
Meeting: Transport for the North Board
Subject: Trans Pennine Trains: Next Steps
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Meeting Date: Wednesday 27 September 2023

1. Purpose of the Report:

- 1.1 To provide an update on TransPennine Trains' Recovery Plan.
- 1.2 Robin Gisby, the Chief Executive of the Government's Operator of Last Resort operating company (DOHL) will present an update to the Board.

2. Recommendations:

- 2.1 That the Board considers and comments on the progress with turning round TransPennine Express to improve the level of service for passengers in the North whilst maintaining the long-term ambition.

3. Main Issues:

- 3.1 TransPennine Express is the intercity operator for the North and is of strategic significance in terms of supporting economic growth and developing East-West markets ahead of the introduction of Northern Powerhouse Rail. It also provides key links to Manchester Airport and supports a wider range of business, leisure, commuter and educational travel flows.
- 3.2 Following a prolonged period of poor performance TransPennine Express (TPE) was transferred by Government to the Operator of Last Resort (OLR) on 28 May 2023, since when the focus has been to ensure as smooth a handover as possible while continuing to stabilise the business. The new business is called TransPennine Trains Ltd (TPT), but it continues to use the TransPennine Express trade name for its operation. TPT's Managing Director (Chris Jackson) attended the Rail North Committee meetings in June 2023 and September 2023. He outlined the work to create a stabilisation plan and the three priorities for the business:
 - 1. Get the trains running on time
 - 2. Re-set relationships (with staff and stakeholders)
 - 3. Deliver the Transpennine Route Upgrade.
- 3.3 The first positive action was to agree a new Rest Day Working (RDW) agreement with ASLEF. Following further negotiation over local disputes, RDW was reinstated on 4 July 2023, and became a feature in daily rosters from 24 July 2023. Since that date, operational performance has shown a significant recovery, with very low P-Coding (planned cancellations) and on the day cancellations. However, as RMT and ASLEF continue the national pay dispute, on strike days and ASOS days, the operational performance is still fragile.
- 3.4 TPT has been working through a 100-day plan of initiatives intended to relaunch the business. As discussed with Rail North Committee they are proposing three immediate actions in order to restore reliability and stability to services.

- Temporary amendments to the timetable from December 2023 to deliver improved punctuality and confidence for customers
- Develop plans to (re)introduce stable and reliable services as early as December 2024, or sooner
- Temporarily withdraw the Nova 3 rolling stock (class 68 locomotives and mark 5a carriages) from the December 23 timetable to simplify and stabilise the service provision.

In addition, from early 2024 TPT will introduce:

- Promotional fares and marketing to win back passengers.

- 3.5 Rail North Committee has supported TPT in the need to re-set the business and fundamentally tackle the training backlog that has built up (and which the temporary timetable reduction is designed to address). Members focussed on the need for clear criteria for restoring the full timetable at the earliest possible opportunity. The Committee was also clear that further discussions were needed on the long-term future of the Nova 3 rolling stock and that a plan for restoring capacity needs to be in place. These discussions will continue with Rail North Partnership and the Committee over the coming weeks.
- 3.6 In tackling the short-term issues, Committee Members were also clear of the importance of the longer-term ambition needing to be rediscovered so that TPT can continue to play the strategic role envisaged. Accordingly, TPT have developed a prospectus for transformation. The key initiatives include:
- New trains and depots to deliver the outputs of the TransPennine Route Upgrade (TRU)
 - New connectivity and service optimisation to realise the opportunities of TRU
 - Station transformation working with local partners.
- 3.7 Robin Gisby will present a further progress update to the Board and there will be an opportunity for Board members to ask questions.

4. Corporate Considerations

Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications to Transport for the North arising from this report.

Resource Implications

- 4.2 There are no direct resourcing implications to Transport for the North arising from this report.

Legal Implications

- 4.3 Any apparent legal implications are covered within the report.

Risk Management and Key Issues

- 4.4 Transport for the North has two relevant corporate risks which are being actively managed - 309 'viability of future train services and future investment decisions' and 311 'future timetables'.

Environmental Implications

- 4.5 This report does not constitute or influence a plan or programme which sets the framework for future development consents of projects listed in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive and therefore does not

stimulate the need for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) or EIA. Passenger rail has an essential part to play in achieving our decarbonisation objectives within Transport for the North's Decarbonisation Strategy, particularly around reducing private car vehicle mileage.

Equality and Diversity

4.6 There are no equality or diversity issues arising from the report.

Glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used

a) TPE	TransPennine Express
b) TRU	TransPennine Route Upgrade
c) RMT	National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers
d) ASLEF	The Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen
e) OLR	Operator of Last Resort
f) TPT	TransPennine Trains Ltd
g) DOHL	Department for Transport OLR Holdings Ltd