

Transport for the North Board Minutes

30 June 2022
Crown Hotel Harrogate

Present:

Lord McLoughlin (Chair)

Attendee	Local Authority
Cllr Phil Riley	Blackburn with Darwen;
Cllr Craig Browne	Cheshire East;
Cllr Louise Gittins	Cheshire West & Chester;
Cllr Keith Little	Cumbria;
Cllr Claire Holmes	East Riding of Yorkshire;
Cllr Andrew Western	Greater Manchester Combined Authority;
Cllr Mike Ross	Hull;
Cllr Charles Edwards	Lancashire;
Cllr Liam Robinson	Liverpool City Region;
Cllr Keane Duncan	North Yorkshire;
Cllr Jonathan Dutson	Tees Valley;
Mayor Tracy Brabin	West Yorkshire Combined Authority;

Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Attendees

Alyson Armett	Cumbria LEP
Justin Kelly	Greater Manchester LEP
Mark Rawstron	Lancashire LEP
Mark Roberts	Leeds LEP
Matthew Lamb	North Yorkshire LEP
Peter Kennan	Sheffield City Region LEP

Partners in Attendance:

John Hall	Department of Transport
David Stones	Highways England
Rob McIntosh	Network Rail
Nick Bisson	DfT

Officers in Attendance:

Name	Job Title
Martin Tugwell	Chief Executive
Gary Rich	Democratic Services Officer
Paul Kelly	Interim Finance Director
Tim Foster	Interim Strategy & Programme Director
Stephen Hipwell	Head of HR

Julie Openshaw
Peter Molyneux

Head of Legal
Major Roads Director

Item No:

1. Welcome & Apologies

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed Members and apologies were noted from Mayors Driscoll and Coppard, Cllrs Gannon, Miller, Aspden, D'Agorne, Swinburn, Kemp, David Williams, Lynn Williams, Tom Smith, Waltham and Hannigan, Lorna Pimlott, Lucy Winskell and Emma Ward.
- 1.2 The Chair welcomed the new Members of the Board including Cllr Ross, Mayor Coppard, Cllr Duncan, Cllr Dulston, Ms. Alyson Armett and Mr. Amir Hussain. The Chair also thanked Cllr Heather Scott and Cllr Daren Hale for all their hard work and dedication during their time representing their constituent authorities on the TfN Board.
- 1.3 Board were informed that items 5,6 and 11 would be taken together as one item.

2. Declarations of Interest

- 2.1 There were no Declarations of Interest.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Transport for the North Board held on 30 March 2022 were considered. The minutes were proposed by Cllr Gittins and seconded by Cllr Edwards

Resolved:

That the minutes of the Transport for the North Board held on 30 March 2022 be approved as a correct record.

4. Governance Report

- 4.1 Members received the report from the Head of Legal who outlined the key points of the report.
- 4.2 During the election of the Chair, Lord McLoughlin vacated the Chair and the Chair was temporarily assumed by Cllr Gittins Lord McLoughlin stood unopposed and was proposed by Cllr Edwards and seconded by Cllr Browne.
- Members unanimously agreed that Lord McLoughlin be appointed Chair of the Transport for the North Board and Partnership Board for the 2022/23 Municipal Year. Lord McLoughlin resumed the Chair.
- 4.3 Board agreed that Cllr Gittins and Cllr Edwards be appointed to the roles of Majority and Minority party Vice-Chairs respectively.

- 4.4 The Head of Legal provided an update on constituent authority appointments to the various committees which had been received following the publication of the papers. She noted that there remained a number of gaps and invited Members to inform the Board now of any additional nominations, or to update Democratic Services as soon as possible following the meeting.

She also informed Board that the number of elected Members to be appointed to the Audit and Governance Committee was recommended to be increased to six and invited nominations to the two available positions.

- 4.5 The Head of Legal then highlighted the key changes that are being recommended to the Transport for the North constitution.

Resolved:

- 1) That Lord McLoughlin be appointed Chair of TfN Partnership Board for the forthcoming year
- 2) That Lord McLoughlin be appointed Chair of TfN Board for the forthcoming year;
- 3) That Cllr Gittins be appointed as Majority Vice Chair for the forthcoming year;
- 4) That Cllr Edwards be appointed as Minority Vice Chair for the forthcoming year;
- 5) That the Board approves the membership of the Board and of Committees for the forthcoming year as set out in Appendix 1 and appoints Councillor Jonathan Owen to the vacancy on Audit and Governance Committee;
- 6) That the Calendar of Meetings set out in Appendix 2 be approved (noting that these may be subject to change where necessary after consultation with the relevant Committee Chairs);
- 7) That the Board approves the Constitutional amendments to the Partnership Board Terms of Reference and the General Purposes Committee's Terms of Reference set out in Appendix 3;
- 8) That Board approves an increase of the number of elected members on Audit and Governance Committee from 5 to 6, and that the new vacancy be filled;
- 9) That the Board notes that the General Purposes Committee will be invited to undertake a detailed review of the Constitution including the role of Independent Persons for the purposes of any disciplinary proceedings involving any of the Statutory Officers, and the role of the Vice Chairs, and will present recommendations to Board for approval in due course.
- 10) That the new Shadow authorities in North Yorkshire, Cumberland and Westmorland and Furness be invited to each nominate one of their Shadow Members to act an observer who will be invited to the public items at Board meetings during the municipal year.

5. Transport for the North Budget and Reserve Strategy 2022/23

- 5.1 Members received the reports on the Budget Reserve Strategy at Item 5 together with Item 6 the Business Planning report and Item 11 the Corporate Risk Register report. The Chief Executive and the Interim Finance Director then outlined the key aspects of each of the reports.

The Chief Executive provided background as to why the Budget and Business Plan had not been set earlier and highlighted three key areas for the Board to consider. These were the preparation of the new Strategic Transport Plan (including work on the Independent Economic Review, the regional Decarbonisation Strategy and Transport Related Social Exclusion plus Health and Wellbeing), TfN's work on strategic policy areas, and its role in supporting partners.

He then reminded Board that where appropriate the executive would look to prepare cases that build on existing capabilities for the Department to consider in the Autumn. He informed Board that provision had been made within the business plan to allow for the preparation of such cases.

- 5.2 The Interim Finance Director provided Board with an overview of the budget. He then went on to highlight the key points within the corporate risk register.
- 5.3 Mayor Brabin expressed her disappointment at the closure of the Leeds office and extended an offer for Transport for the North staff to make use of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority's offices. She highlighted the importance of retaining the analytical skills that Transport for the North has.
- 5.4 The Chair extended his congratulations to Bradford on being successful in securing the City of Culture designation for 2025 and stated that he wishes to look at early work which can be done on transport issues in the area.
- 5.5 Cllr Robinson emphasised the importance of the Communications and Engagement strategy and requested that this be circulated to Members as soon as possible. He stressed the importance of this when dealing with difficult issues with the Government.
- As to reserves, he questioned whether the Executive was comfortable that the medium term financial strategy allowed for a robust financial future.
- The Finance Director stated that TfN is comfortable in the medium term. He added that there will be challenges going forward in year 2-4 and these would be part of discussions with the Department in coming months.
- 5.6 Cllr Gittins raised the issue of in year inflationary pressures and whether these have been considered when setting the budget.
- 5.7 Cllr Little expressed concerns about funding for Local Authorities in the future. He explained that when the Local Transport Authorities (LTAs)

have limited funding for local transport projects, LTAs will need to rely more on support from TfN when developing projects.

- 5.8 On the risk register, Members were keen that this should be looked at in more detail. Mr. Mark Roberts commented that it is helpful for the risk register to be linked to the Business Plan.
- 5.9 Mr. Mark Rawstron highlighted the importance of the Business Plan as a tool for discussing future funding settlements with Government. He stated that a plan with clear messages and a focus on the golden thread of improved economic performance will assist the conversation with Government on future funding.

Mr. Peter Kennan suggested that there should be an input from the LEPs to the business plan forward. He also requested the inclusion of actions that TfN can make with regards to buses.

- 5.10 In response to concerns on inflationary pressures the Interim Finance Director explained that the majority of costs going forward relate to staffing which includes spinal point increases and pay awards. In relation to the future pay awards he explained that a 3% assumption had been made and should this be different then this will be looked at in year or by using reserves.
- 5.11 The Chief Executive addressed some of the other issues raised by Members. He explained that through the budget and business planning process the activities for the year have already been prioritised by the Board.

He further explained that provision has been made within the resourcing of the organisation to work on propositions such as freight and logistics, appraisal frameworks and analytical capability.

On the issue of the Communication and Engagement Strategy the Chief Executive informed the Board that he was meeting with the Head of Communications and the Chair next week to map out the strategy and will update Board at the end of July.

The Chief Executive was supportive of the LEPs providing a foreword to the business plan.

Resolved:

- 1) That the Board approves the 2022/23 Business Plan, subject to delegating to the Chief Executive responsibility for the finalisation of the document as required;
- 2) That the Board approves the Budget as presented in the report;
- 3) That Board approves the transfer of the earmarked devolution reserve of £0.5m to general reserve. This activity would be considered alongside normal business planning;
- 4) That Board approves the reserve strategy as presented in the report; including the use of reserves in 2022/23 of £1.7m;
- 5) That Board notes the Outturn reserves as detailed in section 7.10 of the report;

- 6) That Board notes that the staffing numbers included within the report are projected and subject to on-going UNISON and employee consultation;
- 7) That the Board approve the content of the Corporate Risk Register as a reflection of the current position.

6. Transport for the North Business Plan

- 6.1 This item was discussed together with item 5.

7. Strategic Transport Plan Development

- 7.1 Members received the report from the Interim Programme and Strategy Director who highlighted the key elements of the report.

- 7.2 Mayor Brabin encouraged Board to retain TfN's ambitions and urged colleagues to continue to build on the previously agreed ambition in respect of transforming the North's transport system, including the full NPR proposal as agreed by Board.

She stated that the Government should continue to be pressed for a new through station serving Bradford as well as a line from Sheffield to Leeds as part of HS2, adding that the Board needs to hold the Government to account to deliver what the evidence shows is required. She requested that the Board should see the Chair's objectives for the year.

- 7.3 Cllr Edwards stated that the Board needs to be pressing for "Integrated Rail Plan (IRP) 2" and that work on STP2 provides the evidence for that. He suggested that TfN's capability as a regional Centre of Excellence be exploited to the maximum in making the case for further investment.
- 7.4 The Chair stated that promises that have been made so far in relation to the IRP must be delivered, whilst retaining the longer-term ambition for NPR in full.

Resolved:

- 1) That the Board agrees the proposed structure for STP2;
- 2) That Board endorses the principles outlined in Section 4 of the report.

8. Rail North Committee: Update

- 8.1 Member received the report of the Strategic Rail Director. In the absence of the Strategic Rail Director the Chief Executive presented the key points in the report. Board was advised that one of the clear messages from the RNC meeting on the 31 May is that the North needs to retain its ambition. Board was informed that the Chair had met with the Rail Minister, and that a further meeting between the Chair, the Chair of Rail North and the Minister is planned for the near future.
- 8.2 Cllr Robinson (Chair of the Rail North Committee) updated Board further. He outlined Members' frustrations at the current situation on the

rail network in the North, highlighting unreliability of services and service cuts as areas of frustration.

He emphasised to Board the strength of the rail recovery in the North following the pandemic: faster and stronger than the rest of the country. He reminded Board that levelling up required an expanded rail network. He also addressed the issue of reduced budgets for rail operators in the North and stated his belief that these translate to service cuts and encouraged Board to oppose these. Finally, he highlighted other ways in which savings can be made and encouraged Transport for the North to challenge the way rolling stock is acquired.

8.3 Members were supportive of Cllr Robinson and were keen to pursue work around highlighting waste, particularly in relation to the operation of the rolling stock market.

8.4 Cllr Western enquired if the letter to Network Rail regarding the congestion in the Castlefield Corridor had been sent and whether a response has been received.

The Chief Executive confirmed that the letter had been sent and has expressed the wish for quick response.

8.5 On industrial relations Cllr Edwards urged Transport for the North to encourage the Rail Operators and the Trade Unions to continue talking in order to end the rail disruption.

8.6 Peter Kennan highlighted the cuts that have already been made to rail services as a result of Covid and of constraints on the Castlefield corridor and requested that Board not lose sight of these cuts.

8.7 In response to Members' comments the Chief Executive explained that TfN engages with the Department through the Rail North Partnership which enables it to challenge the operators.

Resolved:

- 1) That the Board notes the feedback from the Rail North Committee held on 31 May 2022;
- 2) That the Board endorses the actions set out in the report including:
 - (a) Adopting a collaborative approach to addressing the current challenges facing the industry in a way that draws on the local knowledge and insight of the North and supports the growth and levelling-up agendas;
 - (b) Undertaking work to plan for a growing railway in the North, recognising the changes in demand patterns post-covid and building on committed investment plans.

9. Great British Railways: Update

9.1 Members received the report of the Strategic Rail Director. The Chief Executive presented the report to Board and highlighted the key points.

- 9.2 The Chair stated that the Bill establishing GBR has yet to be published but would expect that to happen later this year and to be introduced in the House of Commons first.
- 9.3 Cllr Little requested that partners and the officer group be kept informed on progress.
- 9.4 Whilst supportive of those areas that have double devolution Cllr Gittins raised concerns that other areas have no devolution which will result in extensive holes in the system.
- 9.5 The Chief Executive explained that the Great British Rail Transition Team will be attending the next TfN Board meeting in September and if this issue has not already been addressed, then there will be the opportunity in September.

Resolved:

- 1) That the report be noted;
- 2) That Board agrees to delegate to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Rail Reform Working Group the preparation of a response to the consultation on legislation to implement rail reform.

10. HS2: Update

- 10.1 Members received the report from the Interim Strategy and Programme Director.
- 10.2 The Chair updated Board on the current position and informed Board that the Chief Executive had received a copy of a letter which Lancashire County Council had sent to the Rail Minister regarding the Golborne Link.
- 10.3 Members expressed their dissatisfaction on the cancellation of the Golborne Link and raised specific questions about the Crewe Hub as well as the plans for Manchester Piccadilly.
- 10.4 On the removal of the Golborne link, Cllr Robinson raised concerns that if an appropriate alternative is not identified then this will lead to a bottleneck north of Crewe and hinder both current passenger services and the growth of freight on the West Coast Mainline. Cllr Robinson enquired about the timelines for identifying an alternative proposal and whether that might offer the opportunity to increase capacity.
- On this issue Cllr Riley expressed concern that the Government's decision reinforces the view that Lancashire will fall off the HS2 rail map.
- Cllr Edwards opined that written reassurance are needed from Government that HS2 services will serve Wigan, Preston, Lancaster, Cumbria and on to Scotland, as originally planned. He welcomed the review but requested that it take place at pace.
- 10.5 Mayor Brabin enquired about the terms of reference for the Sheffield to Leeds line which have been promised for the last eight months.
- She suggested that the letter to the Secretary of State be made public.

- 10.6 Cllr Browne stated that the Hybrid Bill needs to deliver the necessary infrastructure to enable enhanced service specifications. He highlighted the fact that due to how HS2 is being built that Crewe will be the only Northern stopping point for the North for a decade. He expressed concern about the lack of commitment from Government to build a multi modal hub station capable of dealing with the capacity of customers that will occur on five to seven trains an hour, however if it is as few as only one to two HS2 trains an hour this will not provide businesses with confidence.
- 10.7 Cllr Western raised concerns about Manchester Piccadilly station. He was particularly concerned about the nature of the analysis undertaken by HS2 which did not consider the benefits of a fully optimised underground solution. He requested that TfN engage with Transport for Greater Manchester and partners in order undertake an analysis of the HS2 recommendations and then come back to board to discuss a way forward.
- 10.8 The Chair highlighted paragraph 3.8 of the report and emphasised the relevance of this paragraph to Board with projects the scale of HS2.
- 10.9 Mr. Nick Bisson addressed concerns raised by Members. On the issue of the Golborne Link, he explained that whilst the Government has yet to respond to the Union Connectivity Review it has decided to remove it from the current HS2 legislation going through the House. He explained that when phase 2a opens he anticipates that services will reach Preston, Lancaster, Carlisle and Glasgow. He further stated that the opening of the Western Leg will lead to a journey time benefit for Manchester; Golborne would have provided a further journey time benefit going North. He emphasised that there will be HS2 services extending north of Crewe. When considering the alternatives to the Golborne Link the Department needs to balance benefits and affordability.
- On the concerns relating to the level of service calling at he stated that the plan is five trains southbound and up to seven northbound.
- Mr. Bisson stated that Terms of Reference relating to the Leeds study, there will be published soon.
- Addressing the issue of Piccadilly, he explained that HS2 has published the technical advice to Government and he believed that this reflects the advice given by Richard George to the Board previously.
- 10.10 Cllr Browne expressed concern that whilst other areas of the country are getting a hub station it appears that Crewe would see only two extended platforms which he believes will not give the capacity to deliver five to seven trains an hour.
- 10.11 Cllr Gittins requested that discussions on other routes be done in consultation with Board Members.

Resolved:

- 1) That the Chairman write to the Secretary of State restating the Board's support for HS2 to the North and the Board's continued desire to work with the Government to deliver it at the earliest possible opportunity;
- 2) That the letter to the Secretary of State should also recommend that:
 - The terms of reference for the HS2 Sheffield to Leeds study be published as soon as possible.
 - The Government uses its response to the Union Connectivity Review as the opportunity to commission work on the alternatives to the Golborne Link will be developed and that this work should be taken forward in collaboration with TfN.
 - Clarity is required as to how HS2 and NPR services will serve Crewe.
 - Where savings are realised as a result of changes to the design of HS2 and/or NPR these should be retained within the overall funding envelope defined in the Integrated Rail Plan.
 - Further clarity is required on the decisions made in respect of Manchester Piccadilly.
- 3) That TfN and TfGM work together on analysis of Piccadilly Station options.

11. Corporate Risk Register

- 11.1 This item was discussed as part of the conversation with item 5.

12. Date of Next Meeting

- 12.1 The Chair placed on record his thanks to Peter Molyneux (Major Roads Director) who was attending his last meeting before leaving Transport for the North.
- 12.2 Thursday 29 September
11am
Manchester Venue