

Association of Rail North Partner Authorities

Meeting date: Thursday, 09 June 2016

Item: 6

Subject: TfN Governance

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1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. To provide Association Members with an opportunity to comment on the proposed governance and powers for Transport for the North (TfN) when it is established as a statutory sub-national transport body.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That the TfN proposals in relation to Rail North powers and governance as set out below are noted.
- 2.2. That a report being prepared for the TfN Partnership Board is separately circulated to members for consideration.

3. Information

- 3.1. Governance and powers proposals for TfN to become a statutory sub-national transport body have been developed over the last few months.
 - 3.2. The Rail North Board discussed the emerging proposition at their meeting on 12 May and recommended that the proposal is shared with the Association of Rail North Partner Authorities. At the request of Board Members, a separate meeting was held with members of Rail North Ltd that would fall outside the geographic area covered by TfN. This took place on 24 May with the Chief Executive of TfN.
 - 3.3. There is a strong case for Rail North to be included within the new statutory arrangements for TfN. This could allow Rail North to benefit from new statutory powers, to strengthen its role and, over time, support a further shift of responsibility from central government to the North, allowing rail services to be managed more directly from the North, on behalf of the North.
 - 3.4. The current proposal includes the following points in relation to Rail North:
 - Two potential options for devolving rail franchising powers in the future (equivalent to the position in London/Merseyside and Scotland/Wales);
 - Membership proposals including an 'associate membership' for those authorities who are part of Rail North, but not within the core TfN area;
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- A proposed voting system including retention of the current system of Rail North weighted voting for Rail North matters;
 - Drawing on current arrangements within Rail North/ DfT Partnership Agreement to allow the north to take a bigger role in developing and acting as client for infrastructure schemes.
- 3.5. Of the 29 authorities that currently constitute RN, it is proposed that of these, 19 would have full membership of TfN given their geographical and statutory responsibilities for all modes of transport within the TfN area (19 instead 23 as the Tees Valley authorities have formed a Combined Authority). Of the current RN membership, it is proposed that the 6 authorities who are not full members of TfN would have associate / co-opted member status given the inclusion of Northern rail services within their boundaries, and would retain the same governance and working arrangements over these services as the current membership agreements allow.
- 3.6. It is anticipated that the opportunity for closer working and synergies with TfN full members on the strategic planning across all transport modes would be beneficial to all areas in realising economic growth potential across key corridors.
- 3.7. A detailed proposition for the proposed TfN Order is under development and will be circulated separately to Association members.
- 3.8. It is envisaged that Rail North members will be asked to formally agree the proposed changes at a meeting in Autumn 2016.