

Transport for the North Board Minutes

Wednesday 29 July 2020
Microsoft Teams

Present:

John Cridland (Chairman)

Attendee

Cllr Phil Riley
Cllr Craig Browne
Cllr Gittins
Cllr Keith Little
Mayor Andy Burnham

Cllr Daren Hale
Michael Green
Mayor Steve Rotheram
Cllr Graeme Miller
Cllr Nick Forbes
Cllr Don Mackenzie
Mayor Dan Jarvis
Cllr Hans Mundry
Cllr Judith Blake

Local Authority

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

Rail North Authorities Attendees

Councillor Trevor Ainsworth
Councillor Chris Brewis

Derbyshire
Lincolnshire

Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Attendees

Graeme Bristow
Steve Curl
Stephen Parnaby
Mark Rawstron
Mark Roberts
Andrew Hodgson
Matthew Lamb
Peter Kennan

Cheshire & Warrington LEP
Cumbria LEP
Hull & Humber LEP
Lancashire LEP
Leeds LEP
North East LEP
North Yorkshire LEP
Sheffield City Region LEP

Partners in Attendance:

Margaret Jackson	DfT
John Hall	DfT
Russ MacMillan	DfT
Lorna Pimlott	HS2
Sir Peter Hendy	Network Rail
Graham Botham	Network Rail

Officers in Attendance:

Name	Job Title
Barry White	Chief Executive
Gary Rich	Democratic Services Officer
Maria Unwin	Executive Assistant
Iain Craven	Finance Director
Julie Openshaw	Head of Legal
Rosemary Lyon	Legal and Democratic Services Officer
James Lyon	Legal Assistant
Jeremy Acklam	IST Director
Peter Molyneux	Major Roads Director
Owen Wilson	Major Roads Strategy Manager
Tim Wood	Northern Powerhouse Rail Director
David Hughes	Programme and Strategy Director
Deborah Dimock	Solicitor
David Hoggarth	Strategic Rail Director

Item No: Item

1. Welcome & Apologies

- 1.1 The Chairman welcomed Members and apologies were received from Cllr Waltham, Cllr Hannigan and Cllr Swinburn.

The Chairman highlighted the excellent conversation that had been had earlier at the Partnership Board on the Secretary of State's announcements the previous week.

He explained that there was consensus that Members believe these announcements are encouraging and will provide opportunities for the North, however there are still details that are unknown. Members also agreed that a distinctive contribution for Transport for the North as a Board and an organisation needs to be mapped going forward in these revised arrangements. He further explained that he together with the Chief Executive and leading Members of the Board they will be progressing this work.

- 1.2 Cllr Hale shared his disappointment that Hull was not included in any of the Secretary of State's announcements. He highlighted the fact that Hull and the East Coast is an area where quick wins can be achieved and requested that the Transport for the North Board ensure that they are not forgotten in the main settlement.

2. Declarations of Interest

- 2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Transport for the North Board held on 11 June 2020 were considered.
- 3.2 Peter Kennan referred to minute 4.11. He explained that the LEPs are not represented on the Northern Expert Panel and nor will they be involved in any of the Boards that will be set up following the Secretary of State's announcements. He therefore requested that the LEPs be fully consulted going forward.

The Chairman re-iterated his commitment to involving the LEPs wherever possible and asked that the Chief Executive be in touch with him to discuss this further.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the Transport for the North Board held on 11 June 2020 be approved as a correct record.

4. Governance Report

- 4.1 The Governance report was received by Members. The Solicitor explained that as this is the Annual Meeting a number of Governance items needed to be addressed.

4.2 Election of the Transport for the North Chairman

Cllr Hale proposed John Cridland to be elected as Chairman of the Board and Cllr Little seconded the nomination. There were no further nominations.

The Chairman thanked Members for their continued support.

4.3 Election of the Majority and Minority Party Vice Chairs

Cllr Louise Gittins was nominated by Cllr Blake and seconded by Cllr Little.

The election of the minority party Vice Chair was deferred until the following meeting.

4.4 **Co-option of LEP Members**

Members were then asked to approve the co-option of LEP members. The Solicitor explained that due to changes in the constitution last year there is now no longer a need to co-opt LEP members individually.

4.5 **Virtual Meetings**

Members were asked to approve the new rules for virtual meetings.

4.6 **Rail North Committee Terms of Reference**

Members were asked to approve the Terms of Reference for the Rail North Committee.

Mayor Burnham suggested that there may be a need to make an adjustment to the Rail North Partnership Agreement as this needs to enshrine the new arrangements once they have been agreed.

4.7 **Constitutional Changes**

The Solicitor highlighted the proposed changes to the Constitution outlined in the report.

Cllr Hale brought to the attention of Members the possible split within the Humber Authorities and highlighted the fact that neither of the North Humber Authorities are represented on the Rail North Committees and wondered how any changes would be implemented.

The Chairman highlighted the fact that there is precedence for this in the North East and explained that arrangements will be made in consultation with the affected authorities and a proposal will then be brought back.

4.8 **Whistleblowing Policy**

The Solicitor explained that the policy has been reviewed during the year and revised to reflect current legislation. The Trade Unions have also been consulted.

4.9 **Calendar of Meetings**

Cllr Blake requested that Transport for the North meetings should avoid Local Government Association meetings.

Resolved:

- 1) That John Cridland be reappointed Chairman of the Transport for the North Board.
- 2) That Cllr Louise Gittins be reappointed as Majority Vice Chair of the Transport for the North Board.
- 3) That the appointment of a minority party Vice Chair be deferred to the September Board meeting.
- 4) That each new representative of the LEPs when notified to TfN shall be co-opted as a Co-opted Member of the Board without further reference to the Board.
- 5) That the Board approves the membership of the Committees of TfN as set out in the report.
- 6) That the Board approve the proposed New Procedure Rules and amendments to the Constitution to provide for virtual meetings.
- 7) That the Board approve the proposed amendments to the Terms of Reference of the Rail North Committee and that Mayor Burnham's suggestion be actioned.
- 8) That the Board approve the proposed amendments to the Constitution to enable future minor administrative changes to be made by the Monitoring Officer.
- 9) That the Board approve the adoption of a replacement Whistleblowing Policy.

5. Budget Revision 1

- 5.1 The report was received by Members and taken as read.

The Finance Director explained that there has been an underspend of £2 million in the first 3 months of the year, and this is mainly in IST. He also explained that as a result of Covid programmes have been impacted but anticipated that time can be made up once things begin moving again.

- 5.2 Cllr Blake raised the issue of resources for Blake Jones. She was unsure as to whether there was a budget line for this work. She also stated that Minister Chris Heaton Harris MP is very supportive of this work. The Finance Director stated that this is something that he would look into.

- 5.3 Cllr Miller raised the issue of IST in the North East and whether TfN are able to work with the DfT in order to unlock the business case.

The Finance Director explained that this has been on the agenda for the DfT's Investment, Projects and Delivery Committee (IPDC) twice and hasn't yet been discussed and is awaiting Departmental approvals.

The Finance Director explained that someone from the IST team will get back to Cllr Miller with the answer.

Resolved:

- 1) That the report be noted
- 2) That the budget be approved

6. Corporate Risk Register

- 6.1 The report was received by Members and taken as read. The Finance Director then highlighted key points within the report.

The Finance Director explained that changes have been made to the risk register since the 16 July when Audit & Governance met, these include a number of new risks being added as a result of Covid 19, and changes to the IST Programme and a number of associated risks linked to this. There is also a level of risk associated with the recent announcements from the Secretary of State.

He further explained that the risk profile of TfN has increased over the last six months and that there are limited actions that can be taken to mitigate against these risks.

- 6.2 Mayor Burnham enquired about the Officer Risk Assessment group which he has been informed has not met for over a year. He explained that the work of a group such as this is crucial to TfN as it would help to raise the profile of the organisation. He explained that TfN are closer to the railways of the North and are the best placed to highlight any issues and risks to services.

He requested that this group be reconvened and be given a higher status, he added that the group needs to be a core part of Transport for the North and the unique remit it has over the railways in the North. He explained the group would be able to apply a level of surveillance and vigilance that the Department for Transport and the Northern Transport Acceleration Council are unable to do.

He explained that by having a strong risk assessment group looking out for potential disruptions to service continuity will be vital.

Cllr Gittins supported Mayor Burnham's comments, she highlighted the current number of red risks on the risk register and believed that such a group will be vital in managing these.

The Chairman asked for the Chief Executive to contact Mayor Burnham to discuss this issue further.

- 6.3 Highlighting the risks around Covid 19 Peter Kennan suggested that risks on the Health and Wellbeing of Staff and IT Security should also be included.

Resolved:

That the report be noted, and the Risk Register approved.

7. Monthly Operating Report

- 7.1 The report was received by Members and taken as read.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

8. Transpennine Route Upgrade

- 8.1 Members received the Transpennine Route Upgrade report from the Strategic Rail Director and the report was taken as read. Members were then provided with an update from Mr. Russ MacMillan, the Department for Transport's (DfT's) Project Director.

- 8.2 Mr. MacMillan informed Members that this is the main York, Leeds, Manchester Route via Huddersfield that hasn't been significantly upgraded since the 1970s. It suffers from overcrowding and poor reliability as a result of it being a two-track railway with a mix of fast, slow and freight traffic on it.

He explained that the scheme is focused on reliability and capacity with an emphasis on improving the experience of passengers and will be relatively immune to Covid demand scenarios. He further explained that currently this part of the railway can cause delays to spread East to West. Adding additional tracks in the middle of the route will allow for performance issues in the East and West of the country to be isolated.

Mr. MacMillan then highlighted the objectives of the scheme to Members. He explained that as a result of infrastructure upgrades the line will be able to run eight trains an hour from six. Doubling the track for the significantly congested section in the middle will deliver significant performance and capacity improvements in that area. The scheme also allows for some modest cuts in journey time.

He also highlighted the fact that there would be improved accessibility with approximately another 25% of stations on the route to become fully step free. Members were also provided with the information on the current position regarding electrification of the project.

Members were then informed that DfT is now developing a longer list of options is now being developed beyond the confirmed programme, including full electrification and options for freight.

Mr. MacMillan looked at the impact that the £589 million announcement will have. He explained that elements of the scheme core to all options would move into the design process, thus enabling construction works. This will allow the first benefit from the scheme to be delivered as early as 2024. The money will also help fund the significant design and development work required to develop the additional options.

- 8.3 Cllr Miller expressed disappointment that there was no reference as to what the DfT is doing to bring funding forward for the East Coast Mainline.
- 8.4 Mayor Burnham welcomed the fact that the DfT are now developing full electrification and plans for enhanced freight options. He highlighted that this reflected what the Transport for the North Board had been calling for. In relation to the point made by Mr. MacMillan on the speed of delivery, Mayor Burnham stated that the North will always opt for ambition over speed. He requested clarity as to who will make the decision on the matter of whether it would be speed or ambition that is more important and the role that the Transport for the North Board will play in making that decision.
- 8.5 Cllr Hale requested that Hull and Liverpool are not forgotten when decisions are made.
- 8.6 Cllr Blake asked for a better understanding about the technology that is going to be used in order to achieve full electrification.

Cllr Blake expressed disappointment that there was not greater focus on passengers. As we begin to see an increase in passenger numbers and this work will lead to major disruption. Cllr Blake therefore expressed the need for a good communications plan. She also highlighted the fact that not all the stations along the route would be accessible.

- 8.7 Cllr Green highlighted the East to West line running between Lancashire and Yorkshire and how this line has suffered over the years and how investment is required in it in order to help with regeneration in East Lancashire.
- 8.8 In response to Members questions Mr. MacMillan stated that in the long term they are looking to achieve both speed and ambition. He further explained that the new Northern Transport Acceleration Council will be overseeing the project. He also explained that on the issue of freight it is essential that a regional view is taken on this matter. He stated that the enhanced options included plans to make all stations step free.

Resolved:

That the report and update be noted.

9. Rail North Committee Feedback

- 9.1 Members received an update from the Strategic Rail Director following the meeting on 14 July.

The Strategic Rail Director highlighted the key points discussed at the meeting. In relation to the operational issues Members were informed that the introduction of the July timetable had gone well and performance remains high. Discussions are now turning to how this can be maintained and built upon as the timetable is built back.

The Strategic Rail Director also explained that Members discussed low confidence in using rail currently. He explained that the messaging from the operators has now changed and people can now use public transport. He also updated Members that there has been a resetting of the relationship with both operators, though there are challenges ahead with regards to costs and funding.

- 9.2 Cllr Blake informed Members that she has now met with the Minister Chris Heaton-Harris MP where a variety of topics were discussed including; delays to the Williams Review, devolution and public transport post Covid 19. She explained that the Minister is committed to devolution and that the conversation needs to continue on this. She also requested that the Minister be invited to the next meeting.
- 9.3 Mayor Burnham thanked members of the Committee and board in maintaining a steadfast position on the Central Manchester capacity issue. He also commented on the possibility of platforms 15 and 16 at Manchester Piccadilly being taken off the table. Mayor Burnham stated that he wouldn't like to see this happen unless and until a suitable alternative is in place.

Resolved:

That the update be noted.

10. Investment Programme Update

- 10.1 The Investment Programme update was received from the Major Roads Director and the report was taken as read.
- 10.2 Mayor Jarvis commented how he was particularly pleased to see the inclusion of the Doncaster-Sheffield rail link at the airport included.

Resolved:

That the report be noted, and the proposals be endorsed.

11. Economic Recovery Plan Proposals

- 11.1 Members received the report of the Major Roads Director which was taken as read.
- 11.2 The Major Roads Strategy Manager thanked Officers from constituent authorities for their support during this work.
- 11.3 Cllr Miller raised the issue of the A693 Stanley Bypass scheme which was not included in the proposal due to insufficient information. He explained that this scheme is advanced and can be delivered within 24 months if the funding is available and requested that it be revisited due to the economic and regeneration benefits it will provide for the area.
- 11.4 The Chairman stated that this matter would be picked up and an Officer will return to him on this.
- 11.5 Mayor Jarvis highlighted the fact that light rail had not been included in the report specifically highlighting the omission of Super Tram in the Sheffield region.

Resolved:

- 1) That the report be noted
- 2) That the proposals be endorsed

12. Northern Transport Charter

- 12.1 Members received the report of the Strategy and Programme Director which was taken as read. Cllr Blake then updated Members on the progress of the work.
- 12.2 Cllr Blake referred to the Northern Transport Investment Committee and the role it will play. She emphasised her view that it should not be a decision making body but observed that this is still to be confirmed. She explained that the work is progressing well and requested a communications plan in order for the work to be publicised.

Resolved:

- 1) That the work undertaken to date to develop the Northern Transport Charter, which confirms the key principles of the original work and the need for a devolved Northern budget, be noted.
- 2) That the work on NTC has now reached a natural conclusion and should now form part of TfN's Spending Review submission setting out the case for further powers and devolved funding.

- 3) That TfN's intention to now finalise a report for use in early September be noted – with the detailed draft to be agreed with members in August.

13. Exclusion of Press and Public

RESOLVED: That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business because it is likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, there will be disclosure of confidential information as defined in Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and/or exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)

14. Part 2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The part 2 minutes of the meeting held on 11 June 2020 were considered and their accuracy as a correct record confirmed.

Resolved:

That the private minutes of the meeting held on 11 June 2020 be approved as a true and accurate record.