

**Date: 6 June 2018**

**Item: London Underground Station Action Plan**

---

**This paper will be considered in public**

**1 Summary**

1.1 This paper updates the Panel on the delivery of London Underground's (LU) Action Plan, which was developed to address the issues raised by London TravelWatch (LTW) in its review into ticket office closures.

**2 Recommendation**

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

**3 Background**

3.1 As part of LU's station modernisation programme, Fit for the Future – Stations, all ticket offices were closed on the network with the exception of 11 stations regulated by the Department for Transport on the Bakerloo and District lines.

3.2 The Mayor made a commitment to conduct an independent review into this ticket office closure programme. LTW completed this review on behalf of the Mayor in late 2016.

3.3 LTW's review recommended improvements in the following three areas:

- (i) staff visibility and availability;
- (ii) customer assistance; and
- (iii) purchasing tickets for travel.

3.4 An Action Plan was developed to address each of these areas. The Panel was last updated on its progress at its meeting of 1 November 2017.

3.5 LTW was updated on progress of the Action Plan at its Board Meeting on 16 January 2018; a year since the initial report was published.

**4 Staff Visibility and Availability**

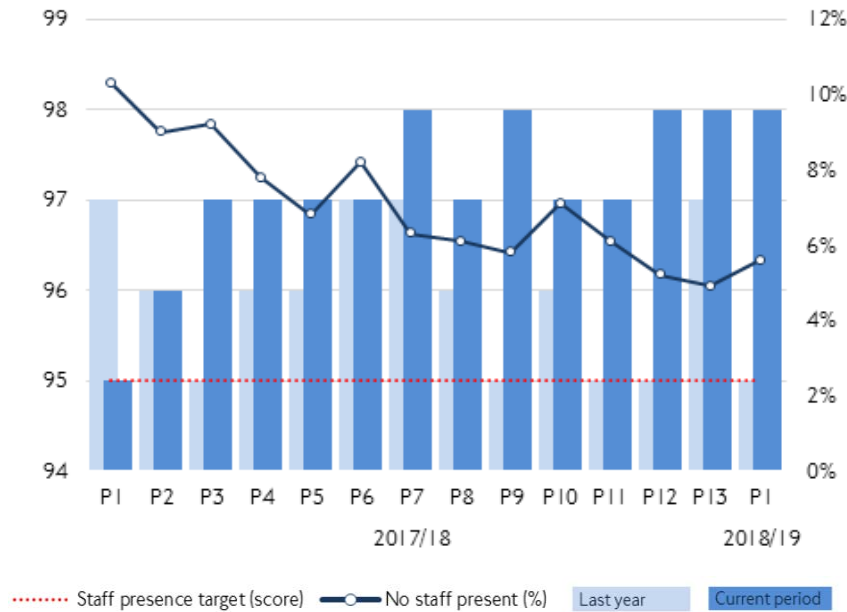
4.1 The LTW review stressed the importance of staff availability and visibility in assisting customers and providing a safe and secure network. Significant progress has been made in this area with 325 additional roles now recruited and deployed to stations. New recruits have been prioritised to smaller single-staffed

stations and those with unstaffed control rooms. Stations with the lowest Staff Presence scores (32 in total) developed and implemented local action plans to improve the visibility of their station staff.

### Impact on Presence Scores

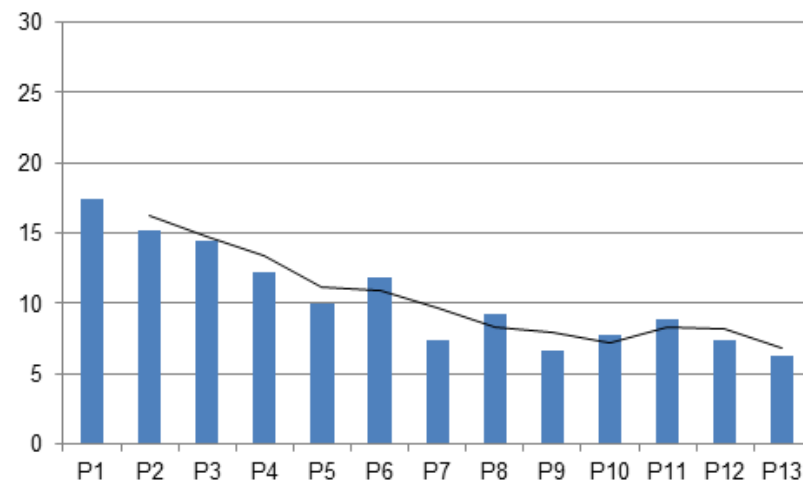
4.2 In the most recent results period, an overall staff presence score of 98 was achieved, three points above the target of 95. This has been maintained for the previous three periods.

**Figure 1: Staff presence trend analysis**



4.3 The network score can mask issues at smaller stations; however, this has also seen significant improvement with 17 stations not meeting their staff presence target in the last period versus 47 stations at the start of the last financial year.

**Figure 2: Percentage of stations failing presence target**



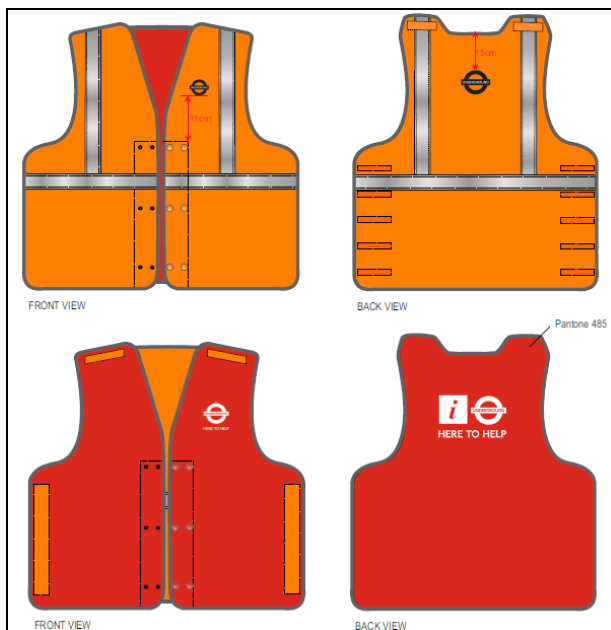
### Focal Points and Staff Visibility

- 4.4 The LTW review also noted that following ticket office closures, stations lack a clear “focal point” for customers to seek assistance. The review also noted that staff can be difficult to pick out in their uniforms, especially in crowded ticket halls. Having trialled a range of interventions, the following interventions are being rolled out in the first half of this financial year to improve the ease with which customers can get help at our stations:

### Reversible Tabards

- 4.5 Following extensive trials, where customers and staff responded positively, procurement is now underway for a reversible tearaway red ‘Here to help’ design combined with existing orange hi-vis. This overcomes the issue of making staff carry an additional item. These will be mandatory for all station staff to wear at all times the orange hi-vis is not required. Subject to manufacturing timescales, we expect to roll these out by the end of the summer.

**Figure 3: Red High Visibility Tabards**



### Focal Points

- 4.6 The purpose of this initiative is to make an area where staff are often located within the ticket hall, usually the gate-line, a focal point for customer assistance, where customers can feel confident in approaching staff. A trial identified that focal points played a supporting role in finding staff, rather than a leading role, and that many customers did not feel comfortable waiting for staff to come to them, so this focal point will primarily communicate to customers that staff are available to assist them and encourage them to approach them as required.

- 4.7 17 central London locations have been identified as sites that would benefit from these focal points. Focal points will be created by adding new signs or design enhancements that remind customers that our staff are here to help and that they should feel confident to approach them directly. Creation and procurement of the focal point signs and enhancements is currently underway, with the aim of improving our customer service.
- 4.8 We are also investigating changes to enhance the visibility of customer information zones at this group of stations, to allow customers to more easily identify where they may be able to find resources to answer common queries, such as maps, and onward journey information. This will involve using signage and potentially colour to draw attention to these areas, as well as potentially looking where they are located within the ticket hall.
- 4.9 Projects already on site at Euston Square and Sloane Square will also be delivering enhanced visibility of customer information sites as part of their works over the coming months, and the intention is to incorporate this into future works being carried out in ticket halls where it aligns with the core scope.

### Help Point Visibility

- 4.10 To improve the visibility of our Help Points, a trial of enhanced signage was installed at Westminster. This seeks to clarify the dual purpose of the help point – with the green button used for emergencies and the blue button used if seeking information, as well as drawing more attention to their location. Rollout is now planned at 31 stations where there is only a single member of staff rostered at some times of day, as these are felt to be the sites where it is most likely that customers will benefit from Help Points. Currently, we are designing signage that can fit within the space available at each station, with completion due in Summer 2018.

**Figure 4: Help point signage enhancement**



## **5 Customer Assistance**

### **Hearing loops and speech-to-text**

- 5.1 In March 2018 we concluded a three month trial of portable hearing loops at King's Cross, Leicester Square and Waterloo. At these three stations hearing impaired customers could interact with staff via portable hearing loops and the speech-to-text app downloaded on staff iPads.
- 5.2 Despite the trial being promoted, there was a low number of participants. The customers taking part in the trial recommended using the "voice to text" functionality on the iPads as a preferred alternative method of communication. Not only do some new hearing aids not support hearing loop functionality, but many of the customers taking part found "voice to text" to be a more practical form of assistance.
- 5.3 From these results, combined with staff feedback, we have concluded that LU will not be rolling out portable hearing loops across the network. Instead, speech-to-text options are being explored in more depth. We are currently assessing the possibility and suitability of reinstating use of Apple speech-to-text on staff iPads. If this is not possible, we will evaluate alternative speech-to-text apps on market before recommending a product for endorsement.

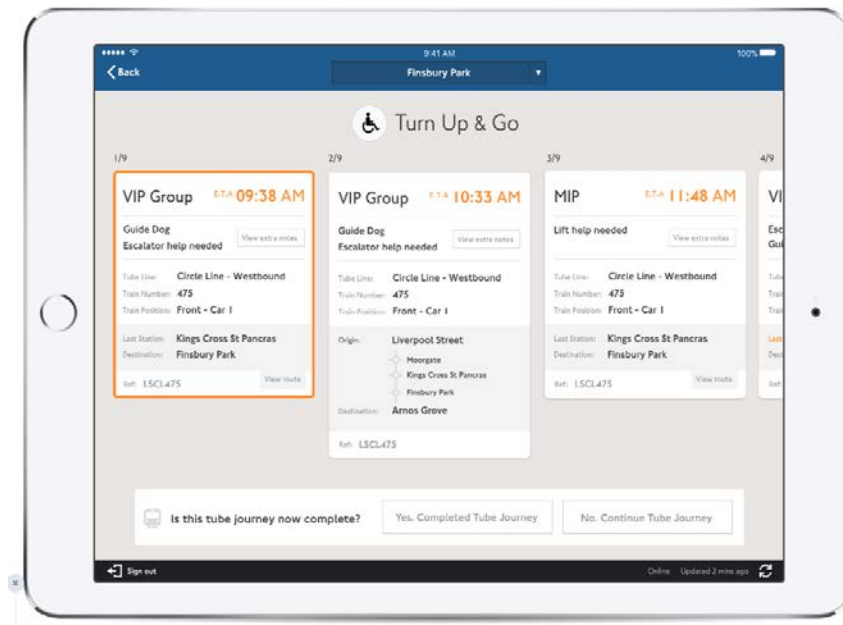
### **Staff Training**

- 5.4 In addition to the review and modifications of key sections to emphasise the importance of actively offering help to customers, our trainers undertook an enhanced training module on customer focus and helping disabled customers. The LU induction material has also been revamped with a much greater focus on customer service.
- 5.5 Over 230 senior managers attended Disability Equality Training (DET). As part of this, they accompanied a disabled customer on a journey around our network, followed by an afternoon of classroom based learning. 100 per cent rated the training as 'very good' or 'good' at providing them with an understanding of disabled people's experience of using the Tube and of the barriers that can exclude and disadvantage disabled people.
- 5.6 Looking forward plans are underway for how best to deliver DET for front line staff in 2018/19 plus new senior managers who have not already attended.

### **Turn Up and Go**

- 5.7 As part of our commitment to improving our "turn up and go" (TUAG) service for disabled customers, working with staff and customers, we have developed a staff app that makes it easier and quicker for staff to log assistance requests and provide customer service. The improvements in the TUAG process should also reduce the number of instances of customers not receiving the assistance they require. It also allows for data collection so for the first time we can monitor the number of TUAG journeys made on the network and ensure our service provision is planned accordingly.

**Figure 5: Visual of the Turn Up and Go app**



5.8 The TUAG functionality forms part of the Real Time Information app. Over the last month this has been trialled at Oxford Circus, Waterloo and King's Cross/St Pancras. More recently it has been rolled out to stations affected by the Kennington works, namely; Morden, Kennington, Elephant and Castle, London Bridge, Vauxhall, Stockwell, Balham, Tooting Broadway, Victoria, Clapham Common, Clapham North and Clapham South. Full roll out should be complete by mid-July 2018.

## **6 Purchasing Tickets for Travel**

### **6.1 Ticket Machine Functionality**

In addition to both boundary extension tickets and discounted National Rail through tickets being made available to customers on all ticket machines, the time required before a customer can obtain a refund for an Oyster card was reduced from 48 to 24 hours in March 2018.

### **Ticket Vending**

6.2 Enhanced ticketing signage was trialled at ticket machines at Westminster, King's Cross and Euston. Minor modifications are required to the design of the signage before planned rollout to accommodate the varying space available in stations. The initiative will be rolled out to those locations with the highest visitor numbers; a total of 56 stations. Procurement is underway and all sites should be completed by Summer 2018.

**Figure 6: Trial signage at ticket machines**



## **7 Next Steps**

- 7.1 Subject to the Panel's agreement, we will provide an update on progress at the Panel meeting scheduled for November 2018.

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

None

### **List of Background papers:**

None

Contact Officer: Mark Wild, Managing Director, London Underground  
Number: 020 3054 4308  
Email: [markwild@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:markwild@tfl.gov.uk)