

**Date: 2 March 2017**

**Item: Night Tube Implementation**

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**This paper will be considered in public**

**1 Summary**

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to inform the Panel of the launch and first few months of Night Tube on London Underground.

**2 Recommendation**

- 2.1 **The Panel is asked to note the paper.**

**3 Background and Readiness Activity**

- 3.1 London is increasingly a 24 hour city. Since 2000 the demand for night time services has been growing across both the Underground and bus networks. This is highlighted by the growth in Underground ridership after 22:00 increasing twice as fast as the average all-day rate and the ridership on the Night Bus network (over 100 routes) growing over 170 Per cent during the same period. Demand is busiest on Friday and Saturday nights.

- 3.2 In response to this growing customer demand, a new Night Tube service was developed to meet the following specifications:

- (a) that a train service should operate at least every 10 minutes through central London, to provide a turn-up-and-go service minimising the likelihood of anti-social behaviour on stations;
- (b) that staff availability, ticketing availability and fares, should be the same as during the day;
- (c) that depots or control centres would operate in line with daytime operations;
- (d) provide a service where there is an existing demand for overnight travel;
- (e) ensure lines pass at one maintenance depot; and
- (f) have minimal impact on major upgrade works.

- 3.2 In November 2013 the introduction of a night time service on the Underground was announced during the 'Future Vision for the Tube' event. To enable this to become a reality a small Night Tube project team was put in place to co-ordinate the 'readiness activities' for London Underground which included:

- (a) phasing of the launch to minimise the impact on the major four Lines Modernisation (District, Circle, Hammersmith & City and Metropolitan lines) and Bank Capacity enhancement projects;
- (b) agreeing policing support with both the British Transport Police and the Metropolitan Police;
- (c) making software modifications to signalling and control systems;
- (d) installing additional gates within stations to prevent access to areas not being used for Night Tube (primarily within interchange stations with lines that running a night service);
- (e) modifying the TfL ticketing system to ensure customers pay the correct fare when travelling either side of the 04:30 change of ticketing day;
- (f) the recruitment of part time Train Operators (drivers) and Customer Service Assistants and Supervisors (Stations);
- (g) rephasing maintenance activities to run from Sunday to Thursday evenings, this also involved changes to maintenance staff rosters.
- (h) running trial operations: trialling the Night Tube service behind closed doors to test that the system (staff and assets) were ready for launch;
- (i) hosting a series of stakeholder meetings to obtain views from local businesses, local borough Councils and residents; and
- (j) reviewing noise and vibration complaint handling processes, to ensure residents get a consistent response and that investment in this area is prioritised to where most needed.

3.3 The change in travel patterns as a result of Night Tube service starting would also impact on the demand for Night Buses. As a result some 19 new Night Bus routes have been introduced to complement Night Tube, providing services from suburban stations for the 'last mile' home. Of these 19 routes, 17 are Friday and Saturday nights only, whilst two were considered to have sufficient justification to operate all week.

3.4 The rationale for Night Tube was based on existing demand for overnight travel, and therefore the Tube was expected to deflect demand from existing Night Bus routes. There was a public consultation in spring 2015 regarding frequency reductions on 16 routes which were broadly parallel to Night Tube. These reductions would have meant Friday and Saturday night buses operated at the same frequency as other nights. It was not proposed to withdraw any Night Bus routes because some customers will have a preference for bus over Tube, due to the exact routing or fare differential.

3.5 A similar shift in demand was predicted for taxi and private hire vehicles (PHVs). Night Tube would reduce the demand from central London but increase suburban demand for short trips from stations. To accommodate, this new taxi ranks have been appointed at 34 Night Tube stations, with wider details of which Night Tube stations have a taxi rank being available on the TfL website. It is also hoped that a net reduction in demand would remove the market for 'illegal minicabs', contributing to TfL's Safer Travel at Night (STaN) campaign.

## 4 Customer Experience

- 4.1 On Friday 16 August Night Tube was launched on the Central and Victoria lines. The Mayor travelled in the cab of the first northbound Victoria line train from Brixton to Walthamstow. Three other lines quickly followed, with the Jubilee line on Friday 7 October 2016, the Northern line on Friday 18 November 2016 and the Piccadilly line on Friday 16 December 2016.
- 4.2 The early adopters of Night Tube have been customers who are extending a night out or using the service to travel to and from work. It was forecast that 163,000 trips per weekend would be taken on Night Tube in the first full year of operation, but demand has been above forecast throughout 2016, with the Halloween weekend and approach to Christmas being particularly busy. The busiest weekend recorded was on the last full weekend before Christmas (16/17 December 2016) when 228,000 journeys were made.
- 4.3 An integrated night-time transport network is now available offering customers a choice between Night Tube to night bus or taxi/private hire. Five bus stations are staffed 24 hours a day (Hammersmith, North Greenwich, Stratford, Vauxhall and Victoria).
- 4.4 The service offered on Night Tube is predominantly every 10 minutes, with some longer intervals in outer London areas.
- (a) Victoria and Jubilee lines: every 10 minutes
  - (b) Central line: every 10 minutes between White City and Leytonstone and every 20 minutes between Ealing Broadway and White City and Leytonstone to Loughton/Hainault.
  - (c) Piccadilly line: every 10 minutes between Cockfosters and Heathrow Terminal 5.
  - (d) Northern line: every 8 minutes between Morden and Camden Town and every 15 minutes from Camden Town to High Barnet/Edgware.
- 4.5 Overall reliability is good at 99 per cent of timetabled trains operated, but due to the lower frequency of trains, when an incident does occur its impact is more pronounced. Teams are in place to resolve faults as quickly as possible.
- 4.6 The operation of Night Tube has quickly become business-as-usual for the operational railway, and performance is comparable to or better than that seen at other times.

### Crime and Safety

- 4.7 A key concern of many stakeholders, including staff, before the launch of Night Tube related to increased crime and issues with personal safety. To allay this concern a policing plan was developed with the British Transport Police. The plan was based on the approach taken in other cities that run night metro services and analysis of data on patterns of crime and anti-social behaviour both within stations and in the surrounding area. The aspiration of the BTP is that *any person working or using on the Night Tube should be no more likely to be a victim of crime or disorder than at any other time.*

- 4.8 The average number of crimes recorded each weekend during the period of Night Tube operation remains close to the British Transport Police's forecast, which was based upon average crimes after 22:00. Many of these incidents consist of low level crimes such as theft. We will continue to monitor this closely and work with the British Transport Police to provide a safe environment for our customers.

### **Noise and Vibration**

- 4.9 During our stakeholder engagement a key concern raised, particularly by residents living over or near the Tube, was the risk of disturbance from overnight noise and vibration. From the outset it was planned that noise at stations and on trains would be removed or reduced on Night Tube unless it was legally necessary (e.g. door closing chimes) or for safety (e.g. train whistles). For example PA announcements at stations and on trains were reduced in volume and kept to an absolute minimum.
- 4.10 In the lead up to Night Tube, we increased investment in both our renewal and maintenance programmes and in the last couple of years have renewed almost 70km of track, and ground or re-railed more than 450km of rail.
- 4.11 We have implemented a robust engineering-led procedure to ensure we respond quickly and sympathetically to people disturbed by noise. We prioritise our mitigation work based on noise levels recorded within people's homes, by our own information about track condition and in response to complaints made about a given location. Each complaint is logged and tracked with weekly reviews of all open cases.
- 4.12 To reduce groundborne noise at identified hot-spots, we have so far installed more than 5,000 shock-absorbent track fastenings and have seen significant reductions in noise in homes in Pimlico, Notting Hill, Baker Street, Wanstead, Bethnal Green, Warren Street and Vauxhall. Work to install more of these is currently ongoing between Gloucester Road and South Kensington. We are also planning to start work in the next few weeks at Kentish Town and Mornington Crescent.
- 4.13 Where this technology is not suitable, either because of the track type or because the noise levels are much lower, we are grinding the rails to ensure they are smooth and in the best possible condition to keep noise to a minimum.
- 4.14 The grinding team will be out most nights during March smoothing the rails to address complaints in the Euston, Highbury and Seven Sisters areas. Following this, we will concentrate on grinding the rails along the Central line in spring, the Northern line in summer and the Piccadilly line in autumn. The Jubilee line was ground in November and December 2016. This plan targets locations where we know residents have reported concerns.
- 4.15 We are also trialling innovative new technologies to deal with airborne noise, which will be rolled out more widely if successful.

## **5 Impact on Buses and Taxis**

- 5.1 There will be a comprehensive review of the impact of Night Tube on the bus network undertaken in spring 2017, once there are several months of full Night Tube operation and new travel patterns start to become established.
- 5.2 The Taxi and Private Hire policing and enforcement teams from both TfL and the Metropolitan Police have been proactively monitoring taxi/PHV activity at stations on the outer reaches of the Night tube network, to prevent, deter and detect any increase in illegal activity as demand for taxis/private hire shifts from central London to the 'last mile home' from suburban stations. However they have not seen any evidence of increased illegal taxi and private hire activity due to Night Tube, and reported incidences of touting/unlawful plying for hire are very low.

## **6 Customer Communications**

- 6.1 A customer communications and marketing campaign was implemented ahead of the launch of Night Tube. The primary focus being the 'Free the Night'; campaign, which featured a series of videos and posters with a 'running man' theme. This campaign was primarily on-system, on social media and in main stream London press. A Piccadilly line train also received a full 'Free the Night' wrap.
- 6.2 Further marketing activity included fares advice (promoting the fact Night Tube fares are the same as off-peak, and Travelcards are valid until 04:29) and messaging on real time displays around the Underground. There was also an increase in campaigns around behaviour, staff assaults and the dangers of using unbooked minicabs (Safer Travel at Night (STaN)), such as only using licensed private hire vehicles or black cabs. Finally, there was local publicity produced about the new Night Bus routes.

## **7 Stakeholder Engagement**

- 7.1 At the time of the announcement of our Future Vision for the Tube (including the Night Tube) in November 2013, we wrote to all our stakeholders setting out our proposals and offering to discuss in further detail either at a scheduled upcoming meeting or at a separate briefing.
- 7.2 This included every London borough leader, cabinet member for transport, chief executive and transport director, a wide range of user groups, disability organisations, local mobility forums, business groups and forums and all London MPs and members of the London Assembly.
- 7.3 Further structured business engagement ahead of Night Tube took place via a number of dedicated forums including:
  - (a) a stakeholder launch in September 2014 to which MPs and major London businesses were invited;
  - (b) an event with London Theatres, in February 2015;

- (c) an event with the London night time entertainment industry, in May 2015; and
  - (d) an event with London restaurants, in June 2015.
- 7.4 In the run up to the launch of Night Tube the ongoing programme of engagement continued with London Boroughs including transport cabinet members and lead transport officers, Borough licensing officers, and Environmental Health Officers in order to provide further information about Night Tube and respond to any questions and concerns.
- 7.5 TfL also wrote to in excess of 230,000 addresses (business /residential) in advance of each Night Tube line commencing its services. The purpose of these letters was to alert the recipient to the commencement of services (including test weekends) and make residents aware of how they could raise a question, concern or complaint with us.

## **8 Economic Impact**

- 8.1 Immediately prior to the launch of Night Tube, London First and Ernst & Young released a report on the value of the night time economy in London. They reported that the night time accounts for 8 per cent of London's GDP, contributing some £26.3bn annually. London represents 40 per cent of the entire UK night time economy. It employs some 723,000 people which could increase to 790,000 people within 15 years. In 2014 London First and Transport for London commissioned a study into the economic impact of Night Tube which estimated almost 2,000 permanent jobs would be created by Night Tube, adding some £360m to the night time economy over the next 30 years.
- 8.2 We are currently working with London First and Ernst & Young on an initial review of the impact of Night Tube on the night time economy, which is expected to report in the early spring.

## **9 Conclusion and Next Steps**

- 9.1 The launch of Night Tube has gone extremely well with millions of Londoners and visitors already having benefited from this transformational service. However, we will continue to monitor the service to identify improvements and any adverse impacts of the service on our neighbours and other transport operations.
- 9.2 There are a number of reviews planned in coming months which include:
- (a) revenue review to understand all aspects of absolute and marginal revenue and the impact on existing late-night Tube and Night Bus services – late March 2017;
  - (b) initial review of the economic impact of Night Tube, in conjunction with London First and Ernst & Young – April 2017;
  - (c) six-month review, providing more detail on the operational, revenue, staffing and maintenance aspects of Night Tube, meeting a London Assembly reporting recommendation – late April 2017; and
  - (d) policing review, the numbers and locations of BTP officers, and the crime rate and types of crimes – June 2017 after six months of full five line network operation.

9.4 A further update will be provided to the Panel at its meeting of 13July 2017.

**List of appendices to this report:**

None

**List of Background Papers:**

*Impact of the Night Tube on London's Night Time Economy*, Volterra Partners for Transport for London and London First, September 2014

*London's 24 Hour Economy*, London First/Ernst & Young, August 2016

*Night Tube Three Month Review*, Transport for London, January 2017

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