

SCRUTINY REVIEW PANEL 4 – TRANSPORT

MINUTES

Tuesday 3rd October 2017

PRESENT: Councillors: Kamaljit Kaur Nagpal (Chair), Gary Busuttil, *Daniel Crawford* (Substitute for Kamaljit Dhindsa) Joanna Dabrowska (Vice-Chair), Kieron Gavan, Abdullah Gulaid, Gurmit Mann, Ciaran McCartan, Aysha Raza, Alex Stafford, Lauren Wall and Ray Wall

Co-opted Members:

John Gashion

Ealing Officers Present:

Harjeet Bains	- Scrutiny Review Officer
Nicky Batkin	- Senior School Travel Advisor
Chris Cole	- Transport Projects and Policy Manager
Russell Roberts	- Principal Transport Planner
Lee Teasdale	- Democratic Services Officer

External Attendees:

Bob Blitz	- Network Planning Manager, Buses, TfL
Nigel Fenn	- Principal Programme Sponsor, Network Rail
Will French	- Chair, Save Ealing's Centre
John Goldsmith	- Community Relations Manager, Crossrail
Hannah Lane	- Communications Manager (Crossrail) Network Rail
Matthew White	- Surface Director, Crossrail

1. Apologies for Absence
(Agenda Item 1)

Councillor Dhindsa was substituted by Councillor Daniel Crawford and Councillor Bagha tendered his apologies.

Education co-optees Ms Sighat and Mr Zaidi also tendered apologies.

2. Declarations of Interest
(Agenda Item 2)

Councillor Ray Wall highlighted that he worked for a firm which had contracts with Network Rail.

3. Matters to be Considered in Private
(Agenda Item 3)

There were none.

4. Minutes (27.07.17)
(Agenda Item 4)

The Panel considered the minutes of the meeting which had taken place on 27 July 2017.

The Panel was advised that information relating to requests from the previous meeting on road humps and vehicle emissions, and economic models for an electric vehicle charging infrastructure; was included on the briefing note and would be discussed further in item 7 of the agenda.

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of 27 July 2017 be agreed as a true and correct record.

5. Crossrail Update (Agenda Item 5)

The Chair invited representatives from Network Rail, Crossrail and Transport for London (TfL) to update the Panel on the latest Crossrail developments in the borough. The response to the consultation on bus route changes in West London due to take place in conjunction with the opening of the Elizabeth Line would also be discussed.

The Chair advised the Panel that the item would be split into two separate sections – beginning with an update on the latest general developments at Crossrail stations before moving onto a discussion of Crossrail related bus routes.

Ealing Station Update

The Council's Principal Transport Planner (Russell Roberts) presented an introductory report. He explained that the construction of station buildings related to Crossrail had been seriously delayed. Officers had been informed that this was due to issues with the initial quotes received for construction. Crossrail had promised that stations would still be completed prior to the full opening of the line in December 2019, but to date they had not provided an implementation programme. Council officers were lobbying for an updated programme and the Leader of the Council had exchanged letters with Network Rail and Crossrail expressing concern regarding the delays. Work had however progressed on new tracks, installation of electrical equipment and platform extensions in stations. The disabled access lift at Hanwell Station was also expected to be installed by July 2019.

The Council had secured over £7million from TfL to invest in the areas around each of the five Crossrail stations in the borough (Acton Mainline, Ealing Broadway, West Ealing, Hanwell and Southall); this would result in improvements to the public realm. However, the only station that had been able to progress to date was Hanwell due to the station delays noted above.

The implementation programme was detailed to the Panel. Highlights included December 2017, when TfL Rail would takeover station management from Great Western Railway between Acton Mainline and Taplow (excluding Slough) and May 2018 when TfL Rail would take over service between Paddington (National Rail) and Heathrow Terminal 4; through to December 2019 when the Elizabeth Line would be fully open.

Nigel Fenn (Principal Programme Sponsor, Network Rail) then led on a presentation to the Panel on railway upgrades in and around Ealing. It was advised that by 30 November 2017 Network Rail would have delivered all infrastructure required to

facilitate the testing of Elizabeth Line trains on the Heathrow to Paddington section. It was explained that improvements required to the rolling stock had necessitated the delays at stations.

Information was provided on plans for the five stations in the borough. It was explained that Ealing Broadway was one of Network Rail's most complex stations to bring to fruition. As it was a 'Category A' risk station, this also meant that significant security concerns had to be taken into account.

The next steps would include submission of the final plans for the stations during October. December 2017 would see advanced station building works begin at Acton Main Line, Ealing Broadway and Southall. Work at West Ealing would begin during spring 2018.

Enhancements to services in 2019 would see four more trains being purchased and the introduction of Elizabeth Line services.

Questions

The Chair thanked officers for the introductory reports and invited Panel Members to comment and ask questions.

Councillor Ray Wall asked what the extra train enhancement would mean for Ealing, would this result in extra trains stopping in the borough? Hanwell was initially promised 4 trains an hour; presumably this did not mean they would receive any more?

It was advised that the services which would benefit from the extra stock had not been agreed as yet, and would form part of the timetable bidding process.

Councillor Ray Wall then expressed concern that Hanwell Station had been omitted in the Network Rail presentation, whilst only minimal work was taking place, it was still important to those in the locality. He expressed concern that design work was still required at this late stage and asked for definitive confirmation on when the Hanwell Station lift would be installed.

It was advised that with regards to the Hanwell Station Lift, tenders for construction were still being considered at present. Work was due to start in January 2018, and the work would form an 18 month programme. July 2019 was the expected finish date.

Councillor Gavan asked how long the West Ealing station works would take, as the works there appeared to be starting later than at the other stations in the borough.

It was advised that as with all stations, work would be completed by December 2019 at the latest, however due to the phased nature of the works, some station works would finish earlier than others.

Councillor Gavan expressed concern that there would be up to 18 months of disruption on a very tight piece of roadway through West Ealing. Therefore the timescales would be very important to residents as it could have a significant impact on the local community.

It was advised that Network Rail had an obligation through the Crossrail Act to take extensive mitigation measures to minimise impacts on local residents regarding noise and disruption. The site was 'offline' and away from the West Ealing bridge bottleneck. The route of delivery lorries had already been approved. There would be some night work, but the vast majority of works would only take place during the daytime.

Councillor Daniel Crawford expressed concern about the lack of communication regarding the delays, stating that he had known nothing about the delays to station developments until he saw it mentioned in the press. He asked that more information be provided about the delays, and asked about what would be done to avoid further delays in the future.

Network Rail officers accepted that the situation was not ideal, and apologised for the hold-up in communicating the delays. It was advised that the complexities of some of the designs had created a real challenge for officers to be able to come up with final designs that were considered as acceptable to all parties. There had been unprecedented levels of bureaucratic detail involved and unfortunately this had meant that the delays had been unavoidable.

Councillor Joanna Dabrowska expressed concerns about plans seen for the ticket gates at the redesigned Ealing Broadway. On the plans it appeared that there would be just one wide gate in place for wheelchair/pram/luggage access. There were concerns that this would lead to people having to cross each other's pathways at an increasingly busy station to access the gate. Given the extra custom expected, was it not considered wiser to have a wide gate on either side separately for entry and exit?

The Surface Director for Crossrail agreed that provision should be in place for two wide gates at the station and was surprised to be informed that this may not be the case. He informed the Panel that he would look into this and feedback in due course.

Councillor Raza noted the concerns of Greenford residents who commuted on the Greenford branch line, particularly regarding the morning Paddington service. Previously the service used to go to Platform 3 at Paddington Station but as of late had been going to Platform 5, which was further away from connecting services, meaning that some Greenford commuters often missed their connections. If there was to be two more years of such disruptions in place, Councillor Raza stated that commuters would like to see a better service to Paddington. The lack of step free access at West Ealing was also an issue for some Greenford branch line users, with no provision available to access the other platform for going west.

Officers advised that they would take these concerns away, but did state that there should be more operator assistance available at West Ealing Station from December 2017.

The Principal Transport Planner advised that Council Officers, together with the Portfolio Holder for Transport, Environment and Leisure and the MP for Ealing North, had been in talks with the Department for Transport requesting an increased service on the Greenford branch line in the next Great Western Rail Franchise.

Councillor Gurmit Mann asked for clarification on whether Crossrail works would have an impact on the gurdwara next to Southall Station.

It was advised that the Crossrail plans did not affect the gurdwara site at all, and that any issues must relate to other rail projects. The Transport Projects and Policy Manager (Chris Cole) stated that there were development proposals at the site, but these were not even at the planning process stage at present.

Co-opted Member John Gashion expressed concern that there were no plans for Crossrail carriages to have toilets, even though the longest stretches of the route would take over an hour to get between. He also expressed concern about the lack of clarity on fares, particularly surcharges from Heathrow and the use of Freedom and travel cards.

Officers had estimated that the average journey taken on Crossrail would only be around 21 mins – which as an example, was the time it would take to get from West Ealing Station to Liverpool Street Station. It was thought that only a small number of commuters would ever be journeying over the full length of the route. Therefore journey times were expected to be relatively short even compared to the average tube journey. It was considered to be better to have increased capacity rather than take up carriage space with toilets.

With regards to fares, the final decision on them would be taken by Transport for London, including the decision on how they would approach the Heathrow surcharge. Officers stated that they had not heard anything to indicate that the surcharge would be removed.

Councillor Ray Wall referred to the lack of clarity on when four trains an hour would begin to operate from Hanwell Station. He stated that Councillors received such queries a lot and were never able to give a clear answer due to the lack of clarity in communications from Crossrail. The project had been planned for many years and it was rather embarrassing that station designs were still being ‘tinkered with’ at this late stage. Had traffic modelling been done in case there were further delays to the final designs? As potentially huge numbers of people would be departing from unfinished stations.

It was stated that station safety was absolutely paramount, and no situation would be allowed where overcrowding at stations could lead to an unsafe situation. Passenger modelling had been done and agreed by the operators (who had accountability for safety at stations).

Councillor Daniel Crawford stated that the decision not to have toilet access on Crossrail trains was regrettable as many disabled and elderly users would be making use of the network – and information regarding surcharges and the Freedom Pass, the usage, or not, of these needed to be communicated to them. There needed to be care taken not to breach the rights of disabled passengers.

The Chair then invited Will French, as a representative of the local action group ‘Save Ealing’s Centre’, to make a verbal submission to the Panel (*A transcript was also provided to the Panel and is available on file*).

He stated that the Crossrail project needed to belong to all, and that from the start many local groups had sought to input as the project evolved. But it was noted that unfortunately, over recent years the communications had gone quiet, and there was a perception that local interest had been pushed to the side as the project had developed. There was also concern that the information provided by Ealing Council to date via their website was vague and lacking in detail.

In 2013 residents groups had been informed that Ealing Broadway work would begin early, and that part of the early work, lifts would be installed. It was felt that the plans seen for the lifts were inadequate for a busy station with no escalators and many passengers who would have buggies, bicycles and luggage. Plans were at the last stage for the lifts to be done 'right' as otherwise the station would be stuck with lifts that were insufficient.

Consultation on the public realm was absolutely key, and there was particular concern about the lack of set down facilities for disabled drivers. There was no sign of draft service timetables as yet. There was concern regarding the level of 'clutter' on Platform 4 at Ealing Broadway with CCTV cameras and cabinet boxes on poles – had models of passenger flows through the station featured these? There was also concern that electrification was behind schedule, were Crossrail officers confident of meeting the previously proposed starting date?

Officers responded to concerns regarding the lifts at Ealing Broadway Station. A lot of work and time had been dedicated to the designing of stations and their contents, and there was no time left available to do redesign work. Escalators within this station were not feasible, but lift capacity had been increased accordingly. With regards to concerns about platform 4, head flow modelling had taken all elements of the platform contents into account and was part of the 3D model. Electrification was not behind schedule, and was actually running slightly ahead of schedule.

With regards to the public realm, the Transport Projects and Policy Manager advised that the security categorisation of Ealing Broadway as a Category A station meant that having drop off points close to the station entrance would be a major issue. Though officers were doing what they could to argue for adequate provision for residents with disability issues.

Councillor Gavan asked whether all stations would have toilets given that the Crossrail trains would not. It was advised that the vast majority of stations would, including all stations in the borough.

Councillor Ray Wall queried this, stating that he had heard nothing about toilet access in Hanwell. It was stated that the Hanwell toilets would not be accessible to disabled users. It was suggested that a list of Crossrail stations that would have toilets on site could be provided to the Panel.

Councillor Ray Wall then asked about the key learnings from the Crossrail project that Officers felt they had taken away so far and would recommend to other projects going forwards, such as HS2.

It was advised that a 'Learning Legacy' website had been set up which detailed key learnings taken away to date, similar to that which had been used following the infrastructure projects around the 2012 London Olympics. It was noted that a lot of

the rail network was still based around a Victorian infrastructure which had led to many difficulties along the way.

The Chair then drew the section to a close, thanking the Crossrail and Network Rail officers for their contribution to the Panel.

Proposed Bus Route Changes in Ealing

The Chair then invited Bob Blitz (Network Planning Manager for Buses, Transport for London) and the relevant Ealing service officers, to discuss proposed bus routes changes in the borough, designed to accommodate the changing patterns of public transport usage expected to take place in line with the opening of the Crossrail service.

The Principal Transport Planner stated that Ealing officers generally supported most of the proposed changes. The improvements to north-south orbital links in the Acton and Northolt areas, the extension of the 112 route to provide needed capacity in South Ealing, E10 route capacity enhancements and the introduction of the express X140 service were particularly welcome. It was acknowledged that there could be users who would appear to be losing out where routes were diverted to be made more direct. However, it was generally considered that the predicted gains in journey time and the reliability benefits for other and new users would make for a net benefit overall.

Officers were disappointed however that the 427 route was being curtailed to Southall, which would result in an eight bus per hour reduction in services along the Uxbridge Road for the majority of the borough. Therefore officers were objecting to this element of the proposal, under the justification that the buses on the Uxbridge Road were felt to serve a very different market, with differing needs, to those who would use Crossrail, and Ealing's population was predicted to grow at 1% every year, therefore leading to overcrowding on the remaining buses.

Public consultation work had been taking place, and officers noted their thanks to John Gashion for aiding in the collation of the full list of changes and their potential impacts. Officers had provided a holding response to the consultation, and would supply the Scrutiny Panel's formal response to the consultation in due course.

Questions

The Chair thanked officers for the introduction and invited Panel Members to comment and ask questions.

Councillor Daniel Crawford stated that the changes to the 440 and 266 had been considered 'scandalous' by residents of Acton, and that he had been deeply disappointed by the Council's response to date, and the overall lack of consultation. The 266 was currently the only major route that connected Acton to Hammersmith, and that no public transport equivalent service was provided elsewhere. As a local Councillor he had received over 200 responses in relation to the decisions on this route. There was also disappointment amongst residents that some streets would now be cut from the 440 route.

Officers apologised for the lack of reference to the 266 route, however the current response was just a holding response to allow for further Councillor input. It was assured that the 266 concerns would be taken into account fully in the final submission.

Bob Blitz advised that the reconfiguration of the 266 route was vital as it had become an endemically unreliable route. As it followed a heavily congested series of roads, such as the North Circular/Hanger Lane Gyratory, many Hammersmith residents had complained about severe delays and service curtailments and cancellations along the route. The 218 route would link Acton to Hammersmith as a single decker route. There was a consensus that long routes had become very unreliable, and that they were increasingly unsustainable cost wise.

John Gashion noted that the present operator of the 427 route was Abellio, and that they had just opened a new garage in Southall which would appear to align with the new end point of the route, leading to speculation that the route cut was a matter of convenience rather than being related to Crossrail.

Officers noted that the new garage had been mentioned. With regards to the 427 it was noted that it was important that this route did not see curtailment from day one of Crossrail, as there was a need to make sure that capacity was sufficient first. The 427 needed to be thought of in conjunction with the corridor in totality rather than in isolation.

Mr Gashion also made reference to service curtailments on the 266 route and the 260 route which went from White City to Golders Green. Could part of this route be extended along the 266 route, and could it not service Acton Mainline station in both directions, rather than just the northbound route as it did at present.

Officers would take this into consideration, though Bob Blitz noted a need to take into consideration problems with the one way system.

Councillor Ray Wall questioned the benefit in applying the changes as soon as Crossrail entered service, was there not more benefit in assessing the impacts on existing routes once Crossrail arrived? Was the saving of money a factor in this? He also made reference to the 427 route, there were increasing numbers of businesses and residential units along the Uxbridge Road corridor, had such growth been taken into account? He also stated that he would object to any suggestions of reductions to the E1 service.

Council transport officers worked with the planning department regularly on the developments around the Uxbridge Road corridor including studies of its future use and capacity issues.

Mr Blitz stated that Transport for London needed to be ready for changes to travel patterns that would be expected to take place from the first day that Crossrail became operational. Lots of traffic modelling had taken place, as well as studies into patterns of behaviour on the travel routes. Only very slight changes would be taking place on the E1 route, with a reduction during peak hours of 8 to 6 buses an hour.

Councillor Ray Wall stated that there were three major secondary schools on the E1 route, and it was not expected that children would be using Crossrail to get home. He

expressed exasperation that Crossrail routes had been years in planning, yet elected members were only engaged in the consultation process a few weeks before it closed.

Councillor Gavan stated that it would be helpful to see the non-technical rationales behind the changes. He did not consider that the difficulties that arose from long routes were acceptable as rationale for the changes to the 266 route, for example. If a route was notorious for being congested, should TfL really be creating a situation that would likely have a negative result of putting extra cars onto the route?

Bob Blitz stated that he would feed back to the Panel on this.

Councillor Raza stated that there needed to be more consideration of the 'far flung' parts of the borough, as there was very little information regarding provision for the 'black holes' of connectivity. For example, what about improving links with Brent? She also expressed a wish for better night bus connectivity to these parts of the borough.

Bob Blitz stated that TfL had looked closely at connectivity problems. The new X140 route proposed new faster links from Northolt. Hillingdon links were increasing, and the new 483 hospital link to Northwick Park was in place.

Councillor Daniel Crawford re-emphasised his concerns regarding the 266 route, stating that the route had very little in the way of Crossrail link-up, and as one of the most used bus routes in London, provided a vital route for the community to key locations. Not everyone had access to a website, nor was everyone able to complete comments in English. So the consultation strategy had been far from perfect. Locals also had a perception that the routes would be changed regardless of their feelings or expressions of their need. He stated that it was imperative that these issues were raised with TfL.

Councillor Joanna Dabrowska made reference to the E8 route and how residents of a street had recently successfully campaigned to have the street removed from the route. How could TfL be sure that some of the proposed changes would not also result in residents objecting to having the buses run down their street?

It was advised that no new roads were due to be served for the first time as part of changes taking place.

Councillor Ray Wall asked whether the changes would result in an overall saving for TfL. Bob Blitz advised that he did not have the exact figure – However, in central London demand had been dropping, with excess capacity on services, therefore TfL was moving more services to outer London where growth was seen. The results of this did not provide savings. He advised that he would look to feedback some exact figures.

Councillor Ray Wall re-emphasised his point that the changes to services should not take place until at least a year into Crossrail to enable the use of hard evidence as justification for the changes.

It was advised that TfL monitored outcomes constantly, and with that, they could amend and change routes if it was found that they had made an incorrect decision. It

was repeated that the inception of Crossrail services would see demands change quickly, necessitating immediate action.

In order to provide a cohesive Council response to TfL, the Transport Projects and Policy Manager summarised some of the key points raised:

- Route 266 – Panel Members objected to the re-routing and splitting of the route on the basis of it being a vital route for the community to key locations.
- Route 440 – Panel Members objected to the rerouting of this service due to its impact on streets that would be removed from the route.
- Route 260 – Panel Members wished to see the route serve the Acton Mainline station in both directions and not just on the northbound service.
- Route E1 – Panel Members objected to the reduction in service frequency during peak hours as the route served several schools, was already overcrowded and was felt to serve a different audience to that of Crossrail.
- Panel Members would like to see a one year grace period after the introduction of Crossrail to allow for seasonal data gathering – base the changes on actual rather than predicted usage.
- Panel Members would like to see better night bus connections in the borough.
- Panel Members would like to see better north and south (orbital) connections within the borough

Councillor Ray Wall asked if TfL could come back to the Panel to talk about hospital links when the information was available. Councillor Daniel Crawford stated that the Health Scrutiny Committee regularly requested updates on hospital transport routes and could link this work up with the Transport Panel.

Councillor Gurmit Mann suggested that the E5 route could be extended to Windmill Lane to help local schools within the Norwood Green area of Southall.

The Chair then thanked all attendees for their contributions and drew the item to a close.

Resolved: That

- (i) the update on Crossrail developments be received;
- (ii) the update on proposed bus route changes be received;
- (iii) information regarding the provision of two wide barrier gates at Ealing Broadway Station be fed back to the Panel;
- (iv) a list of Crossrail stations which have toilets on-site be fed back to the Panel;
- (v) further information be fed back to the Panel on the ‘non-technical’ rationale behind the 266 bus route change;

- (vi) figures on expected TfL expenditure following the changes be fed back to the Panel; and
- (vii) the Panel's feedback on the changes be taken away by officers for feeding back into the TfL bus route changes consultation.

6. School Travel (Agenda Item 6)

Councillor Ray Wall suggested that, given the late running of the meeting, that the school travel item could not be given full justice in the time remaining and suggested delaying the item to the next meeting of the Panel, which had a quieter agenda.

The Chair expressed reserve stating that the item on cycling in the borough at the next meeting would also be time consuming and favoured continuing the school travel item at this meeting.

Following further discussion, the Chair agreed to put the decision to a Panel vote. The Panel voted in favour of postponing the item until the next meeting.

Resolved: That the report asking the Panel to consider the school travel programme in the borough be postponed until the next meeting of the Panel.

7. Panel Work Programme (Agenda Item 7)

As referenced in Agenda Item 4, the Panel was provided with two appendices:

- Appendix A – Road Humps and Vehicle Emissions
- Appendix B – Economic Models for Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure

Councillor Gavan expressed concern that not enough information had been provided and that he would be happy to work with the Transport Projects and Policy Manager on providing a more full set of information for the December meeting of the Panel. The Transport Projects and Policy Manager stated that he would be happy to discuss this with Councillor Gavan via email exchanges.

The Chair stated that any discussion should go through the proper channels, and not solely act as a discussion between the panel member and the officer. It was agreed that the whole Panel should be included in any email exchanges to allow for their input. This would also allow for Panel Members to have the chance to read the information before the meeting.

Councillor Ray Wall noted that the fourth meeting of the Panel was scheduled to have three substantive items, and queried whether it would be possible to place one of the items on the last meeting of the Panel.

Councillor Gavan expressed concern that only inviting representatives of the Ealing Cycling Campaign Group to the item on Cycling in the Borough would lead to an unbalanced view in consideration of the strategy. He felt that the views of other

stakeholders e.g. individuals/groups who did not favour prioritising cycling in the borough should also be heard.

Resolved: That

- (i) the updated Panel Work Programme be received;
- (ii) the Transport Projects and Policy Manager liaise with Panel Members by email to discuss and amend the information provided on Road Humps and Vehicle Emissions, and the Economic Models for Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure; and
- (iii) officers seek to invite a group to the Cycling in the Borough discussion representing the views of other road users in the borough.

8. Date of Next Meeting
(Agenda Item 8)

The next meeting of the Panel was due to take place on Wednesday 6 December 2017.

Councillor Kamaljit Kaur Nagpal, Chair.

The meeting ended at 9.40pm.