

City Development Scrutiny Panel investigation of the Supertram and NGT projects

Prepared by - Peter Bonsall, December 2016

I was asked by the chair if I could identify certain passages in the aural record of the Inquiry which were referred to during the scrutiny panel session on 23rd November. The passages all relate to the cross-examination of Neil Chadwick (of consultants SDG).

The aural record can be found on the NWLTF website - <http://nwltf.org.uk/NWLTFaudio.php>
The relevant days are in the section headed "Value for Money and Financial Case".

In what follows I introduce the passages by giving relevant background and context.

1. On whether DfT had been made aware of the "missing" result respecting peoples' lack of preference for trolleybuses.

The Applicants' forecasts of trolleybus usage and revenue were dependent on their assumption that potential passengers would have an inherent preference to travel on trolleybuses rather than on buses. They assumed that extent of that preference would be equivalent to that which had been found (in stated preference surveys which they had conducted in Leeds in 2008) for travelling on very new buses rather than on old buses. A copy of the questionnaires used in the 2008 survey suggested that questions might have been asked about peoples' preference for travelling on trolleybuses but the documents presented at the Inquiry (including one [C-2-4] which was described as comprising the material which had been sent to DfT) contained no reference to any result from such a question. Under cross-examination, Mr Chadwick confirmed that the question had been asked but that the result had not been used. Relevant sections of the aural record include:

- a. On day 26, at about 31 minutes into the late morning session, Mr Chadwick says that the result had not been used because it was not significant.
- b. On day 26, at about 33 minutes into the late morning session, Mr Chadwick agrees that the report does not contain any result indicating the extent of people's preference for trolleybus.
- c. On day 26, at about 39 minutes into the late morning session, Mr Chadwick agrees that the only evidence he has on the extent of any preference for trolleybus is in the (missing) result and goes on to defend his use the preference for new bus in place of that for trolleybus
- d. On day 26, at about 42½ minutes into the late morning session, Mr Chadwick says he does not know what the value of the preference for trolleybus was. (The Inspector subsequently endorsed a request that the applicants should be asked to provide the value and they subsequently produced it in a new document [APP-155]. Table 1 of APP-155 reveals that the preference for trolleybus [the mode specific constant "Bus to Trolleybus"] was actually negative – i.e. that the survey responses had indicated that people had an aversion to using trolleybuses).
- e. On day 29, about 83 minutes into the late morning session, Mr Chadwick states that he believed that Mr Haskins was fully aware that the preference for a new

bus had been used in place of the result which had been obtained for trolleybuses.

- f. **On day 38, about 46 minutes into the first morning session, Mr Chadwick states that he cannot recall whether DfT were ever informed that the stated preference work had revealed that there was an aversion to trolleybus and confirmed that DfT had never have been given a copy of the table containing the result.**
- g. On day 38, about 50 minutes into the first morning session, Mr Chadwick states that he cannot recall whether Mr Haskins had been informed that the stated preference work had revealed that there was an aversion to trolleybus .
- h. On day 38, about 55 minutes into the first morning session, Mr Chadwick gives his opinion that it was not necessary inform the Promoters of the extent to which future revenues depended on the assumption that passengers would have a preference (rather than the aversion suggested by the stated preference work) for trolleybus.

2. On the question as to whether genuine alternatives to the trolleybus scheme had seriously been considered.

The aural record of the Inquiry includes several instances in which Mr Chadwick states that the Low Cost Alternative reported in the Business Case was specified as “an appraisal device” and that it could not be regarded as representing the best possible lower cost alternative to the trolleybus scheme. He maintains that there was no requirement for serious consideration of alternatives following the (2009) decision to develop a case for the Trolleybus which had been taken after an assessment of the suitability of alternative technologies and corridors. For example

- a. On day 27, at about 51 minutes into the early pm session (following a reference to DfT guidance on the assessment of alternatives).
- b. On day 27, at about 59 minutes into the early pm session.

The question of whether the pre 2009 investigations could be seen as having included serious attempts to consider alternatives had been dealt with elsewhere in the Inquiry and the Panel will be aware that the Inspector concluded that insufficient attention had been given to alternatives.

Further detail on these issues can, of course, be found elsewhere in the aural record. It is to be regretted that it has not been fully transcribed .