

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **Why have you made this proposal?**

This is not the Department's proposal, but a proposal made by London Midland under the rules of the Ticketing and Settlement Agreement.

The Ticketing and Settlement Agreement is an agreement between train operators that governs many aspects of the sale of tickets and the setting of fares. London Midland's proposal only came to the Department to arbitrate because they could not reach agreement with the passenger representative bodies Passenger Focus and London TravelWatch.

### **What exactly has been agreed?**

A few stations will have their opening hours extended in the mornings or evenings to better match passenger demand.

Some ticket offices will have reduced opening hours during very quiet periods.

Four offices - Cheddington, Lye, Witton and Wythall close completely.

### **How have you defined a “busy” ticket office?**

A ticket office is currently defined as “busy” in any given hour if it sells 12 tickets or more. We have robust data from the industry ticketing system that demonstrates these levels of sales.

### **What measures will be put in place to compensate passengers who will no longer be able to buy a ticket from a staffed ticket office at certain stations?**

The London Midland proposal included a number of measures to support the changes which we will require are delivered:

- installation of 29 additional Ticket Vending Machines;
- lifts will now remain in operation when stations are unstaffed (currently they are locked out of use);
- securing ticket offices and retail units to ensure that if these areas represent the best access to the station they can still be used if no staff are present;
- installing help points at all affected stations;
- upgrading CCTV at 11 stations;
- providing new shelters where current access to a sheltered waiting area depends on staff presence;
- new signage to reflect any changes required to routes through stations;
- investment in 30 new train boarding ramps which will be located on platforms – all station platforms will have ramps. Station staff (where available) and on-train staff will use these to assist wheelchair users in boarding trains;
- support of ATOC's new web based booking tool for older and disabled passengers (“Rail Travel Made Easy”) delivering more reliable information to staff and booking confirmation to disabled passengers

### **Which ticket offices are closing?**

London Midland's proposal sought to close ticket offices at Adderley Park, Bescot Stadium, Cheddington, Duddeston, Jewellery Quarter, Lye, Small Heath, Witton and Wythall.

We did not agree that the case was sufficiently made for all of these closures, and have only approved four: Cheddington, Lye, Witton and Wythall.

**What will be the impact on disabled passengers?**

London Midland has commissioned a full report into the impact on passengers with accessibility issues. We are confident that no passenger group will be disadvantaged disproportionately by this change.

London Midland are required to offer assistance to any passengers who advise them in advance of their requirements, and this will continue in exactly the same way as it does now for passengers who travel to stations at times when ticket offices are closed.

**How can a ticket machine replace a person at a ticket office?**

The Ticket Vending Machines that are to be put in place at stations will have the advantage that they will be available for the whole day – this is an improvement in service at many stations where the ticket office is not currently open for the whole day. During busy times, these new TVMs will be additional to ticket office staff, which will help to reduce queuing times.

**The ticket office opening hours weren't being maintained anyway. Won't this just make that situation worse?**

We are aware that there are some ticket offices that LM were not always staffing fully. We have taken this into account and have rejected parts of their proposal for exactly this reason. London Midland will need to make reasonable endeavours to staff their ticket offices fully as soon as these changes have been implemented, and we will be monitoring them closely to ensure that they do so.

**What happens now that you have approved the changes? When will these changes come into effect?**

The implementation of the changes is a matter for London Midland. Our formal role ends with our decision on the changes. It is for London Midland to decide how and when to implement the changes, although we will continue to monitor the situation to ensure, for example, that all the required mitigation measures have been put in place.