

**Date: 10 December 2015**

**Item: Review of TfL Complaint Handling**

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**This paper will be considered in public**

**1 Summary**

1.1 This paper and the attached appendices present the key findings and recommendations of an external audit of our handling of complaints. This was conducted as part of our wider customer service strategy and following the London Assembly's second report on TfL's customer service published in March 2015. This material includes our responses and proposed programme of action to address the opportunities for further improvements highlighted in the audit.

**2 Recommendation**

2.1 **That the Committee note the audit report and action plan to address the opportunities for improvements.**

**3 Customer Service – background**

3.1 Our purpose is to keep London working and growing and to make life here better. We are a customer service business that delivers transport to enable jobs, housing and social cohesion. It is essential that we listen to our customers to help shape our services, including through analysis of, and action on complaints.

3.2 Our Customer Service team handle over 9,000 enquiries every day – that's over 3.3 million per year. The majority of these enquiries are travel advice and ticketing queries, and are not complaints. To give a sense of the number of actual complaints, London Underground receives just over 1 complaint per 100,000 journeys, buses 2.62 and London Overground 3.46 (one of the lowest levels of complaints across train operating companies). These statistics and the actions we have taken to act on complaints are published in our Board papers every quarter.

3.3 We have made it easier for customers to contact us, including enabling them to complain by:

- (a) telephone using our local rate '0343' number;
- (b) email, letter and feedback forms on our website;
- (c) social media on Twitter and Facebook; and
- (d) a new on-line web chat service, which allows customers to communicate in real-time with our customer service team.

- 3.4 We continuously measure our performance and drive continuous improvement through extensive internal quality control processes and externally against the best companies for customer service through mystery shopper surveys. Following rigorous third party assessment of our approach, we have also been ranked in the UK Top 50 contact centres for the last four years.
- 3.5 In March 2015, the London Assembly published its second report on TfL's customer service and made a recommendation for TfL to "*appoint an external organisation to carry out an audit of its response to complaints, including the process for internal escalation of complaints.*" We therefore appointed The Foundation, an organisation with extensive experience of assessing complaint handling, to carry out an extensive audit.

## **4 Key Findings and Current Status**

- 4.1 The Foundation recognised the substantial work already done in improving our service and found us to have a "customer focused disposition".
- 4.2 The Foundation was particularly impressed by our genuine appetite to continuously improve, which translates at the frontline through the level of empathy demonstrated by customer service staff and at a leadership level by the work led by the Customer Group, chaired by the Managing Director, Customer Experience, Marketing and Communications.
- 4.3 They found that the main opportunities to improve are:
- (a) improved complaints logging that could lead to better root cause analysis, so that action can be taken to address issues at source;
  - (b) consistent performance measures across all customer service areas; and
  - (c) improved external and internal communication that provides customers and frontline employees with the confidence that we act on their feedback and have a clear process for escalation of complaints when customers remain dissatisfied.
- 4.4 We will take these opportunities forward through the programme of work described in Appendix 2 which will:
- (a) make it easier for customers to see that we act on complaints and wider feedback;
  - (b) ensure we effectively capture all issues contained in complaints to provide useful data that help address the root causes of dissatisfaction;
  - (c) take further steps to ensure that employees feel empowered to resolve issues effectively first time; and
  - (d) provide customers with a consistent experience across all service areas, including explaining how complaints can be escalated.

## **5 Next steps**

5.1 The next steps are to:

- (a) deliver the improvements through a cross functional team and delivery plan;  
and
- (b) the Managing Director of Customer Experience, Marketing and Communications to track progress and delivery of the improvements through the Customer Group.

## **6 Financial Implications**

6.1 Where required, business cases will be developed to enable the realisation of this programme of work.

### **List of appendices to this report:**

Appendix 1: Transport for London, Complaint Handling: external audit  
Appendix 2: Maximising the Value of Complaints (Programme of work)

### **List of Background Papers:**

None

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# **Transport for London Complaint Handling: External Audit**

## **Key Findings Report for TfL**

November 2015

*FINAL v1.3*

## **Executive summary**

In March 2015, the London Assembly published its second report examining TfL's customer services. The Assembly acknowledged TfL's impressive record of improving how it delivers for customers and also recommended areas for potential further improvement. One recommendation was that TfL commission an external audit of its response to complaints and the process for complaints escalation.

This audit responds to that recommendation and also forms part of TfL's broader customer-led strategy. The findings support TfL's absolute commitment to continuously improve services for customers and to fulfil the organisation's purpose to keep London working and growing and make life in London better. The recommendations in this report are especially ambitious – for three reasons:

1. This reflects the appetite and attitude of TfL's people in response to this audit and the customer-focused disposition of an organisation that deals with 30 million journeys every day across London
2. Improvements in this area would build on the substantial work already done in this area and in defining TfL's overarching customer goal and strategy
3. An ambitious response is appropriate given the increasing challenges of TfL's role, which should be acknowledged throughout: demand on transport services is increasing (+6% year on year on the Tube) with no sign of any rest as the population of London is expected to rise by 10 million by 2030, rising customer expectations, new technologies and digital communication, and the inherent complexities given TfL's broad remit as an integrated transport authority

TfL has taken significant steps to untangle the complex and inefficient system of customer information and complaints handling inherited from multiple predecessors back in 2000, to address the millions of customer contacts it receives each year. The organisation has clearly defined its customer-focused goal and strategy, and has used that to simplify processes and align internal behaviours around delivering customer value. This focus has translated effectively into better responses to customer dissatisfaction. Comprehensive customer gain points work in December 2014 identified priority improvements, which has already driven tangible improvements for customers. Steps have been taken to make it easier for customers to feedback, with overnight reports escalating that feedback to highest levels of decision-making in near real-time. TfL has established a dedicated contact centre covering the majority of TfL's services and there has been a real drive to view complaints as an opportunity to resolve issues for customers brilliantly (focusing on quality as well as efficiency), while learning and improving overall.

This strong foundation was evident in many of our observations, as were the opportunities to build from them and suggested improvement priorities.

*In summary, our overarching observations and recommendations are as follows:*

- We observed a strong customer-focused disposition of the organisation and the genuine appetite to continuously improve services for customers. This was evident in the level of empathy and desire to help shown by service agents when responding to customer complaints, and by the substantial improvement work already achieved and underway in this area
- There has been a renewed drive to focus on quality of response as well as efficiency. TfL now needs to ensure this focus translates consistently, regularly and robustly into performance measurement across service areas. TfL should further define what excellent issue resolution looks like, emphasising outcomes and what customer's value when they complain

## Key Findings Report

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1. What does this report cover?

- In March 2015, the London Assembly published its second report examining TfL's customer services
- The London Assembly's report acknowledged TfL's impressive track record of making constant improvements for customers, while recognising that TfL's relationship with customers is changing (e.g. contactless payments, social media), placing new demands on the relationship
- The report outlined five clear recommendations for further improvement of TfL's services
- This document is in response to recommendation three:

*"TfL should appoint an external organisation to carry out an audit of its response to complaints, including the process for internal escalation of complaints."*

#### 1.2. The approach underpinning this report

- Reflecting the emphasis in the London Assembly's recommendation, this audit covers two areas:
  - i) TfL's direct response to customer complaints
  - ii) The process for internal escalation of complaints
- This approach has been driven by TfL's aspiration and commitment to continuously improve its services for customers. **However it should be acknowledged that this is an aspiration to be worked towards and expectations for what is realistic to see today should be balanced by the complexities of TfL's various roles (regulator, commissioner, owner and operator) and constraints**

#### 1.3. Objectives and scope

##### 1.3.1 Objectives

- To provide a view of TfL's current performance against "best in class" complaints handling

- To provide recommendations to support TfL's aspiration to move towards "best in class"

### **1.3.2 Scope**

- This audit covers all forms of "off system" complaints across all of TfL's service centres, from all customer segments and across all channels
- A "complaint" is defined as an expression (justified or unjustified) of customer dissatisfaction

## **2. Background**

### **2.1. London Assembly Recommendation**

- We note the following themes underpin recommendation three, and have kept these in mind throughout:
  - i) The need for complaints once made to be visible to customers, with progress demonstrated at an individual and London wide level
  - ii) The need for individual responses to be personal and address the specific issue raised
  - iii) The need for the TfL Board to play a more visible role in raising standards in complaints handling
- Within this recommendation, the London Assembly is keen that TfL continues to improve the service and experience it provides to customers overall. This means, continuing to improve consistency and accessibility, while continuing to raise standards

### **2.2. How TfL has responded to the recommendation**

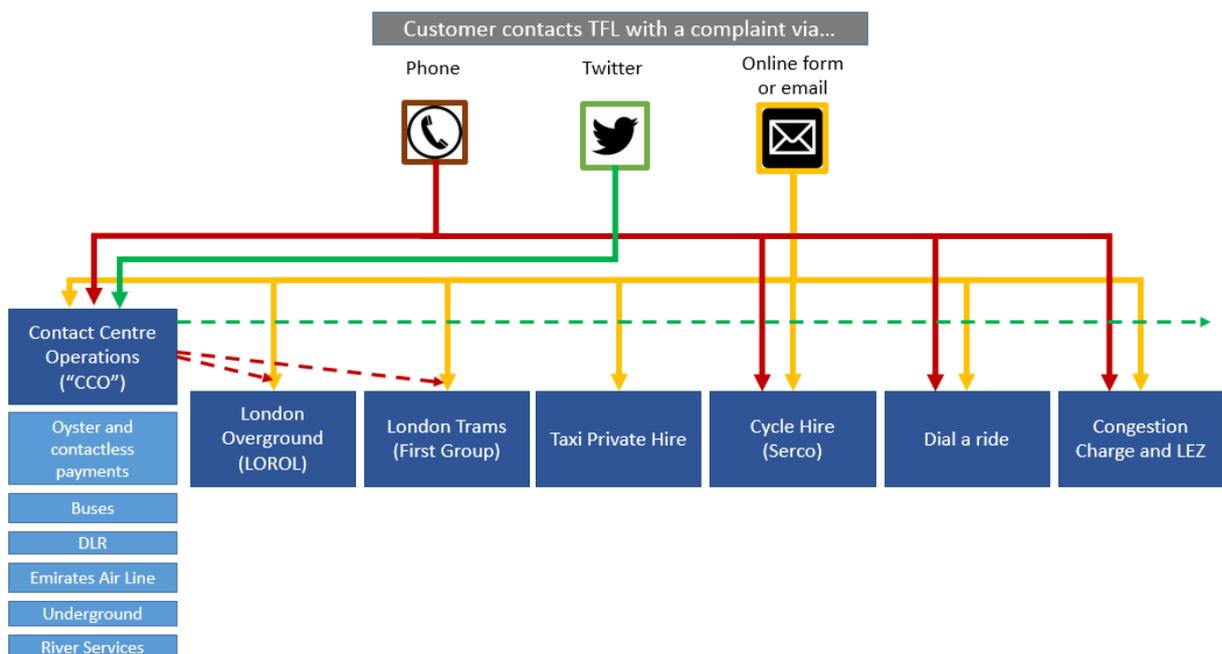
#### **2.2.1 TfL's view of success in response to the recommendation**

- Success for TfL consists of the following:
  - i) The London Assembly is confident its recommendation has been fully considered and will result in action to generate improved complaints handling across TfL's services
  - ii) TfL has a stretching view of complaints "excellence" to constantly strive towards
  - iii) Staff across TfL are clear and energised by actionable improvement areas

#### **2.2.2 The process followed in response to the recommendation**

*Audit overview*

- This is a comprehensive audit of all forms of customer complaints into TfL's various contact centres



- Although customers can complain over the phone through a direct line in most cases, their call may have to be passed to another area in rare circumstances e.g. LOROL, Trams. At present Taxi Private Hire only receive complaints in writing although work is underway to resolve this.
- Twitter – CCO and Centercomms are responsible for monitoring and responding to complaints in relation to all service areas
- Online form/email – Customers can complain directly by online form/email to each service area

#### Audit process

- The audit itself has consisted of the following activities:
  - Internal interviews across TfL, focussing on the areas responsible for complaint handling
  - External interviews of key stakeholders
  - Analysis of relevant material from across the business including reports, quality standards/assessments and policies

- Contact centre visits across all service areas outlined above to interview frontline staff, observe them in action, listen in to calls and review complaints handling via other channels
- Review of performance in each service area against some of the components of best in class complaints handling
- Information about the auditor and full investigation and source details can be found in the appendix

### **3. TfL's current performance - observations and recommendations**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

- This key findings report summarises the results of a detailed audit in which we reviewed each of TfL's service areas against some of the components of best in class
- The intention is not to benchmark TfL's performance against others (no organisation demonstrates these components perfectly), but to have an aspirational view of "excellence" to assess against, and identify stretching improvement opportunities

#### **3.2. Customer experience**

This section reviews how well TfL directly responds to customers when they complain

##### **3.2.1. EASE**

- Overall, we found that it is relatively easy for customers to make a complaint to TfL. Customers can send messages directly to TfL on the go via Twitter. The online form is straightforward to complete and enables customers to express their issue freely in their own words (without restriction). When calling TfL, it has now been made explicit that the number customers are calling also deals with complaints, not just enquiries. Call wait times have been significantly reduced and agents listen effectively
- We have identified some opportunities to make further improvements:
  - i) We note that the "Help and Contact" page on the TfL website has been recently updated with all contact details for the various service areas all presented on one page. Access could be improved by making the help and contact option easier to find on TfL's landing page
  - ii) TfL has invested substantially in a training programme to ensure that customer service agents who previously specialised in one area, are now equipped to resolve most

customer enquiries or issues at first contact. As a result, telephone menu options have been significantly simplified to make it easier for customers to speak to someone who can resolve their issue. There is an opportunity for TfL to make this even easier by publishing the menu options on the website, so customers don't need to listen through the list

- iii) At present, London Overground and Trams do not have their own direct complaints line, which means customers occasionally have to repeat themselves as they are transferred from CCO
- iv) TfL systems do not allow customers to easily re-visit their complaint or track progress, so they know what is being done to address their issue. This system improvement would make it significantly easier for customers to know their complaint has been received and is being acted upon. The advantages of this need to be considered against potentially significant systems investment and only for complex ongoing complaints.

**EASE – TfL management response:**

- We will make the option to complain more visible on the landing page and publish our telephone menu online. We are committed to making it easy for customers to contact us. As outlined in the report, significant improvements have been made online and over the phone to make it easy for customers to complain. There is a continuous programme of improvement to help our customers navigate the website.
- Further consolidation of customer service areas across TfL is planned in the next 12 months. This will address rare issues, such as customers having to repeat themselves as they are transferred from CCO to London Overground, as customers calling the main TfL number will be able to speak directly to an agent who can help
- We are currently investigating better systems options, and will look at the feasibility of customers being able to track the progress of their complaints online

### **3.2.2. EMPATHY**

- Overall, the contact centres and their complaint handling teams showed a very good level of empathy with customer complaints. Service agents performed particularly well on the phone; they connected with customers effectively, were patient, listened well and wanted to be helpful

- We identified improvement opportunities to more *explicitly* demonstrate empathy and understanding across all channels:
  - i) When responding to written complaints, the use of template responses should be improved. These are intended as a starting point (TfL's Style Guide emphasises this, reminding service agents to always adapt them to be personal). In practice, they are sometimes insufficiently personalised and can feel generic
  - ii) Quality criteria are inconsistent across service areas and can be overly prescriptive in some cases
  - iii) In complex cases where the customer's desired outcome is not achievable (e.g. in staff behaviour complaints, where there are legal restrictions on information sharing and a customer wants to know precisely what has happened), service agents generally handle this difficult position well. However, TfL should better equip agents with tools and training to respond with greater confidence, providing the right level of detail so customers feel the complaint has been fully considered and not "closed down", while being open and honest about practical and legal limitations

**EMPATHY – TfL management response:**

- Our aim is to be empathetic to our customers in all circumstances
- We will develop a programme to effectively measure empathy across all customer service areas to make further progress on this, particularly when communicating with a customer in writing. This will include action to ensure that correspondence is personalised on a consistent basis. Specific training will also be identified to help agents deal with situations in which the customer's desired outcome is not achievable

### **3.2.3. CERTAINTY**

- Overall TfL performs well in this area, telling customers what will happen, by when to resolve their issue and updating them if this is going to change with an explanation
- We have identified opportunities to further improve:
  - i) There can be inconsistent levels of complaints ownership across service areas. TfL should ensure customers always have certainty that a named individual is taking responsibility, so they feel they are "in a safe pair of hands". We observed for example in written responses from London Trams that the name of the service agent is not used in the sign off

- ii) For good reason, there is a focus on dealing with the complaint in a single phone call or exchange of correspondence. However, sometimes cases are “closed” by telling the customer what will happen to resolve their issue, rather than when the issue has actually been resolved (unless the customer requests a follow up). Ideally, it should always be assumed that a customer wants to know when their issue has actually been resolved (unless they opt out). The benefits of this should be considered against potentially significant resourcing implications
- iii) TfL should also consider how best to define its approach where the solution is a longer term improvement. It is important even in these cases that customers know their feedback has been considered and acted upon. This could perhaps be achieved with a “you said...we did” website section, and ensuring those handling complaints have this collective view so they can convey this to customers

**CERTAINTY – TfL management response:**

- We recognise the importance of delivering consistent standards across all customer service areas. We established a pan TfL contact centre group two years ago, which shares best practice through regular review meetings
- We acknowledge that providing certainty of when the issue has been resolved would be an improvement to our service. We will examine this, alongside considering the cost of doing so
- Successful customer information campaigns have been undertaken under our “Every Journey matters” message. They are aimed at explaining how we support London and address issues raised by customers. This includes a section on the website landing page where customers can find out more about the improvements TfL is making. We are investigating further the opportunity to communicate improvements resulting from feedback more effectively on the website.

### 3.2.4. SPEED

- TfL performs well in this area and response times have improved significantly across TfL's services. There are also effective mechanisms in place to give priority response and resolution to urgent categories of complaint (e.g. safety related)
- As a step towards "best in class", TfL should ensure customer reasonable expectations on speed of response are consistently considered. Today, response times communicated in holding responses and subsequent prioritisation is based on internal targets, and customer expectations of what is a *reasonable* speed given the nature of the complaint should be more central to thinking. The ability to make time sensitive issues from a customer perspective easily visible in the Customer relationship management (CRM) systems varies across service areas, meaning sometimes customers do not receive a response by the time that they have requested

#### **SPEED – TfL management response:**

- Currently in the main contact centre (Contact Centre Operations), around 80 per cent of contacts are resolved within 48 hours - which is above industry standards. The likelihood of missing a customer's timescale is therefore very low. We know we can always do better and, as part of our wider customer service strategy, we will pursue every opportunity to improve speed of response while maintaining quality.

## 3.3. LEARNING & IMPROVEMENT

### 3.3.1. LISTEN

- Overall, TfL does a great job of listening carefully to the customer's problem. The online form encourages customers to fully explain their issue, and on calls agents seek to capture the *verbatim* issue. On very limited occasions, call notes from the first service agent do not sufficiently capture the issue. TfL should eliminate these rare instances by including this in quality review processes
- As a priority, TfL should focus on improving the consistency in the way complaints are logged (beyond the free text section where the customer verbatim issue is usually logged effectively as outlined above). Information captured in the remaining fields needs to consistently reflect the customer's issue(s), rather than the presumed cause or solution.

**LISTEN – TfL Management response:**

- We will do more to ensure that service agents have a shared understanding of what good complaints logging looks like and that this is followed through with effective quality measures across all service areas
- It should be noted that the way complaints are logged does not impact on the quality of resolution, as customer service agents rely on the verbatim description
- We also use a variety of other sources to identify those areas which cause frustration to our customers. This includes formal research, mystery shopping, social media monitoring and customer satisfaction surveys. They are combined with complaints information to form an overall picture and action plan to make improvements

### **3.3.2. EMPOWER RESOLUTION**

*Empowered individuals*

- TfL has already done a great job in removing many of the practical impediments to empowered resolution (e.g. increasing refund authority levels). The next step is to ensure empowerment authority translates effectively into brilliant issue resolution. This means that agents will consistently know that they are free to act without sign off, taking ownership for resolving customer issues and reducing subsequent escalations
- TfL should further define what excellent issue resolution looks like, emphasising outcomes and what customer's value when they complain. TfL should consider seeking regular customer feedback on quality of complaints handling, noting that London Overground already does this well. This should be incorporated into performance measurement criteria.
- *Daily* measures of agent performance should strike a better balance between efficiency and quality – currently the predominant measures are number of cases closed and handling times (please note periodic reviews focus on quality in balance with efficiency).
- *In most cases* agents are well equipped with access to the information needed to help customers effectively. TfL share useful information with service agents in the form of weekly knowledge bulletins – we observed several helpful and confident responses. Although, access to *real time* "in system" information is inconsistent across services and should be reviewed and improved where necessary.

**EMPOWER RESOLUTION (individuals) – TfL Management response:**

- We work hard to ensure that agents are empowered to resolve customer issues. As recommended, we will take the opportunity to sense check that this is actually translating into positive outcomes for our customers. This will, of course, include feedback from our agents as well as customers
- We regularly conduct mystery shopping surveys. In addition to this, we are working on the best way to collect feedback from customers on the quality of complaints/contact handling. We use this feedback to motivate our agents and to strike an appropriate balance between efficiency and quality

*Escalations*

- TfL needs a clear view on the best approach to escalated complaints. The approach across service areas is inconsistent and needs to be carefully thought through. Smaller contact centres have less formal process definition (with some exceptions such as Congestion Charge which has three defined steps). By contrast, the escalation process in CCO is clearly defined. A general positive theme across all areas is a focus on avoiding handovers, with empowered agents keeping ownership and seeking input from others as needed. However, there is no completely shared view on when it is appropriate to pass case ownership on or the appropriate number of escalation levels before the customer is referred to an independent body
- There is a resulting inconsistency in the level of information customers have on their options *before escalating*. For instance, Congestion Charge and Low Emission Zone has information on TfL's website, though it could be easier to find, setting out the different escalation steps and timings. Other service areas do not do this
- TfL currently does makes it clear that customers can refer their issue to London Travel Watch and the Local Government Ombudsman if they remain unsatisfied, showing a genuine desire to help

**EMPOWER RESOLUTION, including escalation– TfL Management response:**

- We will conduct an internal review of our escalation processes across all service areas to ensure that the escalations process is clearly set out. The website will carry a clear explanation of this so customers know what they can expect when they remain unsatisfied

#### **4. Audit Conclusions**

1. The empathy demonstrated by customer service agents across services stood out; they showed care and patience in understanding the customer's issue and a genuine desire to help
2. Response times on the whole are quick and TfL are good at informing customers when they can expect a response and updating them if this is going to change and why.
3. In addition to speed of response, there has been a renewed focus on quality measures. TfL now needs to ensure there is a consistent understanding of 'quality' in complaints handling across service areas, focused on outcomes and what customers value instead of correct process. Quality measures should be adjusted to align with this and be embedded into *daily* rhythms to keep a more regular focus on the balance of efficiency and quality
4. TfL should identify how it can close the loop with customers more consistently (especially in cases where improvement recommendations are longer term), taking resourcing implications into account. Customers need to have greater confidence that their feedback has been worthwhile, ultimately contributing to London wide improvement
5. Many practical steps have been taken to empower service agents to resolve issues brilliantly. The next step is to ensure service agents understand and act on that empowerment. This will require continuous and strong leadership across the whole management team, which we are confident will be provided

We would recommend TfL carefully phases these changes to make sure there are no adverse effects in the short term that could compromise the positive changes outlined in this report.

**CONCLUSIONS – TfL Management response:**

- Delivering effectively for our customers is at the heart of our strategic priorities. Over the last three years, continuous improvements have been made to meet customers' growing expectations led by the work carried out by the TfL Customer Group. Chaired by the Managing Director of Customer Experience, Marketing and Communications, this brings together senior staff from all areas of TfL to drive improvements for customers. We are determined to build on these strong foundations to do better on a continuous basis
- There are several opportunities for improvements identified in this report which we will seize to further develop our complaint handling processes ensuring we take steps towards the 'best in class' aspiration
- In addition to the existing action plan, we will use the opportunity this audit presents to take further actions. This includes improvements to our website and greater consistency in explaining how complaints are escalated. A project plan of those improvements is now being developed

## **Appendix**

### ***Introducing The Foundation***

- TfL appointed The Foundation to carry out this audit
- The Foundation is a Growth and Innovation consultancy, specialising in helping organisations to achieve lasting success by being genuinely customer-led
- In the last 16 years The Foundation has worked with over 100 organisations across sectors to tackle their toughest growth challenges by seeing their world from “the outside in”, reconnecting with what customers truly value and finding new and better ways to deliver it
- During this period, we have helped organisations to review and improve their complaints handling for customers, both in terms of how they respond to individuals, but also how they listen, learn and improve as a result

### ***Sources informing this audit***

#### **CCO**

#### ***Investigations***

- External Interviews with:
  - Val Shawcross – London Assembly
  - London Travel Watch
  - Top 50
  - Stage Coach
- Stakeholder interviews:
  - MD, Customer Experience, Marketing & Communications
  - Performance Development Manager, Performance Management, London Buses, Surface transport
  - Stage Coach
  - Director of Customer Strategy
  - Operations Director, SSL
  - Head of Network development – Performance London Buses
  - Travel Products Manager
  - Surface Government Relations Manager
  - Director of Asset Management
  - General Manager, Jubilee Line
  - Driver Communications Manager

- Contact centre visit on 01.09.2015:
  - Interview and contact centre overview with Customer Relationship Manager
  - Interviews and call listening with - Generalist (Streets, Buses, London Underground and Rail, DLR, Emirates, River)
  - Interview and call listening with – ticketing (oyster) phone adviser
  - Interview and observation with Buses, rapid adviser
  - Interview and observation with Streets, rapid adviser
  - Interview with Streets Investigations Advisor
  - Interview with Buses Investigations Advisor
  - Interviews with London Underground and Rail Investigations Advisor
  - Interview with Twitter adviser
  - Interview with Reporting Manager
  - Interview with Executive Performance manager, Customer Services Executive team

#### ***Documents reviewed***

- London Assembly Report & written submissions - March 2015
- TFL CCO complaints overview (“Life of a CCO complaint”)
- “One and done” template response letter (failure to stop for customer boarding the bus)
- BPA customer service agent quality assessment form
- Advisor Correspondence quality scorecard
- Customer service agent team stats sheet
- Ticketing (oyster) phone advisers team stats sheets
- TFL CCO Style Guide
- First contact and Executive Team escalations log
- CCO “lessons learnt” summary
- TfL Unreasonable Complainants Policy
- Knowledge Team weekly “Talking Points” bulletin
- An example of a customer handling plan – used to manage repeat complainers
- TFL Customer gain points research – December 2014
- Customer services escalation process
- Top 50 Telephone Report 2014
- Top 50 Email Report 2014
- Top 50 Social Media Report 2014
- TFL mini top 50 – April 2015
- CCO daily customer feedback summary report (sample)
- Rail Feedback report
- Streets correspondence report
- CCO internal stakeholder survey
- TFL draft complaints report – Q1 2014/15

## **Cycle Hire**

### ***Investigations***

- Interview with General Manager, Cycle Hire
  
- Contact centre visit on 23.09.2015
  - Service agent call listening and contact centre observation
  - Interview with Head of Contact Centre

### ***Documents/sources reviewed***

- Quarterly report to TFL summarising number of complaints and reason for complaints
- Service Agent quality assessment form
- CRM system
- On screen team measures
- Monthly Business report

## **London Overground**

### ***Investigations***

- Interview with Operations Director, SSL
- Interview with Director of London Rail
  
- Contact centre visit on 28.09.2015
  - Service agent call listening and contact centre observation
  - Interview with Head of Contact Centre and Customer Relations Team Manager

### ***Documents/sources reviewed***

- Monthly customer service report (verbatim customer feedback on how individual agents have resolved their complaint)
- Monthly internal complaint category analysis
- Periodic service report to TFL
- Service agent performance review form
- Complaint case log form
- Customer hand written feedback form

## **Taxi Private Hire**

### ***Investigations***

- Interview with Head of Passenger complaints
- Interview with Director of Service Operations, Surface Transport
- Interview with Head of Licensing for TPH

### ***Documents/sources reviewed***

- Example periodic complaint report form

## **Trams**

### ***Investigations***

- Interview with Director of London Rail
- Contact centre visit on 12.08.2015
  - Service agent call listening and contact centre observation
  - Interview with Head of Contact Centre Operations

### ***Documents/sources reviewed***

- Reviewing sample written responses
- Reviewing sample call logs
- Reviewing Complaint logging excel sheet

## **Congestion Charge and Low Emission Zones**

### ***Investigations***

- Contact centre visit on 18.08.2015
  - Service agent call listening and contact centre observation
  - Interview with Head of Contact Centre Operations

### ***Documents/sources reviewed***

- Congestion charge complaints procedure
- Congestion Charge and LEZ – Manager Escalations
- Copy of Scheme Order for CC and LEZ
- Quality Scorecard

- Periodic complaints report

### **Dial a ride**

#### ***Investigations***

- Interview with Director of service Ops in Surface Transport
- Contact centre visit on 12.08.2015
  - Service agent call listening and contact centre observation
  - Interview with Head of Passenger Services (DAR)
  - Interview with Contact Centre Manager
  - Interview with Complaints Handling Agents

#### ***Documents/sources reviewed***

- Overview of Dial-a-ride
- DAR complaints procedure

# Maximising the Value of Complaints

November 2015



Transport for London  
**Congestion charging**  
  
**Central ZONE**  
Mon - Fri  
7 am - 6 pm

1	11	FULHAM BROADWAY	due
87	87	WANDSWORTH	13min
11	11	FULHAM BROADWAY	16min
87	87	WANDSWORTH	19min

GREEN PARK STATION

Santander

35087

# Background

- In March 2015 London Assembly's Transport Committee published a report on our customer services
- It recommended that we should appoint an external organisation to carry out an audit of our response to complaints, including the process for internal escalation of complaints.
- TfL appointed The Foundation to carry out this audit.
- The Foundation were asked to provide a view of TfL's current performance. They assessed it against 'best in class' complaints handling and provided recommendations to support TfL's aspiration to consistently improve their customer experience.
- The Foundation's scope covered 'off system' complaints across all of TfL's customer service centres, auditing all forms of customer complaints into TfL across each service from all segments and across all channels

# The Foundation's Key Findings

- The Foundation went beyond the original requirement and in addition to an extensive audit across all customer service areas, highlights opportunities where TfL can improve in becoming a “listening and learning” organisation.
- The Foundation recognises the substantial work already done in improving our customer experience and has found TfL has a “customer focused disposition”.

# Our Key Strengths

## The Foundation said:

- *We were impressed with the empathy demonstrated by customer service agents across services. On the whole, they showed care and patience in understanding the customer's issue, and a genuine desire to help*
- *TfL are good at managing customer expectations, letting them know when they can expect a response and updating them if this is going to change*
- *TfL respond quickly given the volumes of contacts they receive*
- *There has been a real drive to focus on practically enabling empowerment, as well as focusing on quality of resolution.*
- *TfL's response to this audit was open, helpful and keen to build on the positive improvements already made in this area. The leadership appreciates the importance of complaints handling.*

# Key Opportunities

**The main opportunities to better embed a customer focused culture were found in the following areas:**

- Actionable insight through improved root cause analysis of our complaints
- Consistent and focused performance measures at all levels and in all areas of the organisation that better demonstrate TfL's commitment to their customer experience
- Improved external and internal communication that provide customers and frontline staff alike with confidence that the organisation acts on their feedback

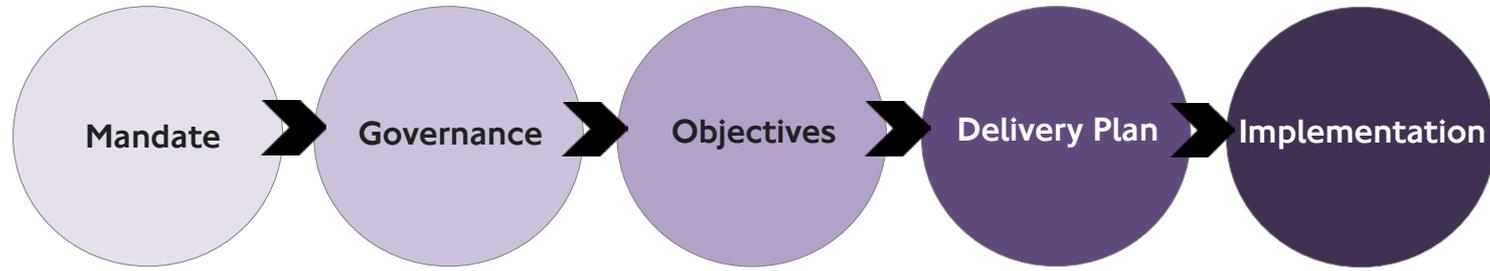
**TfL provided a management response to the opportunities highlighted in the report which now need to be actioned through a comprehensive programme of work**

# Programme purpose

- Act upon management responses and commitment made following the audit
- Provide a panoramic view for all pan TfL initiatives that are aimed at maximising the value of complaints
- Create coordinated and timely interventions that are trackable
- Deliver a consistent 'best in class' customer experience when dealing with complaints
- Demonstrate that TfL recognises the value of complaints

# Programme Deliverables

- Make it easier for customers to feedback and ensure they trust us to act upon it
- More effectively capture customer issues to provide useful data business wide that help address causes of dissatisfaction
- Our staff throughout the organisation feel empowered to resolve issues effectively first time
- Provide customers with a consistent experience across all service areas



**Mandate:** Obtain mandate from the Leadership Team and the Customer Group

**Governance:** Identify a Programme Sponsor and a Programme Manager. Create a Steering Group and assign an Owner to each intervention

**Objectives:** Refine the programme objectives and confirm a set of programme initiatives

**Delivery Plan:** Prioritise initiatives, identify short, medium & long term deliverables and establish the reporting mechanisms

**Implementation:** Implement the activities and monitor their impact

# Key Contributors

Authority Group	Leadership Team Customer Group
Consulting Group	London Travelwatch London Assembly Accessibility Groups
Delivery Group	Gain point Lead TfL Customer Services Employee Comms and Engagement TfL Online Customer Insight Public Affairs

# Things to consider

Building upon strong foundations

Number of disparate customer service areas

Complaints can be seen as threats

Complaints are not valued consistently across TfL

Factor increased demand on our services

Creating a simple message for complex and varied issues

A challenge wider than the contact centre community

Commercial considerations for outsourced contact centres

System limitations

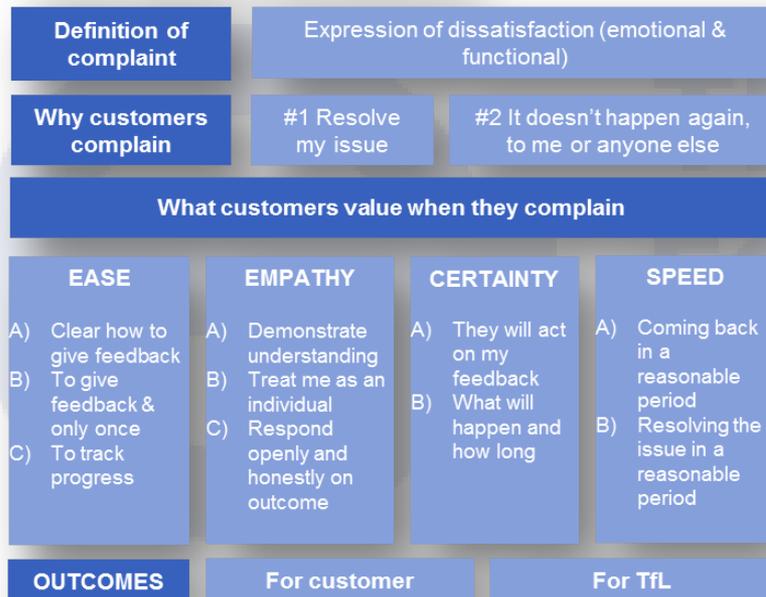
Achieving a balance between efficiency and quality

...And rapidly changing customer expectations!

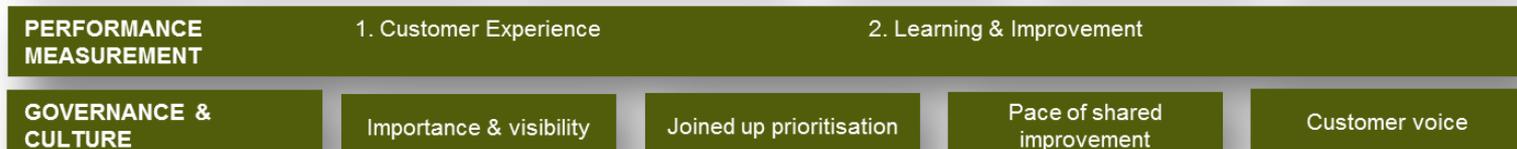
# Our Approach

- We will use The Foundation's framework to ensure all areas are covered
- The interventions, which form part of this programme, will address at least one area of this framework where improvements have been highlighted

## CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE



## LEARNING & IMPROVEMENT



# Possible Interventions

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# Customer Experience

What customers value when they complain...

*...Ease, Empathy, Certainty, Speed*

# Complaints: Customer Experience

## Objectives

Making it easier for customers to feedback

Present TfL as an empathetic organisation

## Initiatives

- Further consolidation of TfL customer service areas planned for 2016, eliminating the need to transfer and increasing the opportunity for first time resolution
- Investigate the feasibility of customers tracking their cases across all customer service areas
- Make our presence more visible through the TfL website
  - Increased visibility on the landing page online
  - Publish phone menu options online
- Enhance our quality measures to ensure we effectively demonstrate empathy and personalisation of response to a high standard pan TfL

# Complaints: Customer Experience

## Objectives

Build customers' trust

Ensure high standard of response time are applied consistently

## Initiatives

- Evaluate the best way to communicate improvements driven by customer feedback more effectively on our website – 'You Said, We Did'
- Evaluate the benefit, cost and practicalities of making contact with customers post complaint first response to advise of outcome when this takes some time to implement (e.g. bus route changes)
- Work towards a consistent Customer Promise that clearly outlines how we use customer feedback
- Create and embed pan TfL complaint handling standards and SLAs to ensure consistency
- Ensure new CRM system maximises the opportunity to enhance the speed of response and resolution

# Learning & Improvement

**Listen, Empower, Action, Focus**

*Capture, Identify, Share, Be Consistent*



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# Learning & Driving Improvements

## Objectives

**Effectively capture our customers' experiences**

**Create a workforce that feels empowered to resolve issues first time**

## Initiatives

- Obtain better business intelligence through the CRM replacement project
  - Establish best in class complaint logging standard and share across all areas to ensure consistency
  - Include logging measures within our performance measures
- 
- By creating an employee charter / gold standard for customer complaint handlers pan TfL
  - Ask Customers of their experience post issue resolution and feedback to frontline staff

# Learning & Driving Improvements

## Objectives

**Provide customers with clear escalation routes**

**Provide insight that is actionable and focused**

## Initiatives

- Conduct an internal review of our existing escalation processes across all service areas to identify any opportunity for improvement
  - Following the internal review, our Customer Promise will be updated, visible online and provide clarity to our customers on TfL's escalation process
  - Review our internal transfer processes, across all channels and services, to ensure best in class experience is provided to our customers
- 
- Evaluate the opportunity and practicalities for real-time reports across all service areas
  - Review reports across all areas to ensure that they provide appropriate actionable insight

# Performance Measurement

*Customer Experience and Learning & Development*

## Culture

*Importance & Visibility, Joined Up Prioritisation, Pace of Shared Improvement and Customer Voice*

# Performance Measurement & Culture

## Objectives

Ensure performance measures focus on quality outcomes for our customers

Create a culture that encourages our staff to own and champion our customers' issues

## Initiatives

- Measure repeat contacts and monitor as part of operations performance data
- Set up quality measures that are more focused on the customer outcome
- Ask Customers of their experience post issue resolution and feedback to frontline staff

- Share customer driven improvements with our frontline staff
- Provide enhanced visibility of the gain points work across the organisation