

TRANSPORT FOR LONDON

SURFACE TRANSPORT PANEL

SUBJECT: M4 BUS LANE UPDATE

DATE: 9 NOVEMBER 2010

1 PURPOSE AND DECISION REQUIRED

- 1.1 This paper updates the Panel on the situation with regards to the status of the M4 bus lane.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In line with similar policy for bus lanes operated by TfL and many authorities in the UK, private hire vehicles are not permitted to use the M4 bus lane. Since August 2009, some private hire operators have been challenging the restrictions in place in respect of the M4 bus lane operated by the Highways Agency and enforced by the Police through intentionally driving in the bus lane and incurring fixed penalty notices.
- 2.2 When this action commenced, TfL received a significant number of complaints and representations from the London taxi trade demanding TfL take action to address this matter and take enforcement action against those private hire operators using the M4 bus lane. While TfL had no responsibility for the M4 bus lane, it facilitated meetings with the Highways Agency and the Police to seek to understand their respective positions and raise taxi trade concerns.

3 CURRENT STATUS

- 3.1 Over the course of the past year, TfL understands that the Police issued over 200 fixed penalties to private hire vehicles observed in the M4 bus lane. While some of these penalties were paid, some of these cases were due to be challenged by the operators and heard at Court in September.
- 3.2 However, on 4 October, the Department for Transport announced that a decision had been taken for a suspension of the M4 bus lane from 24 December 2010 until June 2012 when the lane becomes part of the Olympic Route Network for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. After this, the intention is to remove it permanently.
- 3.3 As a result of this announcement, TfL understands that the Crown Prosecution Service has formally notified those private hire operators challenging the issue of the fixed penalty charges issued to them that it is no longer in the public interest to continue with this legal action.

4 RECOMMENDATION

4.1 The Panel is asked to NOTE the paper.

5 CONTACT

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