
Meeting:	Rail North Committee
Subject:	Manchester Task Force
Author:	Chris Mason, Interim Head of Investment Planning
Sponsor:	David Hoggarth, Strategic Rail Director
Meeting Date:	Tuesday 13 September 2022

1. Purpose of the Report:

- 1.1 This report is to provide Members of the Committee with an update on the work of the Manchester Task Force including the development and delivery of the next stage of the Blueprint, the programme of infrastructure enhancements and progress with delivery of the December 2022 timetable change. It also provides an update on the development of the programme governance by Network Rail.

2. Recommendations:

The Committee is asked to:

- 2.1 Note the update on delivery of the Blueprint that links infrastructure enhancements to service changes and the development by Network Rail of the strategic approach to development and delivery of the three 'tranches' of proposed infrastructure upgrades.
- 2.2 Note the progress on implementation of the December 2022 timetable.
- 2.3 Note the proposal to apply the option testing methodology developed by the Manchester Task Force (MTF) to the next main service change opportunity in 2024/25 and present the outcomes to the Committee to allow them to identify their service priorities.
- 2.4 Note the continued progress with development and delivery of the larger infrastructure upgrades identified in the Blueprint and Transport for the North's engagement with Network Rail at a senior level on further strengthening governance and coordination.

3. Main Issues:

Summary

- 3.1 The Manchester Task Force (including representatives from industry, DfT, Transport for the North and TfGM) is overseeing the work to address the congestion bottleneck in central Manchester. Building on the recent more collaborative approach, the remit and mandate of the Task Force have been extended to cover the longer-term strategy which includes:
- Implementation of the December 2022 timetable as an initial step to address service reliability issues;
 - development of the 'Blueprint' that links on-going infrastructure enhancements to delivery of the connectivity and capacity needed beyond that initial step;

- Work led by Network Rail on the range of infrastructure solutions to support the Blueprint arranged in three 'tranches' of work and;
 - Implementation of an option testing methodology developed for train service improvements facilitated by infrastructure delivery which will allow Transport for the North members to clearly articulate their priorities.
- 3.2 Preparation for the December 2022 timetable change is progressing well; lessons learned from May 2018 have been fully incorporated into the approach including the development of detailed contingency plans should the current Industrial Relations issues impact on preparations. The Task Force will provide a single, co-ordinated update for members at this and future meetings.
- 3.3 Following on from the December 2022 change, which is focussed on tackling performance, the work on Tranche 1 infrastructure enhancement schemes is well underway with a final investment (funding) decision expected early in 2023.
- 3.4 The next major service change opportunity beyond December 2022 will be in 2024/25 (resulting from the committed electrification schemes) for which it is proposed to apply the service option testing methodology developed by the Task Force and present the outcomes to the Committee to enable members to express priorities.
- 3.5 Tranche 2 works are mainly focussed on the Castlefield Corridor and include the re-building of Manchester Oxford Road Station (which also provides an opportunity to significantly improve the public realm in the area) and changes to the signalling to improve the operation of the corridor. There is now a clear industry view on the optimum design for the Manchester Oxford Road scheme and it is now progressing through the development and funding approval process.
- 3.6 Over the summer, a series of workshops has facilitated considerable progress on identifying and developing options for the Tranche 3 major infrastructure upgrades to deliver further service enhancements in the longer term and to understand the opportunities presented by digital signalling, which will be reflected in an update to the Blueprint.
- 3.7 Network Rail has responded to feedback from the Committee on the need for greater clarity on the overall infrastructure programme. This includes responding positively to the proposal for a single programme director, who would improve accountability and focus – including regular updates to the Committee.

The Manchester Programmes Narrative

- 3.8 Several large-scale infrastructure enhancement programmes are currently in development across Greater Manchester's rail network, specifically:
- Manchester and North West Transformation Programme (MNTP) - expected delivery across the 2020s/2030s;
 - Trans Pennine Route Upgrade (TRU) - expected delivery mid-2030s;
 - High-Speed 2 (HS2) - expected delivery across the 2030s;
 - Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) – expected delivery up to 2040; and
 - Integrated Rail Plan (IRP) - expected delivery beyond 2040.
- 3.9 Each programme addresses different requirements and objectives, for example, performance/capacity/journey time improvements on different major rail corridors or hubs. Combined, they deliver a series of 'configuration states' i.e. groupings of enhancements packaged according to their expected delivery dates that will facilitate different train service options across and through the Greater Manchester area at defined points in time.

- 3.10 As infrastructure development progresses greater clarity is reached on the infrastructure in the configuration states and the services they will facilitate. This enables dates to be identified for service enhancements and timetable change opportunities, which can be presented to the Committee. It should be noted that this work has been made possible by the ongoing collaboration of cross-industry stakeholders.
- 3.11 The infrastructure options to enhance capacity and performance across the Manchester area reflected in the Blueprint have been identified through the MNTP via industry workshops and engagement with stakeholders.
- 3.12 To date this has led to the identification of potential infrastructure interventions alongside the combinations required to deliver service enhancements in three stages or 'tranches':
- Tranche 1 - the smaller schemes including those that had the potential to be delivered quickly and could be considered 'quick wins' or 'no regrets' in that they would likely be beneficial in a variety of service scenarios;
 - Tranche 2 - remodelling of passenger and rail infrastructure to improve capacity at Oxford Road and Piccadilly stations; and
 - Tranche 3 - major enhancements such as upgrades of the signalling system and grade separation of major junctions ('flyovers') to remove conflicts between services.
- 3.13 Network Rail have been developing these infrastructure options and in parallel identifying which have a robust business case to suitably add value to services through Manchester. It is also important to understand when these interventions could be delivered and obstacles to delivery.
- 3.14 The options, particularly for the Tranche 3 package, have also been worked through to understand how they interface with the other large-scale infrastructure enhancement programmes across the North both from a constructability perspective (how they interface in space and time) and also ensuring the infrastructure is integrated with the other programmes and their outputs.
- 3.15 Network Rail are now developing a Manchester Programmes Narrative that identifies the different infrastructure programmes with their respective outputs and illustrates which combination of infrastructure enhancements deliver the configuration state opportunities shown in the Blueprint along with an indication of the development stage of each scheme. This includes a graphical representation of progress with the many infrastructure schemes in the MNTP in a comprehensive and easily digestible manner
- 3.16 The development of the cross-industry programme, coordinated by the MTF and DfT is now moving from being infrastructure led to become more output led and through this process Network Rail are narrowing down where resources and funding need to be focussed on the development of infrastructure options, which in turn will give more clarity to the programme. This will be done with consideration of the development and delivery of TRU in the shorter term but also in conjunction with HS2, NPR and IRP outputs in the longer term. Increasingly the outputs need to be considered as part of the whole system and not necessarily attributable to one programme.
- 3.17 This is a welcome development which DfT and Network Rail plan to form the basis for development of an overall strategy for the railways in Manchester from now up to the IRP as a piece of formal strategic advice, with the continued involvement of Transport for the North and affected Local Authorities.

- 3.18 The configuration states and timetable opportunities enabled when combined with the other infrastructure enhancement programmes in the area are:
- Configuration State Opportunity 1 - December 2022: delivery of a more robust timetable to address pre-Covid performance challenges;
 - Configuration State Opportunity 2 - Mid 2020s: enhanced passenger handling at key city centre stations. Potential timetable change options to improve performance across north Manchester and better connectivity to Salford Central station;
 - Configuration State Opportunity 3 - Late 2020s to early 2030s: longer trains facilitated on the Castlefield Corridor and to Manchester Airport. Continued performance enhancements through Central Manchester and across the Pennines. Increased capacity between Manchester and Leeds and Manchester and Liverpool. Options to re-design the pattern of services;
 - Configuration State Opportunity 4a - Mid 2030s to late 2030s: facilitation of more and longer trains in operation in south Manchester; and
 - Configuration State Opportunity 4b - Post IRP: new high-speed networks delivering journey time improvements and opportunities for released capacity on the conventional network, both to the south and east/west.

Delivery of the December 2022 timetable

- 3.19 The December 2022 timetable has been in the development and planning since the summer of 2020 following a recommendation from the Task Force and has been through a public consultation and several rounds of discussion and agreement with Transport for the North members. The overarching aim is to ensure a more reliable service whilst preserving as much connectivity as possible and catering for the expected demand as the post-pandemic recovery continues. This includes scrutiny through the national industry PMO for timetable change each month and through the MTF Board attended by Transport for the North and TfGM where readiness is discussed every two weeks. In addition, there are a series of readiness cross-industry 'deep dives'. A December 2022 timetable readiness session was held on 26 August 2022 between the Industry, DfT, RNP, & Transport for the North colleagues. A further detailed Industry readiness session was planned for the 5 September 2022.
- 3.20 From an infrastructure perspective, plans and mitigations are in place to deliver the platform extensions in Cumbria and depot/stabling enhancements which support the timetable for December. Work is underway to finalise plans for improving accessibility at Irlam station due to the introduction of TPE's longer trains. Rolling stock plans and mitigations are in place to support the cascade of trains to Northern and the reallocation of TPE's train types across its network. Training is continuing on TPE for the extension of Cleethorpes service to Liverpool, rolling stock moves, and depot changes.
- 3.21 Given the backdrop of what appears to be a protracted period of industrial action across the industry, industry partners are also taking the precaution of preparing a contingency plan to protect service resilience on the introduction of the MTF changes. This could include phasing the timetable introduction, something that other train operators have successfully managed over the Christmas period for similar timetable recasts to support service resilience, with some services subsequently phased in on the completion of training or other requirements.

Tranche 1 Infrastructure Progress

- 3.22 In line with the Blueprint, final design and full business cases for Tranche 1 schemes are well underway and progressing towards a final investment decision

in early 2023. Together with the ongoing delivery of the Stalybridge electrification scheme, and Wigan-Bolton to commence delivery in 2023, these Tranche 1 schemes will give an opportunity to reconfigure services from 2024/2025 onwards for improved performance and passenger outputs.

- 3.23 Completion of design and business cases for station capacity schemes at Piccadilly and Victoria, including options to increase terminating platform capacity at Piccadilly and remodelling of Manchester Airport and Oxford Road stations, are expected to follow during 2023.
- 3.24 A Cheshire Lines Committee (CLC) lines workshop on 29 April 2022, covering the route between Manchester and Liverpool via Warrington, agreed on the need to develop a matrix which would consider a hierarchy of potential needs, including the need to restore cross-Warrington connectivity, which would demonstrate how the required outputs could be delivered against a number of alternative infrastructure configurations. A further workshop on 25 July 2022 presented an update on the electrification scheme being developed and an assessment of what signalling alterations could deliver. A workshop is planned for September to test these upgrades against the desired train services to inform design towards an Outline Business Case submission in 2023.
- 3.25 With implementation of the December 2022 Timetable a series of rolling business case submissions will be delivered over a 12 to 18-month period, initially to move forward with schemes that have a business case into committed funding and delivery of the Tranche 1 schemes, but subsequently the more complex schemes such as the remodelling of Manchester Oxford Road (Tranche 2) and Manchester Airport. These rolling business case submissions will seek to secure the funding whilst allowing the embedment of the December 2022 Timetable in parallel.
- 3.26 The remodelling of Oxford Road and lengthening of platforms at Manchester Airport will follow on towards the later end of the decade, which will be another opportunity for a considerable reconfiguration of the timetable and of services which use the Castlefield Corridor.

Tranches 2 and 3 – Castlefield Corridor and Manchester Piccadilly

- 3.27 Work to develop the conclusions from the Manchester Piccadilly Platforms 15/16 performance modelling assessment is continuing, with further information to follow at the next meeting of this Committee.
- 3.28 Following confirmation of the scope of other interfacing major programmes, there is now an overarching need to confirm the outputs which Tranche 3 will deliver, building on the configuration state concepts already in development and market analysis. These outputs need to include TRU outputs, services not delivered by the December 2022 timetable and other stakeholder led aspirations.
- 3.29 The analysis associated with the strategic advice against the updated outputs will allow a gap analysis between the planned service changes and what can be delivered on the existing or planned infrastructure changes. High level analysis of areas that require most interventions to deliver likely aspirations for future service changes reconfirmed that Piccadilly and Stockport were strategic priorities.
- 3.30 A cross-industry planning workshop for the proposed Tranche 3 workshop took place on 25 July 2022 to agree the key areas of focus for and inputs to the main workshop. This was led by DfT and attended by representatives from Transport for the North, DfT, Transport for Greater Manchester and train operating companies.

- 3.31 It was recognised that Tranche 3 covers a large geographic area so the initial workshop would focus on the south side of Manchester with another workshop to be convened to consider other areas, particularly the Ordsall area.
- 3.32 The Tranche 3 workshop took place on 22 August 2022. This gave cross-industry visibility of constraints and opportunities, to inform the sequence and strengthen the case for interventions in central Manchester and the Stockport corridor.
- 3.34 Also considered were what MNTP schemes would be beneficial to interfacing programmes such as the Transpennine Route Upgrade, including where MNTP infrastructure could assist in maintaining services during route closures for infrastructure works, or where closures may facilitate access in parallel.
- 3.33 An outcome was agreement on the criticality of ensuring that services arrived at the Castlefield Corridor on time and that the infrastructure needed to be in place to play its part in facilitating this. The next steps were agreed as:
- Focussing on the Ordsall Lane Junction grade separation options and developing a strategic business case;
 - Confirming the timescales for development of scheme business cases;
 - Development of the construction strategy for the Oxford Road re-modelling;
 - Gain a clear understanding of current HS2 assumptions and impact on the infrastructure at Stockport and Piccadilly; and
 - Re convening in January 2023.
- 3.34 Once developed, the configuration states facilitated by the Tranche 2 and 3 works will feed into additional service choices which will be brought to the Committee.
- 3.35 It should be noted that the ability to fund Tranche 3 works is dependent on capacity within the DfT's Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline (RNEP) funding envelope. Information on the schemes funded within RNEP and remaining headroom has not been made available by DfT but the business cases for the Tranche 3 schemes will need to be as strong as possible to secure funding given there will be many competing demands on railway funding.
- Development of future service choices
- 3.36 Fourteen timetable options have been defined, and a number of criteria have been suggested by which the advantages and disadvantages of future service options could be used to inform the decision-making process, including impact on rail industry revenue and operating costs, socio-economic benefits, connectivity, capacity and performance of services.
- 3.37 Agreement is required on the relative weight that should be assigned to each criterion and Transport for the North led a workshop with representatives from Local Authority partners using an established analysis technique on these weightings, on 12 July 2022. However, work is required to refine the methodology for application of this technique and a further report will be brought to a future meeting to seek the views of the Committee on the proposed weightings and initial outputs.
- 3.38 It should be noted that any proposals will be subject to financial and commercial assessment before implementation.
- Future Development of the Blueprint
- 3.39 The Manchester Task Force has been concentrating on development of Configuration State Opportunity 1 - the December 2022 timetable (Workstream 1) and Configuration State Opportunity 2 - mid-2020's services (Workstream 2) which is focused on the service enhancements options resulting from the

electrification works between Wigan – Bolton and Stalybridge and associated infrastructure improvements in the Manchester area due to be delivered by 2024-25.

- 3.40 It is planned that the appraisal programme for options within Workstream 2 will be completed by the end of September 2022. This appraisal will feature the six-criteria assessment methodology (as set out in paragraphs 3.36 to 3.38 above) that examines performance, revenue and economic benefits, passengers affected, policy, deliverability and assurance.
- 3.41 It is proposed that the series of options identified in the assessment will then be the subject of consultation with Officers, informal briefings to Members and other industry stakeholders before being presented to the Committee later in 2022 for consideration and identification of priorities.
- 3.42 In parallel a similar assessment is being undertaken for Workstream 3 (2030s) and it is proposed that a similar briefing approach will be adopted as for Workstream 2 above.
- 3.43 When finalised, the Configuration State 'maps' will be incorporated into a new issue of the blueprint, expected to be issued later in the autumn.

Further strengthening of governance and coordination

- 3.44 At its meeting on 13 May 2022 in consideration of the Manchester Task Force Update Report the Committee expressed support for the work that has been taken forward collaboratively through the MTF and recognised the development of a Blueprint linking services with infrastructure as being a significant step forward that could be used as a way of monitoring progress being made with implementation.
- 3.45 However, the Committee felt that the Blueprint does not identify *how* feasibility and grouping of infrastructure enhancements to deliver specific service enhancements will be assessed, developed and assembled such that business cases can be confirmed.
- 3.46 The Committee considered that there would be considerable benefit of a single high-level overview of all rail activities being taken forward in and around central Manchester to give further reassurance that the fundamental issues identified by the Task Force were being addressed and by setting out indicative timelines enabling all partners to align their input to the processes at the most appropriate point. This would also enable partners beyond the rail sector to engage with the wider private sector in Greater Manchester to maximise the benefit of the public sector investment in its rail offer.
- 3.47 Consequently, Transport for the North wrote to the Chief Executive of Network Rail pressing the case for the creation of this single high-level overview. Network Rail responded by welcoming the positive comments by the Committee, highlighting the next milestone of the December 2022 timetable change, specifically more accurately matching the train services to the current infrastructure capacity but acknowledging that development of infrastructure enhancements to provide capacity for improved services needed to continue.
- 3.48 The response referred to Network Rail's North West & Central Region strategic planning team beginning to develop an overall strategy for the railways in Manchester from now up to the IRP as a piece of formal strategic advice to be

completed by March 2023. A commitment was made to the continued involvement of Transport for the North officers as well as other affected authorities in this work. Transport for the North officers have already engaged with Network Rail on the Manchester Programmes Narrative referenced in this report including tabling suggestions for improvements to ensure the strategy is clear and will continue to liaise with Network Rail on development of the strategic advice.

- 3.49 Finally, the evolving programme for enhancements in the Manchester area and supporting enhancements further afield highlights that this is a complex programme of a large number of interacting individual schemes and interfaces with broader programmes such as HS2, NPR and TRU, currently overseen as part of the North of England Integration Board remit. Transport for the North proposed to Network Rail that the time is right for Network Rail to appoint a dedicated Manchester Programme Director to ensure the whole programme in the geographic area is coordinated and driven forward to deliver the outcomes as quickly and efficiently as possible. Network Rail have recently responded positively to the suggestion and are understood to be exploring options.
- 3.50 The ongoing development work on Workstream 2 and 3 in addition to the industry workshops described in this report means that the Blueprint needs to be updated. This will be done and brought to a later meeting of this Committee when the outputs of the Workstreams and other workshops are agreed – which will provide an integrated view showing how the short- and medium- term programmes will link to the longer-term end states provided by the IRP and HS2.

Next steps:

- 3.51 The immediate next steps are:
- Network Rail to present to officers in September 2022 the outcome of assessment of what electrification and re-signalling can deliver against service requirements for the CLC lines;
 - Delivery of the December 2022 timetable;
 - Network Rail and DfT to progress the Tranche 1 schemes to final investment decision in 2023;
 - DfT to confirm date for follow-on Tranche 3 workshop for the Ordsall area Follow-up workshop on service choice weightings;
 - Complete the appraisal programme for mid-2020's service options, consult partner authority officers, brief Members and present outcomes to the next Committee meeting for consideration and identification of priorities; and
 - Engage with Network Rail on their proposed development of an overall strategy for the railways in Manchester to be incorporated into Strategic Advice which is due to be completed by March next year.

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 The requirement for further funding for Network Rail to deliver Tranche 1 schemes beyond Full Business Case and further develop Tranches 2 and 3, which will be subject to DfT and Treasury approval.

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 other than raised within the report.

Risk Management and Key Issues

4.5 This paper does not require a risk assessment, however, risks relating to the December 2022 timetable are being identified, assessed managed and monitored through the 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 outputs 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 December 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

a)	DfT	Department for Transport
b)	MTF	Manchester Task Force
c)	MNTP	Manchester NorthWest Transformation Programme
d)	TRU	Transpennine Route Upgrade
e)	PMO	Programme Management Office
f)	HS2	High Speed 2

Glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used

g)	NPR	Northern Powerhouse Rail
h)	IRP	<i>Integrated Rail Plan</i>
i)	RNP	<i>Rail North Partnership</i>
j)	TPE	<i>Transpennine Express</i>
k)	CLC	<i>Cheshire Lines Committee (line from Manchester to Liverpool via Warrington)</i>
l)	RNEP	<i>Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline.</i>
m)	SOBC	<i>Strategic Outline Business Case</i>