16th November 2018

(by email: frasermacdonald@tfl.gov.uk; consultations@tfl.gov.uk)

Fraser MacDonald

Local Communities & Partnerships Lead (Central)

Transport for London

**PROPOSED CHANGES TO BUS ROUTES IN CENTRAL LONDON**

Dear Fraser,

Thank you very much indeed for the opportunity to comment on TfL’s proposed changes to bus routes in central London. And thank you very much for giving us extended time to respond to your consultation, until 16th November 2018.

Cross River Partnership (CRP) is a public-private partnership that has been delivering transport and related regeneration projects in central London since 1994. Over recent years, we have led a number of innovative and collaborative schemes to tackle Air Quality, including some funded by the Mayor’s Air Quality Fund (MAQF). CRP’s full Borough, Business Improvement District (BID) and Other membership is shown below.

Many CRP members have taken the time to prepare and submit their own detailed responses to your central London bus routes consultation. CRP is putting forward this strategic response to the consultation as an impartial delivery agency that has accumulated 25 years’ experience of implementing transport and related projects in central London with both Borough and BID partners. The points made by CRP in this letter were discussed with Borough and BID representatives at a CRP meeting on 31st October 2018.

While CRP fully recognises the need for TfL to review its bus routes in the light of other transport mode openings e.g. Elizabeth Line, and in the context of the ongoing need for public sector cost savings, CRP is committed to contributing positively to shaping the revised bus service to be as efficient, effective and economical as it can be for as many Londoners as possible.

CRP would like the Review to be designed to definitely deliver for Londoners:

* Improved air quality;
* Improved reliability;
* Reduced congestion.

To that end, CRP would respectfully request that TfL:

* Publish further information relating to the proposed bus route changes and the implications of those e.g. how / where / on what, are the resulting cost savings to be spent. This would give Londoners the re-assurances they need that resources are being allocated fairly and transparently.
* Publish further information justifying the approaches being taken to specific parts of the bus review e.g. population growth assumptions / locations / timescales.
* Publish further information showing the improvements to congestion, journey times, road safety, PTAL, air quality and other key indicators predicted to be delivered by the proposed changes to the bus routes.
* Increase the ambition and range of the targets being set. Currently, TfL’s target is only for 80% of buses to be on time. This would result in wider Health and Wellbeing benefits being delivered and captured for the benefit of Londoners.
* Set even more challenging targets for zero emission buses, building on existing excellent proposals for Low Emissions Bus Zones.
* Re-consider the proposed withdrawal of the RV1 bus route, that was introduced in 2002 with strong support from the business and residential communities in South Bank, Bankside and London Bridge, and first promoted by SBEG / championed by Cross River Partnership. The proposed withdrawal of the RV1 will remove one of London cleanest bus services, and the proposed replacement of part of its route with diesel buses runs contradictory to TfL stated aims and objectives regarding the commitment to the Healthy Streets approach, as outlined in the MTS.
* Do not categorise a 12 minute service as a ‘turn up and go’ service.
* Give recognition to the phenomenon of less frequent buses driving down ridership, so that route removals become a self-fulfilling prophecy.
* Plan a full roll-out of digital bus Countdown times services at all London bus stops.
* Show how the bus route review is being undertaken fully cognisant of all other relevant transport considerations and policies e.g. ULEZ, Uber, taxis, cycles, pedestrians, Healthy Streets.
* Consider the human impacts of proposed bus inter-change increases i.e. how those will impact on the most vulnerable (and hence the most needy) sections of society, who may be old, frail, carrying heavy shopping / children, wearing a thin coat, all of the above. Inter-change increases cannot be assessed via wait times only.

We look forward to working with you and your colleagues over the coming months to ensure that London’s bus network continues to provide an outstanding service to all residents, businesses and visitors in London.

Yours sincerely,

  
Susannah Wilks

**Director**

Cross River Partnership (CRP)

cc: Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan

Transport Commissioner, Mike Brown