

Rail North Committee

Subject: Priorities for Future Rail Services

Author: Salim Patel, Programme Manager

Sponsor: David Hoggarth

Meeting Date: 25 March 2021

1. Purpose of the Report:

- 1.1 To update the Committee on the following workstreams:
- The Roadmap to Recovery;
 - The emerging Decarbonisation Strategy; and
 - The Manchester Recovery Task Force Consultation.
- 1.2 To set out the next steps for each of the above workstreams.

2. Executive Summary:

- 2.1 At the last Committee meeting, Transport for the North presented its roadmap to recovery from the pandemic. This outlined a five-year plan to rebuild rail demand and markets based around six key themes with a focus on the recovery on demand and sustainability. The report provides an update on progress on the recovery plan.
- 2.2 Transport for the North has drafted a Decarbonisation Strategy that is to be presented to Transport for the North Board in March 2021. It states that "To achieve a near-zero emissions surface transport network in the North by 2045, there must be a clear understanding of the policies and measures required to bridge the gap between future emissions projections and future emissions targets".

Carbon emissions from rail are low (less than 1% UK annual greenhouse emissions), but nevertheless the industry must do all it can to lead the way in providing carbon neutral transport for the public. Modal shift from road to rail will be biggest contributor to reducing carbon emissions, therefore this will be a key area of focus.

Rail has a significant role to play and targeted workstreams include:

- Supporting the Transpennine Route upgrade to electrify the core Leeds-Manchester route;

- Working with the industry to develop a comprehensive rolling programme of electrification across the North;
- Maximising the benefit of existing rolling stock – particularly new bi-mode trains than can increase the use of electric power rather than diesel;
- Working with operators on a rolling stock strategy to replace non-compliant vehicles and take advantage of the electrified parts of the network; and
- Supporting a strategy for non-electrified routes including trials of other technology such as hydrogen and battery power.

2.3 The Manchester Recovery Task Force Consultation (for the May 2022 timetable) was published on 14 January 2021 and closed on 10 March 2021. Responses are now being reviewed against the technical analysis work that been undertaken in parallel on the 3 timetable options. A Rail North Committee meeting to consider a recommendation alongside the evidence has been arranged for 16 April 2021.

3. Roadmap to Recovery

3.1 The Roadmap to Recovery has been designed to build back demand and n confidence in the rail network over five years. The immediate action plan for this year focusses working with Train Operators and the Department for Transport to deliver some key initiatives:

- Marketing to promote rail as the mode of choice that is safe, clean, user-friendly and punctual;
- Delivering a railway that is reliable;
- Discounted leisure travel and family-friendly tickets to promote the use of rail across generations, and to stimulate the local economy and staycation market;
- Accelerated delivery of flexible season tickets and other products to reflect new ways of working at commuting;
- Working with the Department for Transport and operators to consider removing operator specific tickets to spread demand;
- Maintaining funding for platform extensions as space and social distancing becomes more of a passenger expectation; and
- Transport for the North and partners will also work in partnership with train operators to deliver customer improvements at stations including seeking opportunities from new funding streams such as the Levelling up fund.

3.2 Members are asked to consider the above accelerated priorities and identify any additional suggestions.

4. Emerging Decarbonisation Strategy

- 4.1 Air quality remains a significant challenge in many areas across the UK and plans must look to reduce air pollution impacts from rail wherever possible. Action is being taken across all modes of transport to reduce harmful emissions.
- 4.2 Transport for the North's Long-Term Rail Strategy sets out the importance of "reducing greenhouse gas emissions and moving towards a sustainable transport system."
- 4.3 As part of this Transport for the North have drafted a Decarbonisation Strategy that is to be presented to Transport for the North Board in March 2021. It states that "To achieve a near-zero emissions surface transport network in the North by 2045, there must be a clear understanding of the policies and measures required to bridge the gap between future emissions projections and future emissions targets". Carbon emissions from rail are low (less than 1% UK annual greenhouse emissions), but nevertheless the industry must do all it can to lead the way in providing carbon neutral transport for the public.
- 4.4 The draft strategy emphasises the benefits of Zero Emission Vehicles (ZEV). For rail, route electrification is the most efficient way of reducing rail emissions in the long-term. Not only does it remove tailpipe emissions on those routes, but it supports the use of bi-mode trains on other routes. Overhead electrification also helps to improve rail journey times and reliability, making rail a more attractive mode of transport and encouraging mode shift. Building on Network Rail's Traction Network Decarbonisation Strategy, a regional plan should be formulated laying out the order and timing in which higher-density routes will be electrified and identifying routes where alternative technology is a permanent solution. The current rail fleet in the North is of mixed vintage. There is scope to develop a plan that cascades rolling stock as electrification develops to push out the worst polluters. Electric-only trains are a known quantity and low-risk, but other ZEV technologies (battery-electric, battery and hydrogen) will need further testing to understand their viability.
- 4.5 The draft strategy suggests the following short-term priorities for Transport for the North:
- Supporting our partners to attract testing and pilots of new low emission train technologies;
 - Identify appropriate routes for electrification; and
 - Work with Train Operating Companies (TOCs) and Freight Operating Companies (FOCs) to exploit operational efficiency opportunities.

-
- 4.6 Transport for the North is already working with industry partners to support and accelerate projects that work towards decarbonising the North's railways that is in line with the Traction Decarbonisation Network Strategy (TNDS) that has been published by Network Rail.
- 4.7 Projects that are being targeted include working with the industry as part of Manchester & North West Transformation Programme and the Network Rail electrification programmes in the East to develop and implement a rolling programme of electrification between now and 2040. A rolling programme is vital if delivery by 2040 is to be achieved as it is the most efficient method of delivering electrification, including developing a strong work bank for contractors.
- 4.8 It is important to note that other upgrade work should take place at the same time or prior to electrification, otherwise costs would be much higher in future where poles/lines would need to be dug up after installation to carry out works.
- 4.9 With regards to rolling stock, TPE has already introduced one bi-mode fleet and Northern plan to introduce their first bi-mode (diesel and electric) trains into service, with four units set to be deployed in March 2021 and two in May 2021. There is also scope for rolling stock that runs on battery/hydrogen power for use on lines where electrification is not suitable e.g. Lakes Line or Esk Valley line.
- 4.10 As the removal of diesel rolling is targeted for 2040, Transport for the North will be seeking to work with the industry and the Rail North Partnership to develop a strategy to replace diesel stock in the future. Trials for hydrogen and battery power have already commenced in parts of the country, however a strategic and programme approach will be required to ensure that future rolling stock decision making aligns with a future rolling stock strategy.

Our current approach includes the following workstreams:

- Supporting the Transpennine Route upgrade to electrify the core Leeds-Manchester route;
- Working with the industry to develop a comprehensive rolling programme of electrification across the North;
- Maximising the benefit of existing rolling stock – particularly new bi-mode trains than can increase the use of electric power rather than diesel;
- Working with operators on a rolling stock strategy to replace non-compliant vehicles and take advantage of the electrified parts of the network; and
- Supporting a strategy for non-electrified routes including trials of other technology such as hydrogen and battery power.

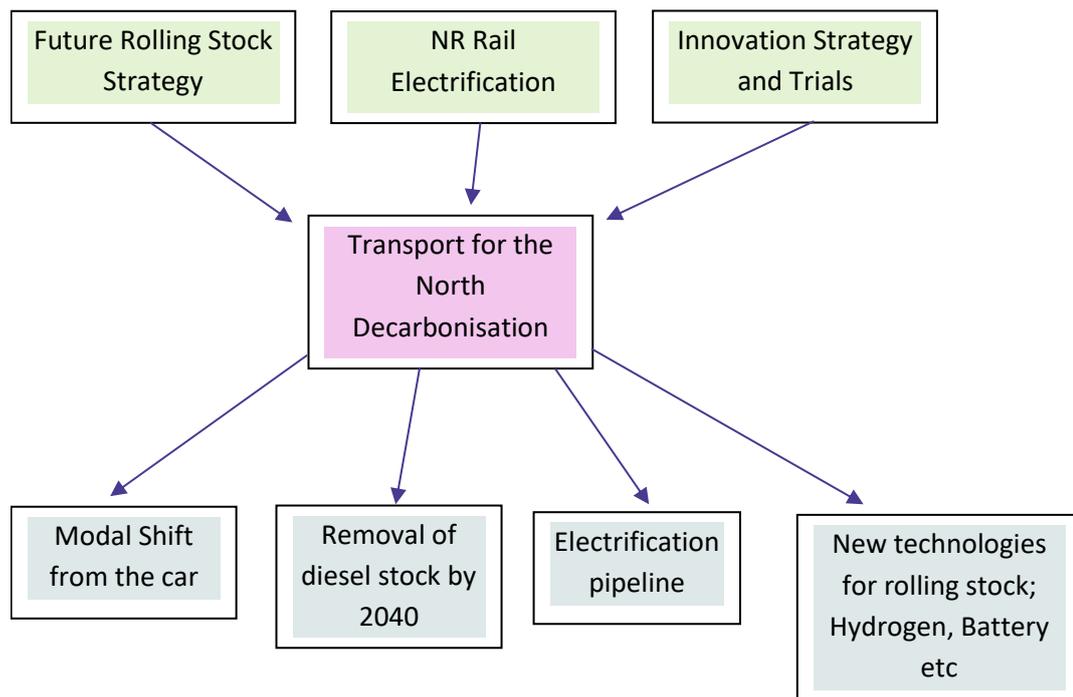


Figure 1: Approach to decarbonising the rail network

5. Manchester Recovery Task Force Consultation

- 5.1 The Manchester Recovery Taskforce (MRTF) continues to undertake technical analysis work on the three options following the close of the consultation on 10 March 2021. The task force is currently on target to provide a recommendation to its Board on 30 March 2021 on the preferred option and the evidence to support this.
- 5.2 If an agreement is reached by the Board on 30 March 2021 then this decision will be consulted with Officers before coming before Rail North Committee on 16 April 2021 for presentation and decision.
- 5.3 Concurrently, the Department for Transport will progress a similar process through their governance process. Finally, the proposed option will be subject to Treasury review in May/June 2021. Train operators will then undertake a further consultation on their detailed timetables proposals. The targeted implementation date for the timetable currently remains May 2022.

6. Recommendation:

- 6.1 The Committee is asked to note the progress on the three workstreams outlined above and provides any feedback.

List of Background Documents:

There are no background papers to this report.

Required Considerations

Equalities:

Age	Yes	No
Disability	Yes	No
Gender Reassignment	Yes	No
Pregnancy and Maternity	Yes	No
Race	Yes	No
Religion or Belief	Yes	No
Sex	Yes	No
Sexual Orientation	Yes	No

Consideration	Comment	Responsible Officer	Director
Equalities	A full Impact assessment has not been carried out progress is being reported and has not yet reached decision stage.	Salim Patel	David Hoggarth

Environment and Sustainability

Yes	
-----	--

Consideration	Comment	Responsible Officer	Director
Sustainability / Environment – including considerations regarding Active Travel and Wellbeing	This report outlines work from the Decarbonisation workstream and aligns with Transport for the North policy.	Salim Patel	David Hoggarth

Legal

Yes	No
-----	----

Consideration	Comment	Responsible Officer	Director
Legal	Transport for the North Legal Team has confirmed there are no legal implications.	Deborah Dimock	Julie Openshaw

Finance

Yes	No
-----	----

Consideration	Comment	Responsible Officer	Director
Finance	Transport for the North Finance Team has confirmed there are no financial implications.	Paul Kelly	Iain Craven

Resource

Yes	No
-----	----

Consideration	Comment	Responsible Officer	Director
Resource	Transport for the North HR Team has confirmed there are no resource implications.	Stephen Hipwell	Dawn Madin

Risk

Yes	No
-----	----

Consideration	Comment	Responsible Officer	Director
Risk	A risk assessment will be carried out when the workstream progresses further	Haddy Njie	Iain Craven

Consultation

Yes	No
-----	----

Consideration	Comment	Responsible Officer	Director
Consultation	A public consultation is has been undertaken for the Manchester recovery work.	Salim Patel	David Hoggarth