

Committee(s): Planning and Transportation Committee – For decision Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee – For information	Date(s): 30/10/2018 04/12/2018
Subject: Transport for London Bus Rationalisation Proposals Across London	Public
Report of: Director of the Built Environment	For Decision
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Summary

This report sets out the proposed response from the City Corporation to the consultation currently being carried by Transport for London (TfL) concerning proposals to make changes to their bus services across London. The majority of their proposals will take place in inner and central London, and if implemented, it will reshape the bus network to address the fall in demand for bus services and reduce bus journey times and poor reliability. The proposals will introduce a number of changes to make the bus network simpler and more efficient, such as by restructuring and curtailing some routes before they reach central London, changing some route frequencies, withdrawing some routes, and introducing one new route. The effect of this will be to reduce the number of bus kilometres travelled in central and inner London by 9 percent, giving TfL the opportunity and flexibility to reshape services where demand is increasing, such as in outer London where housing is on the rise.

The bus routes where changes are proposed which may affect City users are: route numbers 4, 26, 35, 40,45, 48, 67, 76, 100, 149, 172, 242, 341, 343, 388 and RV1. The proposed changes to these routes consist of shortening, extending, removing or rerouting, and changes to route frequencies. The effect of this will be to reduce congestion, which will reduce journey times and reduce the environmental impacts of motor vehicles. The majority of streets in the City will be unaffected by the proposals. However, on the streets affected, many will experience a reduction in the number of buses per hour travelling along them and a small number of streets will experience an increase in the number of buses per hour travelling on them.

It is recommended that the City supports TfL's proposed changes, with possible amendments as a result of the public consultation, because they are in line with the aims of City, in particular the draft Transport Strategy. The City's draft Transport Strategy, which is also included on this agenda, provides a '25-year framework for future investment in, and management of, the City's streets as well as measures to reduce the social, economic and environmental impacts of motor traffic and

congestion.’ ‘As the City grows it will be essential to reduce motor traffic and facilitate the movement of people by the most efficient modes of transport. Improving the efficiency of buses and reducing the number of kilometres they travel will help to bring about reductions in traffic and congestion in the City, helping to improve air quality and make our streets safer.’

This consultation commenced on 28th September 2018 and closes on Friday 9th November 2018. As a consequence, this report is being presented to the Planning and Transportation Committee for decision because the deadline given for a response to the consultation does not leave sufficient time for this to be presented to the Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

1. Note the report.
2. Support TfL’s proposed changes to bus services across London.

Main Report

Background

1. TfL are carrying out a consultation for proposals to make changes to 33 bus routes and introduce one new route across London, with the majority of changes taking place in central London. According to TfL the bus network is vital for London’s continued economic and social development, and it is the most accessible form of public transport, providing the widest and densest network of travel options. However, the way people travel around London is constantly changing and in central London there has been a 12 percent decline in bus use from 2014/15 to 2017/18 as people are finding new travel options that are quicker, easier and more convenient than using the bus. One reason for this is TfL’s investment in walking and cycling infrastructure, as well as improvements to the Overground and Tube network, which is affecting how people use the bus network.
2. TfL have identified parts of the bus network that are inefficient and unreliable, and acknowledge that the network can be over complicated in places. The proposals put forward have been developed to address these issues. Table 1, extracted from TfL’s consultation document summarises the changes and the routes affected.

Table 1

	Central London Route changes
Frequency reduction	53*, 58*, 148**, 205*, N205*, 242*, 388*, 476*
Frequency increase	26, 35, 46, 149**, 242**
Curtailment (shortening a route)	3, 11, 14, 19, 45, 53*, 59*, 67, 134, 171, 172, 388*, 476*
Route restructuring	4, 9, N9, 22, 40, 55, 76, 100, 205*, N205*, 242**, 341, 343
Withdrawal	48, 271 (night service) , RV1
New route	311 (new route)
Total	Note some routes appear twice above, there are 34 individual routes affected

*Some routes appear in multiple categories

** Route 149 and 242 have reductions and increases in frequency

3. The effect of the proposed changes would be to reduce the number of bus kilometres travelled of around 9% in central and inner London, and from discussion with TfL, the number of buses in the City would reduce by around 5%. However, an increase in bus passenger journey times of around one percent is anticipated, although there may be greater increases for some passengers and the number of passengers on each bus is expected to increase. Some passengers will also have to change buses to reach their destination, and TfL say they have designed the proposals to keep this to a minimum. In addition to this, where it is necessary for passengers to change buses, TfL have ensured this will be in locations where there are good passenger facilities, information and pavements with enough space to accommodate the increase in passengers.
4. The Mayor for London introduced the Hopper fare earlier this year, which allows bus passengers to make multiple journeys within an hour for no extra cost. This means that most passengers that will have to change buses as a result of these proposed changes will not incur any additional cost.
5. The Mayor for London's Transport Strategy states the importance of making the most of the flexibility of the bus network, and a reduction of bus services in central and inner London will enable improvements and extra capacity to be provided in outer London where housing is increasing and demand is expected to grow.
6. The proposals align with the City of London Corporation's draft Transport Strategy, which provides a '25-year framework for future investment in, and management of, the City's streets as well as measures to reduce the social, economic and environmental impacts of motor traffic and congestion.' 'As the City grows it will be essential to reduce motor traffic and facilitate the movement of people by the most efficient modes of transport. Reductions in traffic will also help improve air quality and make our streets safer.'

7. It is recognised that a reduction in bus services and kilometres travelled will mean that some bus users in the City will have to wait longer for services and some will have to change buses to reach their final destination, increasing journey times and inconveniences. This could mean that some bus users may choose to use other modes of travel or not make certain journeys if that is a viable option. Most bus users will not incur any additional cost as a result of these proposals as the recently introduced Hopper fare allows bus passengers to make multiple journeys within an hour for no extra cost.

The consultation commenced on 28th September 2018 and closes on Friday 9th November 2018. Appendix 1 shows TfL's consultation material and Appendix 2 shows TfL's supporting material.

Current Position and Proposed Changes

8. The bus routes where changes are proposed which may affect City users are: route numbers 4, 26, 35, 40,45, 48, 67, 76, 100, 149, 172, 242, 341, 343, 388 and RV1. The proposed changes to these routes consist of shortening, extending, removing or rerouting, and changes to route frequencies.

A summary of the proposed changes are as follows:

- Bus numbers where rerouting is proposed are: 4, 40, 76, and 341.
 - Bus numbers where shortening of the current routes are proposed are: 45, 67, 172 and 388.
 - Bus numbers where extensions to current routes are proposed are: 100 and 343.
 - Bus numbers where an increase in current service frequencies are proposed are 26, 35 and 48.
 - Bus numbers where a decrease in current service frequencies are proposed are: 388 and 242, although please note that a section of the number 242 will also have an extra peak journey.
 - Bus number 149 has an increase in service frequency proposed at peak times and a decrease in service frequency proposed at evenings and on Sundays.
9. Some streets in the City will have a change in the number of buses per hour travelling on them as a result of the proposals. These roads are: Blackfriars Bridge, New Bridge Street, Farringdon Street, New Fetter Lane, Fleet Street, Ludgate Hill, Queen Victoria Street, Bishopsgate, New Change, Cheapside, Queen Victoria Street, London Wall, Moorgate north, Leadenhall Street, London Bridge, Fenchurch Street, and Dukes Place / Bevis Marks.
 10. Fetter Lane / New Fetter Lane and Fenchurch Street will no longer be served by buses and the reduction in the number of buses on Moorgate/Princes Street, Poultry and Queen Victoria Street will result in fewer buses travelling through Bank Junction.

11. Plan 1 attached shows the current number of buses per hour on the City's streets and Plan 2 shows the proposed number of buses per hour as a result of the changes. Appendix 3 shows the proposed changes to bus routes in detail. Appendix 4 shows the proposed changes in the numbers of buses per hour on the affected streets in the City.

Options

12. Option 1: To support the proposals. Making bus services simpler and more efficient will help to reduce the social, economic and environmental impacts of motor traffic and congestion in the City, which aligns with aims of the City's draft Transport Strategy.
13. Option 2: To support TfL's proposals, with possible amendments as a result of the public consultation. This would meet local needs whilst ensuring the social, economic and environmental impacts of motor traffic and congestion in the City is reduced, which aligns with aims of the City's draft Transport Strategy.
14. Option 3: To oppose the proposals. This could encourage TfL to not implement the proposals as described if clear reasoning is given to support this viewpoint, which could mean the current situation will continue. If this were to happen, it would not help to support a reduction of congestion or pollution in the City, which does not align with the Corporation's Corporate Plan or its draft Transport Strategy.

Proposals

15. The recommended course of action is Option 2 - to support TfL's proposed changes to the bus services, with possible amendments as a result of the public consultation. This would enable the City Corporation to support local needs whilst ensuring the social, economic and environmental impacts of motor traffic and congestion in the City is reduced, which aligns with aims of the City's draft Transport Strategy. A reduction in bus numbers and kilometres travelled across inner and central London, whilst still providing the necessary level of service for the current demand will help to reduce traffic levels in the City, improve air quality and make our streets safer. This fits in with the aims stated in the City's draft Transport Strategy. In addition, TfL's proposed changes will help the City Corporation with regards to their overall traffic management duties of securing the efficient use of the road network, expeditious, safe and convenient movement of traffic, and avoiding congestion and disruption.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

16. The City of London Corporation's Corporate Plan 2018-23 sets out its vision. TfL's proposals would contribute to the following aims:
- Contribute to a flourishing society
 - Support a thriving economy
 - Shape outstanding environments

17. The City of London Corporation's draft Transport Strategy, is one of a suite of strategies that help to deliver the City of London Corporation's Corporate Plan. The draft Transport Strategy provides a '25-year framework for future investment in, and management of, the City's streets as well as measures to reduce the social, economic and environmental impacts of motor traffic and congestion.' 'As the City grows it will be essential to reduce motor traffic and facilitate the movement of people by the most efficient modes of transport. Reductions in traffic will also help improve air quality and make our streets safer.

18. The strategy states 'We will support TfL's ambitions to adjust bus services in Central London, taking account of the forecast fall in demand following the opening of the Elizabeth Line. We will work with TfL to improve bus journey times to and connectivity through the Square Mile by:

- Reviewing bus routing and frequency throughout the City to optimise routing.
- Introducing targeted junction improvements to enhance bus priority.
- Identifying opportunities to improve bus priority when developing and implementing Traffic Management and Healthy Streets plans.'

19. This will help the City contribute to a flourishing society by:

- Making streets safer and reducing the number of traffic related deaths and serious injuries.
- Enabling people to walk and cycle and reducing the negative health impacts of transport.
- Ensuring streets are accessible to all and provide an attractive space for the City's diverse community to come together.

A thriving economy will be supported by:

- Enabling the City to continue to grow and accommodating the associated increase in demand for our limited street space.
- Improving the quality of streets and transport connections to help attract talent and investment.
- Helping create a smarter City, that supports and enables innovative transport technology and other mobility solutions.

This will help to shape outstanding environments by:

- Advocating for improved local, national and international transport connections.
- Reducing motor traffic levels to enable space to be reallocated to walking, cycling, greenery and public spaces.
- Improving air quality and reducing noise from motor traffic.
- Ensuring streets are well maintained and resilient to natural and man-made threats.

Implications

20. TfL has a legal duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. In accordance with this, TfL has carried out an Equalities Impact Assessment, which they will update as appropriate following the consultation. Further details of this can be found on page 7 of Appendix 1.

Conclusion

21. Supporting TfL's proposals for making changes to the bus network across London will, if implemented, result in a reduction in bus numbers and kilometres travelled across inner and central London, whilst still providing the necessary level of service for current demand. This will help to reduce traffic levels in the City, improve air quality and make our streets safer. This aligns with City of London's draft Transport Strategy, which provides a '25-year framework for future investment in, and management of, the City's streets as well as measures to reduce the social, economic and environmental impacts of motor traffic and congestion.' 'As the City grows it will be essential to reduce motor traffic and facilitate the movement of people by the most efficient modes of transport. Reductions in traffic will also help improve air quality and make our streets safer.
22. However, it is not known how their proposals will affect the City's community. Supporting TfL's proposals, subject to the results of the public consultation will therefore enable the City Corporation to support local needs whilst ensuring that the aims of the City's draft Transport Strategy is still met.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Transport for London's consultation document
- Appendix 2 – Transport for London's Supporting information
- Appendix 3 – Proposed changes to bus services in the City in detail
- Appendix 4 – Proposed changes in numbers of buses per hour on the affected streets in the City

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