

TRANSPORT FOR LONDON

ENVIRONMENT, CORPORATE AND PLANNING PANEL

**SUBJECT: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

**DATE: 17 NOVEMBER 2010**

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**1 PURPOSE AND DECISION REQUIRED**

1.1 This paper gives more detail on public affairs activity, principally engagement with non-elected stakeholders. This is the latest in a series of papers for the Panel examining different elements of TfL's overall communications and customer information strategy. A separate paper on engagement with elected stakeholders will be provided to a future meeting.

**2 BACKGROUND**

2.1 TfL's public affairs activity forms part of its wider communications strategy. It is integral to TfL's 'thematic approach' to communications, which runs a thread through the main priorities and outcomes TfL needs to deliver under the Mayor's Transport Strategy and TfL's Business Plan.<sup>1</sup>

2.2 The scale of TfL's communications challenge is substantial. TfL is one of the largest transport authorities in the world supporting the needs of over 7.6 million Londoners and millions more visitors. Transport is at the centre of daily life in London and is crucial to the economic success of the UK. TfL is therefore, quite rightly, subject to intense scrutiny from a range of stakeholders seeking to ensure effective delivery and value for fare and tax payer money.

**3 APPROACH**

3.1 There are over 4,000 stakeholders actively seeking to engage with TfL, including opinion formers within the business, voluntary and environmental sectors. Many of these groups are sophisticated and successful campaigning organisations. TfL's objective is to engage with them, in a prioritised way, to ensure that TfL's operational and investment plan delivery is communicated and that it listens to the views, criticisms and praise of those who use and fund its services.

3.2 This proactive approach is geared towards building sustained public support for ongoing investment to improve London's transport system. TfL also has to explain the opportunities and constraints placed upon it in making those improvements, and much of its engagement is about managing the expectations of its stakeholders.

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<sup>1</sup> The main communications strategy themes include: the Comprehensive Spending Review; delivery of TfL's investment plan, including Crossrail and the Tube upgrades; cycling including Barclays Cycle Hire and other forms of sustainable transport; the 2012 Games; and Safety and Security.

- 3.3 In the context of the recent Comprehensive Spending Review, support from a coalition of advocates in the business and voluntary sectors was essential in making the case to Government for continuing with planned investment in London's transport network to ensure the UK remains globally competitive and to support the economic recovery. Funding for all of our top transport priorities was preserved. Looking ahead to the next Spending Review, sustaining this support by demonstrating TfL's delivery and effective use of public money is crucial.
- 3.4 TfL seek to understand the views and perspectives of its stakeholders to draw on their expertise early and in meaningful ways. For example, TfL recently hosted a series of 'roundtables' for business, charities and environmental groups to help shape the draft Mayor's Transport Strategy ahead of the public consultation phase.
- 3.5 TfL has also widened its reach to reflect the Mayor's priorities. For example, it has successfully brought youth participation to TfL, establishing a panel of young representatives from youth organisations to enable TfL to gain their views on transport policy. The panel is looking at Community Safety and Crime; TfL's Youth Strategy; Crime Awareness; Teen Road Safety; and TfL's Skills and Employment Strategy.
- 3.6 The complexity and breadth of the agenda at TfL means that, by definition, stakeholder engagement is a core element in the roles of many TfL staff and senior officials. This includes speaking opportunities for the Commissioner and Chief Officers at numerous events, as well as regular bilateral meetings. The preparation of briefing notes, speeches and narratives on strategy and issues ensures that TfL's messages are communicated consistently and that the specific, and often very detailed, concerns of our stakeholders are addressed in a substantive way.

## **4 AUDIENCES AND ISSUES**

- 4.1 TfL's main non-elected stakeholders are:
- (a) Business representative organisations;
  - (b) Individual businesses;
  - (c) London TravelWatch (LTW);
  - (d) Charities and pan-London voluntary organisations;
  - (e) Environmental groups;
  - (f) Transport campaigning organisations;
  - (g) Think Tanks and public policy forums; and
  - (h) Industry bodies.
- 4.2 TfL's relationships with elected stakeholders - Assembly Members, Members of Parliament and European and International institutions - are managed on a similar basis and are all part of our thematic communications strategy.

## **5 IMPROVING TFL'S STAKEHOLDER RELATIONSHIPS**

- 5.1 Formal and informal feedback suggests TfL's stakeholder relationships have been significantly improved over recent years, leading to improvement in TfL's reputation. In a recent survey of TfL's business stakeholders conducted by ComRes, 56 per cent

said TfL's engagement with them had improved markedly over the last few years. Ninety two per cent said cutting investment in the Tube and Crossrail would be severely damaging for business in the long term. The survey also suggested that TfL's stakeholders prefer personalised communications and a clear 'gateway' in to TfL to ensure that contact is made with the relevant TfL policy or operational experts.

5.2 TfL's proactive approach has led to the following outcomes:

- (a) Markedly improved relationships with business and all other priority stakeholder groups, such as LTW;
- (b) Support for TfL's Comprehensive Spending Review campaign leading to the Mayor and TfL securing the future of Crossrail, the Tube upgrade and the protection of the extensive and accessible bus network;
- (c) Endorsement from the CBI, at the national level, for TfL's Spending Review campaign – this has never happened before;
- (d) Support from the motoring lobby for Barclays Cycle Hire;
- (e) Stakeholder endorsement for the launch of Mayoral initiatives, such as *London's Great Outdoors*;
- (f) Stakeholders joining with TfL to deal with the impact of industrial action on the Tube; and
- (g) Integrated 'area based' engagement programmes, such as those around Crossrail construction.

5.3 A bespoke Contacts Relationship Management database acts as the 'hub' of TfL's stakeholder engagement activity. It contains up to date records and meeting notes for all the organisations TfL regularly engages with, which can be accessed by staff across TfL.

## **6 CONCLUSION**

6.1 TfL's proactive and prioritised engagement activity takes place in a complex business and political environment, involving multiple stakeholders. This is coordinated as part of a wider communications strategy that runs a thread through the main priorities needed to deliver under the Mayor's Transport Strategy and TfL's Business Plan.

6.2 Staff from across TfL pool expertise and collaborate to engage effectively with stakeholders. This is supported by the proactive role played by all of TfL's Managing Directors and senior officials, as well as GLA colleagues.

## **7 RECOMMENDATION**

7.1 The Panel is asked to NOTE this paper.

## **8 CONTACT**

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