
Rail North Committee Meeting – Minutes

Meeting: Rail North Committee

Date: Tuesday 14 May 2019, 14.00 – 16.00

Venue: Leeds – Committee Room A, Wellington House.

Attendees:

CLlr Liam Robinson (Chair)
Mayor Andy Burnham
CLlr Trevor Ainsworth
CLlr Keith Little
CLlr Richard Hannigan
CLlr Don Mackenzie
CLlr Carl Marshall
CLlr Susan Hinchcliffe

Liverpool City Region
Greater Manchester
East Midlands
Lancashire and Cumbria
Humber Authorities
North Yorkshire
North East
West Yorkshire & York

Also in Attendance:

Richard George
Anna-Jane Hunter
Leo Goodwin
David Brown
Chris Skilton
Tim Pike
Tobyn Hughes
Oyetona Raheem
David Hoggarth
Gary Bogan
Tom Davidson
Rebecca Parker
Matthew Oxby
Richard Allen
Claire Walter
Caroline Watson
Fran Glyn-Jones
Dawn Madin
Sasha Wayne
Deborah Dimock
Caroline Whitham
Melissa Farmer

SNC Lavalin
Network Rail
TransPennine Express
Northern
Arup
Arup
Nexus
TfN Democratic Services Officer
TfN Strategic Rail Director
Rail North Partnership Director
TfN Transport Planner
Rail North Partnership
TfN Strategic Rail
Northern
Northern
Northern
TfN
TfN
TfN
TfN
TfGM
SYPTE

Apologies:

CLlr Carl Les
Mayor Dan Jarvis
CLlr Rob Waltham

North Yorkshire
Sheffield City Region
Humber Authorities

1.0 Welcome and Apologies

Action

- 1.1 The chair welcomed attendees to the meeting and there were self-introductions.

2.0 Declaration of Interest

- 2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

3.0 Minutes

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 02 April 2019 were considered.

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 02 April 2019 as a correct record.

4.0 Performance and Readiness Update

- 4.1 The report of the Transport Planner setting out an update on Rail Performance was considered.

- 4.2 Anna Jane Hunter made a presentation during which she highlighted the significant improvements to the levels of PPM during Period 2 of the Railway Calendar. She said that targets had been regularly exceeded on daily basis.

Anna Jane Hunter acknowledged that PPM targets were not quite yet where they needed to be, but that the improvements promised to the Committee have been achieved. A rigorous and comprehensive review process have been put in place and a new national Programme Management Office process had been imposed on the network.

- 4.3 Anna Jane Hunter also spoke about the preparedness of the TOCs to deliver the May 2019 timetable from the following week. She highlighted the capacity issues in Manchester and advised that the 100 mph running for electric trains for the Bolton Corridor was due to be certificated at the end of the week.

- 4.4 David Brown of Northern reported that performance has been improving since December although it is not yet at the desired level. He added that Northern remained focused on continuous improvement. New services will be introduced on parts of the network including from Cumbria across to Newcastle. He also

informed the Committee about the steps that have been taken to prepare for the May 2019 timetable and he that he was confident that everything would be in place. New trains have been delivered and drivers and conductors were being trained. About 1500 staff members would have been trained by the week ending 17 May 2019.

- 4.5 David Brown also spoke about the planned introduction of new trains to link Manchester Airport to Cumbria from July 2019 which will increase capacity from Cumbria in particular.
- 4.6 Leo Goodwin of TPE reported that TPE's performance had continued to improve progressively since the progress reported at the December 2018 meeting. Punctuality had improved with PPM up to about 88%. TPE would like to push these levels further.
- 4.7 Leo Goodwin advised that the priority for the current year was to take delivery of new sets of trains that were being manufactured. The first of these had been delivered in April 2019. Staff members were being trained. The new trains will be introduced progressively from Summer 2019 onwards.
- 4.8 Cllr Little expressed disappointment about the delay to the introduction of the new Northern trains. He also expressed concern about continued overcrowding at Leeds Station in particular.

David Brown explained some of the improvements to capacity that have taken place since December 2018 and assured the Committee of a concerted effort by Northern to introduce new trains to ensure adequate capacity in the right places. There are now facilities to provide reports on overcrowding and passengers left behind as requested by the Committee.

- 4.9 Cllr Little commented about planned engineering work in the Lake District by Network Rail which had severely affected a planned promotion to passengers. He queried why there hadn't been a more consistent way of getting scheduled work done.

Anna Jane Hunter said that Network Rail was aware of the issue referred to by Cllr Little and that an industry working group was being set up.

- 4.10 Cllr Marshall acknowledged that some improvements have been made to services in the North East but

asked when Northern would perform in line with targets. He asked to know when the new rolling stock from Northern would be rolled out.

David Brown replied that the roll out had begun and electric trains were already being tested. 25 new trains had been delivered and driver training were ongoing with a plan to introduce the new trains from July 2019. He added that compared to the PPM in the previous year, a lot of improvements have been made and more positive feedback had been received about consistency and reliability of Northern service.

Leo Goodwin advised that TPE had seen month on month improvements in performance and the company had been aiming to push the number higher with the introduction of the May 2019 timetable.

- 4.11 Cllr Marshall queried the claim that new trains have been introduced by Northern as none of these had been in the North East.

David Brown advised that Northern had been delivering refurbished trains equipped with Wi-Fi in line with the original franchise agreement and that feedback clearly showed that things have improved.

- 4.12 Mayor Burnham expressed concern about the information that Network Rail had lowered the performance targets for the train operators and wanted to know why. He saw it as a worrying development that low-level performance was being accepted as the new reality.

- 4.13 Anna Jane Hunter replied that Network Rail would continue to work with the ToCs to assist them to meet their targets. The new Network Rail target figures were however those that have been agreed with the Regulator as joint delivery targets, given the level of money available to Network Rail to deliver the required improvements.

- 4.14 Richard George said that the Regulator had the final say on performance targets and the decision had been based on the available budget. It formed the basis of the contract between the government and Network Rail. He however noted that the targets agreed with the operators have not changed.

- 4.15 Tom Davidson highlighted that whilst PPM targets remain the same Schedule 7.1 benchmarks will change

as a result of infrastructure changes. David Hoggarth stated that this lack of joined up approach was one of the issues to be fed into the Williams' Rail Review.

- 4.16 Mayor Burnham requested to know why there had been further deteriorations in short formations in the April 2019 reports.

David Brown advised that there had been some improvements in the last two to three months and that the information provided to the Committee were in line with what the TOCs were obliged to provide.

Tom Davidson echoed the inconsistencies in the way data is reported and the need to make sure that the passenger reports were accurate.

- 4.17 Mayor Burnham queried why the number of pre-planned cancellations on Sundays in the North West had significantly increased beyond the number agreed with the Committee. He expressed concern that there had been a promise to deliver significant improvements to services if the 90 pre-planned cancellations were agreed but which have not been delivered.

- 4.18 David Brown explained the impact of engineering works on Bank Holiday weekend, for which a large proportion of Northern drivers were not contractually obliged to work. He highlighted some of the discussions being held with staff unions that would enable more Sunday services to be delivered robustly.

- 4.19 The Chair requested to know when the electrification of the Bolton Corridor would be signed off. Anna Jane Hunter replied that the certificate would be issued on Friday 17 May.

RESOLVED: To note the current performance of the train operators.

5.0 Williams' Rail Review

- 5.1 The meeting considered the Strategic Rail Director's report regarding TfN's response to the Williams' Rail Review.
- 5.2 Representatives from Arup presented a summary of the draft response they have developed following consultation with TfN members.

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- 5.3 Cllr Marshall noted the call for greater devolution in the response. He would like further thoughts on issues of regeneration including control of stations and the land around it. David Hoggarth advised that the issues will be highlighted as part of the reasons for a local joined-up approach.
- 5.4 Mayor Burnham would like the relationship between sub-national and regional bodies to be clearly defined. From his experience, working with third parties to provide rail service have not worked well, thereby there is a call for direct control.
- 5.5 Discussion was held on getting the need for the right interface between train service networks that were operating on the same infrastructure.
- The chair cited the example of how trains from Liverpool Lime Street to Manchester Victoria crosses boundaries that would need to be managed. There was therefore the need to get the right words in at this stage.
- 5.6 Cllr Hinchcliffe saw the report as a good step forward but queried if there would be sufficient funding and if TfN has the capability to take it to the next stage.
- David Hoggarth advised that the next stage will be about analysis of a funding model and the associated risks. The need for the responsibility of devolution to be accompanied by appropriate funding had been discussed at the officers' workshop. The matter would be further discussed at the TfN Board in June.
- 5.7 The Committee expressed that the case for additional funding needed to be made as soon as possible in order to meet the deadline for the government's spending review in July.
- 5.8 The chair conveyed the view from Liverpool City Region that the existing arrangements have not worked well and did not provide the maximum value for money to the taxpayers. He said that the report presented had not adequately reflected the views from LCR about the call for the North to operate its own railway.
- 5.9 David Hoggarth advised that the initial thoughts would be circulated to all TfN members for comments with a view to capturing all the views by the end of May. The

final version would then be presented to the TfN Board in June.

- RESOLVED:**
- I. To note the report
 - II. To agree a further consultation with Member Authorities as proposed
 - III. To delegate authority to the Strategic Rail Director to finalise the submission to the Williams Review call for evidence
 - IV. To present the final version to the TfN Board in June.

6.0 Exclusion of Press and Public

- RESOLVED:** That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business since it is likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of confidential information as defined in s100A(2) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

7.0 Richard George Update

- 7.1 Richard George made a presentation on the work to improve performance of the railway following the May 2018 timetable problems.
- 7.2 Members noted Richard's sign-off report and Appendices and the plan to 'institutionalise' the actions and recommendations into the industry / organisation responsible.
- 7.3 Detailed discussions took place on the report followed by a questions and answers session. Members requested regular progress updates.

- RESOLVED:** To **note** the report and the recommendations made by Richard George.

8.0 Franchise Strategy

8.1 The written report from the Rail North Partnership was considered together with the detailed franchise dashboards. The report was discussed.

RESOLVED: To **note** the report.

9.0 Date of the Next Meeting

RESOLVED: That the next Committee will be held on Thursday, 20 June 2019 in Bradford City Hall from 10.00 until 12.00