

Transport for the North Rail North Committee Consultation Call Agenda

Date of Meeting	Wednesday 22 February 2023
Time of Meeting	11.00 am
Venue	Virtual

Filming and broadcast of the meeting

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Item No.	Agenda Item	Page
1.0	<p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>The Chair to Welcome Members and the public to the meeting.</p> <p>Lead: Chair</p>	
2.0	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>Members are required to declare any personal, prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interest they may have relating to items on the agenda and state the nature of such interest.</p> <p>Lead: Chair</p>	
3.0	<p>Minutes of the Previous Meeting</p> <p>To consider the approval and signature of the minutes of the previous meeting as a correct record and to consider any requests for updates on matters contained therein.</p> <p>Lead: Chair</p>	5 - 14
4.0	<p>Chair and Vice Chair of Rail North Committee and Rail North Partnership Board Membership</p> <p>To appoint a Chair of the Rail North Committee and consider a change to the membership of Rail North Partnership Board.</p> <p>Lead: Julie Openshaw</p>	15 - 16
5.0	<p>Rail North Partnership Operational Update</p>	17 - 24

	<p>To receive an update on rail operational matters and updates from the operators and Network Rail.</p> <p>Lead: Gary Bogan</p>	
6.0	<p>Manchester Task Force Update</p> <p>To consider the early indications of how the revised service pattern is performing. To provide an update on the progress of infrastructure development.</p> <p>Lead: Charlie French</p>	25 - 30
7.0	<p>East Coast Mainline</p> <p>To consider the development work done by Transport for the North and Partners to update the "Blueprint" setting out development plans for the northern section of the East Coast Main Line.</p> <p>Lead: Jonathan Brown</p>	31 - 36
8.0	<p>Strategic Rail Report</p> <p>To consider the overview of Transport for the North's Strategic Rail Report.</p> <p>Lead: David Worsley</p>	37 - 46
9.0	<p>North West Regional Business Unit Proposal</p> <p>To seek approval to establish a North-West Regional Business Unit.</p> <p>Lead: David Hoggarth</p>	47 - 100
10.0	<p>Transport for the North Rail Business Plan and Member Contributions 2023/24</p> <p>To consider the update on the Strategic Rail elements of the draft Transport for the North Business Plan 2023/24 and the Department for Transport's funding allocation 2023/24 and 2024/25. To provide an update on the 2023/24 Member Contribution payment.</p> <p>Lead: Caroline Young</p>	101 - 104
11.0	<p>Exclusion of the Press and Public</p> <p>To resolve that the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Items X on the grounds that:</p> <p>(1) It is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during such item(s), confidential information as defined in S100A(2) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) would be disclosed to them in breach of the obligation of confidence; and/or</p> <p>(2) it / they involve(s) the likely disclosure of exempt</p>	

	<p>information as set out in the Paragraphs [listed below] of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.</p>	
12.0	<p>Private Minutes of the Previous Meeting</p> <p>To consider the approval and signature of the private minutes of the previous meeting as a correct record and to consider any requests for updates on matters contained therein.</p> <p>Lead: Chair</p>	105 - 108
13.0	<p>Train Operator Business Planning</p> <p>To provide an update on the Rail Operator business plans.</p> <p>Lead: Gary Bogan</p>	109 - 124

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Rail North Committee Consultation Call Minutes

**Tuesday 15 November 2022 at 11.00am
Virtual**

Present:

Attendee	Local Authority
Cllr Liam Robinson (Chair)	Liverpool City Region
Cllr Craig Browne	Cheshire & The Potteries
Mayor Andy Burnham	Greater Manchester Combined Authority
Cllr Charles Edwards	Lakeland
Cllr Keith Little	Lakeland
Mayor Jamie Driscoll	North East Combined Authority
Mayor Oliver Coppard	South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority
Cllr Jonathan Dulston	Tees Valley
Cllr Susan Hinchcliffe	West Yorkshire Combined Authority

Partners in Attendance

Name	Organisation
Steve Montgomery	Avanti
Nick Donovan	Northern
Matthew Golton	TransPennine Express

Officers in Attendance:

Name	Job Title
Martin Tugwell	Chief Executive
Gary Rich	Democratic Services Officer
Julie Openshaw	Head of Legal
Adam Timewell	Head of Programmes Northern
Chris Roberts	Head of Programmes TransPennine Express
Caroline Young	Partnership and Programme Manager
Gary Bogan	Rail North Partnership Director
Emma Young	Senior Solicitor
David Hoggarth	Strategic Rail Director

Item No: Item**1 Welcome and Apologies**

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were received from Cllr Gannon, Cllr Les, Cllr Duncan, Cllr Waltham, Cllr Hannigan and Mayor Houchen.
- 1.2 The Chair informed Members that he intended to take items 4 and 5 as one item as they cover similar issues.

2 Declarations of Interest

- 2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- 3.1 The minutes of the Consultation Call held on 31 May 2022 were considered for their accuracy.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the Consultation Call held on 31 May 2022 be noted.

4 The Future of Rail in North

- 4.1 Members received the Future of Rail in the North report and the Rail North Partnership Operational report from the Strategic Rail Director who outlined the key points within each of the reports before Members were able to ask questions and make comments.
- 4.2 Mr. Steve Montgomery provided the Committee with an update on the current situation in relation to TransPennine Express (TPE) and Avanti. He recognised the current issues and challenges being faced and apologised to customers and stakeholders for the current situation. Before providing a local update, he gave some context to the wider industry issues.

He stated that industry reform is at different stages and explained that positive levels of engagement are occurring with the Trade Unions looking at reform. He further explained that the unions are seeking a pay increase for their members and together with the Unions and Government they are looking to develop reform that will enable that increase. He then updated the Committee on the current situation with Avanti, explaining that from July staff willing to undertake additional overtime shifts significantly reduced. He then addressed the issue of driver training but stressed that the issue is not driver numbers at either Avanti or TPE as numbers are higher now than pre pandemic but rather getting drivers productive and trained. He added that work on the Avanti recovery plan continues.

Mr. Montgomery explained that final discussions are taking place on the drivers rosters for the December timetable change and was hopeful that the talks would be positive leading to a reintroduction of services from December, particularly on Avanti.

TPE are facing similar issues on driver productivity with a significant amount of training needed on diversionary routes. He reassured Members that they are doing everything possible to restore the services in December that they promised.

- 4.3 Mr. Matthew Golton then provided additional detail on the current situation with TPE. He also apologised for the impact that cancellations have had on customers and Stakeholders. He stated that at the start of the Autumn cancellation levels were at the lowest levels since May but as the Autumn progressed matters became more challenging including a doubling of non-TPE related instances.

An update was provided on progress following the last meeting; he explained that they have been working hard to deliver improvements including a temporary adjustment to services on the West Coast Mainline which provided greater stability and a positive impact on the number of cancellations. More crews are expected to become competent by 12 December and the daily number of services will be increased to 35 in December rising to 40 in May 2023. As competency and depth is added services are anticipated to improve week on week.

- 4.4 Mr. Nick Donovan provided the Committee with a progress update for Northern. He explained that there is currently strong customer demand with the service being at about 90% of 2019 volume levels with leisure continuing to dominate, but this is being impacted by the industrial action and the service delivery challenges.

On the issue of growth Northern recognises that future growth is linked to stronger delivery and performance and he apologised to customers for the service delivery issues. He explained that in the short-term good progress has been made with driver rostering and the issue that had been going on since May was resolved by the end of October though issues still exist with Sunday services. He then highlighted a number of challenges including sickness (which is particularly high in the North East with a lot of focus being placed on improving things in this area), and driver training which has been reduced by about 25% over the last two years despite the rest day working challenge. Regarding the December timetable he explained that the change will be critical for Northern as it will support a more robust delivery.

- 4.5 Cllr Little raised the issue of morning train cancellations and the impact that this has on subsequent trains with them becoming overcrowded and many passengers needing to stand for significant parts of their journey. He further stated that this lack of reliability is making people less likely to use the train.

- 4.6 Mayor Driscoll highlighted the importance of an integrated travel system and the importance of it for growth. He also expressed his support for the "double devolution" proposal as well as the need for a driver training academy in order to help deal with the training needs.

He then addressed the performance issues and the impact that they are having in the North East, highlighting some major issues in rural areas

where businesses have been unable to open due to staff being unable to get to work and school children waiting on dark platforms for long periods. He also highlighted that Northern replacement bus services are not turning up at the stations and expressed concern at the high levels of sickness amongst drivers.

In response Mr. Donovan apologised for the impact to the communities in the North East. He addressed the issue of the high sickness in the area and explained that the management in the North East have a major focus on this issue. On the issue of bus replacement services, he explained that they are having issues in recruiting bus replacement services as the bus companies are having issues in resourcing these. /Mayor Driscoll requested that Northern improve their communication and ensure that the public are kept informed if replacement bus services cannot be put in place either.

The Chair asked Mr. Donovan to ensure that the Regional Director work with Mayor Driscoll, Cllr Little and others in the affected areas while any disruption continues.

- 4.7 Mayor Burnham was critical of the poor service standards during the second half of this year and highlighted the negative impact that this has been having on people's lives, businesses and the wider economy. He believed that the public has lost faith in rail and that this has led to more cars on the road and more congestion in Greater Manchester.

He further stated that the current situation in relation to cancellations over the last few months is worse than May 2018 and specifically highlighted the number of TPE cancellations, as well as the fact that on some mornings there are no services in some places. He added that the people of the North of England have had a very poor service for nearly five years.

Whilst recognising the external and Governmental factors which are beyond the operator's control, he stated that there are things that the operators are in control of and asked for honesty about what they have got wrong and what they are going to change in their service provision. Additionally, he enquired about Government contracts and whether these are playing a part in the poor service. He stated that if their honesty is lacking then there will be no confidence in the December timetable.

- 4.8 In response Mr. Montgomery stated that lessons are always learned from these issues and that previously there has been an over reliance on staff working extra hours in order to maintain services and this has now caused issues. He then explained that they have added more drivers in in order to address this issue and work and discussions have taken place with the Trade Unions on new rosters as well as ensuring that there is a more even spread of drivers available across the week. He stressed that TPE and Avanti want to provide a good service and they are working towards this.
- 4.9 Mayor Burnham reiterated his call for greater honesty from the operators highlighting comments made by the TOCs in the summer where all the

blame for the issues on the trains was placed on trade unions, this he described as inaccurate.

Mayor Burnham stated that he understood why the actions that Mr. Montgomery outlined had been taken and believes that they are the correct actions, but he sought reassurance that three trains per hour between Manchester and London would be reinstated in December.

Mr. Montgomery stated that there are enough trained productive drivers to deliver on this but stated that this was subject to the Trade Unions agreeing to the new rosters.

The Chair requested that Mr. Montgomery keep Members updated on how things progress over the coming weeks.

- 4.10 Mr. Golton highlighted the importance of collaborative working amongst partners in order to deliver a quality and resilient service. He explained that following his arrival at TPE in June 2021 much work has been done to overcome the knowledge backlog and to recruit and train drivers. Due to the December timetable change and the TransPennine Route upgrade this has been a priority. Progress has been made, and there is more to come.
- 4.11 Mr. Donovan highlighted the differences between the forthcoming December 2022 timetable change and that of May 2018. He explained that the planning arrangements for the t timetable structure and its interplay with the infrastructure is in a different place and that only modest infrastructure work is required in order to be able to implement the timetable and much of the work required is on track from completion. /He stated that the most critical part of implementing the new timetable is the train crew resourcing, the rostering negotiations are currently taking place and he was hopeful that these would be completed positively.
- 4.12 Cllr Hinchcliffe shared her frustrations at the poor quality of train service experienced East of the Pennines and highlighted the social and economic impact that this has on communities every time a train is cancelled. She requested that a quantification be done on the economic impact when services are cancelled and are replaced with bus services and that it is important to have this information in order to demonstrate to Government the economic damage that is being done if Northern rail is not funded appropriately.
- On the Rail Academy she requested that this be driven by a group of Combined Authorities from across the North so that all areas have skills leads in order to tap into the existing infrastructure and requested an early meeting of the local authority skills leads with the train operators.
- 4.13 The Chair asked the Strategic Rail Director to monetise the impact of poor performance highlighting that the performance of TPE is costing the Northern economy £2 million per week and asked if this can be localised more.
- 4.14 In response he explained that Transport for the North has the tools and models to be able to demonstrate the economic impact that this is

having on the North of England and that the measures of cost of delays from poor performance and wider social benefits can be combined to produce a figure. /He added that he had already had contact with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority skills lead.

- 4.15 Cllr Edwards highlighted the fact that much of the recovery in rail has been leisure and tourist led during the summer months additionally he highlighted the issues with Sunday travel and how this needs to be resolved because weekend travel is key to those travelling for leisure and tourism purposes. He expressed his concerns and beliefs about the abilities of some operators being able to step up and deliver the December timetable changes.

He requested that the wording of the recommendations be strengthened to state that if the promises are not met and the issues are not resolved then TfN would no longer be willing to support the franchises in their existing state.

- 4.16 The Chair was supportive of the suggested changes to the wording of the resolution and advised the Committee to support the proposed changes. The Committee were also reminded that TfN is able to issue statutory advice.
- 4.17 Lord McLoughlin stated that everyone will be watching what happens at the timetable change on 12 December and that the current situation of one train an hour between London and Manchester unacceptable. He urged operators to be confident in the accuracy of information that they are providing to the public and explained that the public lose confidence in rail services if it is not reliable.
- 4.18 Mr. Montgomery made the Committee aware that there are two strike days planned on Avanti when the new timetable goes live.
- 4.19 The Chair asked that the Train Operators voice their concerns if they are facing issues that are a result of restraints put on them by the Government.

Resolved:

- 1) That assurances be sought from the Department for Transport that the train operators in the North will be provided with the flexibility to put in place short term arrangements that could bring about an immediate improvement to performance – including Rest Day Working Agreements.
- 2) That TfN seeks the support of the Department for Transport to complete the business case for a Training Academy for the North which will ensure there is a pipeline of trained drivers to end the reliance on overtime working and also deliver the growth in services needed.
- 3) That work through the Rail North Partnership continues to hold the train operators accountable for their recovery plans and commitments and should promises and pledges made regarding the December timetable change not be met then TfN would be unable to support continuation of the relevant 'franchises'.

- 4) That the executive be requested to prepare a proposition for consideration by the December 2022 Transport for the North Board that sets out the case for using the existing rail devolution in the North as the basis for rail reform.
- 5) That the case continues to be made for the funding the North needs to support a growing railway including revenue budgets for the train operators and capital investment.
- 6) That the Committee notes the information in the report and the actions that Transport for the North and Rail North Partnership (RNP) is taking to ensure operators have robust recovery plans in place and to provide them with support and guidance to respond to current issues in the best way possible for passengers.

5 Rail North Partnership Operational Update

This was covered in Item 4.

6 Manchester Task Force

- 6.1 Members received the report from the Strategic Rail Director who highlighted the key points within the report.
- 6.2 Mr. Richard Harper the Chair of the Manchester Taskforce provided Members with an update. He explained that the new timetable is designed to improve the situation in relation to delays in central Manchester through reducing the congestion which became apparent in 2018. He added that if a comparison is made between the December 2019 timetable and that which is about to be introduced there are fewer trains making complex routes across Manchester which means less delay will be spread across the region. They are also longer, but also fewer trains more evenly spaced, and whilst this will have an impact on some journeys there will be a big improvement for many. He further explained that standardised service patterns will mean an even delivery of capacity for passengers and will allow for better interchange which will mean fewer trains with better spacing on the Castlefield Corridor.

With regards to infrastructure Mr. Harper highlighted that the industry, through the Task Force, has been closely monitoring readiness for the new timetable. Some infrastructure works have been completed, whilst others are close to completion and are being monitored closely. Work has also been taking place to train drivers on new routes; none of the risks give specific cause for concern, and mitigations are in place.

The Committee was reassured that the Task Force will be closely monitoring the implementation of the timetable.

- 6.3 Mayor Burnham enquired as to “what success looks like” regarding implementation of the timetable and also requested greater clarity on the infrastructure timeline.

Mr. Harper explained that a comprehensive analysis of performance will take place pre- and post- timetable change which will look at all of the detailed root causes. The one measure which is particularly important for the timetable is the level of congestion delay and this will be looked at

closely. He explained that the modelling which was undertaken showed that the new timetable should reduce that by 20% and that is the measure that will be monitored. He then went on to highlight the opportunity for electrification schemes on the Northwest quadrant out of Manchester coming to fruition and the works in Salford and Manchester Victoria.

The Committee was informed that Network Rail is producing work which will be published in the spring which will provide a further update and hopefully remove the vagueness around infrastructure work beyond 2025.

- 6.4 Mayor Coppard raised the issue of there being no link in Sheffield to Manchester Airport and requested an update and requested the opportunity for South Yorkshire to be more involved in the Task Force.

Mr. Harper explained that the service to Manchester Airport is understood and is on the list of service business cases for future. Mr. Golton explained that this is something that TPE are working on.

Mayor Coppard asked Mr. Harper to write to him outlining the plan.

- 6.5 Cllr Hinchcliffe highlighted that there is no link from Bradford to Manchester Airport despite this being promised 3 years ago and requested that a similar approach be taken in West Yorkshire as is being taken in Manchester.

The Strategic Rail Director agreed with Cllr Hinchcliffe on the approach due to many interlinked issues in the Leeds and Bradford areas.

Resolved:

- 1) That the Committee notes the progress on implementation of the December 2022 timetable;
- 2) The Committee notes the continued progress with development and delivery of the infrastructure upgrades identified in the Blueprint in the short and longer term;
- 3) That the Committee notes the next steps including further development of the longer-term infrastructure requirements.

7 East Coast Mainline Update

- 7.1 Members received the report from the Partnership and Programme Manager who highlighted the key issues in the report.
- 7.2 Cllr Hinchcliffe expressed frustration with the length of time taken. She explained that the Programme Board is in place, but more involvement is required from DfT regarding the infrastructure and highlighted the lack of response to the IRP and the fact that there are still no Terms of Reference to the Leeds Study. She also enquired as to the current position of the Northern Acceleration Council.
- 7.3 The Chief Executive explained that during Grant Shapps tenure as Secretary of State the Department was anxious to release the Terms of Reference although cross governmental approval was needed. Following

the change in the Secretary of State he hoped that the Terms of Reference would be released soon.

- 7.4 Mayor Coppard supported Cllr Hinchcliffe's comments and suggested that a letter be sent to Government with the support of TfN on this matter.

Resolved:

- 1) That the Committee notes the update on industry work to introduce a revised timetable on the East Coast Main Line and further infrastructure enhancements;
- 2) That Transport for the North writes to Department for Transport to seek inclusion of Transport for the North on the ECML Programme Board;
- 3) That the Committee notes the update on the Leeds Area Study.

8 Resilience and Reliability Delivery Plan

- 8.1 Members received the report from David Worsley who highlighted the key points in the report.

Resolved:

- 1) That the Committee notes the work that has been undertaken by Transport for the North on small-medium infrastructure schemes
- 2) That the Committee endorses the approach to improving reliability set out in this report
- 3) That the Committee endorses seeking devolved funding from Government, potentially through Network Rail, to address the resilience and reliability of the network

9 Exclusion of the Press and Public

To resolve that the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of items 10 and 11 on the grounds that:

(1) It is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during such item(s), confidential information as defined in S100A(2) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) would be disclosed to them in breach of the obligation of confidence; and/or

(2) it / they involve(s) the likely disclosure of exempt information as set out in the Paragraphs [where necessary listed below] of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

10 Private Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- 10.1 The private minutes of the Consultation Call held on 31 May 2022 were considered for their accuracy.

Resolved:

That the private minutes of the Consultation Call held on 9 March 2022 be noted.

11 Train Operator Business Plans

11.1 The report was received by Members who were then invited to ask questions and make comments.

Resolved:

That the report of the Rail North Partnership Director be noted.

Meeting:	Rail North Committee Consultation Call
Subject:	Chair and Vice Chair of Rail North Committee and Rail North Partnership Board Membership
Author:	Julie Openshaw, Head of Legal
Sponsor:	Darren Oldham, Rail & Roads Director
Meeting Date:	Wednesday 22 February 2023

1. Purpose of the Report:

- 1.1 To appoint a Chair and Vice Chair of Rail North Committee and consider a change to the membership of Rail North Partnership Board.

2. Recommendations:

- 2.1 That Rail North Committee receives nominations for the roles of Chair and Vice Chair respectively and selects a member to undertake each role.
- 2.2 That Rail North Committee considers the membership of Rail North Partnership Board and approves the change of one of the Transport for the North representatives from David Hoggarth to Darren Oldham.

3. Main Issues:

- 3.1 Councillor Liam Robinson has chaired the Rail North Committee for a considerable period of time, and now that he has resigned from his position with TfN, Rail North Committee needs to select a new Chair.
- 3.2 Historically, TfN's Constitution has not made reference to the Chairship of Rail North Committee, nor has there been a Vice Chair, though the Constitution does make provision for the Chairship of Board and other committees. This point will be addressed as part of the current review of the Constitution. Rail North Committee is nonetheless permitted to elect a Chair and Vice Chair, and with the resignation of the previous Chair, clearly an alternative Member needs to be elected to this role at this meeting. Rail North Committee is able to select its own Chair. In the absence of the Chair at the commencement of the meeting, a senior officer will invite nominations to be put forward. At the June 2023 annual meeting of Rail North Committee a Chair and Vice Chair for the full 2023-24 year can be elected.
- 3.3 The Franchise Management Agreement between Transport for the North and the Local Transport Authorities and the (then) Rail North Limited makes provisions for the membership of Rail North Partnership Board ("RNPB") and changes to that membership. Board members are senior officials from both DfT and Transport for the North. There are 6 seats in total, 3 allocated to DfT and 3 allocated to TfN. Of the 3 seats allocated to TfN, the current Members are Tobyn Hughes, Bob Morris and David Hoggarth. The Franchise Management Agreement provides at 8.4 that Transport for the North shall be entitled to replace one of its Rail North Partnership Board Members "if a Transport for the North Rail North Partnership Board Member gives notice to Transport for the North that he no longer wishes to act as a Transport for the North Rail North Partnership Board Member." With the recent reorganisation of Transport for the North posts, Darren Oldham is the new Rail & Roads Director, with the expectation of taking up one of the Transport for the North RNPB seats and accordingly David Hoggarth has given notice to no longer act in this capacity.

The Franchise Management Agreement provides that Transport for the North shall notify the Rail North Authorities within 10 Working Days of the circumstances in any of clauses 8.4.1 to 8.4.2 arising, and this step has been carried out 3.4 It goes on to provide that within 10 Working Days of notification by TfN, the Rail Authorities shall be entitled to nominate proposed appointees in respect of the replacement Rail North Partnership Board Member to Transport for the North and all other Rail Authorities, provided such proposed appointee should be of an equivalent standing to the Secretary of State Rail North Partnership Board Members. If only one nomination is received for the replacement, Transport for the North shall nominate them as the designated appointee to be considered and appointed as appropriate.

- 3.4 RNC is invited to nominate and appoint Darren Oldham to the seat David Hoggarth has previously occupied.

4. Corporate Considerations

Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no apparent financial implications.

Resource Implications

- 4.2 There are no apparent resource implications.

Legal Implications

- 4.3 Legal implications are covered within the report.

Risk Management and Key Issues

- 4.4 There are no risk management issues.

Environmental Implications

- 4.5 There are no environmental implications.

Equality and Diversity

- 4.6 There are no equality and diversity issues.

Consultations

- 4.7 The consultations required under the Franchise Management Agreement have been undertaken.

5. Background Papers

- 5.1 None.

6. Appendices

- 6.1 None.

Glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used (if applicable)

Please include any technical abbreviations and acronyms used in the report in this section. (Please see examples below.) This will provide an easy reference point for the reader for any abbreviations and acronyms that are used in the report.

None.

Meeting: Rail North Committee Consultation Call
Subject: Rail North Partnership Operational Update
Author: Gary Bogan, Rail North Partnership Director
Sponsor: Darren Oldham, Rail and Roads Director
Meeting Date: Wednesday 22 February 2023

1. Purpose of the Report:

- 1.1 To update the Committee on operational rail matters, including performance, and to ask Members to note the information in the report. Representatives from Northern Trains, TransPennine Express (TPE) and Network Rail will attend the meeting.

2. Recommendations:

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes the information in the report and the actions that Transport for the North and Rail North Partnership (RNP) are taking to ensure operators have robust recovery plans in place and to provide them with support and guidance to respond to current issues in the best way possible for passengers.
- 2.2 It is recommended that Committee members discuss the current issues with representatives of the industry attending the meeting.

3. Overview

- 3.1 Train operations in the North (and elsewhere) continue to be impacted by industry-wide issues including Industrial Relations (including ongoing and potential future strikes), higher than average levels of sickness and training backlogs caused by Covid. These issues are combining to create a very challenging environment for operators and unacceptable levels of performance and disruption for passengers. For performance to improve to sustainable levels, the training backlog must be addressed and this needs to be managed alongside the ongoing impact of industrial action, sickness and the loss of rostering flexibility previously afforded by driver Rest Day Working (RDW) is having on daily performance through full or part cancellations.
- 3.2 In the North of England further strikes took place on 1 and 3 February 2023, following a period of disruption in late December.
- 3.3 Transport for the North is using its role and influence in the Rail North Partnership (RNP) to seek solutions to the underlying issues as well as short-term mitigations. RNP is using its contractual relationship with Northern and TPE to develop appropriate recovery plans, implement them once approved and hold the operators to account for delivery against them.
- 3.4 In November 2022 the Secretary of State met Northern mayors and TfN to discuss the impacts of ongoing poor performance. Following these meetings, DfT agreed a revised RDW mandate for TPE and Northern.
- 3.5 On 19 January the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) wrote to all train operators informing them of its decision "to stop the use of "P*-coded" pre-cancellations caused by late-notice resource availability shortages." All operators and Network Rail will work together to identify and implement an appropriate method to end the use of late-notice, resource availability shortage "P*coded" pre-cancellations. In the meantime, cancellations must remain visible to passengers and must also

form a part of the industry dataset to inform decision making, and operators must provide ORR with data counting this type of resource-driven “p*-coded” pre-cancellation at the end of each railway period.

4. TransPennine Express and Northern Recovery Plans

- 4.1 Against a backdrop of stronger recovery of passenger demand in the North, performance remains unacceptable and below target levels (see Appendix 1), due to the impact of sickness, training, industrial action and the loss of driver RDW flexibility. A new offer of a Rest Day Working Agreement was made to ASLEF in late November, but the offer was turned down without resorting to driver ballot. The offer remains on the table for ASLEF to consider.
- 4.2 RNP has been working with Transport for the North, TPE and Northern to develop robust recovery plans, implement them and hold the operators to account for delivery against them. RNP is working with operators to transform ways of working to provide a sustainable and responsive foundation for growing back reliably and making sure operators have the resources, including through large-scale recruitment, to run intended services reliably and increase services as resources allow.
- 4.3 Following a period of worsening performance in the run up to Christmas 2022, the Secretary of State has increased focus on TPE with the Rail Minister, Huw Merriman, now holding weekly meetings with RNP to keep abreast of the position. A formal request for a Recovery Plan has been made, and TPE has now submitted this to RNP board and ministers. TPE will be in attendance and will provide members with an overview of the main actions. The Secretary of State will decide whether to accept TPE’s Recovery Plan as deliverable and desirable or will look to take alternative action, including consideration of appointing the Operator of Last Resort.
- 4.4 RNP continues to work with DOHL (the holding company for the Operator of Last Resort), Transport for the North, DfT and the operators to develop plans, originally put forward by Northern, for a Rail Academy for the North – a multi-location training academy for our (and potentially other) operators, which will both offer people across the North the opportunity to develop the skills needed for careers in rail and provide operators with a sustainable supply of skilled staff for future growth.
- 4.5 Transport for the North has continued to meet with DfT and operators to push for greater clarity on future plans and certainty for passengers where services are disrupted.
- 4.6 RNP has additionally approved TPE’s recruitment of additional driver trainees this year, building on its already significant pipeline of trainees.
- 4.7 Operators’ recovery will be measured by constant monitoring of performance across the network to see if timetable adjustments are supporting service stabilisation, monitoring of sickness levels to see if trends are improving or degrading, reporting of recruitment plans and levels of recruitment and driver training progress, through performance dashboards.
- 4.8 As part of the Recovery Plan (see 4.3 above), RNP is carrying out a review of South and North TransPennine route timetables with TPE to establish what improvements can reliably be made for the December 2023 timetable, including restoring WCML services.
- 4.9 The number of drivers who will complete training and be available for services will increase by 46 between now and 28 May 2023. This increase, coupled with the

return to work of a small number of short- and long-term sick drivers, will reduce the reliance on RDW and should lead to fewer cancellations.

TransPennine Express

- 4.10 Throughout the year, TPE has seen ongoing high levels of sickness, greater than anticipated levels of drivers leaving the business and a very substantial volume of driver training required to recover from Covid-related competency loss and to meet the demands of enhancement programmes (principally TRU and Manchester Task Force related) and timetable changes.
- 4.11 This has impacted service performance, with the situation compounded by diminished rostering flexibility from the loss of driver RDW since December 2021 and strike action by each of ASLEF, TSSA and RMT which has impacted the rate at which training can be delivered.
- 4.12 RNP has been working with the operator and stakeholders to resolve the underlying issues and improve the service for passengers including flexibility to facilitate a temporary Rest Day Working Agreement. A revised offer for RDW was made to ASLEF in November, although this was rejected.
- 4.13 As a temporary solution, and subject to strict conditions, TPE introduced a revised timetable from mid-September 2022 for services it operates on the West Coast Main Line. The amended timetable made reductions in services back to a similar level provided pre-May 2022, complemented by additional bus services in Cumbria and the Scottish Borders. Four services on this route were reinstated in the December 2022 timetable.
- 4.14 There continues to be a focus on the provision of accurate and timely information to passengers about cancellations and service disruption.
- 4.15 TPE will continue to work with Transport for the North members and stakeholders to understand the impact of the timetable in practice and consider any improvements or enhancements to better align the passenger offer with passengers' particular requirements or experiences.
- 4.16 TPE will continue to work with RNP, Transport for the North and DfT to monitor and report on its recovery plan, once delivered and if agreed, to address the underlying issues which have affected operational performance for the last year.
- 4.17 Following a number of uplifts in its December timetable, TPE is not planning material timetable changes at May 2023. RNP is continuing to discuss options for December 2023 with TPE as part of the business planning process and TPE's recovery plan.
- 4.18 Looking forward, TPE continues to make headway with its significant driver training programme and is recruiting additional driver trainees.

Northern Trains Ltd.

December 2022 timetable

- 4.19 The Avoidance of Dispute in relation to the May 2022 Timetable introduction within West and Central was resolved with ASLEF during Period 7. This brought an end to the rostering dispute and part of the agreement reached gave assurances around the December 2022 Timetable by committing to an increased but capped percentage of spare turns, which in turn provides a greater level of protection to the delivery of the train plan. Traincrew linking was completed on time for the December 2022 Timetable change for the entire business and for the first time in several years, there were no incidence of 'emergency rostering'.
- 4.20 The start of the December 2022 saw a number of operational challenges. Period 10 saw RMT strikes on the 13,14,16,17 December 2022 and 3,4,6,7 January 2023 as well as an ASLEF strike on the 5 January 2023 and Network Rail strikes on the 24-27 December 2022. Period 10 also saw RMT work to rule from the 18

December 2022 to the 2 January 2023. Throughout this period passengers were advised to check before they travel. This is because the overtime ban by the RMT meant that Northern had to make interventions 72 hours in advance where resourcing levels were not sufficient to run the published train plan. This led to high level of services not operating during that period.

- 4.21 Owing to a lack of staff cover during the overtime ban period, Sunderland station was closed on 18 and 19 December 2022. Following RNP intervention and RNP's request that NTL prioritise staffing, the station was able to be re-opened through the rest of the holiday period. Sunderland Station also has an issue during the station redevelopment works which caused a station closure due to health and safety risks.

Performance

- 4.22 Traincrew-related incidents continue to be the primary cause of incidents. Whilst 2978 services were removed from the train plan through P-coding to mitigate the impact, the continued high level of cancellations means challenges for service recovery following incidents, irrespective of causation. Sheffield driver, Blackpool, Blackburn and Manchester Victoria conductor depots made up 30% of the overall traincrew cancellations. A Performance Action Plan is now in place to work towards addressing these issues, however unless absence levels reduce to levels experienced pre-covid this is likely to remain a challenge until 2024.
- 4.23 Northern continues to face challenges due to other operators not running services. While the operator is working to manage the impacts of other operators' delays/cancellations, these are causing impacts on performance for which Northern is not to blame.

Successes

- 4.24 Northern has been shortlisted at the Northern Power Women Awards in the large business category.

5. Other Updates

Cross Country Trains

- 5.1 Over the last three months CrossCountry have faced challenges with performance, particularly around the Christmas period where passenger journeys have been impacted by infrastructure failures, application of weather-related Emergency Speed Restrictions and industrial action related driver shortages.
- 5.2 CrossCountry's priority has been to continue positive engagement with industry partners to maintain performance by working closely on projects to tackle trespass, fatality prevention and supporting education for young people.
- 5.3 During the coming weeks CrossCountry will be hosting a series of briefings to advise on changes for the May 2023 timetable change.
- 5.4 CrossCountry have recently received approval from the Department for Transport for a Customer and Communities Investment fund project in the region and, with the support from the Community Rail Education Network, launched the UK's Sustainable Travel Educational Toolkit.

Avanti West Coast

- 5.5 In line with its recovery plan, from 11 December 2022 Avanti has put in place a timetable structure, traincrew rosters and availability management strategies designed to deliver an improved, and more reliable train service. This increased services from four trains per hour to seven trains per hour and included restoring a 3tph service pattern between Manchester and London.
- 5.6 All major routes now have more services than before the August 2022 timetable step-down. Successful delivery of the new timetable has been restricted by strike

action and, on non-strike days, bad weather and engineering works. Delivering the full benefit of the new timetable is dependent on stable industrial relations.

- 5.7 The Department will review the elements within the control of Avanti which impacted their operational performance over the term of the Emergency Measures contract, as one of the important factors when considering the contractual arrangements for train services on the WCML beyond 1 April 2023. Officials continue to meet Avanti's senior management weekly to review their progress against the recovery plan and handling of risks and will continue to hold Avanti responsible for matters within its control.

LNER (London North Eastern Railway)

- 5.8 On 1 January 2023, LNER celebrated the centenary of the grouping following the Railway Act of 1921.
- 5.9 New Year's Day marked the start of a year full of celebrations for LNER who will spend 2023 recognising the achievements of the past as well as the potential for the future. LNER's commemorative video is at <https://youtu.be/8W2CE6ZwwQ4>
- 5.10 On Saturday 28 and Sunday 29 January, LNER responded to the collapse of UK based airline Flybe with free travel for stranded Flybe staff and customers along the East Coast route.
- 5.11 Customers who had seen their flights cancelled, could travel of any LNER service to their destination for free, by presenting their cancelled airline ticket.
- 5.12 LNER's Tomorrow's Talent online work experience programme is returning for a fourth time.
- 5.13 Tomorrow's Talent showcases the wide variety of career opportunities available in the rail industry with teenagers completing several online modules on topics such as the increasing use of innovative technology and sustainability.
- 5.14 Since 2021, more than 500 teenagers living within ten miles of the LNER route have taken part in the programme.
- 5.15 LNER has launched 'Deal Finder' to offer customers even greater choice and flexibility when it comes to planning their trips.
- 5.16 It offers customers the opportunity to set their own budget and see a list of destinations available to them with the lowest available fares shown.

First Hull Trains

- 5.17 Hull Trains have continued to see positive passenger numbers, with the launch of new products such as it's 'Long Weekender' ticket designed to move passengers onto less busy services around weekends. They have also begun to trial 10 carriage formations on additional services over the past couple of months, to increase capacity and assess demand, making more use of the trains that they have.
- 5.18 Performance issues under the ownership of Network Rail have caused over 70% of the delays to customers using Hull Trains service. Hull Trains units remain the best in class in terms of performance for any hybrid train on the UK rail network, demonstrating the strong partnership working between them and their train maintainer, Hitachi. In fact, they won 'best in class' at the recent Golden Spanner awards, recognising the service delivery and reliability of their trains.
- 5.19 Looking forward, they are also one of the few operators on the East Coast Mainline maintaining links to London when the line is closed at weekends, using the Midland Mainline and London St Pancras to keep passengers moving. Furthermore, they are looking to partner with sister operator, Lumo, during some future engineering works so that path requirements are minimalised, but passengers can still travel successfully.

Lumo

- 5.20 Lumo has seen strong passenger demand over the last quarter, with increased leisure demand for whole route journeys between Edinburgh and London. Their service has provided significant competition to the airlines along the route. Recent findings show that travelling on Lumo is over 40 times greener than flying between London and Edinburgh. In November, they carried their one millionth passenger, having run over 2,500 services – the equivalent to around 5,500 full flights, and taking almost 93,000 tons of CO2 out of the sky.
- 5.21 Recent performance has been somewhat mixed, with infrastructure issues under the responsibility of Network Rail causing almost 60% of delays and cancellations to their services in recent periods. The geographical nature and length of route heightens the likelihood of a delay impacting Lumo services compared to other operators. Recent improvement works around Newcastle and York stations should also help to reduce some of these infrastructure issues. Whilst there have been some minor fleet faults with their trains, they have delivered best in class periodic performance for the fleet type compared to all other operators using the same fully electric train. Work is also underway to provide a more regular service during engineering works, so that links to both capital cities can be maintained.

6. Corporate Considerations

Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Resource Implications

- 6.2 There are no direct resourcing implications to Transport for the North arising from this report.

Legal Implications

- 6.3 There are no apparent legal implications arising from this report.

Risk Management and Key Issues

- 6.4 Transport for the North have two relevant corporate risks which are being actively managed - 309 'viability of future train services and future investment decisions' and 311 'future timetables'.

Environmental Implications

- 6.5 This report does not constitute or influence a plan or programme which sets the framework for future development consents of projects listed in the EIA Directive and therefore does not stimulate the need for SEA or EIA. Passenger rail has an essential part to play in achieving our decarbonisation objectives within Transport for the North's Decarbonisation Strategy, particularly around reducing private car vehicle mileage.

Equality and Diversity

- 6.6 There are no equality or diversity issues arising from the report.

7. Appendices

- 7.1 Appendix 1. Performance Update

Glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used

a) RNP	Rail North Partnership
b) TPE	TransPennine Express
c) TRU	Transpennine Route Upgrade
d) NTL	Northern Trains Ltd
e) NPS	Transport Focus National Passenger Survey
f) CSAT	Customer Satisfaction Survey
g) RMT	National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers
h) ASLEF	The Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen
i) TSSA	Transport Salaried Staffs' Association
j) ORR	Office of Rail and Road

Appendix 1.

Performance update

The charts below highlight the train performance for both Northern and TransPennine Express.

The data is reported under the new performance metrics:

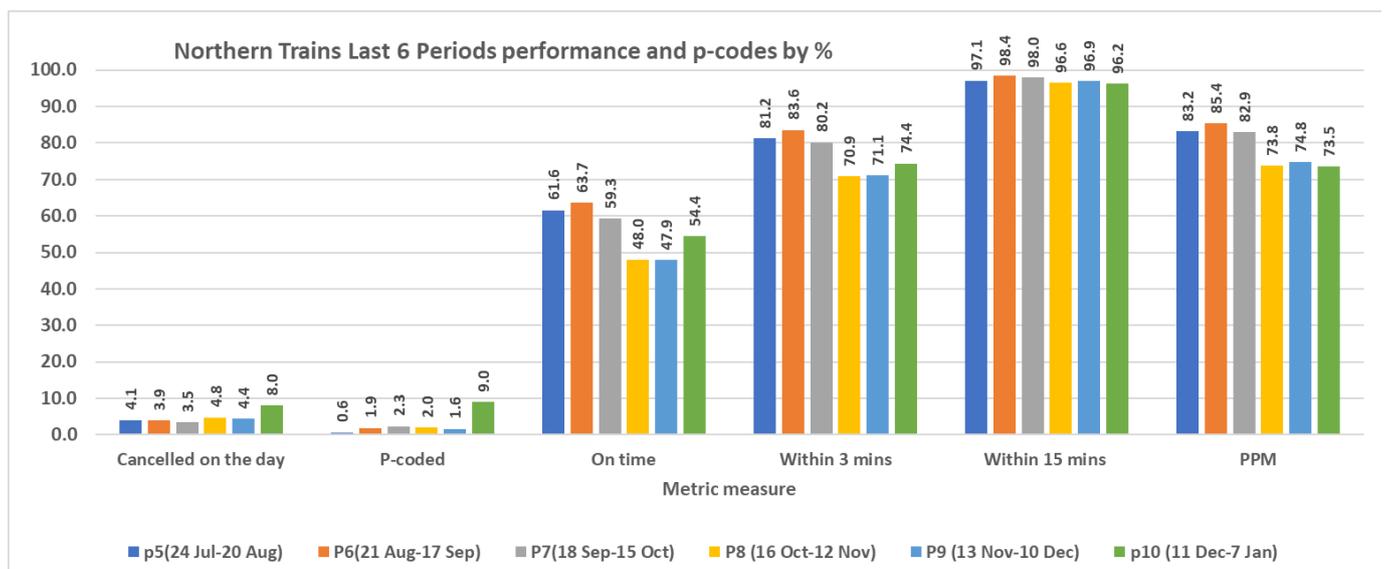
- On-time (arriving within 59 seconds)
- T-3 (arriving within 3 minutes)
- T-15 (arriving within 15 minutes)
- Cancellations (% of trains cancelled v planned to run)

TPE and Northern continue to reduce train services through implementing planned service reductions before 22.00 hours the previous day and these services do not reflect in the overall performance of cancellations but are referenced in the performance charts below as a percentage of trains p-coded.

Although Public Performance Measure (PPM) is no longer a reporting metric but is a combination of all metrics, it has been included as a visual guide (data for PPM is extracted from the Office of Rail and Road webpages).

Periods are calculated each 4 weeks and period dates are included in the charts.

Northern

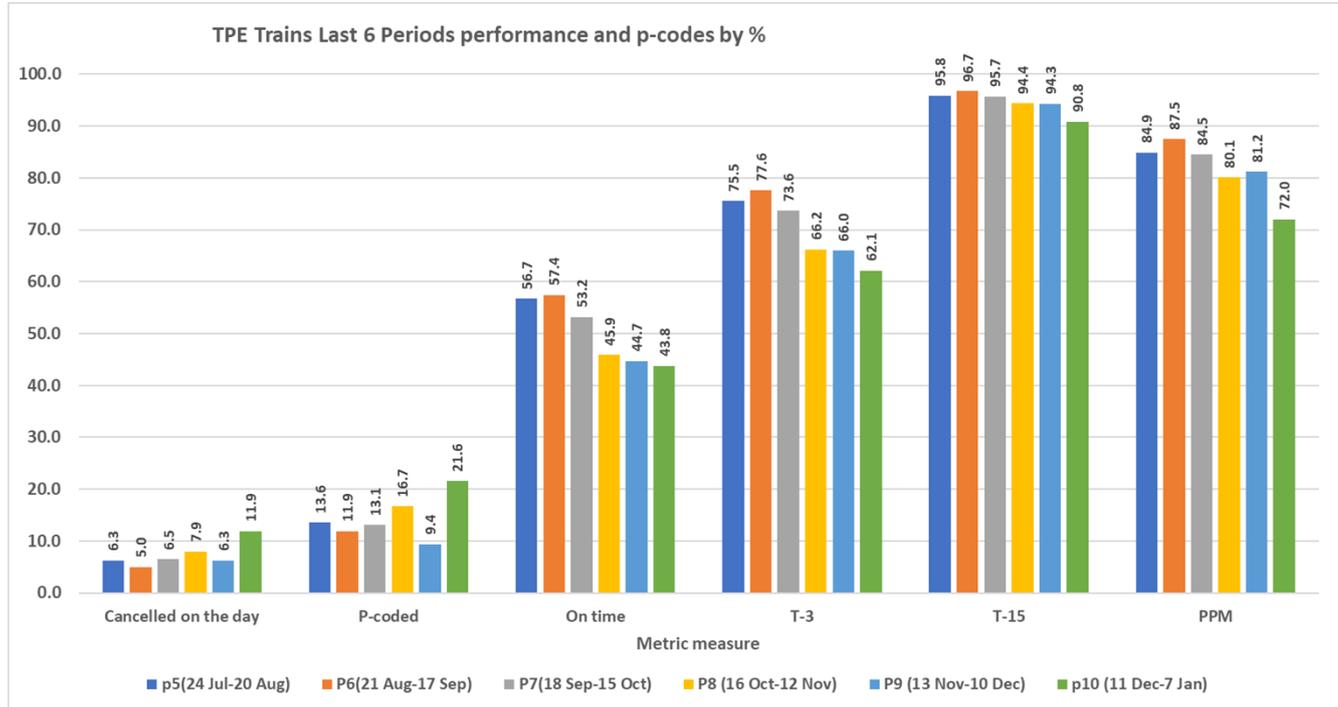


Performance has declined for all metrics compared to P5, P6 & P7. T-15 remains consistently in the high 90%. Cancellations has increased to 8% during P10 which is mostly contributed to action short of strike over a 3-week period.

P-coded trains peaked at 9% in period 10 which is mostly contributed to action short of strike over a 3-week period.

Although PPM is no longer an official measure; analysis shows that since P7 PPM has dipped to low 70's% and now sits at 73.5%.

TPE



TransPennine Express performance has declined for all metrics since to P6. Notably cancellations on the day have increased to 11.9% during P10 which is mostly contributed to action short of strike over a 3-week period.

P-coded services peaked at 21.6% in period 10 which is mostly contributed to action short of strike over a 3-week period.

Although PPM is no longer an official measure; analysis shows that since P6 PPM has significantly declined and sits at 72% for P10.

Meeting: Rail North Committee Consultation Call
Subject: Manchester Task Force
Author: Charlie French, Investment Planning Manager
Sponsor: Darren Oldham, Rail and Roads Director
Meeting Date: Wednesday 22 February 2023

1. Purpose of the Report:

- 1.1 The previous report to the Rail North Committee covered the implementation of the Manchester Task Force led December 2022 timetable change and associated infrastructure schemes required to support this, whilst updating on the progress of future infrastructure upgrades in the region and development of potential service opportunities.
- 1.2 This report is to provide members of the Rail North Committee with an early indication of how the revised service pattern is performing. It also updates on the progress of infrastructure development, following the recent Manchester Task Force industry workshop held on 1 February 2023.

2. Recommendations:

- 2.1 Rail North Committee is recommended to:
1. Note the early positive indications from the implementation of the December 2022 timetable change, with recognition of the significant effort by all parties to enable its introduction;
 2. Note that Department for Transport has advised Ministers to move the Configuration State 2 infrastructure schemes into delivery; and
 3. Note the progress with the development of infrastructure upgrades at Manchester Oxford Road and Manchester Airport in Configuration State 3.

3. Main Issues:

December 2022 Timetable Change

- 3.1 The December 2022 timetable change was designed by the industry to provide a new baseline structure to the North West timetable to deliver immediate improved reliability and performance. Manchester Task Force continue to assess future service opportunities in parallel with infrastructure development work.
- 3.2 The changes in December 2022 saw service groups amended with compromises needed, including changes to origins and destinations, frequencies, and stopping patterns so there was capacity to operate a robust service that passengers could rely on. Seating capacity was also increased by operating longer trains, and more electric operated services with better performance characteristics were introduced. This was all designed to allow trains to pass through the core smoothly, but with a requirement for some passengers to interchange. This reflects service models at other congestion hotspots.
- 3.3 Assessment of the impact of the changes on train service performance and reliability has been limited by the significant quantity of industrial action which took place throughout December 2022 and early January 2023; however, early indications are that the timetable is bedding in well and that the greatest improvements are being seen on Northern service groups operating on the Castlefield corridor.

3.4 A key aim of the December 2022 timetable change was to reduce congestion, and modelling anticipated a reduction of 20%. Data comparing post with pre timetable change performance is not yet available, so no firm conclusions can be drawn at this time, however a performance assessment will be produced in early April 2023 once a longer period of 'normal' operations can be analysed.

Infrastructure Progress

3.5 Network Rail have continued to refine their plans with infrastructure enhancements grouped into five 'configuration states' which show the full journey from now to the completion of the Transpennine Route Upgrade (TRU) and then on to the introduction of Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) and HS2.

3.6 Each configuration state brings together complementary infrastructure enhancement schemes which collectively support and facilitate opportunities to change service operations.

3.7 This refinement of plans is designed to deliver a significant impact, whilst minimising the need for land acquisition, and these have been determined through significant collaboration across the industry through the Manchester Task Force.

3.8 Configuration State 1:

The network is now in configuration state 1 following the implementation of the December 2022 timetable which introduced service changes aimed at easing congestion, particularly through the Castlefield Corridor, and improving train service performance across the North. This was delivered alongside £84m of infrastructure enhancements, including platform extensions for 6 car services on the Manchester – Bolton – Cumbria route (at Staveley, Ulverston and Irlam), commissioning of the former Manchester International Depot for servicing and stabling of Northern's electric fleet and operational control enhancements on the Chat Moss route.

3.9 The successful delivery of these infrastructure enhancements demonstrates significant progress and is the result of meaningful collaboration through the Manchester Task Force.

3.10 Additionally, work is currently underway at Salford Central to reduce the stepping distance from platform to train, improving accessibility.

3.11 Configuration State 2:

The infrastructure interventions within configuration state 2 that Ministers have been advised to progress include:

- A third platform at Salford Crescent station;
- Turnback sidings to the east of Manchester Victoria station;
- Turnback sidings near Salford Central; and
- Station access/flow improvements at Victoria station.

These in addition to the already funded and in delivery works to electrify Wigan to Bolton and the Transpennine Route Upgrade Manchester Victoria to Stalybridge works and Hope Valley route enhancements, provide the opportunity for more timetable reform which the Taskforce is considering now.

3.12 Final business cases for each of the infrastructure interventions within configuration state 2 have been completed, having been developed through the Manchester Task Force with cross industry input including content from TfN for the strategic case, all to ensure a robust case. The Department for Transport is actively working to secure funding to move these to delivery and completion around 2025.

- 3.13 Delivery of these infrastructure enhancements will support further changes to train services in the mid-2020s.
- 3.14 Service options associated with the delivery of infrastructure enhancements set out within Configuration State 2 will be presented to Manchester Task Force in February 2023, with Officer Reference Group workshops planned for March 2023 where options will be presented and feedback sought.
- 3.15 Configuration State 3 to 5:
These include longer term infrastructure enhancements required in Manchester and the North West from late 2020s through to early 2040s with interventions identified which seek to deliver the outputs required to enable introduction of more services, and facilitate the introduction of additional services, but which require further development and design.
- 3.16 Configuration state 3:
This is focused on central Manchester and East – West services. Options are being developed at pace and are expected to include the Cheshire Lines Committee (CLC) route upgrade, platform extensions at Manchester Airport to accommodate longer trains and a complete remodel of the station buildings, platform lengthening and track layout at Manchester Oxford Road and increased platform capacity likely to be at Manchester Piccadilly. The Manchester Task Force is supporting delivery of the outline business cases for each of these schemes across this year and in to early 2024, and associated activities to progress from design to delivery.
- 3.17 Configuration state 4:
Requires refinement, but is likely to include schemes such as the introduction of European Train Control Systems (ETCS) on West Coast Mainline (WCML) North, electrification from Manchester Victoria to Rochdale, resignalling Stockport, ETCS on Castlefield corridor, Ordsall Lane Grade Separation, and the introduction of HS2 rolling stock (HS2 to Crewe – Phase 2A); and
- 3.18 Configuration state 5:
Is a post Integrated Rail Plan (IRP) status and includes Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) and HS2 Phase 2B.
- 3.19 The Manchester Task Force will be seeking to progress design development of configuration state 3, with a view to securing further funding for delivery of these enhancements. This will be done in parallel with the delivery of configuration state 2 enhancements, providing a continuous flow of upgrades.
- 3.20 An industry workshop was held on 1 February 2023 bringing together representatives from Department for Transport, Network Rail, TransPennine Express, Northern, Transport for the North and Transport for Greater Manchester to review progress and discuss next steps on the development and delivery of the Manchester Programme. This workshop focused on three distinct areas:
- Castlefield Corridor;
 - Manchester Piccadilly terminal and the route to Stockport; and
 - Associated enhancements (e.g. ETCS).
- The workshop identified several actions, including the need for emerging plans around Manchester Oxford Road to be presented to Manchester Task Force, with consideration of an access strategy for any proposed works which will need to be cognisant of the impact on customers due to other access requirements in the region resulting from other planned infrastructure enhancements and engineering works.

- 3.21 The CLC whole route upgrade is being developed as a proposal in place of earlier options which only explored turnbacks either side of Birchwood and is believed to be more cost effective and deliver greater benefits.
- 3.22 A stakeholder session was held in 2022 to inform the development of the CLC route upgrade proposal. Since then, progress has slowed. Transport for the North is working with the Manchester Task Force and Department for Transport to understand the current position and where support could be provided to move development forward, e.g. contributing to the development of the Outline Business Case. Requests have also been made to Network Rail for a further stakeholder session to be convened.
- 3.23 Financial constraints mean that each enhancement identified within each configuration state requires its own business case which must present a positive Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) both independently and when presented as part of a package of work.
- 3.24 Business Cases will continue to be developed through the Manchester Programme with cross industry input to ensure a robust case can be made to Treasury for the investment. Transport for the North will continue to support the development of business cases for infrastructure investments by providing local insight and data with the intent of maximising the benefit of any investment.
- 3.25 The options for the timetable change aligned to the implementation of each configuration state will be identified through the Manchester Task Force (MTF) and Rail North Committee (RNC) will be asked to provide direction on priorities, continuing to balance the need to maintain performance whilst providing additional capacity and connectivity.

4. Corporate Considerations

Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no financial implications for Transport for the North as a result of this report.
- 4.2 Investment decisions to allow Network Rail to deliver Tranche 1 schemes and develop and design Tranche 2 and 3 schemes are subject to Department for Transport and Treasury approval, noting the recent change in Ministerial team and potential Spending Review.

Resource Implications

- 4.3 There are no direct resourcing implications as a result of this report.

Legal Implications

- 4.4 There are no apparent legal implications arising as a result of this report.

Risk Management and Key Issues

- 4.5 This paper does not require a risk assessment, however, risks relating to any timetable changes and infrastructure enhancements are being identified, assessed managed and monitored through the Manchester Task Force. A risk has been included on the Transport for the North Corporate Risk Register in relation to future timetable changes.

Environmental Implications

- 4.6 This report does not constitute or influence a plan or programme which sets the framework for future development consents of projects listed in the EIA Directive and therefore does stimulate the need for SEA or EIA. Any infrastructure proposals to improve the capacity and reliability of the system will be subject to EIA Screening, conducted by Network Rail as part of the consenting process for those projects.

- 4.7 Delivery of the blueprint will encourage growth of travel by rail services and contribute to environmental targets through reduction in journeys by road.
- 4.8 Any specific environmental issues will be picked up by Network Rail in the development and delivery of individual infrastructure interventions.

Equality and Diversity

- 4.9 A full impact assessment has not been carried out because it is not relevant to the type of work referenced.

Consultations

- 4.10 Consultations will be carried out by the appropriate body in development of the infrastructure works and on timetable changes through industry processes.
- 4.11 A full public consultation was carried out by train operators on the detailed timetable proposals for 2022. This was open to any members of the public and Local Authorities to respond to.

5. Background Papers

- 5.1 There are no background papers to this report.

6. Appendices

- 6.1 None.

Glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used (<i>if applicable</i>)	
a) IRP	Integrated Rail Plan
b) NPR	Northern Powerhouse Rail
c) TRU	Transpennine Route Upgrade
d) WCML	West Coast Mainline
e) ETCS	European Train Control System
f) BCR	Benefit Cost Ratio
g) MTF	Manchester Task Force
h) CLC	Cheshire Lines Committee
i) MNTP	Manchester and Northwest Transformation Programme

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Meeting:	Rail North Committee Consultation Call
Subject:	East Coast Main Line Services and Infrastructure
Author:	Jonathan Brown, Strategic Rail Lead
Sponsor:	Darren Oldham, Rail and Roads Director
Meeting Date:	Wednesday 22 February 2023

1. Purpose of the Report:

- 1.1 This report provides an update on development work done by Transport for the North and Partners supported by consultants to update the "Blueprint" setting out development plans for the northern section of the East Coast Main Line.
- 1.2 The report also updates on other issues on the route and the HS2 to Leeds Study.

2. Recommendations:

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the updated East Coast Main Line Blueprint.
- 2.2 That the Committee discusses the future use of the Blueprint so that it achieves maximum value.
- 2.3 That the Committee notes the position on the Leeds HS2 Study and other East Coast Main Line issues.

3. Main Issues:

- 3.1 The East Coast Main Line (ECML) links the North with London and Scotland, providing intercity trains to main destinations as well as linking the North East to the North West and Midlands via York and Leeds. The ECML is an electrified route providing services with attractive journey times however some sections suffer capacity issues and poor reliability, and a lack of resilience can affect the route. Additionally, on some sections power supply limitations mean that new rolling stock cannot be used to its maximum effect. As a result, the train service provided is not as frequent as is desired, and some main centres have infrequent or no direct services to London or other major centres.
- 3.2 The ECML is the main route in the corridor serving the eastern side of the country however it is paralleled by other routes which complement the ECML, for example by providing routes for freight trains, and by feeding in connecting passengers to the ECML at hub stations. As a result, development of the ECML itself needs to have regard to the whole corridor and its development needs as well as the core ECML route itself.
- 3.3 As well as being an important route in its own right, the ECML north of York is also part of the proposed Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) Network and is also proposed as the route for HS2 trains to reach North East England. To effectively fulfil these roles, co-ordinated planning is essential so that the specific needs of all programmes can be considered. Transport for the North is a co-sponsor of NPR however only the sections between Liverpool and York currently fall within the remit of the NPR Sponsor Board.
- 3.4 To take a holistic view of the development needs for the ECML, Transport for the North developed with Partners a "Blueprint" setting out known programmes and issues with a focus on the northern section of the ECML which passes through the Transport for the North area. This was first reported to the Rail North Committee in May 2022. This work is based on a similar Blueprint developed for central

Manchester which has been useful to integrate service and infrastructure changes up to 2032.

- 3.5 The ECML Blueprint has now been updated to reflect changes that have happened, not least the impact of changes in train usage or expected demand for travel following the Covid pandemic, changes in government funding and also alignment with business planning cycles that are now in play for Network Rail for the next Control Period (CP7). The updated Blueprint also tries to present information in a clearer format so that the planned investment, service development and future needs are shown in a coherent manner. The revised Blueprint is included as Appendix 1.
- 3.6 Improvements to the ECML are being implemented including recent completion of a grade separated junction at Werrington north of Peterborough, a new track layout at King's Cross Station and the introduction of digital signalling on the route between London and south of Grantham over the next few years. There are also planned interventions on the northern part of the route including in the York area. Other locally led investments such as additional platforms at Darlington and Middlesbrough stations are underway.
- 3.7 The November 2021 Integrated Rail Plan included various investments on the ECML.
- Improvements at York;
 - Extending the current 4-track railway to end just north of Northallerton, rather than just south of the station as at present;
 - An additional through platform on the eastern side of Darlington station, with bays to reduce the number of local services that cross in front of fast trains, which is consistent with the existing proposals being developed by Network Rail with Tees Valley Combined Authority;
 - Upgrading the Stillington route to allow more freight use, and restoring a 3rd track north of Chester-le-Street and a former chord at Bensham to enable a greater degree of segregation between freight and fast passenger trains; and
 - Lengthening some of the bay platforms at Newcastle to enable NPR trains to terminate in the station.
- 3.8 Whilst this investment is welcome, there are outstanding needs on the ECML route itself and also on adjacent routes in the corridor. Transport North East, Transport for the North and Network Rail jointly funded a Strategic Outline Business Case for options which would provide capacity for 7 or 8 trains per hour on the section between York and Newcastle compared with the current 6. This has now been accepted by the DfT and Network Rail is now developing an Outline Business Case as part of the IRP Programme. This is due to conclude towards the end of 2023. Other constraints such as the Doncaster area, Newark Flat Crossing and station facilities remain unaddressed. In the longer term, other improvements such as reinstating the Leamside Line need to be considered.
- 3.9 Work is underway to identify future timetable scenarios for the route through an Event Steering Group process led by Network Rail. There is also other activity to plan in the shorter term for timetables following the abortive attempt to introduce a new timetable for the route in May 2023. Oversight of these process and agreement on end states could be achieved through an integrated programme board.
- 3.10 In the shorter term, there are aspirations for more direct London services to Bradford and Middlesbrough, together with the introduction of a direct services from Huddersfield and Cleethorpes. Extension of 6 additional LNER services from Leeds to Bradford Forster Square is dependent on infrastructure works at the

latter station which are awaiting a decision to design. Transport for the North and Partners have stressed to the Department for Transport (DfT) the need for this work to be completed well in time for Bradford being the UK Capital of Culture in 2025.

- 3.11 Separate from the ECML programme though linked to it, the proposed study into how HS2 trains would reach Leeds has yet to be commenced and Terms of Reference are yet to be issued. This is due to the implications of the 2022 Autumn Statement still being worked through. The HS2 study could take 18-24 months and will look at a range of options for accessing Leeds. Some reports have suggested that HS2 could reach Leeds using the ECML corridor between Newark and Leeds, so it is important there is appropriate visibility of the ECML and HS2 Study programmes.
- 3.12 The Blueprint attempts to show all issues in the corridor can be integrated. The Blueprint is however a snapshot at the time of development and issues can and will change. To have value, it is therefore important that the Blueprint is maintained and owned by key players. That may be through a Programme Board or other similar body. The similar Manchester Blueprint is now overseen by the Manchester Task Force which includes the DfT, Network Rail and Transport for the North. The DfT has suggested that the ECML Programme Board will continue to be the main officer level governance and that Transport for the North should be able to participate in it. Following the November Rail North Committee, the Chief Executive wrote to the DfT requesting confirmation of Transport for the North participation.

4. Corporate Considerations

Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no financial implications for Transport for the North as a result of this report.

Resource Implications

- 4.2 There are no direct resourcing implications as a result of this report.

Legal Implications

- 4.3 Transport for the North is a co-sponsor of the NPR Programme and will need to enter into a formal agreement with the DfT for this purpose. Approval to enter into this agreement will be sought from the Board in the near future. The NPR programme does not include the ECML and there are no legal implications as a direct result of this report.

Risk Management and Key Issues

- 4.4 This paper does not require a risk assessment, however, risks relating to the delivery of infrastructure will be identified, assessed, managed and monitored by Network Rail. A risk is included on the Transport for the North Corporate Risk Register in relation to future timetable changes.

Environmental Implications

- 4.5 This report does not constitute or influence a plan or programme which sets the framework for future development consents of projects listed in the EIA Directive and therefore does stimulate the need for SEA or EIA. Any infrastructure proposals to improve the capacity and reliability of the system will be subject to EIA Screening, conducted by Network Rail as part of the consenting process for those projects.

- 4.6 Delivery of the blueprint will encourage growth of travel by rail services and contribute to environmental targets through reduction in journeys by road.
- 4.7 Any specific environmental issues will be picked up in the development and delivery of individual infrastructure interventions.

Equality and Diversity

- 4.8 A full impact assessment has not been carried out because it is not relevant to the type of work referenced.

Consultations

- 4.9 The updated ECML Blueprint has been developed by consultants working on behalf of Transport for the North. Transport for the North Partner authorities have been involved in this work and their views have been incorporated. The consultants have also discussed the work informally with various rail industry contacts.

5. Background Papers

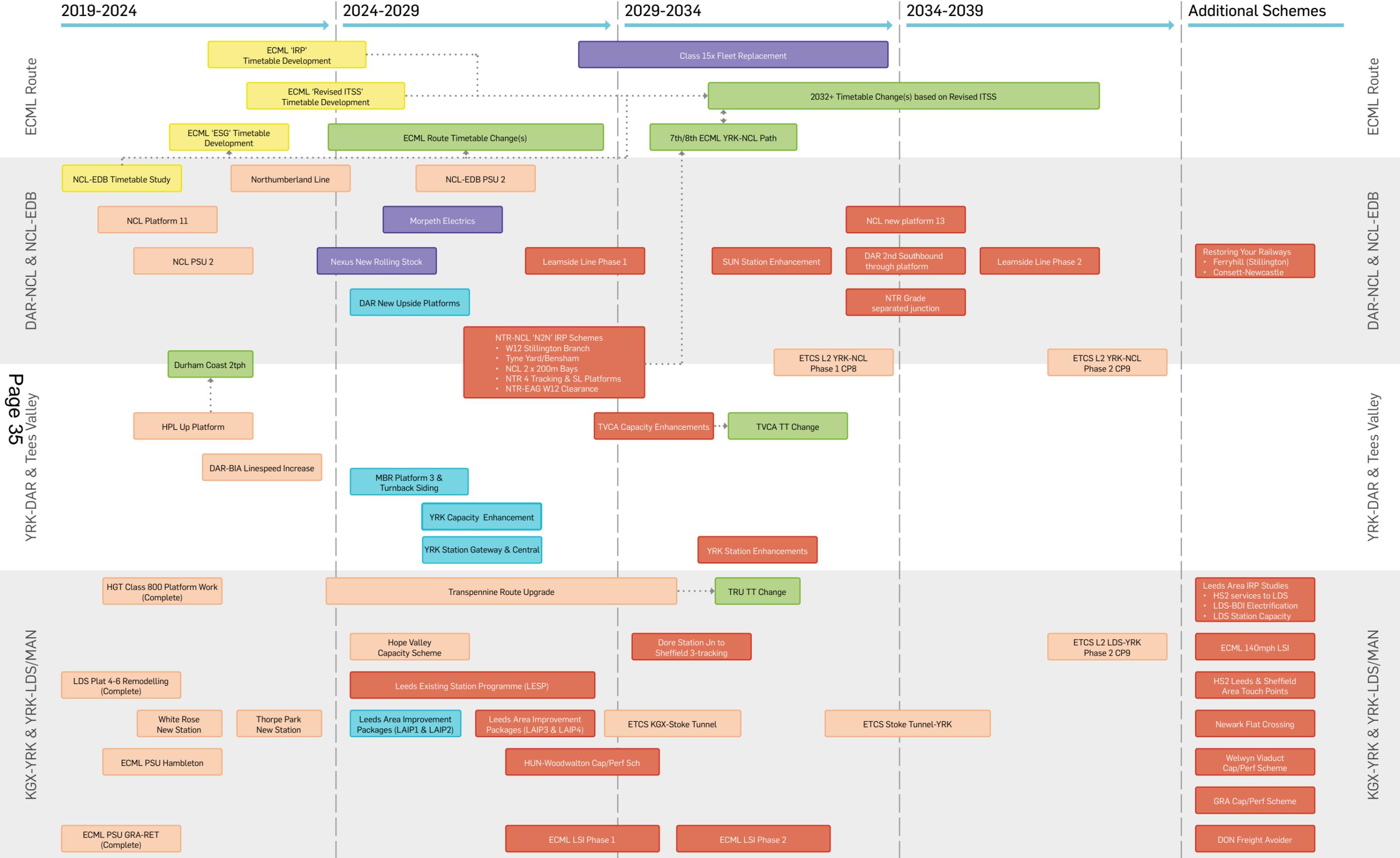
- 5.1 There are no background papers.

6. Appendices

- 6.1 Appendix 1 - Updated ECML (North) Blueprint.

Glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used (*if applicable*)

a) TfN	Transport for the North
b) ECML	East Coast Main Line
c) NPR	Northern Powerhouse Rail
d) CP7	Control Period 7 (i.e., 2024-2029)
e) DfT	Department for Transport
f) LNER	London North Eastern Railway
g) HS2	High Speed 2



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Meeting	Rail North Committee Consultation Call
Subject:	Strategic Rail Report
Author:	David Worsley, Rail Strategy Manager
Sponsor:	Darren Oldham, Rail & Roads Director
Meeting Date:	Wednesday 22 February 2023

1. Purpose of the Report:

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of Transport for the North's *Strategic Rail Report*, which is a summary of the activities and policy positions developed in support of the forthcoming *Strategic Transport Plan*. It explains how the specific plans address current transport issues and links to the *Strategic Transport Plan's* objectives.

2. Recommendations:

- 2.1 The Committee is recommended to consider the approach to the *Strategic Rail Report* and endorse it as a supporting document for the *Strategic Transport Plan*.

3. Main Issues:

- 3.1 The *Strategic Rail Report* explains the policy background and events which have led to Transport for the North's latest rail strategic planning work. Our *Long-Term Rail Strategy* of January 2018 indicated a number of areas for further research and policy development work, but was partly overtaken by events, when the problems associated with the May 2018 timetable change raised issues around reliability to the top of the rail agenda. The government subsequently initiated the Williams Rail Review to examine the long-term future of the industry, but the start of the pandemic in early 2020 led to a forced restructuring of rail industry governance and an enormous impact on demand patterns and travel behaviour, which has led to long-term changes.
- 3.2 It should be noted that an earlier draft of the Strategic Rail Report was reviewed by members of Rail North Committee at a special briefing session on 7th December 2022. The latest version includes changes made in response to feedback received then and in consultation sessions with Transport for the North partners, including additional material on the relationship of the *Strategic Rail Report* to the forthcoming *Strategic Transport Plan* and *Investment Programme*, the immediate problems faced by our railways, decarbonisation, user needs, transport and public health, freight, and Community Rail.
- 3.3 The *Strategic Rail Report* examines how all these factors have impacted on a number of rail industry themes, and Transport for the North's responses and proposals. For each theme, it identifies what issues have remained unchanged since before the pandemic, where change has been thrust upon the industry, and where our own research and strategy development has improved our understanding. The report therefore includes Transport for the North's positions on the following issues:
- a. A summary of how Transport for the North's various initiatives (in areas such as journey times, reliability, stations enhancements, or freight) are expected to contribute towards our intended transport outputs (such as improved performance, modal shift to rail, decarbonisation and enhanced inter-urban connectivity). These outputs in turn contribute towards our

overall environmental and social goals, including improved economic performance, social inclusion, “levelling up” (in terms of both transport provision and regional prosperity) and long-term sustainable and transformational growth;

- b. A summary of the other Transport for the North strategies which complement the *Strategic Rail Report*, including the *Transport Decarbonisation Strategy* and *Freight & Logistics Strategy*;
- c. A restatement of Transport for the North’s support for our preferred network for both HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail, and their relationship to the Transpennine Route Upgrade programme;
- d. A description of our *Northern England Station Enhancements Programme: Strategic Outline Business Case*, which presents the case for 3 different programme options for stations facilities enhancements across the North;
- e. A discussion of the interconnected nature of issues concerning rail connectivity, service frequency, capacity and journey times, the significance that future electrification programmes will hold for improving all of these, and the contribution that our work on linespeed improvements and Combined Train Service Specifications for 2050 can make in this area;
- f. Examination of the changing temporal distribution of rail demand since the pandemic, the importance of early morning, late evening and weekend travel, and our related research on the *Visitor Economy and Transport in the North of England*; and
- g. A discussion of the central importance of reliability and resilience for the attractiveness of rail travel, and Transport for the North’s work in this area, which has identified over 120 small and medium-sized enhancements which could be enacted to improve rail performance in the North in the short to medium term.

3.4 The first topic examined (at Chapter 6) is the major programmes intended to enhance long-distance and inter-city connectivity between the North’s main population centres, and between the North and other parts of Britain, namely High Speed 2, Transpennine Route Upgrade, and Northern Powerhouse Rail. The future of all three was covered in the government’s *Integrated Rail Plan* of November 2021, and the *Strategic Rail Report* restates Transport for the North’s policy that we wish to see our preferred network for NPR implemented in full, along with the necessary supporting elements of HS2.

3.5 The report also includes (at Chapter 7) an overview of Transport for the North’s work on stations facilities, which demonstrates that there is a strong economic and strategic case for a programme of enhancements which would bring all 600 stations in Transport for the North’s area up to a set of common standards. This would be especially important for improving accessibility to all of our region’s stations, as at present only about half have step-free access to all areas, whilst many also lack the customer information systems or public address announcements that are needed by some travellers.

3.6 The next chapter (at Chapter 8) examines the interconnectedness of connectivity (e.g., the ability to catch a direct service or the need to change), service frequency, passenger capacity and journey times, as all are dealt with through the timetable planning process. It explains how Transport for the North has contributed to the production of Combined Train Service Specifications for 2050, which detail our expectations as to what volume of services will be required in the long term. It also incorporates discussion of Transport for the North’s Line Speed Improvement Programme (being developed by Network Rail) which has

developed a new approach to identifying where linespeeds could be increased with the optimal value for money and could yield improvements which could be taken as journey time reductions, operating cost reductions, or performance improvements.

- 3.7 Another group of topics is collected under the theme of “seven-day railway” issues (at Chapter 9). This explains how changed demand patterns since the start of the pandemic, including the increased relative significance of weekend travel, tie in with the importance of travel for leisure reasons and the visitor economy in the North. There is also a link between improving weekend, early morning and late evening travel opportunities, and the reduction of transport-related social exclusion.
- 3.8 Finally, the North’s particular problems with service reliability and resilience are discussed (with performance in the north being almost uniformly worse than elsewhere in the country). In order to begin rectifying this in the short-to-medium term, Transport for the North have assembled and prioritised a programme of over 120 small and medium-sized reliability enhancements, in conjunction with the operators.
- 3.9 The full Strategic Rail Report will be published alongside the *Strategic Transport Plan* consultation draft.

4. Corporate Considerations

Financial Implications

- 4.1 The financial implications are anticipated to be submitted as part of the 2023/24 budget and business planning process which will be subject to board approval in March 2023. This includes Strategic Rail support for the *Strategic Transport Plan* and *Investment Programme* as “must do” items.

Resource Implications

- 4.2 The resource requirements to deliver TfN’s Strategic Rail related key priorities has been identified as part of TfN 2023/24 budget and business planning process and will be subject to approval by the Board in March 2023.

Legal Implications

- 4.3 Transport for the North has a statutory duty to produce the *Strategic Transport Plan* and the *Strategic Rail Report* forms a supporting part of this work.

Risk Management and Key Issues

- 4.4 Transport for the North are managing several corporate risks in relation to the *Strategic Rail Report*.

Environmental Implications

- 4.5 This report does not constitute or influence a plan or programme which sets the framework for future development consents of projects listed in the EIA Directive and therefore does not stimulate the need for SEA or EIA. All proposed infrastructure developments will be subject to screening for the need for EIA by the relevant development authority as part of the design development and consenting process.

Equality and Diversity

- 4.6 A full Impact Assessment has not been carried out because it is not required for this report.

Consultations

- 4.7 Transport for the North's partners have been informally consulted on our approach and will have the opportunity to provide further input as the *Strategic Transport Plan* evolves.

5. Background Papers

- 5.1 None

6. Appendices

- 6.1 Appendix 1. A summary of the *Strategic Rail Report*.

Glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used (*if applicable*)

a)	DfT	Department for Transport
b)	EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
c)	GBR	Great British Railways
d)	LTRS	<i>Long Term Rail Strategy</i> (published by TfN in January 2018)
e)	NPIER	Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review
f)	NPR	Northern Powerhouse Rail
g)	NTC	Northern Transport Charter
h)	RNP	Rail North Partnership
i)	STP	<i>Strategic Transport Plan</i> (published by TfN in February 2019)
j)	TfN	Transport for the North

Appendix 1: Summary of the *Strategic Rail Report*

- 1.1 Transport for the North's *Strategic Rail Report* is a key element of our forthcoming *Strategic Transport Plan (STP)*, of which a consultation draft will be circulated in the Spring of 2023, before a final version is published early in 2024. This will be TfN's second STP, building on the award-winning plan which originally appeared in February 2019. TfN now has a wider vision: that by 2050, the North will enjoy "a transformed zero emission, integrated, safe and sustainable transport system, that will enhance connectivity, resilience and journey times for all users". In order to achieve this, TfN's objectives now include the promotion of social inclusion as well as economic and environmental goals.
- 1.2 The *Strategic Rail Report* outlines the North's requirements for rail investment in the short, medium and long term. It explains how TfN's own initiatives and programmes complement the investment that has already been pledged by central government, and are in fact necessary in order to begin the transformation of rail travel in the North that will be completed by major programmes such as Transpennine Route Upgrade (TRU), High Speed 2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR).
- 1.3 TfN's long-term vision is to secure the transport investment necessary to achieve transformational and sustainable economic growth across the North. At present, productivity and incomes in the North lag significantly behind the rest of England, with gross value added (GVA) per capita in the North East, North West and Yorkshire & the Humber being only respectively 70%, 87% and 79% of the UK average.¹ To achieve "levelling up" between England's regions would therefore in itself be economically transformative. Meanwhile, a virtuous circle would exist linking social inclusion and economic prosperity; removing the transport-related barriers which prevent people from accessing educational and employment opportunities will boost skills, health, disposable income and labour market participation, thereby generating economic growth and further opportunities.² Similarly, reducing car dependency will both enhance social inclusion and contribute to decarbonisation.
- 1.4 "Levelling up" is however not just a question of reducing differences in the economic outcomes between different regions in terms of incomes or unemployment. This is the long-term objective, but reducing the clear differences in the quality of transport provision between the North of England and elsewhere in Great Britain is a crucial step on the

¹ Office for National Statistics, *Regional Gross Value Added (Balanced) per Head and Income Components*, 30th May 2022, Table 2

² TfN, *Transport-Related Social Exclusion in the North of England*, Sept. 2022, p. 3

path to achieving this. At present, the rail network in the North of England falls below the prevailing standards elsewhere in a number of ways:

- The North's Train Operating Companies provide almost uniformly poorer performance than those running elsewhere in Britain, with 9 of the 10 Train Operating Companies (TOCs) based in the South achieving a higher proportion of trains on time than any of the 12 TOCs which contribute to connectivity in the North;³
- Stations facilities are perceived as poorer, with the provision of full accessibility being particularly unacceptable, as only 48% of stations in the North have step-free access to all areas;⁴
- A lower proportion of the North's railway network is electrified and a higher proportion of our rolling stock fleet is still diesel-powered, and this has long been identified by local stakeholders as an impediment to modernising the region's railways;⁵
- There is less regional control of transport policy than in more devolved areas such as London and Scotland, leading to poorer responsiveness to local social and economic needs;
- Journey times between the main urban centres are poor by comparison to equivalent regions;⁶ and
- As a result of all these factors, the proportion of passenger trips made by rail is lower than elsewhere. In the last three months of 2020, as rail demand began a temporary recovery from the pandemic, the proportion of people travelling to work by train in the North East, North West and Yorkshire & the Humber were respectively 1.2%, 3.4% and 2.6%, compared to an average for England of 6.6%.⁷

1.5 "Levelling up" can also be seen as a public health issue, due to the connection between rates of active travel and long-term sickness leading to economic inactivity. It has been noted that rates of economic inactivity due to ill health vary by region, with figures from Spring 2022 indicating that circa 7% of the working age population were inactive for health reasons in the North (with the North East having the highest rates in England), compared to under 5% in the South East, London and the East of England.⁸ The promotion of active travel schemes is one of the potential mitigation measures (alongside limiting the density of fast food outlets) whose effectiveness is

³ Office of Rail & Road, *Passenger Rail Performance: 1 April to 30 June 2022*, 15th Sept. 2022, p. 12

⁴ Mott MacDonald (for TfN), *Northern England Station Enhancements Programme: Strategic Outline Business Case*, May 2022, pp. 42-50

⁵ North of England Electrification Task Force, *Northern Sparks: Report of the North of England Electrification Task Force*, March 2015, pp. 15-25

⁶ Leeds City Council, Liverpool City Council, Manchester City Council, Newcastle City Council & Sheffield City Council, *One North: A Proposition for an Interconnected North*, July 2014, pp. 16-17

⁷ DfT, *Transport Statistics Great Britain: 2021*, 16th Dec. 2021, Table TSGB0108

⁸ Chris Thomas (for Institute for Public Policy Research Commission on Health and Prosperity), *Getting Better? Health and the Labour Market*, Dec. 2022, p. 25

supported by good evidence.⁹ Encouraging modal shift to rail could assist in this area, as passengers often walk or cycle to the station.

- 1.6 These problems are set against a background where economic, technological and cultural changes could see a requirement to accommodate a very large increase in rail demand over the next 30 years. Transport for the North have produced a number of *Future Travel Scenarios* which examine how different combinations of background factors (such as economic growth, car ownership, working culture, population distribution and the use of information technology) contribute to overall changes in transport demand between today and 2050.¹⁰ Of the four scenarios outlined, the lowest growth in total rail demand in the North over this period would be 78%. However, in the scenario named “Urban Zero Carbon”, in which population growth would be concentrated in urban areas (with a corresponding fall in car ownership), rail demand would almost triple, experiencing 193% growth.¹¹ Although such a large increase in rail demand might appear to be unrealistic at first glance, it must be remembered that this only represents a small drop in the proportion of journeys made by private car, and thus a modest modal shift overall.
- 1.7 Accommodating this level of growth in passengers will require the full implementation of the major programmes supported by TfN, namely TRU, HS2 and NPR. Our view on the importance and complementarity of these programmes is given in Chapter 6. However, these infrastructure programmes are still many years from completion, with the final phase of TRU (Leeds to York electrification) likely to complete circa 2031, and the final phases of NPR and HS2 (respectively Leeds to Manchester and the East Midlands spur) due to complete in about 2043.¹² TfN’s view is that these programmes should aim to deliver the full HS2 and NPR networks, including significantly improved links from the East Midlands and Sheffield to Leeds. Furthermore, in some areas of the NPR scope (e.g. Leeds to Hull) it should be possible to make significant improvements in a much shorter timeframe. In order to support such long-term planning, TfN have produced three scenarios for the level of train services which should be provided across the North in 2050, in the form of our Combined Train Service Specifications; these are detailed in Chapter 8.

⁹ Chris Thomas (for Institute for Public Policy Research Commission on Health and Prosperity), *Getting Better? Health and the Labour Market*, Dec. 2022, p. 31

¹⁰ Transport for the North (2020), *Future Travel Scenarios: Adaptive Planning to Deliver Our Strategic Vision in an Uncertain Future*, Dec. 2020, esp. pp. 104-105

¹¹ Transport for the North (2020), *Future Travel Scenarios: Adaptive Planning to Deliver Our Strategic Vision in an Uncertain Future*, Dec. 2020, pp. 59-77

¹² Department for Transport, *Integrated Rail Plan for the North and Midlands*, CP 490, Nov. 2021, pp. 134-135

- 1.8 However, TfN do not believe that it is acceptable or even plausible to expect that radical changes in travel patterns will only occur when these major programmes have been implemented. A modal shift towards rail travel needs to begin during the 2020s, and this *Strategic Rail Report* contains a number of TfN initiatives designed to achieve that. These include:
- A programme of improvements to stations facilities with options to bring all stations in the North up to a choice of three levels of common standards. This includes an Economic Case which demonstrates that good value for money can be produced by the two investment options in the £¾ billion to £1 billion range;
 - A *Reliability & Resilience Delivery Plan* which identifies over 120 small-to-medium interventions which could improve train performance across the North, including 13 which have been noted as priorities;
 - A programme of 22 routes which have been identified as having high potential for linespeed increases, of which five have already progressed to more detailed studies, and two (York to Scarborough and Darlington to Bishop Auckland) have entered Network Rail's implementation process; and
 - The principles which TfN will adopt in our collaboration with DfT and Great British Railways Transition Team in order to secure our vision of "double devolution" in the future governance of the railway industry. This is intended to bring more local knowledge in to the service planning process, thereby enabling a rail network more immediately responsive to local needs.
- 1.9 It should be stressed that these TfN initiatives complement the major programmes backed by the Department for Transport, including the Manchester Task Force, Transpennine Route Upgrade and East Coast Main Line Upgrades; through infrastructure remodelling, electrification and power supply upgrades, these programmes are also intended to improve performance and further decarbonisation. However, the TfN initiatives described above could be enacted sooner than most of the DfT programme work, and begin to encourage the modal shift to rail and performance improvements needed to lay the groundwork for the major investments of the 2030s and beyond. Our rail reform agenda would also promote additional local influence over the rail industry, thereby allowing local knowledge of our communities' social and economic needs to be reflected in decision-making.
- 1.10 As well as complementing the major programmes, the measures described in the *Strategic Rail Report* are aligned with TfN's overall transport objectives for 2050, in particular:
- The reduction of inter-urban journey times generated by the implementation of TfN's preferred NPR network would contribute to increasing the proportion of the North's population who can

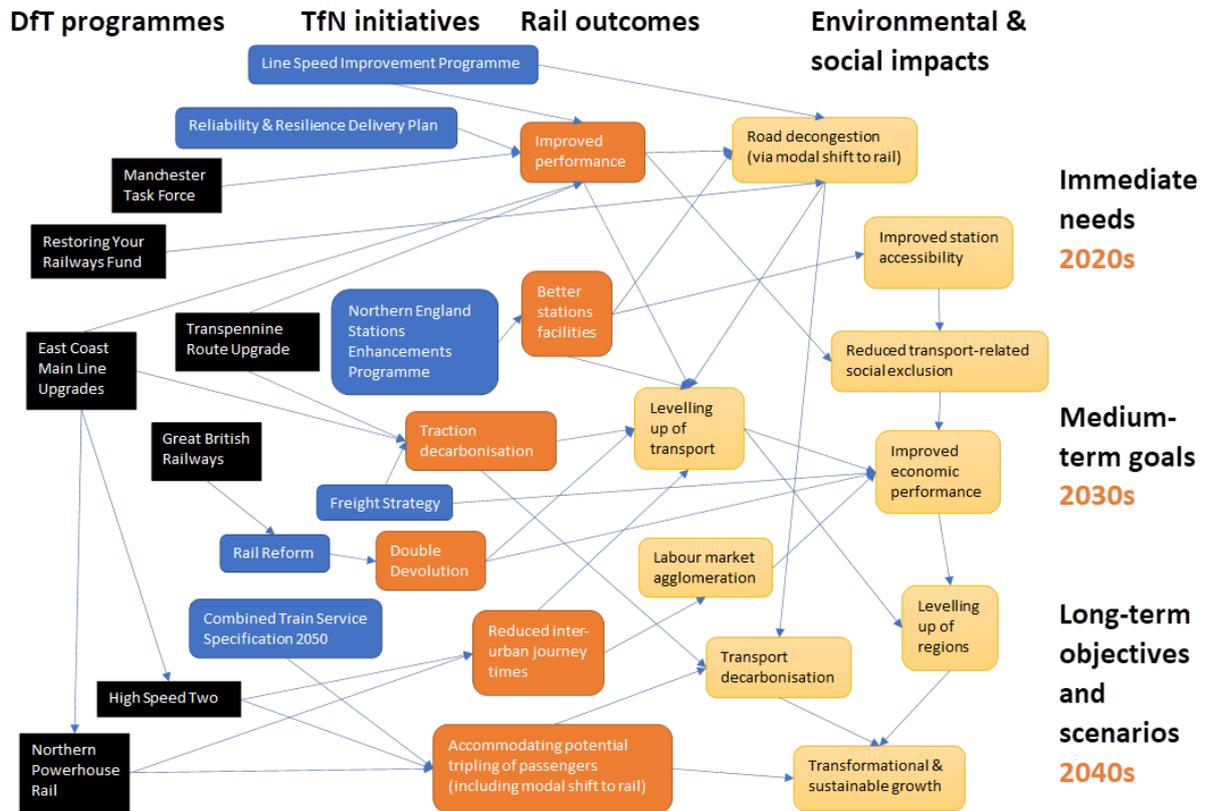
access 500,000 jobs by rail within 60 minutes from 27% to 37%;

- The implementation of TfN's preferred NPR network and local linespeed improvements would contribute to increasing the proportion of the North's population who can access an employment centre (with at least 5,000 jobs) by public transport within 30 minutes from 63.4% to 75%;
- Modal shift to rail, accompanied by traction decarbonisation in the rail network, would contribute to reducing the North's surface transport emissions from 25 million tonnes of CO₂ equivalent to near zero by 2045;
- All of the measures described in this policy to improve the attractiveness of rail (e.g. reduced journey times, increased frequency, improved reliability, enhanced station facilities) will contribute to increasing the share of trips made by public transport from 8% to 15%; and
- The measures described to improve performance will help to achieve a Public Performance Measure (PPM) of at least 91.2% for both TransPennine Express and Northern by 2028.

1.11 TfN would particularly like to emphasise the centrality of good performance to our vision of the rail industry. Not only have performance issues dominated perception of the industry throughout 2022, but any continuing inability to return to good levels of punctuality and reliability will hamper the industry's ability to gain new customers in the long term. It would also restrict our strategic decision-making, as when passengers cannot rely on connections their preference for direct trains and aversion to interchange rises significantly, which will influence the types of solutions that we adopt. Furthermore, performance is a social inclusion issue, as evidence has emerged to suggest that some workers have lost their jobs due to persistently late train services. The improvement of punctuality and reliability is thus both a short-term and long-term imperative.

1.12 The relationship of these programmes, initiatives and goals is shown in the diagram below.

Figure 1: Inter-relationship of programmes, initiatives, outcomes and impacts



Meeting: Rail North Committee Consultation Call
Subject: North West Regional Business Unit
Author: David Hoggarth, Head of Strategic Rail
Sponsor: Darren Oldham, Rail and Roads Director
Meeting Date: Wednesday 22 February 2022

1. Purpose of the Report:

- 1.1 To seek approval to establish a North-West Regional Business Unit as permitted under the Rail North Partnership Agreement.

2. Recommendations:

- 2.1 That Committee approves the establishment of a North-West Regional Business Unit as set out in this paper and Appendix 1.
- 2.2 That the Committee notes that the establishment of Business Units was highlighted to the December 2022 Transport for the North Board consultation call as one of the 'quick wins' on rail reform that the North can take ahead of full implementation of the planned rail reform.

3. Main Issues:

- 3.1 The Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail and Levelling-Up White paper emphasises the importance of local collaboration for delivering improved local outcomes for passengers. At the Transport for the North Board meeting in December 2022, it was highlighted that through the Rail North Partnership arrangements that already exist in the North, it is possible to make progress on some of the key rail reform initiatives ahead of the planned legislation to create the new industry structure. The establishment of a North-West Regional Business Unit is one of the initiatives highlighted. The recent speech¹ by the Secretary of State for Transport set out the Government's intention to proceed with the rail reform agenda, but full implementation will take some time.
- 3.2 To support this national agenda as well as deliver local and regional objectives, authorities in the North-West of England are committed to close partnership working to improve rail services in their region. They have decided to come together through the formation of a Regional Business Unit (NWRBU).
- 3.3 Within Transport for the North and Rail North Partnership governance, a Regional Business Unit is defined as 'a group of two or more Transport for the North Rail Authorities formed to jointly oversee rail matters in their geographical area.' Partners in the North-West have developed a proposal to establish a NWRBU with responsibilities to help forge collective positions amongst Local Transport Authorities in the North-West on rail matters.
- 3.4 There is already a pre-existing Regional Business Unit in the North East (North East Regional Business Unit). In the light of the work in the North West and the recent signing of the North East Devolution deal, the North East Authorities are looking to review and refresh their own business unit. Any revised proposals will be reported through to a future meeting of the Committee.

¹ [George Bradshaw address 2023 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/george-bradshaw-address-2023)

- 3.5 Subject to approval, the NWRBU will be established by mid-2023, and will be enabled through a formal agreement between its members, including clear governance and management arrangements that will create accountability, aid decision making, minimise complexity and represent 'one voice' for the North-West. The NWRBU will also help Rail North Partnership manage stakeholders in the region and directly engage with Train Operating Companies (TOCs).
- 3.6 Initial development of a Collaboration Agreement between NWRBU members is under way, and advisors are in place drafting a framework document. It is important to note the governance arrangements of the NWRBU, in terms of voting shares, will mirror those within the Rail North Partnership Agreement, and therefore there is no material impact to this overarching agreement.
- 3.7 The detailed proposition for a North-West Regional Business unit is set out in Appendix 1.
- 3.8 Under Transport for the North's governance, Rail North Committee is required to approve the creation of a Regional Business Unit. Following this, it can be presented to the Rail North Partnership Board as a Transport for the North-endorsed proposal.

4. Corporate Considerations

Financial Implications

- 4.1 Greater Manchester Combined Authority (as the proposer) has confirmed that there are no financial implications for Transport for the North as a result of the establishment of the Business Units.

Resource Implications

- 4.2 Greater Manchester Combined Authority (as the proposer) has confirmed that there are no resource implications for Transport for the North as a result of the establishment of the Business Units. Transport for the North's interaction with the Business Unit can be managed within existing resources.

Legal Implications

- 4.3 The establishment of the Business Unit, also referred to in Transport for the North's Constitution, requires the agreement of Transport for the North under the 2018 Franchise Management Agreement between Transport for the North and Local Transport Authorities. That agreement is being sought through this report. Such agreement is not reserved to Board, so can be given by Rail North Committee.

Risk Management and Key Issues

- 4.4 This report relates to corporate risk 310: There is a risk that Transport for the North could have a reduced role in the rail industry following the implementation of rail reform under Great British Railway. The establishment of Business Units is a positive action and mitigation that Transport for the North (and partners) can take.

Environmental Implications

- 4.5 There are no environmental implications from the report.

Equality and Diversity

- 4.6 There are no environmental implications from the report.

Consultations

- 4.7 Transport for the North Rail Authorities have been consulted on the proposals.

5. Background Papers

5.1 None.

6. Appendices

6.1 Appendix 1: North West Regional Business Unit Proposal

Glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used (*if applicable*)

- | | |
|----------|-----------------------------------|
| a) NWRBU | North West Regional Business Unit |
| b) TOCs | Train Operating Companies |

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North-West Regional Business Unit

The Case for Change, Roles and Responsibilities and Implementation

18 February 2022

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1 Executive Summary

1. The purpose of this paper is to outline a more detailed proposal for the North-West Regional Business Unit (NWRBU) to support consideration by the Rail North Partnership (RNP) Board. The focus of this paper is to highlight:
 - a. the case for the North-West Regional Business Unit (NWRBU) including how it adds value to decision making on rail in the region;
 - b. the proposed roles and responsibilities of the NWRBU, how it makes decisions and how it fits into and enhances the existing governance structure of the Rail North Partnership (RNP) and Transport for the North (TfN); and
 - c. how the NWRBU will be delivered at no additional cost, critical success factors, risk management, mobilisation and timescales.
2. The definition of a Regional Business Unit is a group of two or more Transport for the North parties (members) formed to jointly oversee rail matters in their geographical areas. It is set out in the partnership agreement between the Secretary of State, Transport for the North and Rail North limited. As a result, this document should not formally be considered a business case under Her Majesty's Treasury (HMT) guidance as it does not constitute an investment decision. Nonetheless, the principles underpinning HMT business case development have been applied in the development of this proposal and the areas covered broadly correspond to 'strategic' and 'management' cases.

The Case for the NWRBU

3. The Williams Shapps Plan for Rail highlighted the failings of the current rail system and set out a plan to put customers (passengers and freight) at the heart of the railway as well as making it affordable for taxpayers. The review highlighted the importance of strengthening collaboration to improve the outcomes for passengers and for decision making to be linked as closely as possible to the customer. When established, Great British Railways (GBR) "will be made up of powerful regional divisions, with budgets and delivery held at the local level, not just nationally"¹. There is some uncertainty over the direction of future rail reforms. No matter what shape they take, it is more important now than ever that local views are reflected and action is taken to improve partnership working to address the challenges the rail industry faces.
4. The Williams Shapps Plan has led to initiatives to strengthen collaboration *within* Mayoral Combined Authorities on rail matters to later develop formal partnerships with Great British Railways (GBR). GBR transition team (GBRtt) is in dialogue with Mayoral Combined Authorities, including Greater Manchester, on longer term partnership arrangements post-rail reform. As a first step, Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) has put forward a proposal to establish a Greater Manchester Rail Board (GMRB) as part of its Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) 'Levelling up Trailblazer' submission in September 2022.
5. The travel to work area of Greater Manchester, however, encompasses the whole of the North-West region. Commuters and passengers to other city-regions in the North-West including Liverpool City Region are also reliant on using the rail network. Rail usage is relatively self-contained within the region with the vast majority of passenger journeys starting in the North-West also ending in the region. Further, the geography of the North-West corresponds to the way NTL's western rail operations are organised. **Rail matters, however, are not currently considered at the geographical level of the North-West despite the alignment with travel to work areas and rail operations.** Greater alignment between the geography of how people travel and governance structures for rail has the potential to improve passenger outcomes – whilst recognising that rail is a complex integrated system where there will be inevitable trade-offs.
6. To support the national agenda set out in the Williams Shapps Plan for Rail as well as delivering local and regional objectives, authorities in the North-West of England are committed to close partnership working to

¹ Great British Railways The Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail, Secretary of State for Transport, May 2021, p. 40, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/great-british-railways-williams-shapps-plan-for-rail>

improve rail services in their region. The partnership includes Greater Manchester, Liverpool City Region, Lancashire County Council, Blackpool, Blackburn with Darwen, Cumbria (representing the soon to be formed Cumberland Council, Westmorland and Furness Council), Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, Warrington Borough Council, Derbyshire, Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

7. All parties have decided to come together through the formation of a Regional Business Unit (NWRBU). This option has precedence as the North-East Regional Management Unit (NERMU) is part of the rail governance landscape in the North. Other bodies including the West Midlands Rail Executive are also present and have more formal duties over the specification of rail franchising in the region.
8. A spectrum of options were considered including more informal arrangements for collaboration as well as options that devolved further powers and accountabilities for rail services to the region. The more informal arrangements were not felt sufficient to meet the objectives of passengers and provide an impetus to collaborate whilst options involving greater formal devolution of responsibilities did not align with the present GBR agenda as indicated via engagement with GBRTt and DfT. The NWRBU that supports RNP and TfN is the preferred option on the basis that: it establishes a formal partnership between members thereby supporting the GBR and Devolution agenda by strengthening collaboration in the North-West. It also aligns better with existing governance structures as it will work closely with RNP and TfN.
9. The combination of initiatives at the Mayoral Combined Authority and North-West level will mean that there will be improved partnership working at the local and regional level. This will enable more effective and efficient collaboration with existing pan-Northern and national institutions to help ensure better outcomes on the railways for all.

The roles and responsibilities for the NWRBU

10. The proposal for the NWRBU has been developed through collaborative dialogue with stakeholders across authorities in the North-West, TfN, Rail North, GBRTt, Network Rail and DfT. The NWRBU will act as a key adviser to Transport for the North (TfN) and the Rail North Partnership (RNP) to help them execute their statutory duties including on rail infrastructure projects, train service specification/operations, fares and ticketing, stations, rolling stock and decarbonization, inputting at various stages of the contract management process with rail operators. It will represent 'one voice' for the North-West. The NWRBU will also help RNP manage stakeholders in the region and directly engage with Train Operating Companies (TOCs).
11. **The proposal for the NWRBU is not intended, however, to change existing responsibilities, accountabilities or risk allocations within the rail industry.** The NWRBU easily fits into existing governance structures as shown in Figure 5. The NWRBU will have a board that will consist of officer-level representatives of the member Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) and will be chaired by one of these members. The NWRBU will be a subset of existing governance arrangements for the RNP Board at the level of the North-West. There will be no change to the existing governance arrangements of the RNP. The NWRBU will reach a consensus position on rail matters for the North-West which will help advise RNP/TfN. It is proposed that the chair of the NWRBU will sit on the RNP Board alongside the other members.
12. The NWRBU Board will be chaired by officers. Political accountability will remain as it is today. All LTA members have political representatives to escalate issues as appropriate and pan-Northern structures such as the Rail North Committee or the TfN Partnership Board are also forums in which political representatives can share their views or raise concerns.
13. The NWRBU will also work closely with the governance at the LTA level including the proposed 'GM Rail Partnership Board'. The 'GM Rail Partnership Board' will be focused on aligning the rail network with the priorities of the GM region, with its purpose on integrating rail into GM's 'Bee Network' (Integrated Transport system) whilst the NWRBU is more focused on services which clearly transcend GMs boundaries and helping discharge the duties of the RNP and TfN with a North-Western perspective.
14. A series of worked examples have been developed around proposed responsibilities for the NWRBU to show how it could work with stakeholders in practice. This includes inputting into the train service specification, fares, performance and contract management and infrastructure. These worked examples can be found from paragraph 78 in the paper.
15. Partnership working between the NWRBU and TOCs will be crucial towards achieving the objectives of the proposal. The NWRBU will work collaboratively with Northern Trains Limited (NTL) and Transpennine

Express (TPE) to develop improved ways of working and look to engage broadly with other TOCs operating in the North West on a case by case basis. Existing governance structures for engaging with NTL and TPE in the region will be reviewed including the existing Central and West Business Unit Board. The objective is to find optimal arrangements for all parties that minimise burdens whilst ensuring that TOCs benefit from local input to help improve services and operations for passengers.

Implementation

16. **The NWRBU will be delivered at no additional cost to the rail industry in the North including to TfN, RNP and DfT and will take advantage of existing TfGM and other resources available in the North-West.** Initially, an RBU Manager will be appointed and will work with officers and specialist teams across the North-West on a range of issues including train services, fares, ticketing and infrastructure development.
17. The RBU Manager will coordinate input into relevant technical working groups and engagement with RNP contract managers and NTL and TPE on the development of their business plans. Additional resources will be pooled for specific projects as required.
18. The timeline for the NWRBU is for the proposal to be agreed in early 2023 followed by developing the formal collaboration agreement amongst members within the first quarter of 2023. Following that, the NWRBU governance will be set up and it will develop its plans for 2023 and beyond. As part of this process, a Business Plan for the NWRBU will be developed which will summarise the proposed activities for the NWRBU across the year including key outputs and outcomes. Key risks and mitigations have been outlined including on mobilisation, collaboration with TOCs and resources.
19. Indicative critical success factors have been developed which will form the basis of the NWRBU Business Plan with a focus on ensuring that the NWRBU brings forward meaningful proposals to improve rail in the North-West.

2 Objectives

20. The NWRBU will help to advise on the rail matters in the North-West including the delivery of reliable, resilient and high-quality rail services and infrastructure for passengers. It will ensure that the full value of investment in rail is considered including supporting wider priorities such as social inclusion, regeneration and development and decarbonisation.
21. The NWRBU will be set up to:
- a. support TfN and RNP in executing their formal duties, with a specific focus on providing **specialist insight, advice and added value across the North-West** region
 - b. help support and **meet the needs of its customers**
 - c. to act **as influential / key partner across NW region**, working within the framework of the TfN / DfT Partnership Agreement
 - d. **consist of NW regional authorities**, enabled through a formal agreement between its members, enabling effective and agile decision making to the benefit of the region
 - e. provide more **cohesive, constructive, strategic and tactical/operational advice** to both TfN and RNP on management of rail contracts (TPE and NTL) and infrastructure schemes in the NW region
 - f. **Act as 'one voice' for the NW region** in our wider engagement with rail industry including with TOCs, GBRTt, Network Rail and wider industry stakeholders such as Transport Focus.
 - g. **Pooling existing resources and expertise to add value to the North-West**, and in doing so at no additional cost to the industry

3 The Case for Change: Why is the RBU needed?

Context – alignment with the GBR agenda and Trailblazer devolution deals

22. The Levelling-Up White paper highlights the importance of local collaboration for delivering improved local outcomes². It sets out an ambitious agenda for “Trailblazer deeper devolution deals” for Combined Authorities and greater devolution to county areas³. Urban and rural local authorities are directly accountable to citizens for economic development, planning, housing and local transport. Rail services interact with all these areas and play a critical role in people’s lives. The Levelling-Up agenda is an opportunity for local areas to bring rail closer to those impacts areas. The William-Shapps Plan for Rail envisions new partnerships between Great British Railways (GBR) and local government to give local leaders a greater say in how railways are run in their area including services, ticketing and stations⁴. It is vital that the local perspective is represented when decisions on rail services are being made and that the development of these services are aligned with these priorities.
23. In order that GBR’s regions can deliver at a local level they will need to work closely with local areas. The Levelling Up White paper says that priority for new rail partnerships with GBR will be given to places which develop devolution arrangements with directly elected mayors. The white paper adds that:
24. *“These partnerships will encompass the whole passenger offer and long-term strategy for railways in a local area. Depending on the needs and capacity of different areas, these could include the ability for local leaders to integrate ticketing and fares, control stations and buy additional services or infrastructure to achieve local transport and housing priorities more effectively”⁵*
25. To best leverage the transition to the new industry structure for rail, Combined Authorities such as Greater Manchester are pursuing ambitious proposals to enhance transport in their areas as part of their Trailblazer Devolution Deal. This includes developing a ‘Greater Manchester Rail Partnership Board’ to bring together stakeholders to maximise the potential of the rail network within the GM region. The Board has 5 customer pillars including fares and ticketing reform, infrastructure investment, accessibility and inclusivity, station development and regeneration and operations / transport integration.
26. Existing governance structures in the North of England for rail enables consultation at the Local Transport Authority (LTA) level and at the pan-Northern level through Transport for the North and the Rail North Partnership (RNP) Board. However, there is presently **a gap in governance at the regional level across the North-West**, and given the way existing rail services operate across the region, there is an opportunity to align best practice and expertise across the North-West. The perspective at the North-West regional level is crucial across areas where there are overlaps and potential synergies from greater collaboration. This includes the provision of regional rail services, performance and support for infrastructure planning and delivery. A key example includes ensuring that there is proper multi-modal integration between stations on

² The Levelling Up White Paper, HM Government, February 2022, p. 137, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/levelling-up-the-united-kingdom>

³ The Levelling Up White Paper, HM Government, February 2022, p. 235, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/levelling-up-the-united-kingdom>

⁴ Great British Railways The Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail, Secretary of State for Transport, May 2021, p. 38, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/great-british-railways-williams-shapps-plan-for-rail>

⁵ The Levelling Up White Paper, HM Government, February 2022, p. 180, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/levelling-up-the-united-kingdom>

the national rail network and the local transport network which the NWRBU and boards at the MCA level are ideally placed to advise on.

27. It is for this reason that authorities in the North of England have come together to explore opportunities for greater partnership working through the formation of a Regional Business Unit (RBU). RBUs are defined in the Partnership Agreement between the Secretary of State for Transport, Transport for the North (TfN) and Rail North Limited, as a group of two or more TfN parties formed to jointly oversee rail matters in their geographical areas⁶.
28. The authorities who are part of this partnership in the North-West include Greater Manchester, Liverpool City Region, Lancashire County Council, Blackpool, Blackburn with Darwen, Cumberland Council, Westmorland and Furness Council⁷, Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, Warrington Borough Council, Derbyshire, Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.
29. The NWRBU builds on both the Levelling-Up agenda with 'Trailblazer Devolution Deals' and the GBR agenda by strengthening coordination and collaboration on rail management in the North-West. Better collaboration, accountability and decision-making on rail at the local level through initiatives like the 'GM Rail Partnership Board' will only help to strengthen collaboration between local areas across the North-West. The combination of these initiatives will mean that there will be improved partnership working at the local, regional, pan-Northern and national level that will help ensure better outcomes on the railways for all. This will help support wider economic and social objectives including access to opportunities for all.
30. It should be noted that there continues to be uncertainty over the implementation of the Williams Shapps Plan for Rail as well as the scope and timetable for the formation of GBR. The NWRBU will need to be flexible and adaptable as the future structure of the rail industry takes shape and it is more important than ever to ensure that local input is fed into the decision-making processes.

Geography and Rail Usage

31. The North-West of England has a complex rail network that provides access to, from and between major population centres and their hinterlands, international gateways, rural communities and logistics centres. An overview of the geographical scope of rail in the region is provided in Figure 1 below – this is still an indicative map at this stage and subject to further detailed work.

⁶ Secretary of State for Transport and Transport for the North and Rail North Limited Partnership Agreement, p. 5

⁷ Cumberland Council and Westmorland and Furness Council are the two new unitary councils that replace the current Cumbria County Council and six district councils in Cumbria.

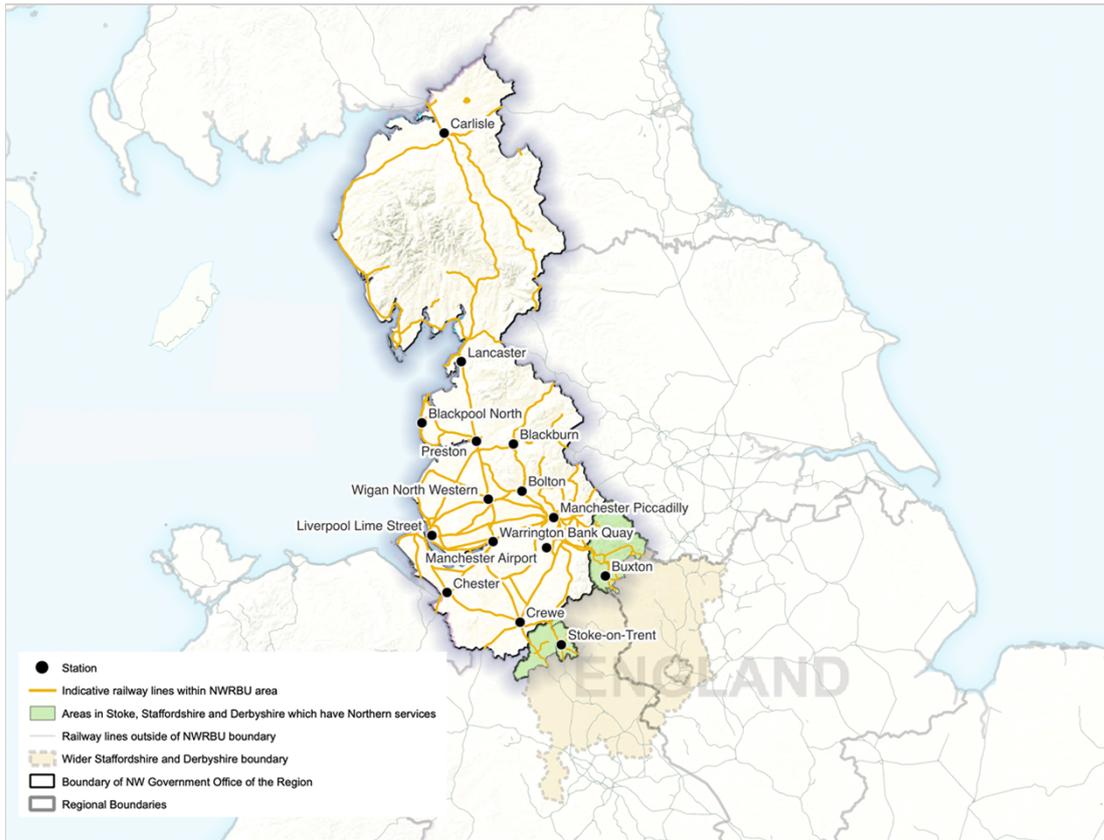


Figure 1 Indicative map of geographical scope of NW RBU⁸

32. Although extensive, the network is mainly a mixed-use, predominantly two-track railway, with all types of passenger and freight services often utilising the same track. It is this characteristic which acts as one of the key limiting factors to the planning and delivery of rail services in the North-West. Despite this, rail use in the North-West has grown significantly and continues to be at the heart of both the levelling up agenda and responding to the climate emergency and the Paris agreement on decarbonisation. Improving rail services in the area will be an important part in supporting the UK's plan to become a net-zero country by 2050 and with Liverpool City Region targeting 2040 and Greater Manchester's plans to become net zero by 2038.
33. The travel to work areas for some areas in the North-West extend well beyond their administrative boundaries. Figure 2 shows that the travel to work area for Greater Manchester extends across a significant portion of the North-West region. There is therefore a high proportion of passengers in the North-West that are commuters. According to the ORR, in 2020-21 just under 80% of the journeys on the rail network in the North-West take place wholly within the North-West rather than to or from other regions⁹. Even prior to the Covid period this was around 72% in 2019-20. This is one of the highest rates in the country which indicates that rail travel in the region is relatively self-contained. Out of the 46 timetabled routes on the Northern franchise network, around 30 start and end either wholly or mostly within the North-West region¹⁰.

⁸ Developed in QGIS using data from the ONS Open Geography Portal and Open Railway Map December 2022, available at <https://www.openrailwaymap.org/>

⁹ Rail usage 2020-21, Office of Rail Regulation (ORR), February 2022, available at: <https://dataportal.orr.gov.uk/statistics/usage/regional-rail-usage/>

¹⁰ Based on a desktop review of the service groups in the current Northern operating contract and an evaluation of which services fall wholly within the North West of England.

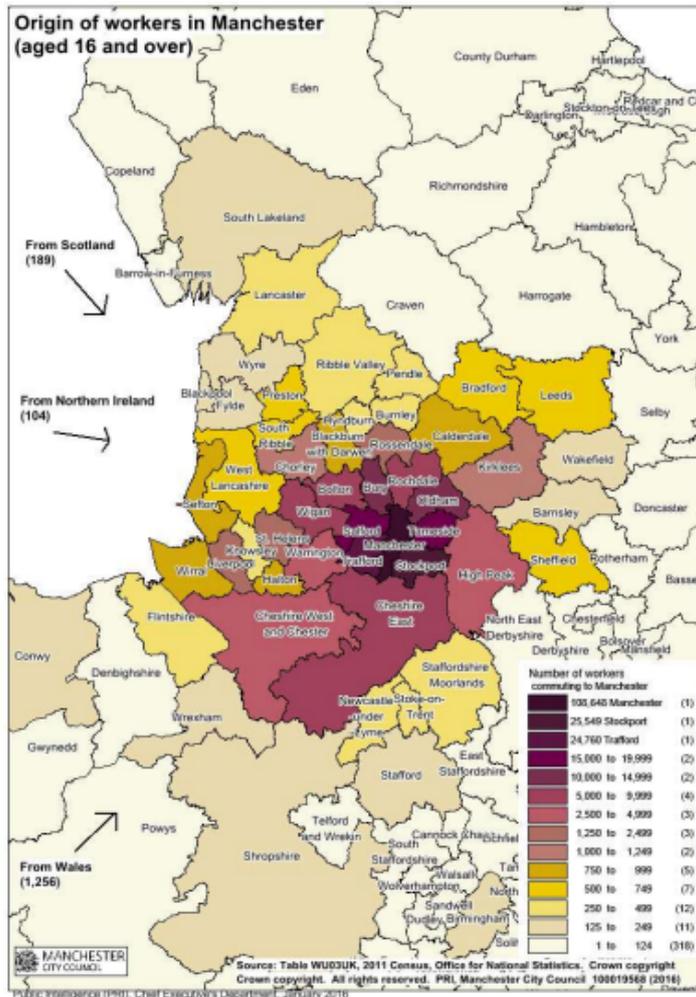


Figure 2 Travel to Work Area for Greater Manchester¹¹

34. As a result, there is a strong alignment between the proposed geography of the RBU and the way rail services operate in the North-West. Further, the geography of the North-West corresponds to the way NTL's western rail operations are organised. This alignment means that there is a strong incentive to consider the provision of rail services from the perspective of the North-West.

Existing arrangements

35. In terms of services, responsibility for the management of the two major rail contracts that operate in the North of England including Northern and the Transpennine Express (TPE) rests with the Rail North Partnership (RNP) Board¹². The membership of the board consists of TfN, the Secretary of State for Transport and 3 TfN nominated members to represent the Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) and Local Economic Partnerships (LEPs) in the North. Key responsibilities include managing and agreeing the train service requirements, oversight of performance and approving plans for Service Quality Programmes. The RNP are supported by a dedicated management team consisting of commercial managers to manage the day-to-day running of the two franchise agreements as well as personnel for handling change management, planning and investment¹³.
36. The partnership agreement between TfN, Rail North Limited and the Secretary of State specifies that decisions taken by the RNP Board are reached by majority¹⁴. Decisions are only valid if the board members

¹¹ 2011 M06 Census analysis of UK origin-destination data, Manchester City Council, available at: <https://bit.ly/3B0AX8a>

¹² Secretary of State for Transport and Transport for the North and Rail North Limited Partnership Agreement, 6.1.1

¹³ Secretary of State for Transport and Transport for the North and Rail North Limited Partnership Agreement, 7.4

¹⁴ Secretary of State for Transport and Transport for the North and Rail North Limited Partnership Agreement, 6.7

representing the Secretary of State and TfN agree¹⁵. Ultimately, the Secretary of State has duties for rail franchising under the Railways Act 1993 and decisions taken by the RNP Board are treated as an informed recommendation to the Secretary of State¹⁶.

37. Individual LTAs can provide input, mostly at the strategic level, through their membership of the RNP Board. There are two representatives at the RNP board that represent city-regions and county authorities respectively. Individual LTAs (referenced as TfN Rail authorities) can propose Franchise Output adjustments via TfN to the RNP including changes to train service requirements or rail fares if they are cost neutral and do not increase the risk for the Secretary of State¹⁷. To date though this has not happened as most changes impact multiple LTAs and it is complex to put proposals forward without the relevant formal collaborative structures in place. TfN also have limited funding to support the development of these types of proposals.
38. Inevitably, there will be trade-offs in a system as complex and interdependent as rail and the RNP Board plays a crucial role in bringing together perspectives at the local, pan-Northern and national level. Given the vast geographical scope of the North, the challenges for TfN and the RNP in coordinating different stakeholder perspectives whilst engaging and managing the TPE and Northern franchises are considerable. Across 25 authorities it can be difficult to maintain engagement and keep track of local issues which can sometimes mean that local knowledge and expertise is not fed into the management of the railways which impacts the quality of rail service operation and management. This has reduce the ownership and accountability at the LTA level for the decisions made by the RNP.
39. In terms of the development and delivery of infrastructure proposals in the North, TfN coordinate and engage with LTAs on proposals and work with Network Rail and other stakeholders. There are similar challenges for TfN in coordination across a large geographical area. For example, planning in relation to blockades and possessions for infrastructure as well as customer communications and stakeholder management could benefit from greater input from the perspective of the North-West. Clarification and formalisation of the North-West's role could better facilitate the flow of information from a local to regional and national level. This could improve the alignment of proposals to local economic ambitions and the development of mitigation proposals that integrate with the existing transport network (such as rail replacement services). It could also allow the task of engaging with the public to be shared.
40. Greater initial coordination across the smaller and more integrated geography of the North-West could help tackle these challenges. This includes on issues such as train service requirements, fares, operational performance which could benefit from more specialist advice and detailed knowledge that is available at the local and regional level. Greater discussion and collaboration within the North-West could manage trade-offs and enable the North-West to speak with one voice. This could help support TfN, the RNP, TOCs and Network Rail as well as help individual LTAs in the North-West feel more engaged in the overall process and achieve best outcomes for all parties.
41. Examples of issues that could benefit from prior coordination at the regional level of the North-West are set out in the paragraphs below.
42. **Train Service Requirements:** Rail service provision has a significant socio-economic impact at a local and regional level in terms of connecting people with places and opportunities, encouraging, active and inclusive lifestyles and supporting vibrant communities. It can often dictate the viability of housing development, the accessibility of key workers to jobs and the location decisions of businesses. It is important for these factors to be present in the decision-making process and in influencing any proposals to change service specification. At present, however, there is limited opportunity for direct dialogue and collaborative working between LTAs and TOCs – for example, when the Business Plan for the franchise is being developed. In practice, it could be difficult for TOCs (particular those that cover larger geographical areas) to coordinate input across many different LTAs. Engagement at the regional level of the North-West could provide a good balance as train service proposals could be coordinated, trade-offs could be managed in advance and TOCs can more easily collaborate with the region to enhance the train service.
43. **Fare adjustments:** Whilst LTAs can put forward proposals for fare adjustments to the RNP Board, as fare adjustments have wide ranging implications, collaborative working between LTAs and TOCs are vital to develop viable proposals. Collaborating at the level of the North-West would allow easier engagement with TOCs (or in the future GBR if they take on this responsibility) on fare adjustment proposals, greater

¹⁵ Secretary of State for Transport and Transport for the North and Rail North Limited Partnership Agreement, 6.9

¹⁶ Secretary of State for Transport and Transport for the North and Rail North Limited Partnership Agreement, 6.13

¹⁷ Secretary of State for Transport and Transport for the North and Rail North Limited Partnership Agreement, 15.1

efficiencies in the analysis supporting fare adjustment proposals, the ability to manage trade-offs and being able to pool together funding provision for fare adjustments. This should improve the quality of proposals put forward to the RNP Board for consideration.

44. **Performance Monitoring:** The RNP monitors the performance (including operational performance, customer and service quality, business / financial performance, and compliance with business plan commitments) of the Northern and TPE franchises at the pan-Northern level to ensure that contractual compliance is being achieved. The performance is inevitably monitored at the pan-Northern level which allows potentially significant variation in performance across specific geographies in the North. There is limited transparency of contractual targets, train service and operational performance data, especially at more granular geographical levels. Greater collaboration by LTAs in the North-West will provide additional support to RNP in ensuring contractual compliance and monitoring performance. This would allow performance to be monitored at a more granular level and support RNP to hold operators to account more effectively to improve passenger outcomes.
45. **Development and Delivery of Infrastructure:** The benefits of national rail projects can be maximised if they are aligned with local and regional plans. TfN play a key role in facilitating the input of LTAs into the development of major rail projects. Prior coordination at the North-West level could improve collaboration for infrastructure development. This includes coordinating more detailed considerations around integration with local infrastructure, managing priorities and developing mitigations around short-term disruptions.

Options

46. The areas of the North-West have considered a range of options for collaboration from informal arrangements to more formal options. These options are summarised in Table 1 below. They have been evaluated on a criteria that draws from the objectives set out in Section 2 above with some adaptations. The criteria includes whether the options:
1. help meet the needs of customers;
 2. allow the North-West to be an influential partner;
 3. allow the North-West to speak with one voice by providing cohesive advice;
 4. fit the current industry structure and help support TfN / RNP;
 5. is aligned with the GBR and devolution agenda; and
 6. can be delivered at no additional cost to the industry.

Table 2 below summarises the results of this analysis.

Table 1 Options to improve collaboration on rail in the North-West

Partnership Arrangement	Role / Responsibilities
Improved collaboration between LTAs and industry	Under this option LTAs in the North-West would work directly with the rail industry including Northern and TPE, GBR (once established) as well as continuing with existing arrangements on rail services and infrastructure via TfN and RNP. This would enable the industry to benefit from the specialist insight and advice that LTAs can provide. With collaboration strengthened <i>within</i> local authorities, for example through the GM Rail Partnership Board, LTAs would be better equipped to hold the industry to account. However, this option on its own does not strengthen collaboration between partners in the North-West and does not enable them to speak with one voice. As a result, it does not meet the objective of providing more cohesive and constructive advice to the industry as coordination within the North-West is not facilitated with this option.
Voluntary partnership between NW LTAs and	Building on the previous option, to improve collaboration a voluntary partnership between areas in the North-West could be considered to coordinate on rail matters and support TfN / RNP. The voluntary partnership could allow more cohesive advice to emerge from the North-

collaboration with industry	West. However, without any formal agreement in place, the partnership could be more easily undermined and may lack the ability to be an influential partner in the region. This could affect the clout of such an arrangement particularly when engaging with TOCs and other industry stakeholders such as Network Rail, Rail Delivery Group, Transport Focus etc.
Formation of NWRBU to work with industry and support TfN / RNP	The formation of an RBU between LTAs in the North-West would deliver the benefits of the previous two options whilst ensuring that a robust legal agreement is in place setting out the framework for collaboration. The RBU would provide the impetus for collaboration between areas in the NW, would be more resilient to changes in priorities or political representation at the local level and therefore have much greater clout when engaging with the rail industry. This would allow the North-West to better collaborate to meet the needs of customers whilst supporting TfN and RNP in executing their statutory roles in service specification, fares, performance monitoring and consultation. The formation of the RNP does not, however, change existing duties, accountabilities and risks within the rail industry. Therefore, it easily fits within the existing structure of the rail industry and will be relatively simple and quick to implement. It will also be more flexible and adaptable to future changes in the rail industry as the rail reform agenda takes shape.
NWRBU take on RNP formal duties including franchise specification and contract management (West Midlands model)	This option would go one step beyond the previous option and provide formal duties to the NWRBU on franchise specification and contract management – likely to be shared with RNP and TfN. This option could help better meet customer needs in the North-West as the NWRBU would have direct influence over specification. It would also improve transparency and accountability of rail services in the region. By having formal duties, the NWRBU would become a more influential player. With both Northern and TPE being pan-Northern franchises under the current franchise mapping this option would create additional interfaces in the current industry structure. It would require small adjustments to existing responsibilities, accountabilities and risks. Whilst this makes it more difficult to implement in the short-term than the RBU, the proposed change in structure is relatively minor and it could still be made to fit with existing governance. This is very similar to the current model in the West Midlands today so there is precedent for these arrangements. If the Northern franchise were remapped to have a separate operator for the North-West, the case for this option would become even stronger.
Full devolution – NWRBU becomes franchising authority	Enabling NWRBU to become a formal franchise authority would arguably be the most effective way to meet the needs of customers in the North-West as the majority of responsibilities for rail services would be devolved under this model. Direct responsibility and accountability would provide the greatest potential to improve services in the region with the policy levers belonging to the NWRBU. However, it would involve a very significant increase in the risk taken by the NWRBU, would require industry restructuring (including franchise remapping) and the devolution of funding responsibilities from DfT. This would increase complexity in the current industry structure and would take time to implement. GBRtt have indicated through engagement that this option would not align with their current policy agenda.

47. The option for the formation of the NWRBU provides the appropriate balance between a formal partnership that provides the impetus to strengthen collaboration between LTAs in the North-West passengers whilst not requiring any major changes to existing accountabilities and risks in the industry – thereby not increasing complexity.

Table 2: Options for greater partnership working (green represents that objective is met, amber that objective is partially met and red that objective is not met – the ticks and the crosses show the extent to which the option either meets or does not meet the objective)

Option / Objective	Helps meet Customer Needs	Enables NW to be influential partner	Enables NW to speak with one voice	Fits current industry structure with TfN / RNP	Aligned with GBR and Devolution agenda	Delivered at no additional cost
Improved partnership between LTAs and industry	✓ / ✗	XXXX	XXXX	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓✓
Voluntary partnership	✓ / ✗	XX	XXXX	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓✓
Regional Business Unit (RBU) to support TfN/RNP	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓✓
RBU with franchise management duties	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓ ¹⁸	✓ / ✗ ¹⁹	✗
NWRBU as franchising authority	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✗	✗ ²⁰	XXXX

The added value of a North-West RBU

48. The formation of the NWRBU is intended to enhance partnership working on rail across the North, its added value includes:

49. **Provide more cohesive and constructive advice to support TfN and RNP on rail services and fares:** The NWRBU can work closely with its members to collectively shape the strategic direction for rail in the North-West. This includes developing proposals for franchise adjustments on rail services and fares. These proposals can combine LTA aspirations whilst ensuring that trade-offs within the region are made to ensure the best overall outcome for all areas. Analytical work and evidence can be commissioned by the NWRBU to bring together the regional benefits that can save time and resources compared with LTAs all conducting their own independent analysis. The NWRBU can also more easily work collaboratively with TOCs without creating an additional burden and by being in the inner circle on business planning processes it can add value through consideration of subsidising services. This will enable more cohesive and constructive advice to support proposals for franchise change to be provided to TfN, RNP and DfT for formal consideration.
50. **Help communicate issues and priorities for the North-West region:** The NWRBU can work more closely and regularly with its LTA members to understand LTA priorities and issues, draw out the implications regionally and develop and shape a strategy for the North-West that brings together these perspectives. This includes consideration of all service types including to metropolitan, suburban, rural and coastal areas. This will help support TfN and RNP as the NWRBU can do some of the ‘heavy-lifting’ with engagement and

¹⁸ Would require minor adjustments to industry structure

¹⁹ Uncertainty over scope of GBR agenda

²⁰ DfT have indicated this does not align with their agenda

ensure that more members feel empowered by the process. NWRBU can then provide more coherence on priorities and issues to TfN and RNP on the perspective of the North-West allowing the region to have greater impact and influence. It can also share the duties of communicating to the public and planning for disruption in relation to the rail network including provision for alternative services that are better integrated with the local transport network.

51. **Share expertise in the North-West and provide more specialist insight into rail issues to support TfN and RNP:** LTAs bring detailed knowledge of their local areas and expertise in housing, planning, local transport and socio-economic development. The planning and development of the rail network requires this insight and the NWRBU can be used as an effective vehicle to collate this expertise – this is in-line with the agenda in Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail. Some LTAs for example have significant responsibility for running bus, metro or tram services in their areas and as such they bring significant strategic and operational expertise to running a complex, multi-modal transport network whilst being accountable to the public. As different LTAs will have varying capabilities in different areas, the NWRBU provides a forum to share expertise, learn best practice and develop capability for rail planning and development in the region. Further, performance on the rail network can be monitored at a more granular level and tracked more effectively. This includes understanding the implications of disruption, service patterns, punctuality and infrastructure provision on local economic development. In turn, the NWRBU can more easily collaborate with TOCs, TfN and RNP to ensure this insight is fed into the decision-making process.
52. **The pooling of resources to support the development for innovative proposals:** The development of proposals to improve services for passengers and infrastructure including initiatives such as smart ticketing may require additional funding and support to develop. LTAs, as agents of local authorities, have access to a wide variety of funding sources to help develop and deliver these initiatives. This includes direct local taxation, central government grants and land value capture options such as the Community Infrastructure Levy that could allow the development of future additional housing and growth in land values to fund service enhancements and infrastructure improvements. The NWRBU allows the pooling of resources relative to the benefits of proposals in different areas to provide funded proposals to TfN and RNP Board for further consideration.

Case studies

West Midlands Rail Executive (WMRE)

53. West Midlands Rail Executive (WMRE) was established in December 2017, a partnership of 16 local transport authorities. Although its formal status is less than five years old, the relationship with DfT is nearly 10 years old, and was formalised via a Collaboration Agreement.
54. WMRE has joint responsibility for overseeing rail services running within the region along with the DfT. In particular, it oversees (with the DfT) specific parts of the operations of the train operating company West Midlands Trains, which commenced operations on the West Midlands Railway franchise in December 2017. The geography of the WMRE is designed to be in line with the travel to work area of the West Midlands that rail services help enable – which provides a similar context to the North-West.
55. It is important to emphasise WMRE's remit differs from Transport for the West Midlands (TfWM), which is responsible for transport within the smaller West Midlands metropolitan area, and WMRE's geography extends well beyond the West Midlands to include Herefordshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, West Northamptonshire and Worcestershire. A total of 14 local authorities (plus 2 affiliate member local authorities) are represented on its board which is chaired by the mayor of the West Midlands CA.
56. WMRE's role includes:
 - a. Specifying and managing the West Midlands Railway franchise contract (one part of wider WMT contract which also includes the London North-Western Railway), including setting performance targets and agreeing timetables
 - b. Upgrading and building new stations on behalf of TfWM
 - c. Supporting improvements for passengers and freight services
 - d. Planning future network improvements

- e. Involvement in various joint industry partnerships including West Midlands Grand Railway Collaboration and the West Midlands Station Alliance.
57. WMRE published their first Rail Investment Strategy in 2019. The strategy explains plans to improve rail services and stations. It includes short, medium and long-term plans up to 2047.
 58. WMRE are part of the West Midlands Stations Alliance (WMSA). Through the WMSA, work to improve stations in the region. The Alliance works with Network Rail, West Midlands Railway, community groups, and local authorities to identify and secure funding, agree station improvements, and maintain stations efficiently.
 59. The Grand Railway Collaboration (GRC), which also acts as the rail industry's West Midlands Supervisory Board, brings together the West Midlands Rail Executive, Network Rail, passenger and freight operators and other rail industry partners. The regional rail network is complex, with multiple train operators. The GRC gives it a governance structure.
 60. The GRC's current priorities are to:
 - a. provide a safe regional rail network
 - b. assess what the network needs in future
 - c. make sure timetables meet customer needs
 - d. ensure a consistent customer experience across the West Midlands
 - e. improve connections with other modes of transport, making it easier for customers to complete their journey.
 61. The WMRE demonstrates the potential of local areas having a greater say in the management of rail services. Although the WMRE ultimately holds greater levels of responsibility than what is being set out at this stage for the NWRBU, this provides a good benchmark, as well as potential opportunities for further development in the future.

North-East Regional Management Unit (NERMU)

62. The North-East has developed a RBU, NERMU, with a role to; have greater influence over the delivery of rail services in the North-East of England; to deliver high quality integrated local services in line with the vision of Rail North's Long Term Rail Strategy and the North-East Rail statement; and to facilitate and stimulate economic growth and social cohesion. The North-East RBU has worked closely with stakeholders in the region to coordinate policy in the North-East and work with RNP, TfN, Network Rail and TOCs to optimize the effective delivery of rail services under the Franchise agreement.
63. The North-East RBU consists of a board which is responsible for approving the business plan for the RBU, approving proposals to the RNP Board and endorsing key appointments. The Steering Group is responsible for executing the Business Plan including making recommendations to the Board. Through the RBU, the perspective at a North-Eastern regional level is developed and represented across the rail industry. The creation of regional units in the North and Midlands has improve rail governance in these regions and reinforces the need to also address the gap in the North-West with how rail matters are considered. Views of stakeholders and engagement process

Views of stakeholders

64. Extensive engagement on the role of the NWRBU has been conducted with all of the LTAs in the North-West, TfN, RNP, DfT, NR, GBRTt, NTL, TPE, West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA), Transport for the North East (TfNE) and West Midlands Rail Executive (WMRE). TfGM have led the engagement and letters of support for the proposals have been received from Lancashire County Council, Blackpool, Blackburn with Darwen, Cumbria (representing the soon to be formed Cumberland Council, Westmorland and Furness Council), Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, Warrington Borough Council and Derbyshire.
65. The letters of support have outlined a strong desire for the creation of the NWRBU noting:
 - a. The need for greater local input in planning for rail matters and having greater combined influence for the North-West on the development of future rail services and infrastructure

- b. Consideration of rail matters should account for the wider benefits of rail in supporting regeneration and development, inclusivity and addressing climate change
- c. The need for the NWRBU to ensure an inclusive approach to making decisions with consideration of all journey types including those made to rural and coastal areas
- d. Caution over taking on further financial risk (particularly for smaller LTAs) and limitations on resources

4 Roles, Responsibilities and Governance

Proposed roles and responsibilities

66. The roles and responsibilities for the NWRBU have been developed in a series of collaborative workshops with officials from the authorities that are proposed members of the NWRBU. There has been positive reception all round and a strong commitment from LTAs in the North-West to proceed with the establishment of the RBU.
67. It should be noted that in formulating the role for the NWRBU, the key principle has been that there are **no changes to the risk, responsibilities or accountabilities for the way rail services are governed in the North of England**. All NWRBU are members of the Franchise Management Agreement and are represented via three TfN appointed members on the RNP board. The NWRBU is designed to support TfN and the RNP in executing their formal duties and close partnership working with both organisations is envisioned. The NWRBU will only advise on matters relevant to their geographical area.
68. It is also intended that NWRBU should be 'future-proofed' to evolve into alternative partnership arrangements, especially as part of the ongoing Rail Reform and Devolution agendas.
69. The role is proposed across the following areas set out below including supporting franchise management of rail services and supporting the development of rail infrastructure. The NWRBU will work with TfN to refine and evolve ways of working together utilising existing structures.
70. **Support TfN on infrastructure:** Provide advice to TfN (relevant to the NWRBU area) to support its statutory partner role on infrastructure (priorities, schemes and projects), including data, technical studies, evidence-based advice and local / regional consultations. Work collaboratively with TfN to provide advice that can maximise potential for the NW region. For example, replicating / formalising a role for NWRBU similar to TfGM's role in the Manchester Recovery TaskForce to address the poor performance of the rail network in the Manchester area, working alongside TfN, DfT, TOCs, Network Rail and any other relevant party;
71. **Advise on TOC Business Plans:** Advise RNP in the development and agreement of Operators Annual Business Plans and Business Plan Commitments, working within the affordability envelope set by Secretary of State;
72. **Advise RNP on service specification and fares:** Provide advice across a range of areas relevant to the NWRBU area, specifically those identified in 'TfN matters' within the RNP Franchise Agreements but broadly covering train service specification/operations, fares and ticketing, stations, rolling stock and decarbonisation;
73. **Support NTL/TPE franchise management:** Embedded into RNP team to provide support and advice on contract management / annual business planning process collaboratively. For agreement between NWRBU and RNP, however this would be intended to include;
 - a. defined, dedicated resources from NWRBU members to provide support and advice relevant to the NWRBU area e.g. development of proposals / business cases, or preparation of performance improvement / action plans;
 - b. sharing of data, systems integration (where feasible);
 - c. aligned governance, regular meetings, consistent reporting approaches (dashboards, KPIs etc.);

74. **Put forward Output Adjustment proposals:** Ability to propose / put forward Passenger Service Contract Output Adjustment proposals (this specifically covers train service specification and fares within RNP Agreement), subject to RNP Board approval and funding / risk conditions.
75. **Put forward contract variation proposals:** Ability to put forward further contract variation proposals (in addition to those above), subject to RNP Board approval and funding (e.g. sourcing direct or third party funding) / risk conditions (e.g. financial risk on payback assumptions).
76. **Monitor and scrutinise NTL/TPE performance:** Support RNP's contract management processes, monitor and scrutinise ToC performance / contract compliance. Share data analysis, information, studies to support RNP's role and to identify opportunities for improvements.
77. **Stakeholder management:** Act as extension of RNP in the management of stakeholders within NW region, as well as direct engagement / relationship with Operators to share information, ideas, opportunities (noting formal contract management sits with RNP). The focus of TOC engagement will primarily be NTL and TPE as RNP has formal responsibilities for contract management of these operators. It is acknowledged, however, that there will be a need to interact with other TOCs and the NWRBU will engage openly with these operators on any shared issues. There are precedents for such informal collaboration between regional transport bodies and train operators, notably in the West Midlands and at Transport for London.

Worked Examples

78. To provide additional insight into how the role described above could work in practice, a range of worked examples have been developed across roles including inputting into the train service specification, making targeted fares adjustments, performance issues / contract compliance and NWRBU support for TfN.

Input on the Train Service Specification

79. A flowchart of this process is presented in Figure 3 below. Throughout the year the NWRBU will gather views on the current train service in the North-West from its member LTAs. This could include understanding LTA service aspirations, areas of capacity constraints and services that are of vital social and economic importance. This approach reflects the significant changes to the train service specification process following the end of rail franchising and move to Annual Business Planning.
80. Once the formal process for defining the Train Service Specification begins with the RNP issuing the RfBP to TOCs (with a target budget envelope), it is proposed that the NWRBU holds dialogue with TOCs. The nature of this dialogue would include options on current and future timetable options given the parameters set out in the RfBP. It is important that a transparent relationship with TOCs is established and the required data is shared. The dialogue should be constructive and collaborative with operators and would be an ongoing process through the whole year. Examples of what could be discussed include:
 - a. ***Evidence for Service Enhancements:*** The NWRBU can work with its member LTAs to identify the economic, social and environmental evidence base for supporting the provision of enhanced service patterns to support TOC proposals. The NWRBU would work with LTAs as a key quality assurance partner and ensuring that the evidence base is robust. This would help funnel the information for consideration by TOCs in an appropriate format. For example, this could include evidence of new or planned housing developments which could support the case for improved service provision at stations to help passenger growth of the franchise, local-regional economic growth and decarbonisation. It can then work with TOCs collaboratively to deliver these aspirations with the train service including consideration of:
 - i. Stopping patterns and service frequencies at individual stations, including at 'low use' and 'new' stations;
 - ii. Passenger capacity / rolling stock requirements;
 - iii. First and last trains (including overnight services to/from Manchester Airport), evenings and weekends;
 - iv. Services varying by seasonality and special events;
 - v. Maximum journey times; including with an interchange;
 - vi. Key interchange requirements (rail/rail and multi-modal);

- vii. Services to be provided during infrastructure maintenance / enhancements and other disruptions (e.g. keeping alternative routes open, diversion of rail services and additional stops, replacement road services and maximum journey times);
- viii. Running later services on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve, reducing peak services between Christmas and New Year and starting services later on certain routes on New Year's Day; and
- ix. Sporting events, exhibitions and other attractions generate significant additional demand on an ad-hoc basis.

b. **Managing trade-offs:** changes to services can sometimes disadvantage some passengers whilst benefitting others, as a result, the NWRBU can coordinate work to assess the impacts on all passengers and ensure that any potential adverse impacts are proportionate and mitigated. The NWRBU can then work with TOCs to relay this evidence and understand any other trade-offs with service enhancement. This may include service rationalisations to match changing demand patterns and economic development. This includes working collaboratively with TOCs to influencing services to meet existing and forecast demand on a route-by-route basis, with calling patterns adjusted as necessary to provide an appropriate balance between:

- i. Peak Vehicle Requirement;
- ii. journey time requirements between major centres; and
- iii. requirement to provide public transport journey opportunities from each location.

c. **Feedback on public response:** proposed changes in service should be tested in public so that passengers and their representatives can comment and offer their views on what is proposed. The NWRBU can give support to TOCs to understand the local stakeholder and passenger response to any train service proposal changes which would be collated by member LTAs. This can help anticipate any issues that TOCs may encounter with passenger groups and the NWRBU can support this engagement process.

81. Following this process, TOCs put forward timetable proposals as part of the ABP process and NWRBU can support RNP with review, feedback and further iterations if required.

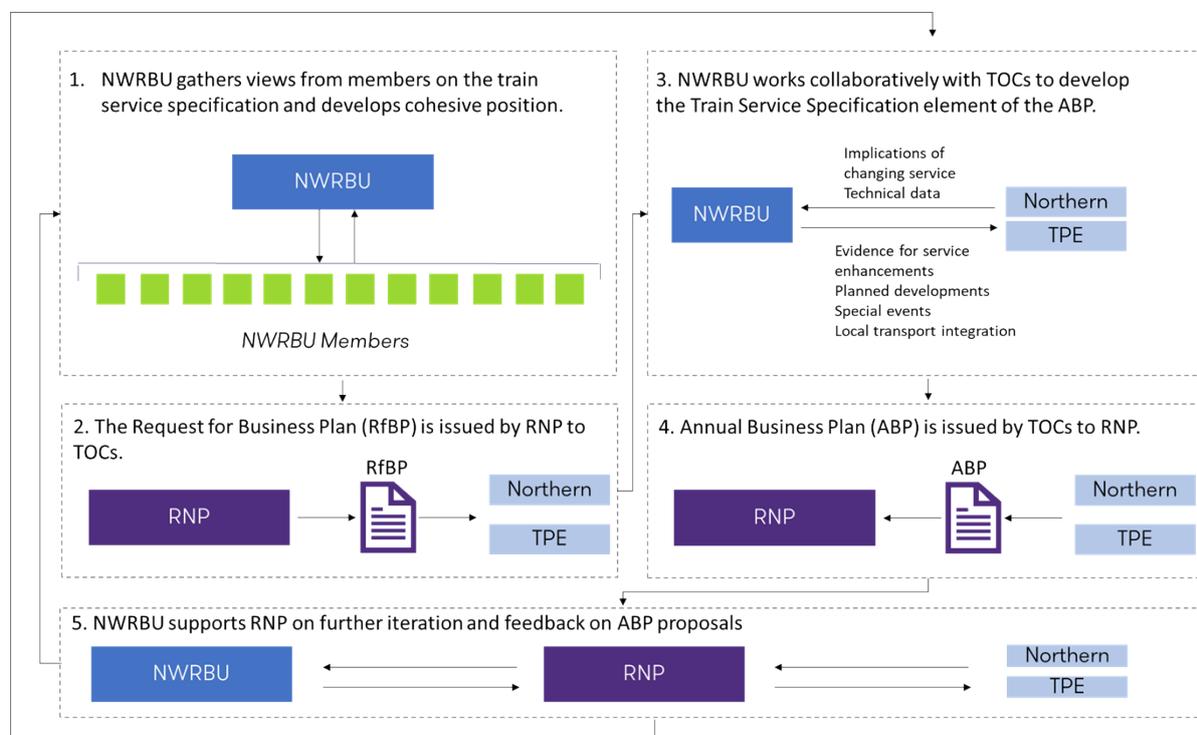


Figure 3 Flowchart of Train Service Specification worked example

NWRBU put forward proposal to make targeted fares adjustments within region into RNP board

82. NWRBU can work closely with members to undertake a full review of regulated fares for journeys made within the NWRBU. This will require data to be provided by TOCs via RNP. Analysis on fares usually requires complex technical modelling work to be conducted. The NWRBU can coordinate this analytical work on fares across authorities in the region and there can be efficiencies in this process compared to individual LTAs commissioning their own analysis. The NWRBU could also take advantage of more specialist skills on fares analysis situated in individual LTAs for the benefits of the region as a whole.
83. Using this analysis, the NWRBU can develop business cases setting out proposed targeted fares adjustments. Examples include helping to address fare anomalies in the North-West. The business cases will set out the strategic rationale for the proposal as well as the economic and financial impacts. It can also set out recommendations as to how the proposals will be funded if they increase subsidy and the NWRBU can help pool resources across members to provide a sustainable funding stream. Examples of the types of issues that could be considered include tackling the cliff-edge on fares that occur at PTE boundaries.
84. Any proposal would be submitted to the RNP Board for approval and the NWRBU on implementation, timescales and additional resourcing support.
85. Key issues that the partnership will seek to investigate include how rail fares and fares policy can be adapted to achieve more efficient use of North-West rail capacity. The current fares structure has many anomalies and the work of the partnership will need to address this. In order to provide input into this area, NWRBU will work to develop a base fares and ticketing position. Through the partnership it would need access to all relevant data and information relevant to the customer proposition and to identify the issues and complexity across the region. Access to data will mean that NWRBU can develop robust propositions with which to engage with stakeholders (GBR, DfT, HM Treasury).

NWRBU support RNP in working with TOCs on potential emerging performance issues / contract compliance

86. It is proposed that NWRBU works closely with RNP, to obtain full access to contractual targets and train service / operational performance data (e.g. including the Public Performance Measure (PPM) which is a key measure of punctuality that is important for service quality to customers, Time to 0 and Time to 15 minutes late at all stations, cancellations, short formations). The NWRBU can work with RNP to ensure that data is obtained at the appropriate geographical scope and format, to give enough granularity for assessing operator performance within the North-West. This does not infer generating new sources of data.
87. The NWRBU can work with its members to conduct its own analysis on this data including the emerging areas of risks, concerns, or trends in performance. For example, if certain routes were having major reliability issues that were impacting customers or there were wider operational issues including stabling, depot and driver availability issues. In the medium term, more regionally focused or defined action plans for performance could be developed with the RNP. The NWRBU can work closely with RNP to undertake service level performance reviews and support TOC interventions, to understand any emerging issues causing declining or ongoing poor performance and to support stakeholder engagement on resolving performance issues. It can also provide informed advice on Service Quality Improvement plans and Joint Performance Improvement Plans (JPIPs) to help address these issues and any other mitigations to ensure improved, stable performance.
88. The dialogue will be structured, regular and ongoing with transparent approaches to collaborative initiatives that can be escalated if and when necessary through the joint RNP and Rail Industry partnership governance arrangements.
89. An example of how this could work in practice is set out below for a local service improvement on a particular line to combat poor performance:
 - NWRBU identifies an issue through analysing detailed performance data
 - NWRBU officers work directly with Northern on possible solutions, but all agree a significant change is needed
 - NWRBU provides advice to RNP that options for change should be formally requested
 - Options are provided back to RNP and shared with NWRBU and TfN as there are implications beyond the NWRBU boundary

- NWRBU come to a common view on the preferred option including dealing with any funding implications and work with RNP to validate the preferred option
- TfN consults its members outside of NWRBU (as the NWRBU view is already known) and prepares a report for Rail North Committee with a recommendation
- RNC comes to a view on the preferred option and this is put forward to the RNP Board for approval – TfN members of the board support the RNC preferred option.

NWRBU support TfN (e.g. on TRU / NPR / HS2 and other major schemes) with technical / planning support during implementation to maximise benefits and to mitigate impacts during construction

90. NWRBU can support TfN as an adviser or a representative by taking a formal role in project governance during the detailed stages of infrastructure project development. This includes the development of business cases, detailed design and implementation and during delivery.
91. Examples of the role that NWRBU can take includes coordinate and facilitate input from NWRBU members which utilise their expertise. Examples include analytical data provided by NWRBU to TfN on housing, local economic strategies, impacts on local transport and accessibility. This will help present a more holistic picture of the benefits of infrastructure projects.
92. NWRBU can also provide input into construction and delivery planning including blockades and possessions strategy, how mitigations such as rail replacement services should integrate with local transport and supporting stakeholder management activities (including lineside neighbours).

Impact on TOCs

93. To ensure that the NWRBU can effectively achieve its objective, collaborative working between the NWRBU and TOCs is essential. This will require dialogue and openness and transparency in information and data sharing between the NWRBU and TOCs.
94. LTAs and TOCs already collaborate on a range of matters relevant to the contract. There are regional directors within the Northern and TPE franchise who engage with LTAs. Much of the dialogue is informal and there is not always structure to the engagement process. For example, there is currently a Central and West Business Unit Board that is attended by NW LTAs and stakeholder engagement managers in Northern and TPE. These meetings are infrequent and often the dialogue is one-way with TOCs providing an update. There are no formal mechanisms to raise concerns, propose solutions and work collaboratively.
95. It is important that these proposals do not impose an undue burden on TOCs who already have a wide range of critical responsibilities. The NWRBU is intended to replace existing 'engagement' arrangements. As noted above, the NWRBU will help coordinate the views of LTAs in the North-West and interface with TOCs at key touch points in the Annual Business Planning process working closely with RNP. The objective will be to enhance existing ways of working and bring more formality and clarity over the engagement process between NW LTAs and TOCs. This will improve the more ad-hoc approach that currently exists.
96. During the mobilisation period we will engage with NTL and TPE to define the most appropriate ways of working. This may include the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the NWRBU and NTL/TPE to formalise the relationship. We are committed to regular evaluation of any new ways of working developed and we will set a review point as part of our annual business planning process to evaluate how effectively collaboration with all parties is working and make any additional changes.

Proposed governance structure for the RBU

97. It is proposed that the NWRBU governance will be a subset of the governance structure used for the RNP Board. A key principle of governance is that it is inclusive and that members are consulted on key proposals that impact their areas. The TfN and the RNP Board operates based on voting shares for different LTA members depending on the relative population of each area. For example, in the TfN constitution there is a voting matrix for the TfN constituent authorities highlighting their share of votes for Rail North²¹. This is based on the percentage share of rail passenger revenue in each constituent authority. The matrix is also

²¹ TfN Constitution, Appendix 2, The Voting Matrix, p. 120

used for TfN funding contributions. A subset of the same matrix could be used for the NWRBU specifically. The NWRBU will reach positions on rail matters through consensus.

98. The NWRBU will have a board that will consist of officer-level representatives of the LTA member authorities. It will be chaired by a senior representative of one of these authorities. It is intended that the chair of the RBU board will also be a member of the RNP Board and will act on behalf of TfN when undertaking their role on RNPB. We will work with TfN on the best approach to adapt the membership of the RNP Board to include a representative of the NWRBU. The board will be responsible for formulating the objectives of the NWRBU, define its roles and responsibilities, plan the scope of the NWRBU activities and milestones for next year and monitor progress against these plans. The NWRBU will also be supported by a dedicated RBU Manager who will implement the NWRBU's agenda as set by the board and work closely with LTA members, RNP, TfN, TOCs, NR and any other relevant party.
99. If differences in views arise between members of the NWRBU, these will be discussed in detail internally with NWRBU members to reach a resolution. Similarly, if differences arise between the NWRBU and TfN then it is expected these will be discussed in detail. The NWRBU will work closely with RNP/TfN throughout the process and an open and transparent dialogue will take place. This includes providing RNP/TfN with early sight of the NWRBU's position on relevant rail matters. Through this dialogue, the NWRBU can better understand the impact of its intended proposals on the rest of the TfN membership and can have further discussions with NWRBU members to make them aware of the implications and manage any trade-offs.
100. As noted above, the NWRBRU Board will be officer-led. Political accountability will remain as it is today. All LTA members have political representatives to escalate issues as appropriate and pan-Northern structures such as the Rail North Committee or the TfN Partnership Board are also forums in which political representatives can share their views or raise concerns.
101. The NWRBU will also interact with governance at the LTA level including the GM Rail Partnership Board. The GM Rail Partnership Board will be focused on aligning the rail network with the priorities of the GM region. This includes integrating the rail network with the local transport network in the region. The NWRBU is more focused on rail services which clearly transcend GMs boundaries and helps discharge the duties of the RNP and TfN with a North-Western perspective (including on train services, rolling stock, fares adjustments and TOC operational and customer performance review / monitoring) and supporting regional infrastructure proposals.
102. The intention is that, while the GM Rail Partnership Board may influence the NWRBU, and vice versa, they are managed / governed independently of one another. This recognises their key differences in attendees, geography and remit. But establishing both and aligning practices and principles (across all stakeholders) will be key to ensure the industry and wider transport network is pulling together as one in the interests of the customer.

How the NWRBU fits into the existing RNP / TfN governance structure

103. As noted earlier, there are no proposed changes to existing roles, responsibilities, accountabilities or risks from the proposal for a NWRBU. As a result, the NWRBU seamlessly fits into TfN and RNP existing governance structures. It is intended that the chair of the NWRBU will sit on the RNP Board alongside the other members. It will also participate in relevant technical working groups including direct engagement with RNP contract managers on operational issues, collaborative working with TfN on infrastructure issues and directly with TOCs on influencing the business plan for Northern and TPE. The role of the NWRBU and how it fits with TfN and Rail North as well as LTAs are summarised in the diagrams in Figure 4 and Figure 5 as well as Table 3 below.

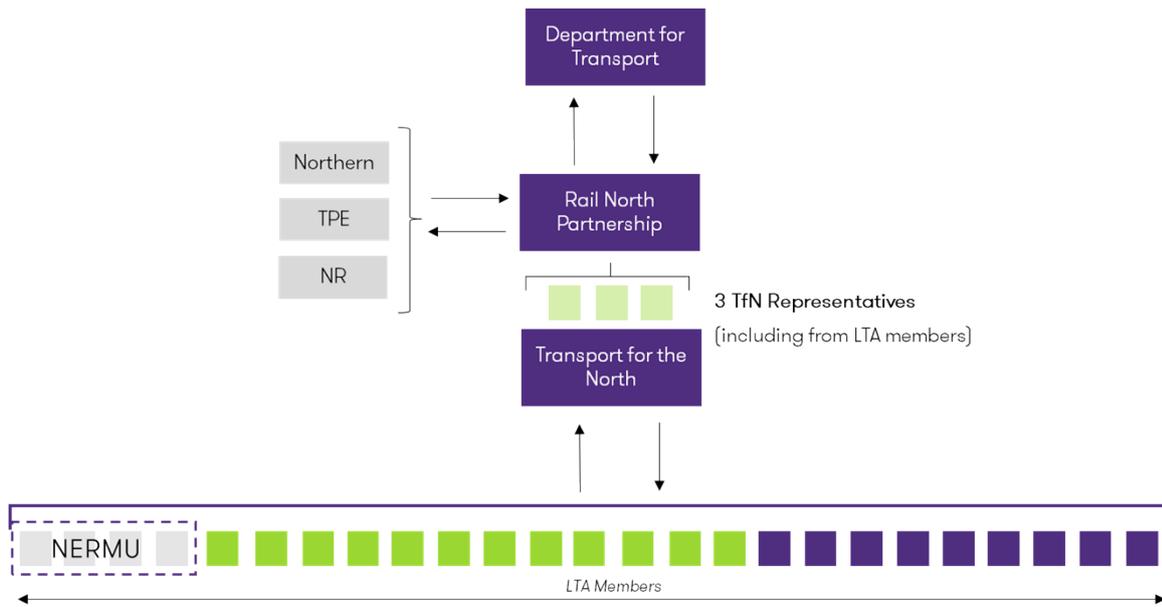


Figure 4 Current industry structure

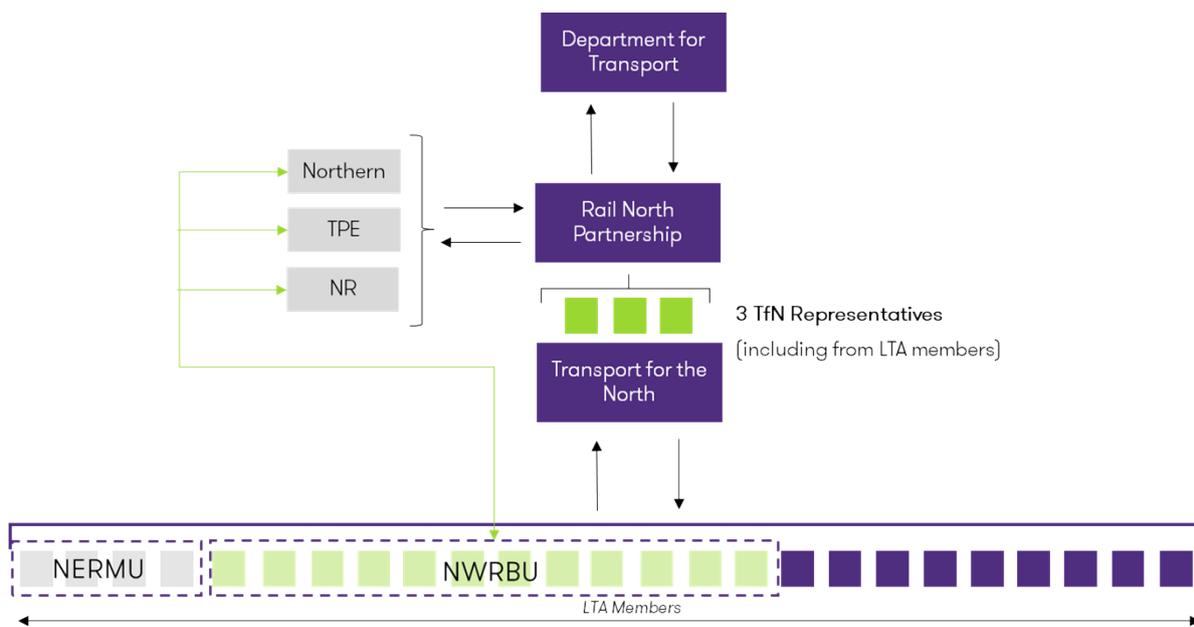


Figure 5 Industry structure with NWRBU

Table 3 Overview of the roles and responsibilities of LTAs, NWRBU and TfN / RNP

Role Type	LTA Current Role	Proposed NWRBU Role (to support LTAs and TfN / RNP)	TfN	RNP
General (data sharing, transparency, governance, decision making)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constituent member of TfN (one of 25) but with no direct powers to influence strategic rail matters Limited access to data / information under current arrangement with further access by request through RNP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Works collaboratively with RNP and TOCs on data and evidence base with LTA members Sits on the RNP Board as one of the 3 x TfN representatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for the Statutory Strategic Transport Plan for the North Work with TOCs, Network Rail and DfT to share data and draw conclusions to inform policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with NTL/TPE, Network Rail and DfT to share data and draw conclusions to inform the contracts with NTL/TPE
Train Services (specification, short term planning, operational management)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential to engage on funding additional services, although no input on a broader basis into Northern's Annual Business Planning process Limited input into short term planning, wider timetable planning, and operational matters, except as part of stakeholder forums Undertake feasibility studies to support locally developed schemes and/or lobbying / influencing the rail industry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advise on Train Service Specification in TOC business plans working directly with operators and RNP and feeding input from LTAs Work in collaboration with RNP to manage contracts including performance Coordinate operational issues for LTAs to RNP to raise with TOCs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inputting into the Train Service Specification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing and agreeing the overall Train service Specification alongside the Secretary of State
Stations (station management, improvements, customer service, transport integration)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution directly to station improvements (passenger facilities, accessibility improvements, car parks / park and rides, new stations). Informal alliances on stations with Network Rail, TOCs. Limited involvement in station management / operational matters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate LTA perspective on station improvement, management and funding on behalf of RNP / TfN to influence franchises and support infrastructure development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TfN coordinate station improvements proposals as part of wider infrastructure enhancement schemes being developed as part of the Strategic Transport Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RNP manage station management and proposals for improvement with Northern and TPE.

	<p>(where there is huge opportunity to improve transport integration, for example)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Funding and support for Community Rail Partnerships 			
<p>Ticketing / Fares (fares setting / products, integrated ticketing, ticketing enhancements)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can propose Fare adjustment proposals to the RNP board ▪ Subsidise concessionary fares ▪ Some city-region authorities manage / co-manage (with Northern) a number of multi modal products (e.g. Wayfarer, PlusBus & SystemOne) ▪ Limited opportunities for wider engagement on ticketing enhancements – act as a stakeholder within forums with RDG ▪ Smart ticketing across City-region’s own modes (e.g. Metrolink / Merseyrail). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coordinate input and analysis across North-West LTAs on proposals for fare adjustments including business case development. ▪ Work with TOCs to access data and scrutinise fare adjustment proposals ▪ Propose fare adjustment to the RNP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ TfN can proceed with a Fares Change if the Secretary of State confirms that ▪ he does not believe that this will or may impose any adverse financial consequences on him. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Considers proposals for fares adjustments in terms of impact on the rail contracts with Northern / TPE and from a business case perspective
<p>Infrastructure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Significant investment in coordinating and securing funding to deliver rail schemes in the LTA area ▪ Some involvement in strategic rail investment schemes e.g. as part of TfN governance ▪ Limited involvement in decision making on prioritisation of schemes (through TfN Statutory Partner role) and / or funding for rail improvements– these are all made at a regional and national level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate input and analysis across North-West LTAs to support TfN on infrastructure projects to feed into business case development • Support TfN in inputting into the implementation of infrastructure projects including on construction and delivery plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TfN develop the statutory Strategic Transport Plan to coordinate infrastructure development in the North of England and make the case to government for funding • TfN is a Statutory Partner on rail investment in the North of England. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand and input impact of infrastructure proposals on service specification and operational ability of TOCs

5 Implementation

Resource and financial requirements

104. The NWRBU will be funded within existing budgets of its LTA members. A full-time RBU Manager will be appointed to coordinate the work of the RBU. This role will be hosted by TfGM but will represent all NWRBU members and will be accountable to the NWRBU Board. The RBU will be supported by a wider pool of resources within the Rail Team in TfGM and from other LTA members. To support NWRBU workstreams, specialist advice will be sought from LTA members with the greatest capabilities in those areas. This will allow all members to benefit from best practice capability in the North-West.
105. Depending on how future responsibilities evolve, resources could be funded or pooled from LTA members or other sources depending on requirements. For example, to develop business cases for service enhancement and fares there is capability available within the North-West that could be deployed for this purpose.
106. For any subsidy implications that arise from proposals (via business cases) that are put forward, the NWRBU will work with its members to consider what resources could be pooled or consider alternative sources if sufficient funding was available. This is consistent with the approach of the RNP Board where franchise adjustment proposals can be put forward which are financially neutral or have funding allocated.
107. Table 4 below highlights how NWRBU activities will be funded.

Table 4 Overview of how activities will be funded

Activity	Potential Funding sources / options
Set-up of RBU	Funded within existing budgets
Day-to-day running and management of RBU	Funded within existing budgets
Development of business cases for service enhancement and fare adjustment proposals	Funded within existing budgets
Potential subsidy implications of service enhancement or fares proposals	NWRBU will consider pooling long-term financial resources from LTA members or other sources if sufficient funding is available. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis and is consistent with the RNP approach of franchise output adjustments remaining financially neutral or with funding provision being in place.

Proposed approach to contractualisation

108. A range of options have been considered to implement the contractualisation of the NWRBU. To formalise the relationship at a high-level, the option of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) amongst the NW LTAs could be considered. MoUs generally do not imply legal commitment. Usually, they set out the objectives of the RBU and the principles by which the parties to the MoU would collaborate. This would set a baseline for engagement and cooperation for NW LTAs on the RBU. As the agreement is higher level and principle based, it may be easier to sign-off and agree compared with other more formal agreements. However, because MoUs are lighter-touch agreements that are often not legally enforceable, this type of agreement

could be more easily ignored and does not provide as strong an impetus for collaboration on the NWRBU. This may compromise the objectives of enabling the NWRBU to speak with 'one voice' for the region and the resources and capabilities at its disposal.

109. A more formal and binding approach would involve NW LTAs signing up to a Collaboration Agreement. The agreement would set out in more detail the intended role and governance of the NWRBU and the responsibilities and obligations of the signatories of the agreement. Collaboration Agreements have significant precedent in the rail industry and has been the contractual approach used by Rail North, TfN and the Secretary of State for the management of the two Northern Rail franchises. As the agreement would have a more solid legal foundation it will provide a stronger incentive to collaborate and would also make it more resilient to changes in the political environment. This is preferable to a more high-level Memorandum of Understanding agreement which would be a looser partnership with less obligations and binding commitments.

Critical Success Factors

110. To determine whether the NWRBU has been successful in delivering its objectives, a range of critical success factors have been developed. These factors will be closely monitored by the NWRBU Board which will ensure that the RBU is on track for achieving them.

111. These factors are outlined in detail in Table 5 below.

Table 5 Critical success factors

Key Critical Success Factors	Description
Collaboration, Representation and Consensus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LTA members feel involved, represented and influential The NWRBU helps streamline existing governance and management arrangements. The NWRBU forges consensus and manages trade-offs to provide cohesive advice The NWRBU is able to foster collaborative relationships with TOCs to feed into the Annual Business Planning process for the franchises The NWRBU develops a collaborative relationship with Network Rail and other stakeholders including Transport Focus. RNP and TfN feel supported in executing their formal duties
Development of train service and fares proposals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NWRBU delivers meaningful proposals to the RNP Board to improve outcomes for rail passengers including train service specification changes or fare adjustment proposals. This includes putting forward business cases or analytical evidence to support decision-making. Quick-wins and incremental proposals for service improvements and fare simplification are developed
Performance monitoring and contractual management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NWRBU plays an active role in monitoring performance, raising issues and ensuring contractual targets are met Data sharing between the NWRBU, RNP and TOCs is transparent
Impact and Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NWRBU is an influential player in the region. It is trusted as providing 'one-voice' to the North-West, viewed credibly by key partners and stakeholders in region including TOCs, RNP and TfN

- Adds value (rather than complexity) to the process of managing the rail services in the North, and has a collaborative relationship with Northern and TPE that allows transparent data sharing, the development of proposals to improve the train service and simplify fares and allows operators to be held to account for performance.

Risk Management

112. The NWRBU will follow TfGM's Risk Management framework and it is intended that the NWRBU Board will oversee the risks and mitigations with the RBU Manager monitoring on a day-to-day basis.

113. An initial risk register has been developed for the NWRBU which will evolve as the implementation processes commence. This is set out in Table 6 below.

Table 6 Risk Register

ID	Risk description	Likelihood	Impact	Owner	Accountable	Mitigating Actions
1	A collaboration agreement is not agreed by June-23 deadline delaying the formation of the RBU and impeding its ability to influence the ABP process for TOCs	Low	Medium	RBU Manager (currently TfGM rail team)	RBU Board	Significant engagement with partners in the NW has already taken place and will continue in relation to the role of the RBU. Workshops will be organised for early next year to begin the process for contractualisation. It is likely that the collaboration agreement will be similar to previous agreements and therefore it is unlikely there will need to be complex legal drafting.
2	Adequate resources are not available for the NWRBU to fulfil its role	Medium	High	RBU Manager (currently TfGM rail team)	RBU Board and LTA members	A mobilisation plan has been developed and TfGM will soon begin the process of recruiting the RBU Manager and choosing representatives for the RBU Board. There are options to pool available expertise across LTAs in the North-West especially from authorities such as TfGM and Merseyrail which have significant expertise and resources.
3	TOCs are not cooperative with the RBU compromising the ability of the RBU to influential rail services and fares	Medium	High	RBU Manager RNP	RBU Board RNP Board	The RBU will work collaboratively with RNP and TOCs to develop a formal planned process of engagement touch-points which align with the Annual Business Planning process. This will bring predictability and structure to the process and should therefore ease the process of

					engagement. If sufficient collaboration is not being achieved then the RBU will escalate to the RNP Board and leverage political channels.
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Timescales and Mobilisation

114. The following are the proposed timescales for the immediate next steps for the NWRBU:

- a. The proposal for the RNP Board will be submitted for approval in January 2023.
- b. Between January and March, LTAs within the North-West region will develop the partnership agreement to form the RBU.
- c. Beyond April, the NWRBU will develop a 'business plan' for the year including the key objectives, deliverables and milestones it should deliver in the year. The RBU Board will hold the RBU Manager to account for the delivery of this plan.

115. The mobilisation plan for this is set out in Table 7 below.

Table 7 Mobilisation plan

Workstreams	Resources / Owners	Timescales
Collaboration Agreement Legal to develop agreement framework / structure Agree / populate clauses / schedules Issue first draft of Agreement Discussion / Dialogue Finalise Agreement	Led by Legal and Commercial Advisors (Grant Thornton) Input from NWRBU members	Est. completion June-23
Governance Arrangements Governance Arrangements – agree decision making processes and voting rights Meeting Frequency and Terms of Reference Establishment of Boards and Working Groups Papers / Processes KPIs / Reporting How fits / aligns with RNP governance etc.	TfGM Lead Support from NWRBU members	Est. completion May-23
NWRBU 'Business Plan' Workshop specific priorities / objectives for NWRBU (internally and with rail industry partners) Agree priorities, objectives and specific action plans (incl roles and responsibilities) into a dedicated NWRBU 'Business Plan' Agree monitoring and reporting against Business Plan	Led jointly by NWRBU members Input from TfN, RNP, ToCs, NR to ensure alignment	Est. completion May-23 Ongoing monitor / review thereafter
Geography Develop precise mapping / geography definitions Common understanding of service group in NW scope Agree cross-boundary processes	TfGM lead	Est. completion April-23
People / Resources Agree NWRBU member roles / responsibilities and any management arrangements (e.g. working groups) Appoint RBU Manager	TfGM lead	Est. completion June-23

<p>Working with Rail Industry Partners (incl TfN, RNP, ToCs and NR) Agree principles for data sharing, alignment of governance and reporting, agree processes for feeding into TfN / RNP responsibilities (e.g. Annual Business Planning process) Agree data sharing / reporting with ToCs/NR and terms of engagement</p>	<p>TfGM lead</p>	<p>Est. completion May-23</p>
<p>Other Areas Comms / Marketing / Branding (tbc) Wider engagement with other rail industry partners / stakeholders</p>	<p>TfGM lead</p>	<p>Est. completion latter half of 2023 (not required for NWRBU 'go live')</p>

Appendix

North West Regional Business Unit Member – Letters of Support

Simon Elliott
Transport for Greater Manchester
2 Piccadilly Place
Manchester
M1 3BG

[INSERT DATE]

RE: North West Regional Business Unit – WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL Letter of Support

Dear Simon,

Further to positive discussions held to date on the establishment of a North West Regional Business Unit (NWRBU) created under the existing Rail North Partnership (RNP) framework, we are pleased to confirm our support in principal. We understand that Transport for Greater Manchester, on behalf of the local authorities and Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs) across the North West of England, are submitting a formal proposal to the RNP Board requesting approval to establish the NWRBU and that this letter will be included in the proposal to demonstrate our support.

Our support is based on our current understanding of the role and purpose of NWRBU, namely:

- The NWRBU will consist of up to 12 local authorities and MCAs across the North West of England
- The NWRBU's purpose is to support TfN and RNP in executing their formal duties, with a specific focus on providing specialist insight, advice and added value across the North West region
- The NWRBU is to act as influential / key partner across NW region, working within the framework of the TfN / DfT Partnership Agreement
- The NWRBU will provide cohesive, constructive, strategic and tactical/operational advice to both TfN and RNP on management of rail contracts (TPE and NTL) and infrastructure schemes in the NW region
- The NWRBU will act as 'one voice' for the NW region in our wider engagement with rail industry e.g. NR and Operators

Similarly, our support is also based upon our current understanding of the anticipated commercial and management arrangements, including:

- The NWRBU will be enabled through a formal agreement between its members (which will be developed and entered into following approval of the proposal), including clear governance and management arrangements.
- The NWRBU will formally meet periodically (aligned with TfN / RNP's governance) with clear ToR to be developed
- The NWRBU will be resourced by member organisations, with centrally appointed NWRBU manager(s) to manage governance and interactions with TfN, RNP and industry partners e.g. TOCs, NR
- The NWRBU will be embedded into TfN and RNP processes to facilitate effective collaboration, e.g. dedicated resources, sharing of data, IT systems integration (where feasible), and alignment of governance / reporting
- There is no formal transfer of risk, responsibility or accountability as all NWRBU members are already members of the RNP Partnership Agreement. The NWRBU will feed into existing RNP governance arrangements. It is therefore assumed there is no change to existing governance or decision making powers (including voting rights).
- All TfN and RNP responsibilities, accountabilities and duties remain as today

Subject to the proposal being approved by at the RNP Board, we intend to become a member of the NWRBU and enter into an agreement between NWRBU members. We look forward to working with you on this, the establishment of the NWRBU, and on delivering positive outcomes for the region during 2023 and beyond.

Kind Regards,



Steve Hunter
Transport for Warrington Service Manager
Warrington Borough Council



Simon Elliott
Transport for Greater Manchester
2 Piccadilly Place
Manchester
M1 3BG

Date: 06 January 2023
My Ref:
Please ask for: Martin Kelly
Direct Dial: 01254 588686
Email address: martin.kelly@blackburn.gov.uk

Dear Simon

RE: North West Regional Business Unit – Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council Support

Further to positive discussions held to date on the establishment of a North West Regional Business Unit (NWRBU) to be created under the existing Rail North Partnership (RNP) framework, we are pleased to confirm our support in principle.

We understand that Transport for Greater Manchester, on behalf of the North West of England Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) and Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs), are submitting a formal proposal to the RNP Board requesting approval to establish the NWRBU and that this letter will be included in the proposal to demonstrate our support.

The move towards the creation of Great British Railways (GBR) presents a significant opportunity for North West of England LTAs to come together as partners to influence the future planning of rail. We feel that the NWRBU's creation will provide additional local input to the existing RNP framework, forming the basis for stronger relationships between LTAs, RNP, TfN and in the future, GBR. We agree that the NWRBU's establishment would deliver additional regional benefits giving LTAs enhanced influence in rail matters and building on well-established arrangements with TfN.

The NWRBU's common aims are of particular importance to Lancashire and Blackburn with Darwen. The need for a greater, combined influence cannot be underestimated and we see additional input and focus on the North West's transport issues as being key to the development of future rail infrastructure and services.

Martin Kelly – Strategic Director for Growth and Development
3rd Floor, One Cathedral Square, Blackburn, Lancashire BB1 1EP

Given the current financial climate, assuming further financial risk is not feasible for the Council. Furthermore, the current Central Government "red lines" regarding provision for additional power devolution, or finance at the present time, are noted.

Our support is based on our current understanding of the NWRBU's role and purpose, namely:

- The NWRBU will consist of up to thirteen North West of England LTAs and MCAs
- The NWRBU's purpose is to support TfN and RNP in executing their formal duties, with a specific focus on providing specialist insight, advice and added value across the North West region
- The NWRBU is to act as influential / key partner across the North West region, working within the framework of the TfN / DfT Partnership Agreement
- The NWRBU will provide cohesive, constructive, strategic and tactical / operational advice to both TfN and RNP on management of rail contracts (TPE and NTL) and infrastructure schemes in the North West region
- The NWRBU will act as 'one voice' for the North West region in our wider engagement with the rail industry e.g. Network Rail and Operators
- The NWRBU will be inclusive, strongly representing and advocating for the needs of all parts of the North West region
- The NWRBU will have governance arrangements that are inclusive and allowing a strong voice for all parts of the North West region

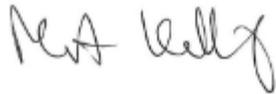
Similarly, our support is also based upon our current understanding of the anticipated commercial and management arrangements, including:

- The NWRBU will be enabled through a formal agreement between its members (which will be developed and entered into following the proposal's approval), including clear governance and management arrangements
- The NWRBU will formally meet periodically (aligned with TfN / RNP's governance) with clear Terms of Reference to be developed
- The NWRBU will be resourced by member organisations, with centrally appointed NWRBU manager(s) to manage governance and interactions with TfN, RNP and industry partners e.g. TOCs and Network Rail
- The NWRBU will be embedded into TfN and RNP processes to facilitate effective collaboration, e.g. dedicated resources, sharing of data, IT systems integration (where feasible), and alignment of governance / reporting
- There is no formal transfer of risk, responsibility or accountability as all NWRBU members are already members of the RNP Partnership Agreement. The NWRBU will feed into existing RNP governance arrangements. It is therefore assumed there will be no change to existing governance or decision making powers (including voting rights)
- All TfN and RNP responsibilities, accountabilities and duties remain as today

Martin Kelly – Strategic Director for Growth and Development
3rd Floor, One Cathedral Square, Blackburn, Lancashire BB1 1EP

We look forward to continuing to work with you on the proposals and to develop a collective agreement between all NWRBU members, so that we can deliver positive outcomes for the region during 2023 and beyond.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Kelly'.

Martin Kelly
Strategic Director for Growth & Development

Martin Kelly – Strategic Director for Growth and Development
3rd Floor, One Cathedral Square, Blackburn, Lancashire BB1 1EP

Date: 9th January 2023

Simon Elliott
Transport for Greater Manchester
2 Piccadilly Place
Manchester
M1 3BG

Our Ref:
Your Ref:
Direct Line: 01253 476176
Email: david.simper@blackpool.gov.uk

Dear Simon,

RE: North West Regional Business Unit – Blackpool Council Letter of Support

The council is pleased to confirm its support in principle for the establishment of a North West Regional Business Unit (NWRBU) to be created under the existing Rail North Partnership (RNP) framework. It is understood that Transport for Greater Manchester, on behalf of the local authorities and Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs) across the North West of England, is submitting a formal proposal to the RNP Board requesting approval to establish the NWRBU and that this letter will be included in the proposal to demonstrate the council's support.

This support is based on a current understanding of NWRBU's role and purpose, namely:

- The NWRBU will consist of up to twelve local authorities and MCAs across the North West of England
- The NWRBU's purpose is to support TfN and RNP in executing their formal duties, with a specific focus on providing specialist insight, advice and added value across the North West region
- The NWRBU is to act as influential / key partner across NW region, working within the framework of the TfN / DfT Partnership Agreement
- The NWRBU will provide cohesive, constructive, strategic and tactical/operational advice to both TfN and RNP on management of rail contracts (TPE and NTL) and infrastructure schemes in the NW region
- The NWRBU will act as 'one voice' for the NW region in our wider engagement with rail industry e.g. NR and Operators

Similarly, the council's support is also based upon a current understanding of the anticipated commercial and management arrangements, including:



Communications and Regeneration www.blackpool.gov.uk
Growth and Prosperity
One Bickerstaffe Square
Blackpool, FY1 3AH

- The NWRBU will be enabled through a formal agreement between its members (which will be developed and entered into following approval of the proposal), including clear governance and management arrangements.
- The NWRBU will formally meet periodically (aligned with TfN / RNP's governance) with clear Terms of Reference to be developed
- The NWRBU will be resourced by member organisations, with centrally appointed NWRBU manager(s) to manage governance and interactions with TfN, RNP and industry partners e.g. TOCs, NR
- The NWRBU will be embedded into TfN and RNP processes to facilitate effective collaboration, e.g. dedicated resources, sharing of data, IT systems integration (where feasible), and alignment of governance / reporting
- There is no formal transfer of risk, responsibility or accountability as all NWRBU members are already members of the RNP Partnership Agreement. The NWRBU will feed into existing RNP governance arrangements. It is therefore assumed there is no change to existing governance or decision making powers (including voting rights).
- All TfN and RNP responsibilities, accountabilities and duties remain as today

Subject to the proposal being approved by at the RNP Board, the council intends to become a member of the NWRBU and enter into an agreement between NWRBU members. The council looks forward to working with you on this, the establishment of the NWRBU, and on delivering positive outcomes for the region during 2023 and beyond.

Yours sincerely,

David Simper

David Simper
Group Leader (Transport Projects)



Communications and Regeneration www.blackpool.gov.uk
Growth and Prosperity
One Bickerstaffe Square
Blackpool, FY1 3AH



Working for a brighter future together

Westfields
c/o Municipal Buildings
Earle Street
Crewe
CW1 2BJ
thomas.moody@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Date: 22 December 2022

Our Ref: TM/MM

Simon Elliott
Transport for Greater Manchester
2 Piccadilly Place
Manchester
M1 3BG

North West Regional Business Unit – Cheshire East Council Letter of Support

Dear Simon,

Further to positive discussions held to date on the establishment of a North West Regional Business Unit (NWRBU) created under the existing Rail North Partnership (RNP) framework, I am pleased to confirm support in principle on behalf of Cheshire East Council. We understand that Transport for Greater Manchester, on behalf of the local authorities and Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs) across the North West of England, are submitting a formal proposal to the RNP Board requesting approval to establish the NWRBU and that this letter will be included in the proposal to demonstrate our support.

Our support is based on our current understanding of the role and purpose of NWRBU, namely:

- The NWRBU will consist of up to 12 local authorities and MCAs across the North West of England – including Cheshire East Council
- The NWRBU's purpose is to support TfN and RNP in executing their formal duties, with a specific focus on providing specialist insight, advice and added value across the North West region
- The NWRBU is to act as influential / key partner across NW region, working within the framework of the TfN / DfT Partnership Agreement
- The NWRBU will provide cohesive, constructive, strategic and tactical/operational advice to both TfN and RNP on management of rail contracts (TPE and NTL) and infrastructure schemes in the NW region

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All other enquiries 0300 123 5500

www.cheshireeast.gov.uk

- The NWRBU will act as 'one voice' for the NW region in our wider engagement with rail industry e.g. NR and Operators
- The NWRBU will make all reasonable endeavors to take into account the policy priorities and views of the participating Local Authorities in the conduct of its business.

Similarly, our support is also based upon our current understanding of the anticipated commercial and management arrangements, including:

- The NWRBU will be enabled through a formal agreement between its members (which will be developed and entered into following approval of the proposal), including clear governance and management arrangements.
- The NWRBU will formally meet periodically (aligned with TfN / RNP's governance) with clear Terms of Reference to be developed
- The NWRBU will be resourced by member organisations, with centrally appointed NWRBU manager(s) to manage governance and interactions with TfN, RNP and industry partners e.g. TOCs, NR
- The NWRBU will be embedded into TfN and RNP processes to facilitate effective collaboration, e.g. dedicated resources, sharing of data, IT systems integration (where feasible), and alignment of governance / reporting
- There is no formal transfer of risk, responsibility or accountability as all NWRBU members are already members of the RNP Partnership Agreement. The NWRBU will feed into existing RNP governance arrangements. It is therefore assumed there is no change to existing governance or decision making powers (including voting rights).
- All TfN and RNP responsibilities, accountabilities and duties remain as today

Subject to the proposal being approved by at the RNP Board, Cheshire East Council intends to become a member of the NWRBU and enter into an agreement between NWRBU members. We look forward to working with you on this, the establishment of the NWRBU, and on delivering positive outcomes for the region during 2023 and beyond.

Yours sincerely,



Tom Moody
Director of Highways & Infrastructure
Cheshire East Council

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Economy and Infrastructure · Cumbria House · 117 Botchergate
Carlisle · Cumbria · CA1 1RD
T: 01228 606060 · F: 01228 606060 · E: angela.jones@cumbria.gov.uk

Simon Elliott
C/O Transport for Greater Manchester

Letter sent via email

21 December 2022

Dear Simon,

RE: North West Regional Business Unit –Letter of Support

Further to ongoing discussions held to date on the establishment of a North West Regional Business Unit (NWRBU) created under the existing Rail North Partnership (RNP) framework, we are able to confirm our support in principle.

We understand that Transport for Greater Manchester, on behalf of the local authorities across the North West of England, are submitting a formal proposal to the RNP Board requesting approval to establish the NWRBU and that this letter will be included in the proposal to demonstrate our support.

We feel that the creation of the NWRBU will provide additional local input to the existing RNP framework and form the basis for stronger relationships between LTAs, RNP, TfN and in the future, GBR. We agree that the establishment of the NWRBU would deliver additional benefits for the entire region giving LTAs supplementary influence in rail matters and building on established arrangements with TfN. While supportive in principle it is also important to note that additional financial risk and taking revenue risk is not feasible for the Council.

While writing on behalf of Cumbria County Council, it is important to note that from April 1st 2023 Cumbria County Council will be abolished to be replaced by Westmorland and Furness and Cumberland Council's. Both of which have been consulted and are supportive in principle and it will be important for both authorities to be individually engaged moving forward.

Our support is based on our current understanding of the role and purpose of NWRBU, namely:

- The NWRBU will consist of up to 13 local authorities and MCAs across the North West of England
- The NWRBU's purpose is to support TfN and RNP in executing their formal duties, with a specific focus on providing specialist insight, advice and added value across the North West region
- The NWRBU is to act as influential / key partner across NW region, working within the framework of the TfN / DfT Partnership Agreement
- The NWRBU will provide cohesive, constructive, strategic and tactical/operational advice to both TfN and RNP on management of rail contracts (TPE and NTL) and infrastructure schemes in the NW region

Serving the people of Cumbria

cumbria.gov.uk



- The NWRBU will act as 'one voice' for the NW region in our wider engagement with rail industry e.g. NR and Operators
- The NWRBU will be inclusive, strongly representing and advocating for the needs of all parts of the region
- The NWRBU will have governance arrangements that are inclusive and allowing a strong voice for all parts of the region

Similarly, our support in principle is also based upon our current understanding of the anticipated commercial and management arrangements, including:

- The NWRBU will be enabled through a formal agreement between its members (which will be developed and entered into following approval of the proposal), including clear governance and management arrangements.
- The NWRBU will formally meet periodically (aligned with TfN / RNP's governance) with clear ToR to be developed
- The NWRBU will be resourced by member organisations, with centrally appointed NWRBU manager(s) to manage governance and interactions with TfN, RNP and industry partners e.g. TOCs, NR
- The NWRBU will be embedded into TfN and RNP processes to facilitate effective collaboration, e.g. dedicated resources, sharing of data, IT systems integration (where feasible), and alignment of governance / reporting
- There is no formal transfer of risk, responsibility or accountability as all NWRBU members are already members of the RNP Partnership Agreement. The NWRBU will feed into existing RNP governance arrangements. It is therefore assumed there is no change to existing RNP governance or decision making powers (including voting rights).
- All TfN and RNP responsibilities, accountabilities and duties remain as today

We look forward to working with you on this, the establishment of the NWRBU, and on delivering positive outcomes for the region during 2023 and beyond.

Kind Regards,



Angela Jones

Executive Director Economy and Infrastructure

Simon Elliott
Transport for Greater Manchester
2 Piccadilly Place
Manchester
M1 3BG

Telephone 01629 536721
Ask for Chris Hegarty
Email Chris.hegarty@derbyshire.gov.uk
Our ref NWRBU1
Your ref
Date 04 January 2023

Dear Simon,

RE: North West Regional Business Unit – Derbyshire County Council Letter of Support

Further to positive discussions held to date on the establishment of a North West Regional Business Unit (NWRBU) created under the existing Rail North Partnership (RNP) framework, we are pleased to confirm Derbyshire County Councils support in principal. We understand that Transport for Greater Manchester, on behalf of the local authorities and Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs) across the North West of England, are submitting a formal proposal to the RNP Board requesting approval to establish the NWRBU and that this letter will be included in the proposal to demonstrate our support.

Our support is based on our current understanding of the role and purpose of NWRBU, namely:

- The NWRBU will consist of up to 12 local authorities and MCAs across the North West of England
- The NWRBU's purpose is to support TfN and RNP in executing their formal duties, with a specific focus on providing specialist insight, advice and added value across the North West region
- The NWRBU is to act as influential / key partner across NW region, working within the framework of the TfN / DfT Partnership Agreement
- The NWRBU will provide cohesive, constructive, strategic and tactical/operational advice to both TfN and RNP on management of rail contracts (TPE and NTL) and infrastructure schemes in the NW region
- The NWRBU will act as 'one voice' for the NW region in our wider engagement with rail industry e.g. NR and Operators

Similarly, our support is also based upon our current understanding of the anticipated commercial and management arrangements, including:

- The NWRBU will be enabled through a formal agreement between its members (which will be developed and entered into following approval of the proposal), including clear governance and management arrangements.
- The NWRBU will formally meet periodically (aligned with TfN / RNP's governance) with clear ToR to be developed

CONTROLLED

- The NWRBU will be resourced by member organisations, with centrally appointed NWRBU manager(s) to manage governance and interactions with TfN, RNP and industry partners e.g. TOCs, NR.
- There will be no additional cost to Derbyshire County Council to join the NWRBU beyond the funding we already provide to TfN.
- The NWRBU will be embedded into TfN and RNP processes to facilitate effective collaboration, e.g. dedicated resources, sharing of data, IT systems integration (where feasible), and alignment of governance / reporting
- There is no formal transfer of risk, responsibility or accountability as all NWRBU members are already members of the RNP Partnership Agreement. The NWRBU will feed into existing RNP governance arrangements. It is therefore assumed there is no change to existing governance or decision making powers (including voting rights).
- . All TfN and RNP responsibilities, accountabilities and duties remain as today

Subject to the proposal being approved by at the RNP Board, we intend to become a member of the NWRBU and enter into an agreement between NWRBU members. We look forward to working with you on this, the establishment of the NWRBU, and on delivering positive outcomes for the region during 2023 and beyond.

Yours sincerely

Chris Hegarty

Strategic Rail Officer

Simon Elliott
Transport for Greater Manchester
2 Piccadilly Place
Manchester
M1 3BG
simon.elliott@tfgm.com

Phone: 01772 534675
Email: phil.durnell@lancashire.gov.uk
Our ref: PD/TFGM1
Date: 21 December 2022

RE: North West Regional Business Unit – Lancashire County Council Support

Dear Simon

Further to positive discussions held to date on the establishment of a North West Regional Business Unit (NWRBU) to be created under the existing Rail North Partnership (RNP) framework, we are pleased to confirm our support in principle.

We understand that Transport for Greater Manchester, on behalf of the North West of England Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) and Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs), are submitting a formal proposal to the RNP Board requesting approval to establish the NWRBU and that this letter will be included in the proposal to demonstrate our support.

The move towards the creation of Great British Railways (GBR) presents a significant opportunity for North West of England LTAs to come together as partners to influence the future planning of rail. We feel that the NWRBU's creation will provide additional local input to the existing RNP framework, forming the basis for stronger relationships between LTAs, RNP, TfN and in the future, GBR. We agree that the NWRBU's establishment would deliver additional regional benefits giving LTAs enhanced influence in rail matters and building on well-established arrangements with TfN.

The NWRBU's common aims are of particular importance to Lancashire. The need for a greater, combined influence cannot be underestimated and we see additional input and focus on the North West's transport issues as being key to the development of future rail infrastructure and services.

Given the current financial climate, assuming further financial risk is not feasible for the County Council. Furthermore, the current Central Government "red lines" regarding provision for additional power devolution, or finance at the present time, are noted.

Our support is based on our current understanding of the NWRBU's role and purpose, namely:

- The NWRBU will consist of up to thirteen North West of England LTAs and MCAs

Lancashire County Council
PO Box 100, County Hall, Preston, PR1 0LD



- The NWRBU's purpose is to support TfN and RNP in executing their formal duties, with a specific focus on providing specialist insight, advice and added value across the North West region
- The NWRBU is to act as influential / key partner across the North West region, working within the framework of the TfN / DfT Partnership Agreement
- The NWRBU will provide cohesive, constructive, strategic and tactical / operational advice to both TfN and RNP on management of rail contracts (TPE and NTL) and infrastructure schemes in the North West region
- The NWRBU will act as 'one voice' for the North West region in our wider engagement with the rail industry e.g. Network Rail and Operators
- The NWRBU will be inclusive, strongly representing and advocating for the needs of all parts of the North West region
- The NWRBU will have governance arrangements that are inclusive and allowing a strong voice for all parts of the North West region

Similarly, our support is also based upon our current understanding of the anticipated commercial and management arrangements, including:

- The NWRBU will be enabled through a formal agreement between its members (which will be developed and entered into following the proposal's approval), including clear governance and management arrangements
- The NWRBU will formally meet periodically (aligned with TfN / RNP's governance) with clear Terms of Reference to be developed
- The NWRBU will be resourced by member organisations, with centrally appointed NWRBU manager(s) to manage governance and interactions with TfN, RNP and industry partners e.g. TOCs and Network Rail
- The NWRBU will be embedded into TfN and RNP processes to facilitate effective collaboration, e.g. dedicated resources, sharing of data, IT systems integration (where feasible), and alignment of governance / reporting
- There is no formal transfer of risk, responsibility or accountability as all NWRBU members are already members of the RNP Partnership Agreement. The NWRBU will feed into existing RNP governance arrangements. It is therefore assumed there will be no change to existing governance or decision making powers (including voting rights)
- All TfN and RNP responsibilities, accountabilities and duties remain as today

We look forward to continuing to work with you on the proposals and to develop a collective agreement between all NWRBU members, so that we can deliver positive outcomes for the region during 2023 and beyond.

Yours sincerely



Phil Durnell
Director of Highways and Transport
Lancashire County Council



Cheshire West & Chester Council

Simon Elliott
Transport for Greater Manchester
2 Piccadilly Place
Manchester
M1 3BG

Cheshire West & Chester Council
The Portal, Wellington Road,
Ellesmere Port,
CH65 0BA
Phone number: 0300 123 8123

25th January 2023

RE: North West Regional Business Unit – Cheshire West and Chester Council Letter of Support

Dear Simon,

Further to positive discussions held to date on the establishment of a North West Regional Business Unit (NWRBU) created under the existing Rail North Partnership (RNP) framework, we are pleased to confirm our support in principal. We understand that Transport for Greater Manchester, on behalf of the local authorities and Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs) across the North West of England, are submitting a formal proposal to the RNP Board requesting approval to establish the NWRBU and that this letter will be included in the proposal to demonstrate our support.

Our support is based on our current understanding of the role and purpose of NWRBU, namely:

- The NWRBU will consist of up to 12 local authorities and MCAs across the North West of England
- The NWRBU's purpose is to support TfN and RNP in executing their formal duties, with a specific focus on providing specialist insight, advice and added value across the North West region
- The NWRBU is to act as influential / key partner across NW region, working within the framework of the TfN / DfT Partnership Agreement
- The NWRBU will provide cohesive, constructive, strategic and tactical/operational advice to both TfN and RNP on management of rail contracts (TPE and NTL) and infrastructure schemes in the NW region
- The NWRBU will act as 'one voice' for the NW region in our wider engagement with rail industry e.g. NR and Operators

Similarly, our support is also based upon our current understanding of the anticipated commercial and management arrangements, including:

- The NWRBU will be enabled through a formal agreement between its members (which will be developed and entered into following approval of the proposal), including clear governance and management arrangements.
- The NWRBU will formally meet periodically (aligned with TfN / RNP's governance) with clear Terms of Reference to be developed
- The NWRBU will be resourced by member organisations, with centrally appointed NWRBU manager(s) to manage governance and interactions with TfN, RNP and industry partners e.g. TOCs, NR
- The NWRBU will be embedded into TfN and RNP processes to facilitate effective collaboration, e.g. dedicated resources, sharing of data, IT systems integration (where feasible), and alignment of governance / reporting
- There is no formal transfer of risk, responsibility or accountability as all NWRBU members are already members of the RNP Partnership Agreement. The NWRBU will feed into existing RNP governance arrangements. It is therefore assumed there is no change to existing governance or decision making powers (including voting rights).
- All TfN and RNP responsibilities, accountabilities and duties remain as today

Subject to the proposal being approved by at the RNP Board, we intend to become a member of the NWRBU and enter into an agreement between NWRBU members. We look forward to working with you on this, the establishment of the NWRBU, and on delivering positive outcomes for the region during 2023 and beyond.



Cheshire West & Chester Council

Kind Regards,



Rose McArthur
Director of Transport & Highways
Cheshire West and Chester Council



Meeting:	Rail North Committee Consultation Call
Subject:	Transport for the North Rail Business Plan and Member Contributions 2023/24
Authors:	Caroline Young, Partnership and Programme Manager David Hoggarth, Head of Strategic Rail
Sponsor:	Darren Oldham, Rail and Roads Director
Meeting Date:	Wednesday 22 February 2023

1. Purpose of the Report:

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the Strategic Rail elements of the draft Transport for the North Business Plan 2023/24 and the Department for Transport's funding allocation 2023/24 and 2024/25.
- 1.2 This report also provides an update on the 2023/24 Member Contribution payment.

2. Recommendations:

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee endorses the approach set out in the report to the 2023/24 draft Rail Business Plan.
- 2.2 It is recommended that the Committee notes the Department for Transport funding allocation for 2023/24 and 2024/25.
- 2.3 It is recommended that the Committee approves the approach to the 2023/24 Member Contributions as outlined in this report.

3. Main Issues:

- 3.1 The Transport for the North 2022/23 Business Plan was set against a backdrop of a significantly reduced budget, whole organisational restructure, and emergence from the Covid 19 pandemic.
- 3.2 The Business Plan focussed on Transport for the North's core roles and responsibilities and to push for better outcomes for passengers and investment in the rail network.
- 3.3 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were developed as part of the Business Plan and overall good progress is being made to deliver them by 31 March 2023, including:
- A Stakeholder Forum for the Trans-Pennine Route Upgrade has been established and is Chaired by Transport for the North;
 - A report will be presented to the Transport for the North Board on 23 March 2023 seeking agreement to endorse the formal Northern Powerhouse Rail Sponsor Agreement between Department for Transport and Transport for the North; and
 - Work is progressing to develop a detailed proposals of how rail reform should be implemented in the North.

Proposed Priorities for 2023/24

- 3.4 Transport for the North's Rail Team has two core functions:
- Providing Transport for the North's direction to the Rail North Partnership to meet the terms of the Partnership Agreement including consultation with partner authorities; and

- Overseeing delivery of the Rail Strategy element of the Strategic Transport Plan including the rail investment programme and Statutory Advice to the Secretary of State relating to rail investment including NPR.
- 3.5 On 18 January 2023 the Department for Transport wrote to Transport for the North and outlined the 2023/24 and 2024/25 funding settlement.
- 3.6 The core funding allocation is £6.5 million for each of the next two financial years (2023/24 and 2024/25) to ensure that Transport for the North can continue to fulfil its statutory functions.
- 3.7 In addition, Department for Transport will provide an additional £710,000 for both 2023/24 and 2024/25 to allow Transport for the North to support the development of wider Subnational Transport Bodies and Local Transport Authorities capacity and capability.
- 3.8 As in previous years, this report provides an opportunity for the Rail North Committee to comment and shape relevant and rail aspects of the draft Business Plan prior to being approved by Transport for the North Board at the 23 March 2023 meeting.
- 3.9 The proposed priorities of the Rail Business Plan for 2023/24 are:
- a) Northern Powerhouse Rail Co-Sponsorship & HS2
Influencing and shaping the future arrangements to benefit the North, support the development of the Strategic Outline Business Case and carrying out partner engagement.
 - b) TRU Stakeholder Forum
Develop insight and evidence to the proposals and to influence and steer the outcomes to benefit the North.
 - c) Strategic Transport Plan (Rail elements)
Publish the Strategic Rail report and support consultation on the rail aspects of the Strategic Transport Plan and ensure that they reflect the wider Transport for the North Strategic Transport Plan objectives.
 - d) East Coast Mainline Upgrade
Continue to press for a seat on the East Coast Mainline Programme Board and influence and steer the outcomes to benefit the North, including East – West connectivity to meet the requirements of partners and stakeholders.
 - e) Transport for the North Investment Programme
To develop the investment priorities following consultation on the Strategic Transport Plan and influence and steer investment priorities to provide better connectivity, capacity, and resilience of services throughout the North.
 - f) Manchester Task Force
Influence and steer investment priorities in the North to provide better connectivity, capacity, and resilience of services including input into business cases for Manchester Airport and central Manchester stations and provide updated Statutory Advice to Department for Transport on timetable and infrastructure options.
 - g) Integrated Rail Plan Leeds Area Study
Input into defining and agreement of the Board Term of Reference and provision of evidence for the Working Group to provide influence and advice on proposals.
 - h) Train Operator Business Plans 2024/25
To influence the Business Plans and reflect the aspirations of partner authorities and stakeholders and represent the views of the north. Provide support to Member input through Rail North Committee and Working Groups.

- i) Esk Valley Line Capacity increases
Provide project management support via a contract between Transport for the North and North Yorkshire County Council with regard to increasing the capacity and frequency of services on the Esk Valley Line.
- j) Resilience and Reliability Delivery Plan
To develop priority initiatives which will increase resilience and reliability on priority routes to increase demand and connectivity, including developing feasibility studies and business cases.
- k) Connected Mobility
Provide support to partners in developing initiatives and sharing best practice to provide the North with an integrated ticketing system and bring together member Authority aspirations for digital innovation in transport.
- l) Future timetables
Ensure that partner authorities have input into proposed timetabled service changes and understand the impact of such changes and consult with Rail North Committee on future proposed timetables from TransPennine Express and Northern.
- m) Rail Reform
Develop and agree a reform proposition to embed Transport for the North's role within Great British Railways as a key strategic partner the unified voice for northern authorities and the business community, acting as the link between local devolution, multi-modal integration, Local Enterprise Partnerships and Great British Railway's regions.
- n) Transport for the North Stations Strategy
Publish and embed the strategy as part of 'Stations as a Place' and to influence the prioritisation of station facility improvements to bring all stations within the North up to a defined acceptable standard.

Resources

- 3.10 The approach to resource allocation follows the overall approach that Transport for the North is taking based on a continuation of resources in the current financial year and following the organisational wide restructure in 2022/23.
- 3.11 Transport for the North core budget funds 12 roles within the Strategic Rail Team in addition to modest external consultancy support and modest travel budget. These resources can support the activities set out in paragraph 3.9.

Member Contributions

- 3.12 Each financial year Transport for the North sets an appropriate level for Member contributions (as defined in Transport for the North's Franchise Management Agreement) from each of the Transport for the North Rail Authorities in respect of a Support Payment to specifically support Transport for the North operating costs.
- 3.13 It is proposed to continue with the approach used in previous years which will be the current year (2022/23) contributions with the appropriate indexation applied. Lead officers have been advised in writing of the financial contributions proposed.
- 3.14 In previous years 'in kind' contributions (or Additional Contributions) have been permitted in the form of staff time (for example Local Transport Authority staff working on specific projects or programmes on behalf of Transport for the North). The proposed approach is to continue the option of 'in kind' contributions.

4. Corporate Considerations

4.1 *Financial Implications*

The financial implications are set out in this report and annual Member Contribution payments are used to support the operating costs of Transport for the North.

4.2 **Resource Implications**

There are no direct resourcing implications as a result of this report.

4.3 **Legal Implications**

There are no apparent legal implications arising other than raised within the report.

4.4 **Risk Management and Key Issues**

This paper does not require a risk assessment however Transport for the North are actively managing a number of corporate risks in relation to rail.

4.5 **Environmental Implications**

This report does not constitute or influence a plan or programme which sets the framework for future development consents of projects listed in the EIA Directive and therefore does stimulate the need for SEA or EIA. Any infrastructure proposals to improve the capacity and reliability of the system will be subject to EIA Screening, conducted by Network Rail, or scheme Promotor as part of the consenting process.

4.6 **Equality and Diversity**

A full impact assessment has not been carried out because it is not relevant to the type of work referenced.

4.7 **Consultations**

Consultations will be carried out by the appropriate body in development of any works outlined in the Transport for the North Rail Business Plan.

5. **Background Papers**

5.1 There are no background papers to this report.

6. **Appendices**

6.1 There are no appendices to this report.

Glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used (if applicable)

a) TPE	TransPennine Express
b) NPR	Northern Powerhouse Rail
c) ECML	East Coast Main Line
d) IRP	Integrated Rail Plan

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