



**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL'S
LOCAL COMMITTEE IN
EPSOM & EWELL**

**CRITERIA FOR INCLUSION INTO
LONDON TRAVELCARD ZONE 6**

10th APRIL 2006

KEY ISSUE:

To establish the factors by which a railway station is included or not included into London Travelcard zone 6.

SUMMARY:

Recently Epsom Downs and Tattenham Corner railway stations were included into the London Travelcard zone 6. The inclusion of the above stations raised the issue of why could not other stations within the Borough be included within zone 6. The report contains responses from Southern Railways which is the main rail operator within the Borough and from the County's Rail Development Officer.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee is asked to comment upon and note the report.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Both Surrey County Council and Southern Railways have been asked to provide a response regarding their position on stations being included or not included in zone 6.

2. SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL'S POSITION

- 2.1 The decision to include Epsom Downs and Tattenham Corner railway stations into zone 6 was a purely commercial one on the part of Southern Railways.
- 2.2 The County welcomed the move on the basis of making train travel on those lines more attractive, hopefully achieving modal shift, and also hopefully reducing railheading (railheading is where passengers drive to a distant station rather than use their local station, because of fares or the level of service or both, putting them off travelling from their local station. Clearly with our roads getting busier this is unhelpful and should be discouraged.)
- 2.3 Currently some people who could use these stations drive over to Redhill where there is a more frequent and quicker service to London. By expanding zone 6 it is hoped that it will make people who live locally to Epsom Downs and Tattenham Corner use those stations because of the price incentive instead of driving over to Redhill.
- 2.4 The Passenger Transport Group will continue to lobby train operators to make train travel attractive in terms of price and suggesting the expansion of zone 6 in Surrey where it is appropriate.
- 2.5 The County Council does recognise the commercial realities that train operators face in running the railways. While lightly used stations like Epsom Downs and Tattenham Corner are not going to cause major damage to train company finances when ticket prices are reduced as a result of their inclusion within zone 6, the inclusion of Epsom station itself as Surrey's third busiest station, would certainly hit train operator finances.

3. SOUTHERN RAILWAYS POSITION

- 3.1 The decision on whether to move a station into zone 6 is not one that can be made by Southern Railways alone. The decision would require agreement from the following organisations:
- Transport for London
 - All other London train operators
 - Department for Transport
- 3.2 Moving Epsom station into zone 6 is a more complicated process than, say, Epsom Downs, Tattenham Corner or Caterham for two reasons:
- i) the level of revenue at Epsom is higher
 - ii) more than one Train Operating Company operates out of Epsom.
- 3.3 Train Operating companies are in the business of making a financial profit not of making a loss. Department for Transport would be reluctant to permit the inclusion into zone 6 because it would lower the value of the Franchise when it comes to be re-franchised.
- 3.4 Southern Railways would be prepared to look at the case for including Epsom and Ewell East into zone 6 but would also require South West Trains to do the same with regards to Ewell West.
- 3.5 If the Local Authority were in a position to offer some compensation, this may help to allow Freedom pass holders free travel as far as Epsom.
- 3.6 Southern Railway's main concerns in enabling the inclusion of Epsom, Ewell East and Ewell West into zone 6 are:
- Transport for London would be unlikely to agree;
 - Department for Transport would be reluctant to agree as they would not want to introduce anything so risky with South West Trains about to be re-franchised;
 - Southern Railways might need the finances to gate Dorking and Leatherhead stations so that we would have the prospect of some gains to compensate for losses.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The County Council's Passenger Transport Group does not have any additional revenue available nor is it likely to have in the future to compensate Southern Railways for the loss of revenue from moving Epsom and Ewell East into zone 6.

5. CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECCOMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The Committee is asked to note and comment upon the positions of Southern Railways and Surrey County Council's Passenger Transport Group in relation to the possibility of including Epsom, Ewell East and Ewell West into London Travelcard zone 6.
-

**LEAD OFFICERS: Roger Lanham (Southern Railways)
Daniel Wright (SCC Rail Development Officer)**

CONTACT OFFICER: Kirsty Light (Local Committee & Partnership Officer)

TELEPHONE NUMBER: 020 8541 7062

BACKGROUND PAPERS: None