



Transport for London

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Dear Val,

TfL Customer Service – next steps

Thank you for your follow-up report into customer service at TfL.

As I mentioned when we met recently, your reports have helped shape our customer service strategy and action plan.

We agree with almost all of your recommendations and we have started to implement many of them. Our full response to your report is set out in the attached note and we will provide the Committee with an update later in the year on the progress we are making.

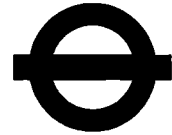
Thank you again for your constructive contribution to improving customer service.

*Yours sincerely,
Vernon*

Vernon Everitt

Managing Director, Customer Experience, Marketing and Communications

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TfL Customer Service – next steps

Recommendation 1

Transport for London should produce a single customer charter covering all of its services, applicable from 1 January 2016. TfL should respond to this recommendation by the end of May 2015, setting out its plans for the development of a charter.

We agree. We will bring together all of our promises under a single customer charter. This will cover customer service commitments from all parts of our business.

With improved navigation on our website, we will clarify our commitments to our customers in the following areas:

- Fares and ticketing
- Standards of service
- Keeping customers informed
- Queries and complaints
- Performance targets
- Getting in touch

We are developing this now and it will be introduced, with accompanying publicity, by the end of the year.

Recommendation 2

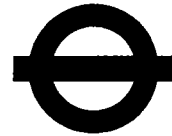
Transport for London should:

- **Add a specific option to make a complaint to the main menu of the customer services helpline.**
- **Modify the design of its web form for complaints, so people can save their own complaints, upload documents and enter a Freedom Pass number.**
- **Allow people to make a complaint via a direct email address, text message or smartphone application.**

TfL should respond to this recommendation by the end of May 2015, setting out the findings of its review and next steps.

Customers can make a complaint using a variety of channels including via social media, to a member of staff at a station, online or by telephone. We recognise that we can make these processes even more transparent.

For the three quarters of Londoners who use it, our website is the main gateway to the services we offer. We will redesign the 'Contact us' section to make it easier to use and allow customers to leave feedback and make a



complaint about any aspect of our services. This redesign will be introduced over the summer.

As you identified in your report, we have reduced the cost for customers contacting us by telephone through introducing our 0343 222 1234 number. We have also simplified the options available when customers call us. Later this month we will introduce a fifth option to the menu which will allow for complaints to be made more easily by telephone.

The outdated technology we currently used to support our web forms will be replaced. We have been looking into technology that would enable a simpler process for complaints and enquiries, including adding files using a smartphone. Provided that the costs are proportionate to the number of customers who would use the service, we would like to see this happen in the next 18 months.

We are already able to receive uploaded documents from customers and, as part of an investigation into a complaint, our staff routinely ask for any additional information customers are willing to share with us, in any format. This will continue.

Recommendation 3

Transport for London should appoint an external organisation to carry out an audit of its response to complaints, including the process for internal escalation of complaints. TfL should respond to this recommendation by the end of May 2015.

We agree. Over the summer we will appoint a firm with expertise in this area to conduct this review. It would be very helpful to gather the views of the people who use our services, and we would welcome the Assembly's involvement in this exercise. We will also provide you with their findings once the audit has been completed.

Recommendation 4

Transport for London should engage in discussions with the Department for Transport, aimed at agreeing arrangements for the structure, funding and governance of a new Alternative Dispute Resolution system for TfL service users. TfL should respond to this recommendation by the end of May 2015 setting out its approach to the ADR Directive and plans for further discussions on this topic.

We welcome the Government's aim to find simpler, cheaper and more efficient ways to resolving disputes.



In its November 2014 response to the consultation on implementation of the ADR Directive, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) indicated that it was still considering how the Directive should apply to the transport industry where passengers already have access to independent complaints handling bodies to help them resolve their disputes with transport providers, such as London TravelWatch and Transport Focus.

We understand that BIS is still considering the matter, but we stand ready to work with any new Directive that is introduced.

Recommendation 5

The Transport for London Board should play a more visible role in championing good customer service. We recommend that:

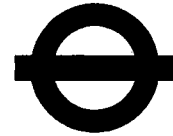
- **The Board should receive quarterly complaints reports, which include the full range of customer service metrics.**
- **A single Board Member should be designated as the customer champion to represent the interests of TfL's customers at Board level.**

TfL should respond to this recommendation by the end of May 2015.

From September 2015, more customer service related data will be included in the quarterly Operational and Financial Performance report submitted to the Board. We already detail the number of complaints received across our services and what we have done to address them and this will be given greater prominence, alongside other performance measures. Board members will therefore be better able to scrutinise our performance in this area.

We will also submit papers on our customer strategy for scrutiny by the Safety, Accessibility and Sustainability Panel, which feeds directly into the Board. This will take effect from the next meeting of the Panel on 7 July.

All Members of the TfL Board play a core role in ensuring that we deliver for our customers and users. The Commissioner and the Managing Directors of London Underground and Rail, Surface Transport and Customer Experience, Marketing and Communications are directly held to account by the Board against challenging customer service targets set out in the published scorecards for TfL overall and our individual operating businesses. Appointing a single board member would, in our view, relegate customer service to a marginal activity, rather than, as it currently is, it being a central consideration for every Board member.



Recommendation 6

Transport for London should take steps to build on the customer service training being provided for London Underground staff during the Fit for the Future programme. The training should be repeated regularly, and extended to staff on other modes. From 2016 it should also incorporate training in implementing the new single customer charter. TfL should respond to this recommendation by the end of May 2015.

The programme to improve customer service at London Underground stations includes an innovative training programme that equips our staff to deliver high quality customer service. Staff participate in a range of scenarios and learn techniques for serving our customers more effectively. They are also given the confidence to resolve customer issues themselves, reducing the need for escalation. Feedback has been excellent and over the next two years nearly 5,000 staff will take part in this training.

Building on this programme, all new recruits to a customer service role across the organisation will receive similar training and this is also being factored in to new training for bus drivers.

Training on a new, single customer charter will be incorporated once the charter itself is finalised.

Recommendation 7

Transport for London should improve the way it informs passengers about their rights to use priority space on buses. Where necessary, clear, accessible signage should be on display, supported by further publicity campaigns and online information. The review should also consider how bus operators train staff to promote these messages and deal with any conflict between passengers, and identify any required improvements in staff training. TfL should respond to this recommendation by the end of May 2015.

We agree. A renewed customer awareness campaign will be launched shortly, informing passengers about their rights in using priority space on buses. Posters will be displayed on buses and at shelters across the network and there will be extensive social media, including our accessibility Twitter and Facebook channels which reach over three quarters of a million followers. This campaign will be delivered with the direct involvement of stakeholders. By September, all 24,500 bus drivers will have participated in All Aboard! training, which promotes empathy with the needs of our customers, particularly towards accessibility. All Aboard! was developed in collaboration with Transport for All and Age UK London.

The way drivers are trained is currently being reviewed as part of the formal BTEC qualification that all drivers are required to take. We will start talking to



stakeholders soon but we intend to improve the current equality and inclusion module as part of this review.

Recommendation 8

Transport for London should add fare information to its Journey Planner tool, including a ‘best available fare’ option, giving people the ability to tailor their journey according to the fares they will incur. TfL should respond to this recommendation by the end of May 2015.

We launched our new website in March 2014 focusing on its primary function of providing reliable real-time travel information to customers. It receives over 20 million visits every month and has become a core part of London life.

During its development, we looked closely at integrating fares information with the Journey Planner tool. However, because of the complexity of the fares structure and the huge number of possible routes, it was not possible to match on a completely reliable basis journeys to fares with our current systems.

This is, however, a change that we are committed to making, and we will investigate again how we can make it happen.

Separately, from this summer 'bus only' journeys will be visible by default alongside Tube, rail, cycling and walking options in Journey Planner, providing a lower cost journey option to customers in a more visible way.