsor	Nigel Holden
Project manager	Nigel Holden
Total direct costs	
Board observations	Subject to confirmation of the savings to be made, and the development of a GB office strategy for agreement by the Board
Outcome	Approved, with reservations as set out above
Chair signature	
Approval registered by	Jon Carter; this approval will be included on the next (public) Board meeting agenda.


**ANNEX TO BOARD MEETING MINUTES;
RECORD OF BOARD APPROVAL(S) FOR PROJECT FRAMEWORK PURPOSES**

Meeting date	25 April 2023
Venue / location	Video conference
Approval reference	BRD2324-002

Proposal reference	C2 Apr 23 PBM
Project code (if project)	n/a
Title	Transport Focus Wales Ltd: parent company guarantee
Project category	n/a
Project sponsor	Nigel Holden
Project manager	Shahid Mohammed
Total direct costs	nil
Board observations	None
Outcome	Approved, no concerns
Chair signature	
Approval registered by	Jon Carter; this approval will be included on the next (public) Board meeting agenda.


**ANNEX TO BOARD MEETING MINUTES;
RECORD OF BOARD APPROVAL(S)**

Meeting date	23 May 2023
Venue / location	Video conference
Approval reference	BRD2324-003

Proposal reference	C2 May 23 PBM
Project code (if project)	n/a
Title	Transport Focus / London TravelWatch Collaboration Agreement
Project category	n/a
Project sponsor	Jon Carter / Nigel Holden
Project manager	Jon Carter
Total direct costs	n/a
Board observations	Update to ensure Agreement runs for one year and is to be updated annually.
Outcome	Approved, with reservations as set out above
Chair signature	
Approval registered by	Jon Carter; this approval will be included on the next (public) Board meeting agenda.


**ANNEX TO BOARD MEETING MINUTES;
RECORD OF BOARD APPROVAL(S)**

Meeting date	20 June 2023
Venue / location	Video conference
Approval reference	BRD2324-004

Proposal reference	C1 Jun 23 PBM
Project code (if project)	#227
Title	Riding, Walking and Wheeling 2023-25
Project category	A (DfT Core Budget Must Do)
Project sponsor	Guy Dangerfield
Project manager	Toby Cotton
Total direct costs	£150,000
Board observations	
Outcome	Approved, no outstanding concerns
Chair signature	
Approval registered by	Jon Carter; this approval will be included on the next (public) Board meeting agenda.

**ANNEX TO BOARD MEETING MINUTES;
RECORD OF BOARD APPROVAL(S)**

Meeting date	20 June 2023
Venue / location	Video conference
Approval reference	BRD2324-005

Proposal reference	C2 Jun 23 PBM
Project code (if project)	n/a
Title	Annual report and accounts 2022-23
Project category	n/a
Project sponsor	Anthony Smith
Project managers	Hazel Phillips and Shahid Mohammed
Total direct costs	n/a
Board observations	NS to review one last time
Outcome	Approved, no outstanding concerns
Chair signature	
Approval registered by	Jon Carter; this approval will be included on the next (public) Board meeting agenda.