

Rail North Committee Minutes

**Tuesday 12 January 2021
MS Teams**

Present:

Attendee

CLlr Liam Robinson
CLlr Karen Shore
CLlr Chris Brewis
CLlr Richard Hannigan
CLlr Keith Little
CLlr Carl Marshall
CLlr Don Mackenzie
Mayor Dan Jarvis
CLlr Heather Scott
CLlr Judith Blake

Regional Group

Liverpool City Region;
Cheshire & the Potteries;
East Midlands Authorities;
Humber Authorities;
Lancashire and Cumbria;
North East Authorities;
North Yorkshire;
Sheffield City Region;
Tees Valley Combined Authority;
West Yorkshire and York;

Partners in Attendance:

Bob Morris
Tobyn Hughes
Phil James
Rob Warnes
Jerry Farquharson

Greater Manchester
North East
Network Rail
Northern Rail
TPE

Officers in Attendance:

Name

Gary Rich
Dawn Madin
Jim Bamford
Julie Openshaw
Adam Timewell
Rosemary Lyon
Salim Patel
Gary Bogan
Deborah Dimock
David Hoggarth

Job Title

Democratic Services Officer
Director of Business Capabilities
Head of Investment Planning
Head of Legal
Head of Rail Service Outputs
Legal and Democratic Services Officer
Programme Manager - Rail North
Rail North Partnership Director
Solicitor
Strategic Rail Director

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

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from Mayor Burnham.

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 held on 21 October 2020 were considered and their accuracy as a correct record confirmed. There were no issues arising from the minutes.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 October be approved as a true and accurate record.

4. Rail Reform Matters

- 4.1 Members received the report from the Strategic Rail Director who highlighted the key points in the report. Following this Members were able to make comments and ask questions.

The Strategic Rail Director explained that the report picks up the submissions to the Williams Review setting out the ambition for rail reform and further devolution in the North. He further explained that the report is about developing a response to the White Paper and highlighted a number of opportunities, including strengthening the provisions in the existing Rail North Partnership particularly around making greater use of regional business units, and he highlighted the model in the North East. He also highlighted the need to simplify the fares and ticketing offer as well as the need to build stronger relationships with Network Rail.

Members were informed that if the report is endorsed work will take place with partners to develop a strong response when the White Paper is published.

- 4.2 Cllr Marshall agreed that elected Leaders from across the North need to be involved in any decisions that affect the North. He referenced the North East Rail Management Unit and requested that the committee support this due to the opportunities that it will present.

Members supported the comments of Cllr Marshall.

- 4.3 The Chair reiterated the importance of having a strong response to the Williams Review/ White Paper. He stressed that no one would tolerate a situation where rail decisions in the North are being made in Whitehall.

Resolved:

- 1) That the report be noted
- 2) That the next steps in the report be endorsed.

5. Update on Operational Rail Issues

- 5.1 Members received the report of the Head of Rail Service Outputs. He outlined the key points in the report following which Members were able to ask questions and make comments.

The Head of Rail Service Outputs requested feedback from Members on the set of principles developed to guide the industry on the current resource uncertainty. He also requested Members support for the North East in promoting the retention of two TransPennine Express trains per hour north of Darlington on the anticipated East Coast Mainline consultation.

He explained that due to lockdown resource availability continues to be a challenge. Operators are looking to make changes over the next few weeks in order to provide deliverable resilient timetables that meet the need of the public whilst also being able to step services back up quickly when required.

- 5.2 Mr. Rob Warnes explained that Northern are replanning their timetables in order to deliver a reliable and resilient service during lockdown with a reduced available workforce. He highlighted the changes to the timetable for an initial four-week period and explained that the new timetable would be available on their website later in the week.
- 5.3 Mr. Jerry Farquharson explained that TPE were not amending their timetables but were readying services to step back up when required.
- 5.4 Mr. Phil James explained that they have been working with train planning colleagues to facilitate the amended timetables. He explained that Network Rail were focusing on assuring themselves that Covid secure locations are fit for purpose including stations. He explained that lateral flow tests were being introduced enabling them to manage attendance at work for staff in critical locations.

- 5.5 The Chair thanked the operators and Network Rail for their hard work during these challenging times and asked for the Committee's thanks to be passed on to their frontline staff.

Resolved:

- 1) That the report and the updates be noted
- 2) That the committee is asked to support the North East in promoting the retention of 2 trains per hour on TPE's North East services in the anticipated East Coast Main Line consultation.

6. Planning for the Future

- 6.1 Members received the Planning for the Future report and the Strategic Rail Director then highlighted the key points in the report. He explained that the report outlines a roadmap to recovery following the pandemic and how public confidence in using trains can be rebuilt. He also highlighted the six core themes outlined in the report.
- 6.2 Cllr Marshall highlighted the importance of the role that rail will play as we come out of the pandemic. He then went on to stress that the Government needed to resource the proposed infrastructure projects in order to help with the recovery and stressed that TfN need to continue with this ask of Government. He emphasised that the role of the rail industry for the recovery will be vital.
- 6.3 Cllr Blake highlighted the importance of local knowledge and stated that it needs to be continued to be heard and be at the forefront of what will be done. She stated that the DfT need to take seriously the need for a flexible ticketing model and that there are good packages.

Resolved:

- 1) That the Committee endorse the 'roadmap to recovery'.
- 2) That the Committee note the progress on the business plan for the upcoming financial year.
- 3) That the Committee endorses the proposed forward plan set out in Appendix 1.

7. Exclusion of the 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)

8. Private Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- 8.1 The private minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2020 were considered and their accuracy as a correct record confirmed. There were no issues arising from the minutes.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 October be approved as a true and accurate record.

9. Manchester Recovery Task Force

- 9.1 The report on the Manchester Recovery Task Force was received by Members. They were then invited to ask questions and make comments on the update.

Resolved:

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That the discussed recommendations be agreed.

10. Update on matters reserved to the Secretary of State

- 10.1 The report on Matter Reserved for the Secretary of State was received by Members. They were then invited to ask questions and make comments on the update.

Resolved:

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That the discussed recommendations be agreed.

11. Infrastructure Investment: Manchester Recovery Task Force

- 11.1 The report on Infrastructure Investment in Central Manchester was received by Members. They were then invited to ask questions and make comments on the update.

Resolved:

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That the discussed recommendations be agreed.