

**JULIA LOPEZ MP**  
Hornchurch & Upminster



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Mr Michael Roberts  
London TravelWatch  
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Southend-on-Sea  
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*Dear Mr Roberts,*

I am writing to submit my official response to your consultation on C2C's ticket office proposals.

C2C operate one station, Upminster, in my constituency of Hornchurch & Upminster. I noted that C2C are proposing to move staff out of ticket offices and onto station platforms and concourses in the form of 'Floorwalkers'. This new role would see staff who are specially trained in ticketing rates and advice continue to assist passengers but without a designated ticket office. I recognise the need for continued modernisation of railways in the face of changing demographics and how customers purchase their tickets, particularly post-covid. However, I am concerned that there will be, overall, a reduction in service at Upminster railway station despite the introduction of 'Floorwalkers' who will be present and are expertly trained to give ticketing advice.

For Monday to Friday, the current ticket office hours are from 5.30am until 8.15pm. C2C are proposing Floorwalkers be deployed from 6am until 8pm and a station presence from 4.30am until 8pm. Although I welcome the overall increase in staff presence of 45 minutes, I am concerned that there will be an overall reduction in staff who are expertly trained to give ticketing advice of 45 minutes. For Saturday, the case is the same with an increase in overall station presence of 2 hours but an overall reduction in staff who are expertly trained to give ticketing advice of 30 minutes. For Sunday, C2C the current ticket office hours are from 6.45am until 8pm and it is inexcusable and regrettable that they are proposing no floorwalker deployment at all on Sunday. This is a significant reduction and will result in no staff being present at Upminster on a Sunday who are expertly trained to give ticketing advice. I hope that full time positions will not be lost and part time positions replacing them, as this would not be in the spirit of the Department for Transport's request for consultation on ticket office hours.

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As stated above, I accept the need for modernisation and am aware of other smaller stations with Transport for London's (TfL) remit, including Hornchurch, Upminster Bridge, and Elm Park, which do not have ticket offices and function as intended. However, Upminster is a much busier station and acts as a transit hub from which three rail services operate; C2C, the District Line and the London Overground. My main concern lies with the proposed changes for the Sunday service, where there will be no provision at all of floorwalkers or ticket office staff. This represents a clear, significant reduction in service with no alternative provision.

Havering is the London Borough with the highest proportion of elderly people and is also a local authority with a simultaneously fast growing younger population. The demands of families, disabled passengers and elderly passengers mean that the population may be uniquely dependent on station staff in order to purchase tickets, respond to queries, and assist with those who are unable to use the railway without additional assistance. I was interested to read that your research suggested 58% of passengers rely on information given out at stations regarding changes to services, rather than online.

This leads onto my concern for those residents who may not be as comfortable, or at all able, to use digital technology to purchase tickets in advance or use smart cards to travel. As you have cited, there are 260,000 adults in London without a bank account and there is no guarantee that a ticket machine may be able to take cash on any given day. I do not want constituents who may not have a bank account to be left without any way of purchasing a ticket, should a machine which accepts cash not be working. I have been contacted by the Chair of Havering Learning Disability Society who cited examples of vulnerable adults who do not understand how to use apps on their phones and do not possess their own credit cards, and have used cash to pay for everything. This case is often the same for those with learning disabilities as their carers are unable to carry their bank cards on their behalf, if they have them. Whilst some will be able to use smartcards in London, the Chair of HLDS was particularly concerned about the provision for outside of Greater London and how these changes may exclude those with learning disabilities from using the transport network. I would therefore encourage C2C to consider training all staff to ensure that they have adequate provision so any member of the public without a smart card or smart phone are able to use cash to purchase a ticket in the case that the ticket machines are damaged.

Whilst I accept that the proposed model can work, given it's implementation at TfL stations as noted above, this is reliant upon there being a presence of floorwalker staff during the stations operation. I am therefore concerned that the proposed staff deployments at Upminster Station on Sundays, where no floorwalker or ticket office service is proposed, and call upon C2C to revisit this aspect of the proposals. I would also call upon C2C to ensure that multiple floorwalkers are deployed at such a vital station, especially at peak times, to ensure passenger safety and to allow for unforeseen staff absences.

With kind regards,  
Julia