

Transport for the North Board Minutes

**14 December 2022
Virtual**

Present:

Lord McLoughlin (Chair)

Attendee

CLlr Phil Riley
CLlr Quesir Mahmood (Observer)
CLlr Louise Gittins
CLlr Keith Little
Mayor Andy Burnham

CLlr Mike Ross
CLlr Rupert Swarbrick
Mayor Steve Rotheram
CLlr Martin Gannon
CLlr Richard Hannigan
Mayor Jamie Driscoll
Mayor Oliver Coppard

CLlr Jonathan Dutson
CLlr Hans Mundry
Mayor Tracy Brabin

Local Authority

Blackburn with Darwen;
Blackburn with Darwen
Cheshire West & Chester;
Cumbria;
Greater Manchester Combined
Authority;
Hull;
Lancashire;
Liverpool City Region;
North East Combined Authority;
North Lincolnshire;
North of Tyne Combined Authority;
South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined
Authority;
Tees Valley;
Warrington;
West Yorkshire Combined Authority;

Shadow Member

CLlr Denise Rollo

Cumberland

Rail North Authorities Attendees

Councillor John Ogle

Nottinghamshire

Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Attendees

Alyson Armett
Justin Kelly
Tony Kirby
Mark Rawstron
Lucy Winskell
Peter Kennan

Cumbria LEP
Greater Manchester LEP
Hull and East Yorkshire LEP
Lancashire LEP
North East LEP
Sheffield City Region LEP

Partners in Attendance:

John Hall

Department of Transport

David Stones
Rob McIntosh

Highways England
Network Rail

Officers in Attendance:

Name	Job Title
Lucy Jacques	Acting Head of Policy
Martin Tugwell	Chief Executive
Gary Rich	Democratic Services Officer
Julie Openshaw	Head of Legal
Paul Kelly	Interim Finance Director
Brian Sloan	Interim Research Manager
Tim Foster	Interim Strategy & Programme Director
Tom Jarvis	Senior Evidence and Analysis Officer
Emma Young	Senior Solicitor
David Hoggarth	Strategic Rail Director

Item No:

1. Welcome & Apologies

1.1 The Chair welcomed Members and apologies were noted from Cllrs Swinburn, Waltham, Smith, Wynter, David Williams, Jellyman, Duncan, Abi Brown, Perraton Williams, Mr. Asif Hamid and Mr. Mark Roberts.

1.2 The Chair informed the Board that he and the Chief Executive had just provided oral evidence to the Transport Select Committee which is scrutinising the current situation regarding rail services in the North.

The Chair then updated Board on changes to the Membership informing them that Cllr Robinson has stepped down from Board and his role as Chair of the Rail North Committee due to being appointed Leader of the Labour Group on Liverpool City Council, whilst Cllr Edwards has also stepped down and has been replaced by Cllr Swarbrick. The Chair welcomed Cllr Swarbrick and placed on record his thanks to both Members for all their hard work whilst involved with TfN.

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 29 September 2022 were considered.

3.2 The Chief Executive updated Board on actions undertaken since the last meeting. He explained that there are ongoing positive conversations with Network Rail and DfT regarding strengthening TfN's role in support of the Transpennine Route Upgrade (TRU) Programme Board and he hoped to be able to provide a further update at the next Board meeting. He explained that the Social Inclusion Strategy was sent out for consultation following the last meeting; this has now concluded. Additionally, the approved statement of accounts has now been finalised and published. On the issue of Connected Mobility, he stated that follow up meetings have taken place with officers where interests of involvement have been expressed.

3.3 Cllr Riley requested an update on the Golborne Link with Cllr Mundry suggesting a change in the terminology around this matter since the Golborne Link has been removed and other alternatives are being explored.

The Chief Executive informed the Board that he was unable to provide an update but he will raise this with the Department for Transport.

The Chair stated his expectation that greater clarity will come on this issue as the HS2 Bill proceeds through the Committee stage.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the Transport for the North Board held on 29 September 2022 be noted.

4. Appointment of Finance Director

4.1 Members received the report from the Head of HR.

4.2 Cllr Little proposed the appointment of Mr. Paul Kelly and this was seconded by Mr. Peter Kennan.

4.3 The Chair thanked Cllr Little and the Members on the Appointment Panel for all their hard work during the process.

Resolved:

- 1) That Board approves the appointment of Mr. Paul Kelly, Finance Director (S151 Financial Officer) from 15 December 2022 and notes the intention of the Chief Executive in consultation with the Head of Human Resources to use delegated authority already approved under the Constitution to confirm the interim appointment made from 17 March 2022 as permanent from 15 December 2022.
- 2) That Board notes that TfN's Chief Executive will agree the Finance Director's probationary objectives and monitor performance.
- 3) That Board notes the appointment of Mr. Darren Oldham to the role of Rail & Roads Director and Ms. Katie Day to the role of Strategy, Policy & Communications Director, both appointments effective from 6 February 2023.

- 4) That Board notes the revised annual objective setting arrangements which have been adopted for TfN's Chief Executive and Independent Chair.

5. Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review (NPIER) Update (15 mins)

5.1 Members received the report from the Interim Research Manager who highlighted the key points within the report.

5.2 Mayor Burnham was supportive of the work and suggested that the profile of the work be increased during the Convention of the North in January 2023 with it being positioned as a piece of work that is fundamental to the North.

The Chair suggested that conversations should take place as to how best to present the work at the Convention.

5.3 Mr. Mark Rawstron stressed the importance of focusing on the golden thread of economic issues around transport, and that it should be used as a key message in everything that TfN does and that the message needs to be continually reinforced by the hard evidence.

5.4 Cllr Little requested engagement with partners and stakeholders in order that local opinions should be taken into consideration.

Resolved:

- 1) That Board expresses deep concern at the widening of the productivity gap between the North and other parts of the UK;
- 2) That Board calls on Government to recognise the urgency of investing in the North to maintain current infrastructure and service levels;
- 3) That Board notes the next stages of finalising the refresh of the NPIER and the intention to publish alongside the Strategic Transport Plan (STP).

6. Strategic Transport Plan Development (20 mins)

6.1 Members received the report from the Acting Head of Policy and Strategy who then highlighted the key points within the report.

Additionally, the Chief Executive explained that the Board will be given a comprehensive outline of the communications and engagement that will underpin the consultation process when it considers the draft for consultation.

6.2 Mr. Mark Rawstron raised suggested that simplification of procurement as well as funding streams would aid implementation, noting that different methods of procurement can lead to barriers to progress. He also requested that the private sector be referenced for engagement and that there should be an Executive Summary at the start of the plan which will give clarity of message at the start of the plan.

- 6.3 In relation to section 5.1d of the report Cllr Gittins requested that something on the linkage with devolved nations should be included.
- 6.4 Regarding operational issues on the rail network, Ms. Lucy Winkell requested that existing resources be built upon when considering where the proposed rail academy for the North should be. She highlighted two existing facilities in the North East that are equipped for this and that they could be used as a platform to build from.
- 6.5 Mayor Burnham raised the issue of Strategic Transport Planning and Local Transport planning and requested greater clarity on this issue in order that there can be an understanding on where local transport planning ends and strategic planning begins.
- Additionally, he provided his support for TfN and informed the Board that in a recent meeting with the Secretary of State he informed him that TfN needs to be given pre-eminence again. He added that the City Regions and rural areas are the foundations of the system and TfN then builds above that; he hoped the revised Plan will set out the role of TfN and strengthen the position of the organisation with the Government and the DfT.
- 6.6 The Chief Executive reassured the Board that in relation to Mayor Burnham's comments the revised STP will set out where the added value is and where the strategic position supports and complements the local and city regions. He stated that Members' comments will be worked into the plan.

Resolved:

- 1) That Board endorses the proposed overarching narrative for STP2;
- 2) That Board agrees the proposed key priorities and messages in the report;
- 3) That Board notes the next steps.

7. The Future of Rail in the North (50 mins)

- 7.1 Members received the report from the Strategic Rail Director who highlighted the points in the report.
- 7.2 Regarding recommendation 4 in the report ("Stress the importance of the Government maintaining progress with major projects already in the pipeline") Mayor Driscoll requested that the East Coast Mainline be included given a number of critical projects. He also requested that in relation to recommendation 5 ("Stress the importance of the Government progressing at pace with bringing forward the plans for a new station in Bradford and publication of the Terms of Reference on the Leeds Sheffield study") that the Leamside Line is included as an additional project given its strategic importance.

Mayor Driscoll then highlighted the letter that the Mayors of the North had received following their recent meeting with the Secretary of State. Whilst the letter stated his (the Secretary of State's) interest in pursuing

a rail academy for the North, it made no mention or recognition of the strength of the recovery in patronage in the North and the adverse effects that service cuts would have if operators are asked to absorb the inflationary costs i.e. real term cuts in operating budget). Mayor Driscoll stressed that there will not be a future for rail in the North without investment in critical infrastructure and services.

He then informed Board that for many there is no viable alternative to heavy rail and highlighted the need for guards to remain on the trains in order for them to be safe for all to access.

- 7.3 Mayor Brabin was supportive of the recommendations in the report though she thought they could have gone further following the meeting with the Minister and subsequent letter. She highlighted TPE as being particularly problematic with the new December timetable leading to even more cancellations. She informed Board that the Mayors of the North had asked the Secretary of State to put TPE on notice; however, in the reply from the Secretary of State this issue was not addressed so she requested TfN's support on this matter. She explained that this is necessary as there is no plan for recovery and requested some identifiable markers of improvement. She also raised concerns around the "P-coding" and in particular whether this is included within the data.

On the issues of the new TPE timetable she stated that it is not reflective of the needs of the communities Members serve and raised concerns about overcrowding and potential health and safety issues with the number of people on a train. She requested that TfN raise these concerns with the Secretary of State.

In response the Chair confirmed that he and the Chief Executive had recently met with the Secretary of State and is hopeful that following this meeting a Minister will be in attendance at the next Board meeting.

- 7.4 Mayor Burnham suggested turning the most prominent suggestions within the report into a five-point plan suggesting practical things that can be done on the railway in 2023 in order to try and restore confidence in train use for the travelling public.

Addressing other issues in the report he requested that the issue of guards on trains should be separated from the current dispute noting that the latter issue has an impact on the public's trust. Additionally, he stated that accountability needs to improve and was critical of pre-cancelled trains, stating that this is being overused by TPE to avoid accountability.

He suggested the TfN should be calling on the Government to expedite the legislation on Great British Rail stating his belief that the bringing together of track and train will improve the system.

- 7.5 Mayor Coppard highlighted the fact that following the most recent timetable changes there had been 105 cancellations from TPE on the first day. He requested that the Sheffield to Leeds link be firmly established in the plan as well as calling for the Terms of Reference for the Leeds Study

to be published urgently. He also raised the issue of the cuts and companies being asked to absorb the inflationary pressures leading to cuts in services.

- 7.6 Mr. Rob McIntosh supported Mayor Burnham's suggestion of a document highlighting key priorities noting that TfN shouldn't get lost in a long "wish list". He suggested that there should be a focus on ticketing reform agenda around fares and ticketing, having more influence and control on the specification of services, the need to balance local versus strategic objectives and an emphasis on the need for reforming working practices to increase productivity.
- 7.7 Mr Peter Kennan highlighted that other rail operators operating in the North, aside from the main ones, are missing from the report (for example Cross Country) and stated the importance of such services in levelling up. He then raised the issue of further cuts that have been made as a result of the December timetable changes and asked if TfN could look at the nature of these cuts.
- 7.8 In reference to the final recommendation in the report (to write to the Rail Minister emphasising the importance of taking into account the impact on revenues, unmet demand and wider economic and social impacts when setting the budgets for Northern and TPE) Mr. Mark Rawstron suggested that the economic impact should be at the top of all communications.
- 7.9 Ms. Fiona White addressed the issue of "P Coding", explaining that the data is collected for contractual purposes and is reported to the DfT and TfN partners meaning the data isn't lost.
- 7.10 The Strategic Rail Director stated that the points made by Members will be incorporated into an document along the lines they suggested. On the issue of "P-Coding" a protocol is being worked on and this will be shared with the Rail North Committee. On the issue of Cross-Country he stated that he will look further into the Cross Country issue.
- He explained that in the proposed document he will look to ensure that it explains how the market in the North has changed from pre-Covid yet has huge potential and that services need to be adjusted in order to take full advantage of this.
- 7.11 The Chief Executive stated that the letter will be sent to the Rail Minister as soon as possible.

Resolved:

- 1) That the importance of train operators being held accountable against service recovery plans is stressed;
- 2) That Board support the development of a Rail Academy for the North which will ensure there is a pipeline of trained drivers and operational staff;
- 3) That the critical importance of delivering Northern Powerhouse Rail 'in full' in order to realise the economic potential of the North is restated;

- 4) That the importance of the Government maintaining progress with major projects already in the pipeline, including:
 - Delivery of measures identified by the Manchester Recovery Task Force
 - Transpennine Route Upgrade (TRU)
 - HS2 Western Leg
- 5) That the importance of the Government progressing at pace with the need to:
 - Bring forward plans for a new station serving Bradford, one which makes passive provision for NPR 'in full'
 - Publish the Terms of Reference for Leeds – Sheffield study identified in the Integrated Rail Plan
 - Push forward with implementation of the Leamside Line
- 6) That Board agrees to prepare and publish the case for using the existing rail devolution in the North as the basis for rail reform;
- 7) That Board agrees to write to the Rail Minister emphasising the importance of taking into account the impact on revenues, unmet demand and wider economic and social impacts when setting the budgets for Northern and TPE.

8. Business Planning 2023-24 (15 mins)

- 8.1 Members received the report from the Finance Director who then highlighted the key points within the report.

Resolved:

- 1) That Board notes the financial performance in the six-month period to September 2022;
- 2) That Board approves the Revisions 2 Budget;
- 3) That Board notes compliance with the Treasury Management Strategy;
- 4) That Board notes the funding and business planning update.

9. Transport and Health Policy Position (20 mins)

- 9.1 Members received the report from the Senior Evidence & Analysis Officer who then highlighted the key points within the report.
- 9.2 Cllr Gittins set out her strong support for the position statement stating that the key is how the work will be measured and how it will help with health inequalities.
- 9.3 Mayor Brabin explained that West Yorkshire has an agreed target of zero road deaths by 2040 and the importance of Vision Zero in West Yorkshire. She stated that reducing car dominance is a priority as those

that are poorest and do not have a car are subject to the worst air pollution.

- 9.4 Mayor Coppard highlighted the health inequalities that exist in South Yorkshire stating that 1 in 20 deaths in the region are as a result of air pollution and public transport has a major role to play in reducing it. Additionally, he offered the help of South Yorkshire in supporting and or evidencing this work.
- 9.5 The Chief Executive highlighted the fact that over the last twelve months TfN has significantly moved the agenda forward on issues such as Transport Related Social Exclusion, Social Inclusivity and Health and Wellbeing and he is keen to explore how TfN can continue to push the boundaries in this regard. He added that the Transport Select Committee Report on the Integrated Rail Plan highlighted the importance that community, social and health aspects play and they are all an integral part of transport agenda.
- 9.6 Cllr Gittins suggested that a Director of Public Health representing the constituent authorities be invited to join the Partnership Board.

Resolved:

That Board approves the Transport and Health Policy Position.

10. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday March 23 2023
10.30

The Chair wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.