
Transport for the North Board Minutes

**Thursday 11 June 2020
MS Teams**

Present:

John Cridland (Chairman)

Attendee

Cllr Phil Riley
Cllr Jim Hobson
Cllr Craig Browne
Cllr Gittins
Cllr Keith Little
Cllr Matthews
Mayor Andy Burnham

Cllr Daren Hale
Michael Green
Mayor Steve Rotheram
Cllr Carl Marshall
Cllr Stewart Swinburn
Cllr Rob Waltham
Cllr Don Mackenzie
Mayor Dan Jarvis
Cllr Heather Scott
Cllr Hans Mundry
Cllr Judith Blake
Cllr Andy D'Agorne

Local Authority

Blackburn with Darwen;
Blackpool;
Cheshire East;
Cheshire West & Chester;
Cumbria;
East Riding of Yorkshire;
Greater Manchester Combined
Authority;
Hull;
Lancashire;
Liverpool City Region;
North East Combined Authority;
North East Lincolnshire;
North Lincolnshire;
North Yorkshire;
Sheffield City Region;
Tees Valley;
Warrington;
West Yorkshire Combined Authority;
York;

Rail North Authorities Attendees

Cllr Trevor Ainsworth
Cllr Mark Winnington

Derbyshire
Staffordshire

Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Attendees

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

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

Partners in Attendance:

Nick Bisson
Ben Smith
Jim O'Sullivan
Graham Botham
Lorna Pimlott

DfT
Department for Transport
Highways England
Network Rail
HS2

Officers in Attendance:

Name	Job Title
Barry White	Chief Executive
Gary Rich	Democratic Services Officer
Dawn Madin	Director of Capabilities
Iain Craven	Finance Director
Julie Openshaw	Head of Legal
Rosemary Lyon	Legal and Democratic Services Officer
Deborah Dimock	Solicitor
Peter Molyneux	Major Roads Director
Tim Wood	Northern Powerhouse Rail Director
David Hoggarth	Strategic Rail Director
David Hughes	Programme and Strategy Director

Also in Attendance:

Richard George
Anna Jane Hunter
Nick Donovan
David Sidebottom
Beth Farhart

DOHL
Network Rail
Northern
Transport Focus
TUC

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

1.1 The Chairman welcomed Members and apologies were noted.

2. Declarations of Interest

2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

3.1 The minutes of the Transport for the North Board held on 12 March 2020 and the consultation call on 29 April 2020 were considered.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the Transport for the North Board held on 12 March 2020 and the consultation call on 29 April 2020 be approved as a correct record.

4. Operational Rail Update

- 4.1 The Operational Rail update report was received by Members and taken as read. Anna Jane Hunter, Beth Farhat and Richard George were invited by the Chairman to update the Board on their specific areas. Following the updates Members were able to ask questions.
- 4.2 Members received a presentation from Ms. Hunter which set out the measures taken by the industry to support essential travel during the pandemic. The presentation was taken as read.
- 4.3 Ms. Farhat provided Members with background as to the work the Trade Union Congress (TUC) do. She explained that safety is at heart of what they are trying to do in order to get people back to work at the same time as protecting jobs.

In relation to the rail network, she explained that she expects there to be an increase in footfall over the second half of June and in July and that this would need to see the introduction of longer trains together with an intelligent system of monitoring and responding to changes.

She also addressed the issue of social distancing and explained that workers also have a responsibility to do this properly. She expressed concern as to how social distancing could be properly maintained, for example at unstaffed stations.

Ms. Farhat spoke about face coverings and explained that the compulsory wearing of them would make members of the public feel safer, but she said there were questions as to how the operating companies and their staff would be able to enforce it and how they would know who had dispensation not to wear one.

She explained that the issue of volunteering at stations had not been discussed with the unions and that there was anxiety amongst staff as to the roles they would be doing. She explained that the unions' current position on this was that they opposed the use of volunteers whilst there are staff who are able to work and take on these tasks. She stated that this would be their position until consultation has taken place.

- 4.4 David Sidebottom provided Members with background on his organisation's role and gave a passenger perspective on the current situation. Mr. Sidebottom stated that passengers want a good rail service that is punctual and reliable. Before updating Members, Mr. Sidebottom thanked the front line staff who have been delivering services over the last few months.

Members were informed that Transport Focus has been tracking the views of around 2000 people over the last 6 weeks. Issues discussed included face coverings and social distancing. He informed Members that 70% of those asked about using public transport said they only do so if there was safe social distancing in place.

Mr. Sidebottom stated that he had spoken to the Train Operating Companies (TOCs) about the good and clear messages they are providing on their websites, and also suggested that the companies may want to explore the possibility of more flexible season products.

- 4.5 Richard George updated Members on the current position with the 100-day plan following the end of the 100 day period earlier in the week. He explained that Covid 19 had made producing a proper business plan and preparing a budget difficult.

Mr. George explained that the plan looks at what needs to be done and focused on getting the basics right.

Mr. George stated that at the next Rail North Committee, Members will be presented with the plan.

He explained that a more strategic review of the fleet will be needed and that there is a task force which is dealing with congestion in and around Central Manchester. In due course this will require some difficult choices to be made.

- 4.6 Mayor Rotherham emphasised the importance of the Board hearing from Ms. Farhat and Mr. Sidebottom particularly on the issues of social distancing and face coverings.

- 4.7 Mayor Jarvis questioned if there is sufficient rolling stock.

Mr. George confirmed there is no shortage of rolling stock. He added that longer rolling stock would be good although there are limitations due to the length of platforms. He also stated that operators are constrained by staff who are currently unavailable to work.

Mr. George concluded by saying that mass transit and social distancing do not work well together and once the number of passengers begin increasing then the 2-metre distancing may prove to be problematic.

- 4.8 Cllr Little suggested that the use of volunteers may be beneficial in unstaffed stations

Ms. Farhat reiterated that the unions are currently opposed to the use of volunteers as there has not yet been any discussion on the matter. She added that there are staff who are well enough to work and who could be undertaking this work but who have been stood down.

In response, Richard George stated that there won't be any use of volunteers on Northern without consultation with the staff first

- 4.9 Mayor Burnham commented on the stability of the railway over the last three months and expressed concern that this stability may be disturbed once there is an uplift in services.

Ms. Hunter explained that the uplift would be done gradually and in a controlled manner in order to maintain resilience as much as possible. She highlighted that that biggest challenge would be delivering the correct capacity to the correct areas; however the North of England Contingency Working Group will play a key role in this work.

- 4.10 Cllr Swinburn raised the issue of communications and publicity and praised the work of Transpennine Express in this area; however he added that Northern's performance had not been as good.

Nick Donovan stated that he would ask his team to engage directly with Cllr Swinburn on the communication issue.

- 4.11 Peter Kennan requested that the LEPs should be involved in the process of potential changes as this to date has not happened.

The Chairman supported Mr. Kennan's point and asked that this issue be followed up after the meeting.

- 4.12 Cllr Blake requested that communications with the public should be accessible for all and suggested that it should be published in different languages as well as being made available for those with disabilities. She explained that passengers would not return unless they have confidence and the only way that will happen is through communication.

Cllr Blake also raised the issue of face coverings, hand sanitisation and safeguarding issues relating to volunteers.

She also asked that there be more clarity on the passenger promise so that the voice of the passenger and their needs is picked up.

Cllr Blake also raised the issue of seat bookings for all journeys and whether other operators would be following LNER in adopting this style.

In response to this Mr. George stated that this system would be difficult to implement on short distance travel.

- 4.13 Cllr Gittins raised the need for toilets on trains as well as test, track and trace.

- 4.14 Ben Smith addressed the issue of face coverings explaining that a huge amount of work is being undertaken by the Department on this matter including the development of guidance and how it will be enforced and

he confirmed that information will be provided to authorities on this matter as soon as possible.

- 4.15 Ms. Hunter responded to the issue of hand sanitisation raised by Members, explaining that enhanced cleaning regimes are now in place and that hand sanitisers are available on station platforms where practical. Members were also informed of an anti-bacterial product that Network Rail has been using over the past few weeks, which provides protection to indoor surfaces for up to 28 days and the TOCs are also beginning to use this as well.
- 4.16 Cllr Riley raised the issue of compliance with the new standards.

Resolved:

That the report, presentation and updates be noted.

5. Economic Recovery Plan

- 5.1 The report was received by Members and taken as read. The Chairman outlined for Members the key points of the report which focuses on accelerating investment in various areas. He explained that this is not a decision making paper, but that the work outlined in the report will be undertaken and then brought back to Board.

The Chairman explained that following the meeting a letter outlining the quick wins will be sent to the Secretary of State.

- 5.2 Members highlighted specific programmes relating to their constituent areas as well as the issue of Active Travel and the investment in the physical infrastructure.
- 5.3 Steve Curl suggested that a balanced portfolio of ideas should be included in the letter to the Secretary of State.
- 5.4 Mayor Burnham suggested that a principle be added to section 4.9 of the report. He suggested that devolved funding should be routed via city regions for bus and light rail so that public transport reform can be achieved. Mayor Burnham asked for the support of Transport for the North in trying to achieve this.
- 5.5 Cllr Blake requested, that wherever possible all conversations on economic recovery include a request around devolution.

Resolved:

- 1) That the report be noted;
- 2) That the Board endorses Transport for the North's (TfN) proposal to develop a proposed Economic Recovery Plan, for accelerated investment in Northern Transport schemes;

- 3) That the Board endorses TfN's proposal to develop a proposed Economic Recovery Plan, for accelerated investment in Northern Transport schemes;
- 4) That the Board endorses writing to the Secretary of State, seeking development and implementation funding for a number of "quick win" schemes and interventions;
- 5) That an additional principle is included in section 4.9 of the report supporting devolved funding to be routed via City Regions for bus and light rail.

6. Future Road Investment

- 6.1 The report was received by Members and taken as read.
- 6.2 The Chairman invited Jim O'Sullivan to provide Members with an update on the Road Investment Strategy.

Mr. O'Sullivan explained that the total cost of the A66 and A63 schemes is £1.4 billion. Members were informed that acceleration options are being explored for the A66.

Mr. O'Sullivan highlighted the benefits of both schemes and explained that they would bring jobs to the north and that a great many local companies and local employees will be involved in their delivery.

- 6.3 Members welcomed the proposed schemes in the report with Cllr Scott highlighting the importance of local businesses being procured to undertake the work.
- 6.4 Cllr Green highlighted an error in section 2.4 of the report stating that the M6 Junction 33 scheme is being delivered by Lancashire County Council and not Highways England.

Resolved:

- 1) That the report be noted
- 2) That section 2.4 of the report be amended to reflect that the M6 Junction 33 scheme is Lancashire County Council scheme.

7. Northern Powerhouse Rail Update

- 7.1 The report was received by Members and taken as read. The NPR Director welcomed questions on the report.

Mayor Burnham raised the issue of Manchester Piccadilly following agreement at the March Board that there should be a fair comparison of the optimised underground option and the surface options. Mayor Burnham stated that he believed that the peer review of the Bechtel work was being used to stall the further work on Manchester Piccadilly. He requested that the Board sticks to the decision that it made in March and that work progressed on the integrated underground station to present a fair comparison.

Mayor Burnham also welcomed the letter the Chief Executive had sent to Andrew Stephenson MP and thanked him for it.

- 7.2 The Chairman stated that he and the Chief Executive had been pursuing this matter between the two Board meetings. He explained that the Chief Executive had written the letter in order to progress the matter.
- 7.3 Cllr Blake asked about the NPR non statutory consultation and asked how it fits into the Integrated Rail Plan.

The NPR Director explained that the non-statutory consultation has been paused and that he does not now expect this to be done until after the Strategic Outline Case delivery in March 2021.

Addressing the issue of the Integrated Rail Plan, the NPR Director explained that Transport for the North is working closely with all partners to make sure that its needs and wants in terms of the delivery of a fully integrated rail solution across the North of England with all the associated benefits is made clear to the National Infrastructure Commission .

- 7.4 Cllr Swinburn questioned how Transport for the North would consider freight and local connectivity as part of Northern Powerhouse Rail rather than just city connectivity, due to the fact that passenger and freight are going to grow in line with expected economic development across all of the North.

The NPR Director explained that the Integrated Rail Plan will look at transformation in the North as a whole and Northern Powerhouse Rail is considering locations beyond the major cities including North East Lincolnshire.

- 7.5 The Finance Director raised the matter of funding for the NPR programme that had previously been discussed on the consultation call. He explained that the issue had largely been resolved and that circa. £46 million (incl.VAT) had been committed by the department, although some caveats remain around Pre-Sequence 5 work which is being reviewed by the Department and TfN, equating to around £5.8 million (incl. VAT).
- 7.6 Nick Bisson explained that the Department shared Mayor Burnham's frustration with regards to the Peer Review and the amount of time it has taken for the review to be completed. Now it has been completed, advice has been given to Ministers and he anticipates that Mayor Burnham should hear from them shortly on this.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

8. Monthly Operating Report

- 8.1 Members received the Monthly Operating Report from the Finance Director and the report was taken as read.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

9. Financial Outturn 2019/20

- 9.1 Members received the Financial Outturn Report from the Finance Director and the report was taken as read.

9.2

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

10. 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).

11. Part 2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- 11.1 The private minutes of the previous Transport for the North Board were considered.

Resolved:

That the private minutes of the Transport for the North Board held on 12 March 2020 be approved as a correct record.

12. Proposed Investment Programme - Update

- 12.1 The proposed Investment Programme report was received by Members who were invited to ask questions and make comments on the report.

Resolved:

That the report be noted