

**Meeting held on 7th September 2021 on Zoom.**

Present: Peter Osmon (Chair), Neil Roth (Secretary), Chris Barker (Zoom host), Maggie Heraty, Bill Kay, Robin Whittaker, Rob Adamson, Rowena Lee, Paul Ebbutt.

Apologies: Andrew Bosi, Jim Lawman, John Cox, Margherita Rendel

1. Peter especially welcomed Rowena Lee (as a new member) and Paul Ebbutt (as a guest) to the meeting.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 27th July. Approved.

Matters arising: John Cox had found online Network Rail’s London Rail Freight Strategy Full Report (as opposed to the summary). He is still to draft letters for FTL to send to every Greater London Assembly Member but wished FTL members to be aware that, a couple of weeks ago, he had been knocked unconscious by a scooter on the pavement, taken by ambulance to Northwick Park hospital for treatment and then discharged

3. Campaigning. Bus Alliance. Chris reminded us that it had been set up by London TravelWatch to campaign against potential cuts in bus services in the light of TfL’s dire financial circumstances. LTW had invited other sympathetic organisations to join and to sign a letter to the Secretary of State for Transport. At the meeting Chris attended on 1/9/21, a campaign day was announced for 15/9/21. First London were to supply a campaign bus which would follow this itinerary:

* We’ll start on the bus at **Queen Elizabeth Street**(near City Hall) and be there from **9.30 – 10.10 am**.
* We’ll then travel on the bus to **Old Palace Yard, Westminster** (opposite the Houses of Parliament) and be there from **10.30 – 11.30 am.**
* After this, we hope to be able to make a final stop for the bus at **Newham General Hospital**, where we would expect to be from **12.30 – 1.30 pm.**Confirmation of this and a map of the exact location will follow. *(post-meeting: the Newham element of this itinerary is now unlikely).*

Chris and Neil will both participate and are allowed to include a guest or two: Rowena agreed to join Chris and Neil.

4. Discussion Topic: Northern Line Extension to Battersea Power Station (NLE).

After the agenda had been issued, the opening date had been announced: 20th September.

Paul had been employed by London Underground as the ‘Principal Project Engineer’ on the NLE project until his retirement 2016. He explained how the Transport & Works Act Order and the construction contract had included for full length overrun tunnels to be constructed beyond both terminal platforms at Battersea Power Station. These would have enabled one train to be routinely outstabled in each tunnel as well as a third in a platform (allowing other trains to reverse in the opposite platform).

Neil explained how outstabling in standard, full length overrun tunnels (as provided on the Victoria line beyond Brixton and the former section of the Jubilee line beyond Charing Cross) enabled passenger services to start earlier and finish later than if all the trains in operation had to arrive from/depart to a remote depot.

Standard full-length overrun tunnels are also long enough to enable a train to approach a terminating platform safely at normal speed, even if a defective train has been stored temporarily, during the traffic day, in the tunnel beyond the platform.

It was understood that a significant settlement sum\* had been agreed with Battersea Dogs & Cats Home to enable the overrun tunnels to be constructed under the existing concrete piled buildings. The settlement included agreement in principle to the method for constructing the tunnels; this was included in the NLE design & build contract. Sometime after Paul had retired, a decision was made, perhaps because of financial pressures, not to build the overrun tunnels after all and there is only a short stub tunnel at the end of each platform accommodating retarder units. The effect this might have on southbound journey times is not known. Only one train can now be outstabled at Battersea Power Station and (according to *Modern Railways*) a second train will be outstabled on one or other running track at Nine Elms. No explanation is provided as to how engineering trains will routinely pass Nine Elms. The first few and last few trains each day will be provided by these two trains shuttling between Battersea Power Station and Kennington (laboriously reversing twice to run the “wrong way” around the 1 km. loop in order to change platforms).

It is understood that any further extension to Clapham Junction could not reasonably open before Crossrail 2 is built. However, a further extension to Wandsworth Town had better prospects and issues with Battersea Dogs & Cats Home would have to be resolved then. (Bill had worked on an alignment to Clapham Junction and another to the Wandsworth area).

Maggie will be going on a site visit to the NLE on 13/09/21 and will try to obtain more information about these matters then.

\**Post-meeting. Rob kindly researched The Battersea Dogs & Cats Home accounts on the Charity Commission website. They show income from TfL totalling at least £9.5m (£4 million in 2014, £2.5 million in 2015 and £3 million in 2016). There were no further payments in 2018 or 2019 but there may have been before 2014.*

5. Newsletter. Chris reported that the September newsletter was fully drafted, and he hoped to finalise it in a matter of days. Publishing in electronic format only meant that there was no longer a limit on article length and the September newsletter will contain a long article by Maggie on returning to public transport (and problems for disabled travellers during Covid).

6. Other business.

Maggie asked why the website analytics for visits during July and August had not been circulated with the agenda, as Peter had promised. Neil said he had not received them from Peter until some days after the agenda had been sent out (and are being circulated with these minutes).

Rowena suggested the rationalisation of signage as a future discussion topic and climate resilience as a major consideration in our deliberations of future projects. Paul said that (during his earlier work on Crossrail) the level of station thresholds had been raised to provide greater resistance against flooding while preserving step-free access.

Peter asked Maggie to report on the scooter trials at a future meeting.

Christian Wolmar had criticised the adequacy of the Sandilands enquiry in a *Rail* article (“…the questions haven’t been answered”) which had been picked up by *Inside Croydon* (and circulated to core members). John Cartledge had attended every day of the inquiry as London TravelWatch’s advocate and agreed with and endorsed the coroner's ruling re further witnesses, for reasons set out in his report to LTW's board. Neil suggested an FTL debate, if both were willing and available to participate. Chris suggested this could be in person and in public at the offices of Alan Baxter Associates

7. Next meeting: Tuesday 12th October at 6 pm