

**Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee
Main meeting, 20th September, Rooms H2/3 Great Minster House**

Attendees

DPTAC - Keith Richards (Chair), Will Bee, Helen Dolphin, Dave Partington, Roger Mackett, Sharon Brennan, Tanvi Vyas, Sue Sharp, Matthew Smith, Chris Price, Bryan Matthews, Niki Glazier, Mike Brace,

[REDACTED]

Observers

[REDACTED]

Apologies

Jessica Uguccioni, David Chrimes, David Mapp

1. Key Points and Actions

1.1 Conflicts of interest –

All meetings start with a reminder to all members and other attendees to declare any potential conflicts of interest with the agenda items. Additionally, members were reminded to inform the Chair and the Secretary of all longer terms conflicts, or changes to them.

1.2 Support from DfT Legal –

In his introductory remarks, Keith referred to the need for DfT lawyers to provide DPTAC with advice on certain matters, e.g. on Freedom of Information Act requests and on GDPR liabilities.

Action: [REDACTED] [REDACTED] will share feedback from a recent meeting with DfT Legal, where it was agreed that they will provide ad hoc support to DPTAC.

1.3 Notes of the May 2018 meeting – these were agreed.

2. Peter Wilkinson, Managing Director of Rail Passenger Services, Department for Transport

- 2.1 Peter Wilkinson was welcomed to the group. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was also in attendance.
- 2.2 Peter stated that he wants to build self-confidence for customers using the rail network and staff delivering a service to disabled passengers. He is considering an 'awareness day' which will involve key stakeholders in order to provide an understanding of the accessibility issues facing the rail industry. This wouldn't be a one-off event, but recurring, and suggested an annual timeframe for this.
- 2.3 Peter stated that a dedicated franchise agreement Delivery Plan is being developed covering access for disabled people. The DPTAC Rail Working Group have been involved in its development.
- 2.4 Other points mentioned were that Peter has used the Passenger Assist service himself and had mixed experiences. He also noted the requirement that for all trains to meet accessibility standards by the 1st of January 2020.
- 2.5 Peter stressed the importance of making sure Accessibility features in the recently announced Williams Rail Review. Peter said he will continue to push for its conclusion and that he would write to DPTAC to clarify the position.

Action (Peter / [REDACTED] – to clarify in writing the extent to which Accessibility is a factor in the Williams Review.

Action (Secretariat) – Pending clarification from Peter as per action above, Keith said that he would arrange a meeting between DPTAC and Keith Williams, Chair of the Review.

2.6 **Questions to Peter Wilkinson and [REDACTED] [REDACTED]**

Keith Richards asked what tools DfT has within a franchising model to ensure that the needs of disabled people are met as an essential criteria in the process that grants franchises allowing a TOC to provide rail services to the public.

In response Peter said –

- DfT can remove TOCs from operation if they fail to meet the requirements set out in the franchising agreement
- He wants more incentives to provide good services, to reward innovation in sectors and services that are performing well
- Wants rail staff to feel positive about providing a good service

- He wants to encourage a more positive approach within the management structure of the industry such that providing an excellent service to all rail users is the primary aim of the TOCs – this should be at least on a par with meeting the desires of their shareholders

Will Bee - (Compliance) Would fining a TOC £50 every time they are reported to have provided a poor service not provide incentive?

In response [REDACTED] said –

- Providing compensation for failed assistance will be in the delivery plan together with a specific target for successful delivery of passenger assist services

Roger Mackett - (Vehicle infrastructure) Are all vehicles going to be accessible by 2020?

In response Peter said –

- He could not, absolutely, promise that all vehicles would be compliant by 2020 but the Department is holding TOCs and rolling stock manufacturers to this deadline.

Niki Glazier - (Accessibility funding) RDG have not been able to commit to funding future phases of their Passenger Assist work. What is the Department's view?

In response Peter said –

- An effective Passenger Assist system is necessary to enable disabled passengers to use the railway. It is for the operators to demonstrate leadership in this area and ensure that all passengers can travel, and that should be factored into their business plans. It should not be reliant on Government to subsidise. We have however supported this work to date and will continue to do that in whatever way is necessary.

Niki Glazier – (Awareness) In regards to Accessibility Awareness, what's going to change?

In response Peter said –

- We've got to concentrate on improving training for staff, to increase their confidence as well as awareness.

[REDACTED] added –

- There's going to be a requirement for disabled people to be directly involved in the design and where appropriate delivery of future

training in the new accessibility delivery plan. (Keith referenced the commitment made within the ITS regarding this matter)

Sharon Brennan – (Staff availability) what's DfT's stance on some services not providing a guard on the train?

In response Peter said –

- DfT's expectation is that current levels of service are improved not reduced.
- The rail industry is employing more staff on the railway than ever before, but it needs to assess more actively how staff are allocated.
- Where it is possible for technology to reduce the need for staff the expectation is that the staff freed up will be deployed appropriately and that includes ensuring that passengers are provided with assistance.

Bryan Matthews – (Operations) What are the incentives for TOCs working together?

In response Peter said –

- He wants leadership within rail to put more priority on accessibility services and more effort needs to be put into ensuring that. Rather than depending on incentives, industry leaders need to act and there are signs that the RDG and RSSB are understanding that more and more. He also welcomed Andrew Haines' arrival in that regard.

Mike Brace - (Barriers) What are the barriers, as a business case, to improving accessibility?

In response Peter said –

- This is a mindset issue and requires cultural change. The railway is a *public* transport system meaning that the needs of the public are most important. Additionally, it is in the longer term interests of the industry, whoever the shareholders may be, that it draws in more users and properly meets their demands.

Action: (Peter / [REDACTED]) It was noted that there were no / few references to the needs of disabled people in the Cross Country franchise consultation - to check Accessibility focus within the Cross Country consultation.

3. Update and discussion on the Inclusive Transport Strategy (ITS).

3.1 Introduced by [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

- Noted the 96 commitments within the ITS Delivery Plan
- Noted that the ITS Programme Board met earlier in the week and identified two key risks to the ITS as well mitigating actions:
 - (i) Internal DfT resource challenges
 - (ii) Commitments that are the responsibility of 3rd parties

Action: [REDACTED] to send the ITS Dashboard to DPTAC (actioned).

- Discussed the proposed disability stakeholder group which would consist of a range of organisations representing disabled people. The role of the group would be to act as a “sounding board” to the Department as it developed ITS and more general policies.
- It will continue to be DPTAC’s role to provide formal advice to DfT. To keep the group to a manageable size regulators and other bodies will not be core members of the group but will be secondary members who will be invited to attend meetings depending on the agenda.
- Keith Richards, as DPTAC’s chair will be invited to be a member of the group, it was agreed that Keith could nominate another member of DPTAC to attend on his behalf.
- Confirmed that the ITS spreadsheet will be updated quarterly, and this will be shared with DPTAC and that Graham Pendlebury has overall responsibility for delivering the ITS programme.
- Invited views on other organisations that might be included within the disability stakeholder group.

DPTAC’s comments included –

- Welcoming the thorough approach to monitoring and evaluation.
- Getting effective representation on the stakeholder group will be difficult. Many organisations have particular agendas and lobbying points that will lead them to focus on particular issues rather than more generally. Additionally, many organisations tend to speak *for* disabled people; the views they express are not necessarily the views *of* disabled people.
- DPTAC noted that Vision UK may need to nominate a representative to act on their behalf. Also noted that there were no organisations representing people with non-visible physical disabilities or health conditions.
- Suggested to consider inclusion of the Urban Transport Group.
- Suggested that DfT should keep ITS commitments that don’t currently have timescales under review.

- Suggested that DfT should review the accessibility of the ITS spreadsheet (e.g. labelling the colour of colour-coordinated cells).

3.2. Evaluation of the ITS. Introduced by [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

- Noted that the Evaluation and Monitoring Framework will aim to show the impact of the ITS actions on the travel behaviour of disabled people.
- The Framework will be published in January 2019 and a draft would be circulated shortly to the DPTAC Research and Evidence group for discussion in their meeting in October.
- Noted that there will be two surveys. The first in 2019, the second in 2021 (though this could change depending on when policies are actually implemented).
- Noted that there will be specific questions asked to respondents. This aims to identify a broad disability range.

4. Public Sector Equality Duty in DfT – Introduced by Tricia Hayes, Director General of Roads, Devolution, and Motoring

- Noted the launch of a new submission template, that [REDACTED] [REDACTED] has delivered four equality training workshops, that DfT was due to hold its annual Inclusion Week the following week, and that the Induction Packs have been refreshed to include content on equality.
- Once the initial roll out of training is complete refresher sessions will be made available. This is particularly important for Private Office staff who tend to have short term posts.
- Noted that the first step in the process of assessing the impact of new policy includes testing the need for a more thorough (Equality/disability) Impact Assessment.
- DfT are offering training on how to do quality analysis. This isn't mandatory, however, staff are encouraged to take training to ensure that their actions are compliant with the PSED.
- Noted that the Equality Duty isn't just about those with disabilities, the Department's actions will need to pay due regard to the other protected groups and to the intersectionality between them.
- Noted the next steps on the PSED project within DfT are: establishing a Centre of Expertise, ensuring use of the new submissions template, and more training.
- DPTAC suggested a survey in early 2019 to assess the impact of the PSED project.

Action: [REDACTED] to discuss with [REDACTED] how the impact of the new submission template and associated training can be measured, and update DPTAC accordingly.

5. DPTAC Stakeholders

- DPTAC noted that it contains certain knowledge gaps, such as awareness of cognitive disabilities. More generally, DPTAC recognises a need to engage more often with disabled people more directly.
- DPTAC had hosted an event to consider the options for responding to the issues associated with priority spaces on buses to which several representative organisations had been invited – feedback had been positive.
- It was considered whether the focus of further engagement might be, for example, topic based or impairment based.
- In terms of engaging with other sectors, Keith suggested to hold an event to fill DPTAC knowledge gaps by the year end.
- It was noted that DPTAC would need to be clear on why it was seeking engagement, who it wished to make contact with, and the need to balance any such engagement with available resources to take this forward
- It was agreed that DPTAC would not be seeking to engage with the general public, and that the focus would be on relevant DPOs and stakeholder organisations
- To inform this, DPTAC requested a list of stakeholder bodies held by DfT.

Action: [REDACTED] [REDACTED] said he will send the names of organisations who responded to the AAP consultation. Personal details and email addresses will however need to be removed.

- Keith said he was conscious of DPTAC resources. He said he is planning on producing a paper on the use of DPTAC time