

# Transport for London - Transparency Strategy

October 2015

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## **Introduction**

### **Transport for London - our purpose**

We are London's integrated transport authority, responsible for implementing the Mayor's Transport Strategy. Our purpose is to keep London working and growing and to make life in the Capital better.

We are funded by income from fares, revenue raised from fees and charges, commercial property and advertising, borrowing and Government grants. Every penny of our income is reinvested in running and improving transport to ensure that London remains a world-leading city.

### **Our services**

We are responsible for London Underground, London Buses, Docklands Light Railway, London Overground, London Tramlink, London River Services, Dial-a-Ride, Victoria Coach Station, Santander Cycles and the Emirates Air Line.

We regulate taxis and the private hire trade, operate the Congestion Charging scheme, manage the 580km red route network of London's key strategic roads, and operate 6,000 traffic signals.

We work with many partners to improve life in London. This includes taking action on road safety and enabling people to make sustainable travel choices, such as cycling and walking.

We are also delivering one of Europe's biggest programmes of capital investment, including building Crossrail, modernising the Tube and road networks and delivering the Mayor's vision for cycling.

We are determined to operate in an open and transparent way, for the benefit of our customers, stakeholders and those who hold us to account.

We recognise that with responsibility for billions of road and public transport journeys every year and an annual budget of around £11bn, we have a duty to spend that money as efficiently as possible and account for every penny.

We publish a huge amount of data reflecting the scale of what we do including contracts, expenditure, operational and financial performance, customer satisfaction and journey patterns. This helps us to explain how we run London's transport network and plan for its future. We now publish more information on how we operate than ever before. Much of this is designed to explain how we reinvest public money to improve transport for customers and road users. Our dedicated 'Transparency' and 'Publications and Reports' sections on our website show where this information can be obtained.

Openness and transparency in these and other areas is helping to transform the way in which we operate. It helps our customers use our services more effectively,

strengthens our relationships with customers and stakeholders, and helps us to work with local communities and businesses to improve our services.

Our provision of free real-time open data also enables innovation in the way our customers travel. Hundreds of smartphone apps developed by third parties are being powered by our data.

### **Our approach to transparency**

We are committed to operating in an open and transparent way and fully recognise the benefits this offers our customers, stakeholders and, of course, us.

By being open and accountable we:

- Enable our customers and stakeholders to hold us to account, contributing to better decision-making and enabling public input into those decisions
- Deliver better value for money
- Engage businesses, non-profit organisations, academics and others to make transport in London better

We publish all the documents required by statute and supplement these to publish a range of documents which provide a detailed insight into our priorities, targets and delivery:

- Business Plan – our 10 year plan of investment and operational improvements and the financial resources required for their delivery
- Annual Budget – how the ‘first’ year of the Business Plan will be delivered, including that year’s detailed budget and performance targets
- Annual Report and Statement of Accounts – overall performance in the previous financial year including investment and operational performance, remuneration and statutory accounts
- Operational and Financial Performance Report – quarterly reporting setting out performance against annual budget
- Investment Programme Report – quarterly reporting on progress of the investment programme against annual budget and milestones
- Commissioner’s report to the Board – the main highlights of all TfL’s activities and performance since the previous Board meeting
- Annual report for Health, Safety and Environment – to provide our stakeholders with additional information on these core areas of our business

We constantly analyse what our customers and users tell us is important to them. We gathered views through a public consultation on our approach to transparency and routinely analyse, among other sources, questions and complaints, regular customer research, scrutiny by the London Assembly and London TravelWatch and Freedom of Information requests.

This analysis allows us to identify core areas of public interest and thus the new data sets which we should publish as a matter of course rather than waiting to be asked for them.

Our published information is focussed on:

- Our operational performance, including the reliability and safety of public transport and the road network, and data on ticketing derived from the Oyster and contactless payment card system
- Progress on delivery of our investment programme which is modernising public transport and roads infrastructure
- Our people, including levels of remuneration and expenses
- Real-time customer information on the status of public transport and roads, including open data feeds that can be used by third parties free of charge
- Overall value for money, including commercial contracts and sponsorships

### Operational performance

We must ensure that millions of journeys are made safely and reliably every day and publish data on our operational performance, through the Operational and Financial Report to the Board. Additional examples of more detailed information published about our operations are:

- Detailed and frequent performance information published on our website in the 'Transparency' and 'Publication and reports' sections
- Information on planned modernisation work which might disrupt journeys, including sending information out each week to millions of customers and users who have registered to receive service-related emails from us
- An array of live 'service status' information
- Crime figures on public transport
- Data on all road collisions, including the number of people killed and seriously injured
- Data on all collisions involving buses under contract to TfL
- A range of operational information derived from the Oyster and contactless payment card system
- Bus-related crime data by borough, based on figures provided by the Metropolitan Police Service
- Bus operator league tables, showing performance against a number of measures
- The performance of TfL Customer Services

In addition, we publish more general information on our operations, such as customer research and guidance on how to get the best out of the services we operate. We help customers to understand the features of Oyster and contactless payments and how they can make sure they pay the right fare and get the best value for money.

This includes promotion of daily and weekly fare capping, off-peak fares, remembering to touch in and out, and refunds following service delays.

### The investment programme

Increasing capacity and connectivity is central to meeting the needs of a rapidly expanding world city. London is growing faster than anyone expected a few years ago, with its population expected to rise from 8.6 million today to around 10 million by 2030. To accommodate this, we must increase services and unlock areas of economic development. This requires better local connections, more people using sustainable transport and the capacity to take people to where they work.

Our quarterly Investment Programme Report to the TfL Board describes our major programmes and projects designed to expand capacity. It describes the objectives of each, the financial cost and their progress against milestones. We also publish:

- Details of our most significant projects, including through short films, available via our website
- An annual report, which sets out the improvements we have delivered

### Our people

We publish:

- A high-level organisation chart, with contact details
- Extensive details of the remuneration of staff
- Our annual Workforce and Monitoring Report and Single Equalities Scheme describing the composition of our workforce
- Biographies of all Board members and Chief Officers, with declarations of interests, a register of gifts and hospitality and any expenses claimed

### Customer information

We reinvest all of our income into running and improving our services. Explaining this is a common theme in our public communications, helping to set out how we use public money to benefit the economy of London and the UK.

Customers rightly regard real-time travel information as part of the core service we provide. Their expectations of how they should be kept informed and how they transact with us have shifted dramatically, and will continue to do so.

Examples of how we have adapted to these expectations include:

- Providing a real-time commentary on the status of transport services via our website and social media such as Twitter
- Films on our website that answer customers' most frequently asked questions in an accessible way
- Factsheets to help customers get the most from our services and make sure any charges, such as the Congestion Charge, are fully explained

- Complaints levels, the major themes which emerge from complaints and the action we take to address them
- All live feeds of operational service status are made openly and freely available in machine readable form

Thousands of developers and others use our feeds to create real-time travel information apps for millions of customers. The Shakespeare Review, commissioned by the Government in 2013 to consider the use of open data created by the public sector, noted that this approach benefited our customers by up to £58m each year in time saved.

We are proactive in explaining to our customers how we will handle personal information that they share with us. This includes publishing detail on what we do with their data, who it is shared with and how long it is retained.

### Value for money

Delivering value for fare and tax payers' money is central to everything we do. We explain how we spend public money productively and the resulting benefits through publishing:

- Details about our financial decision making, including agendas, papers and minutes from Board and other key governance meetings
- Details of all expenditure over £250
- Details of all contracts worth more than £5,000 and any that have been released as a result of a Freedom of Information (FOI) request
- All contracts announced in a press release, as well as those concluded as a result of an invitation to tender issued after 1 September 2013, where the value of the contract exceeds the applicable OJEU threshold. This includes revenue raising contracts (such as deals for sponsorship or property development) as well as contracts for the purchase of goods and services
- Contract opportunities
- Internal audit reports, showing the actions we have taken

In addition, we communicate any discounts customers might be eligible for by promoting Zip Oyster cards for children and adult discount and concession cards. This includes supporting London Councils to promote Freedom passes.

### **Accountability**

We have substantially changed the way information is made available about our decision-making. We have published the information required by the Government's 2015 Local Government Transparency Code and met all of the requirements in relation to disclosure of remuneration data.

We answer around 2,500 FOI requests a year, providing access to an even greater range of data, often of particular benefit to individuals with a local or specialist interest in our operations.

We also use these requests to identify information that we should publish routinely, such as London Underground's working timetables or data on the use of Oyster and contactless payment cards. In 2014/15 84 per cent of all FOI requests resulted in the disclosure of information in full and 87 per cent of all FOI requests were answered within statutory deadlines.

Approximately 2,000 questions put to the Mayor by the London Assembly about TfL through the Mayoral Question Time process are also answered each year, as well as around 2,500 pieces of correspondence from Assembly Members.

### **Our commitment to transparency**

Our presumption is that all our information should be made publicly available and, in the case of data, provided in machine readable form, unless there are legitimate reasons why not – for example, disproportionate cost, personal data or information which would harm our ability to maximise value for money for customers and tax payers.

All the information we publish is available through our website and we will ensure that it is easily identifiable (including via improved search), accurate and up-to-date and, where appropriate, available in machine-readable form.

We will normally make data available on our website for as long as is necessary to ensure accountability and establish trends. We assign staff to own our published information and take responsibility for its quality.

We align with the Principles set out by the Government's Public Sector Transparency Board and where our practice differs (eg on the use of data.gov.uk or in the requirement for app developers to register with us to gain access to our data feeds) we consider that this brings benefits to the users of our data.

We will develop and publish a schedule which outlines when we plan to make specific information available such as publications, Board papers, replies to FOI requests and datasets. This will initially cover regular publications and will expand to include ad hoc and planned future information as far as is practicable.

### **Further developing our approach**

We will formally review our overall approach to transparency on an annual basis and keep stakeholders informed and involved in its development. We aim to continuously develop the range and quality of information we make available. Twice a year we will publish an update summarising developments in this area, and comments on our approach are welcome. These can be sent to [HowardCarter@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:HowardCarter@tfl.gov.uk) or [VernonEveritt@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:VernonEveritt@tfl.gov.uk).