

Committee(s)	Dated:
Planning & Transportation	7/02/2017
Subject: GLA Bus Network Call for Evidence and City Corporation Position on Buses	Public
Report of: Director of the Built Environment	For Information
Report author: Tom Parker, Department of the Built Environment	

Summary

The purpose of this report is to inform Members on the GLA's investigation into bus services in London and seek approval for the evidence and assertions the City Corporation wishes to submit. Furthermore, this report is to gain approval of the objective to '*reduce the number of buses and rationalise routes in the City of London*'.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Approve the submission in Appendix 1 for the GLA call for evidence, outlining our assertions that the bus network;
 - Is not fit for purpose in the City
 - Requires it's safety programme to be monitored and emphasis placed on improved driver performance through training or reorganisation of performance based contracting to safety based contracting
 - Should include emission geofencing and GPS controlled speed limiting across its fleet
- Approve City Corporation objective to '*reduce the number of buses and rationalise routes in the City of London*'

Main Report

Background

1. In December 2016 the GLA issued a call for evidence on two aspects of the bus network to various stakeholders across London. These were bus network planning and bus safety. There are 15 questions regarding bus network planning and 14 questions regarding bus safety.

2. Due to the unique nature of the City in relation to the rest of London, the majority of the questions in both sections are not applicable to the City Corporation and therefore have not been addressed as part of the response.

Position

3. The response is split into two sections which set out the City Corporation's strategic position on both topics, focussing on key areas in each section. These are;
 - a. The bus network in the City of London is **not fit for purpose**
 - b. TfL should evaluate and evidence benefits of their bus safety programme and consider **increased driver training or reorganising performance based incentives to safety based contract incentives** if benefits are not significant
 - c. TfL needs to further consider emission geofencing and GPS controlled speed limiting across its fleet
4. Many of the questions asked in both sections require empirical analysis to answer fully. Due to the limited data available from TfL, the City Corporation has utilised data from the Bank project to evidence network planning and used publically available bus safety evidence from the TfL website
5. This has been supplemented with the small amount of data that TfL provided to the City Corporation ahead of the annual network planning meeting between the City Corporation and TfL

Corporate & Strategic Implications

6. The core rationale of the response is to establish the City Corporation's position on the bus network to the GLA and TfL. This is imperative as it will publicise the City Corporation's ambition for air quality and road safety as well as highlight our position for projects, including the long term aspirations at Bank
7. TfL are currently working on a 'Central London Bus Priority Network'. This is a more new approach looking at how the network operates in central London and what alternatives there may be. Engagement is expected to commence next month.

Conclusion

8. Approval of both recommendations will codify the City Corporation's position on buses and establish the ambition for change to both the GLA and TfL. This will provide the opportunities to meet the outlined objective of reducing the number of buses in the City of London.

Appendices

- Appendix - Letter to the GLA Transport Committee regarding the distributed “Call for Evidence: Bus Services” document.

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Appendix 1 – Response to GLA call for evidence

To whom it may concern,

The City of London Corporation welcomes the London Assembly's call for evidence regarding bus services and bus safety, and are thankful for the opportunity to provide evidence on the network within our area. The City of London Corporation supports buses as a key part of sustainable public transport that is efficient and accessible to all Londoners, and as such aspires to work with TfL to promote an efficient and reliable network.

Not all questions outlined across both sections are pertinent to the network within our borders. Therefore, we have split our response across the two sections of the request rather than for individual questions.

Bus network planning

Questions answered;

- Is London's bus network fit for purpose?
- How well do TfL currently plan bus routes?
- What bus priority measures has TfL already introduced and how successful are they?
- What tools does TfL have to monitor and forecast demand?
- Is it a good idea for TfL to consider different types of network for different areas of London?
How could this work in practice?

The City has a significant number of bus movements relative to its size. The network has 36 bus routes within our boundary, with most streets operating with more than 60 buses per hour. With the exception of the Bishopsgate/Gracechurch Street and New Bridge Street/Farringdon Road corridors, these buses run on the City of London Corporation's road network, rather than on the TLRN, including Bank Junction, Cannon Street and Ludgate Hill.

On 23/11/2016 City of London officers and Christopher Hayward, chairman of the Planning and Transportation Committee, met with John Barry, Head of Network Development at TfL, as well as other members of his and the public transport strategy team. We requested data in advance of the meeting covering aspects of network distribution, frequencies and boarding/loading data.

Unfortunately, TfL were only able to supply us with a frequency map covering the City area, as shown in **Appendix 1**. Whilst a useful illustration of the flow of buses across the City, the City of London Corporation were disappointed by the lack of information provided, specifically on loading. TfL has a significant amount of information regarding demand, including BODS (Bus Origin/Destination Surveys) and Oyster card data. It is important that the City Corporation understands why limited physical space is required for bus infrastructure and why capacity of movement should be prioritised for buses.

However, we have had some data regarding loading provided to us in the past using BODS data. As part of the business case process for the Bank Junction Interim Scheme, we have been provided with some localised loading for routes traversing the junction. In the AM peak (7am-10am), the average loading per bus is only **16 people**. All routes utilize double deck buses, which have capacities up to

80 people for New Routemasters. Furthermore, due to the survey periods of BODs data this predates the deterioration of reliability and decline in bus passengers, and therefore may well be optimistically high. The City of London Corporation believes that this is indicative of a wider inefficiency of use across the network and therefore asserts that **the bus network in the City is not fit for purpose.**

The City of London Corporation is scheduled to deliver the Bank Junction Interim Scheme in April 2017. Whilst this is primarily a road safety scheme, it will also deliver significant bus journey time benefits to all routes which use the junction, including a modelled **15 minute benefit** for one route. This is an unparalleled benefit for buses. We currently have three small interventions from the Bus Priority Delivery Portfolio to deliver on our network which will have a nominal journey time effect. However, the City Corporation appreciates this is not representative of the bus benefit achieved across London as a whole by the program, or on the TLRN in the City.

An on-going work stream with regards to a “Central London Bus Priority Network” is currently underway at TfL. We would like to use this opportunity to work with TfL and other local authorities to deliver an efficient bus network with an overarching objective of having fewer vehicles on the road. This will benefit the high number of pedestrians in the City through road safety and air quality improvements – both key mayoral targets. The City of London Corporation understands the role of the bus for London’s public transport. Working together we can shape a City network to suit the aspirations and requirements of both bodies and, most importantly, all Londoners.

Bus Safety

Questions answered;

- What should TfL’s priorities be for delivering a safe bus network?
- Are you aware of any particular accident blackspots?
- What are the particular safety concerns for passengers on buses and other road users?
- Has TfL taken advantage of new technologies to make buses safer?
- What other technology advances should TfL consider piloting?

The City has no discernable pattern of accidents involving buses. However, the City of London Corporation is concerned regarding the nature and make up of accidents involving buses that do occur.

A review of the available online data for bus accidents shows that between January and September 2016 there were 17 accidents in the City. This is the total number of collisions and incidents of slips, trips or falls from passengers on vehicles and excludes other accidents in the data set. We have found that **65% of the accidents in this period were passengers injured on buses.**

The City of London Corporation views safety as a priority and our Road Danger Reduction Strategy seeks to halve the number of slight injuries. We are undertaking a number of initiatives of various scope, including the Bank Interim Scheme; which we hope will significantly improve safety for all highway users in the City.

It is assumed that most slips, trips and falls will be incidences of significant driver acceleration or deceleration. Accordingly, the City of London Corporation would like a review of the bus safety data

in the context of the work undertaken in the Bus Safety Programme to evaluate its benefit. If these types of accidents have not been significantly improved by the programme, the City of London Corporation would like this investigation to consider safety incentives in operator contracts or the devaluing of performance based incentives within contracts and replaced with safety incentives.

Vehicle related technology is an escalating industry at present, with exciting innovations commonplace in the media. We are aware of technology trials undertaken by TfL of speed limiting with GPS tracking for different locations. The City of London Corporation welcomes TfL's innovation and awaits the results of the trial and next steps in potential roll out.

The City of London Corporation is thankful for the London Assembly's request for evidence and looks forward to working closely with all parties as part of this investigation.

Kind regards,

Christopher Hayward CC

Chairman, Planning and Transportation Committee.

Appendix 1: Bus Frequencies in the City of London

