

# Transport for the North Board – Minutes

**Meeting:** Transport for the North Board  
**Date:** Thursday 12 September 2019, 12.30 – 14.30  
**Location:** Schiphol Suite, Hilton Manchester Airport,

## **Chairman:**

John Cridland Chairman

## **Also in Attendance**

Paul Maynard MP

## **Constituent Authority Attendees:**

Councillor Phil Riley	Blackburn with Darwen
Councillor Fred Jackson	Blackpool
Councillor Louise Gittins	Cheshire West & Chester
Councillor Keith Little	Cumbria
Mayor Andy Burnham	Greater Manchester
Councillor Michael Green	Lancashire
Mayor Steve Rotheram	Liverpool City Region
Councillor Carl Marshall	North East Combined Authority
Councillor Philip Jackson	North East Lincolnshire
Councillor Don Mackenzie	North Yorkshire
Mayor Ben Houchen	Tees Valley
Councillor Hans Mundry	Warrington
Councillor Judith Blake	West Yorkshire

## **Rail North Authority Attendees:**

Councillor Chris Brewis	Lincolnshire
Councillor Mark Winnington	Staffordshire

## **Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Attendees:**

Steve Curl	Cumbria
Mark Rawstron	Lancashire
Mark Roberts	Leeds City Region
Peter Kennan	Sheffield City Region

## **Delivery Partners:**

Nick Bisson	Department for Transport
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Ben Smith	Department of Transport
Jim O'Sullivan	Highways England
Rob Drury	HS2
Michael Bradley	HS2
Sir Peter Hendy	Network Rail

**Transport for the North Officers in Attendance:**

Barry White	Chief Executive
Gary Rich	Democratic Services Officer
Iain Craven	Finance Director
Dawn Madin	Director of Business Capabilities
Tim Foster	Head of Economic Advice
Julie Openshaw	Head of Legal
Stephen Sutcliffe	Head of Northern Powerhouse Rail Development
Lucy Hudson	Lead Officer Freight & Logistics
Rosemary Lyon	Legal and Democratic Services Officer
Peter Molyneux	Major Roads Director
Tim Wood	Northern Powerhouse Rail Director
James Syson	Rail Strategy Liaison Manager
Haddy Njie	Risk Manager
David Hoggarth	Strategic Rail Director
Deborah Dimock	Solicitor
David Innis	Interim Strategic & Programme Director
Jim Bamford	Head of Investment Planning, Rail North
Lewis Jones	Head of Stakeholder Engagement and Communication
James Mills	Corporate Engagement Lead
Kevin Willans	Head of IT and Information

**Apologies:**

Christine Gaskell	Cheshire and Warrington LEP
Councillor Craig Browne	Cheshire East
Councillor Sam Corcoran	Cheshire East
Councillor Trevor Ainsworth	Derbyshire
Councillor Richard Burton	East Riding of Yorkshire
Councillor Chris Matthews	East Riding of Yorkshire
Mike Blackburn	Greater Manchester LEP
Councillor Darren Hale	Hull
Councillor Gary Wareing	Hull
Lord Haskins	Hull LEP
Kishor Tailor	Hull LEP
Asif Hamid	Liverpool City Region LEP
Mark Whitworth	Liverpool City Region LEP
David Land	North East LEP
Councillor Rob Waltham	North Lincolnshire
Councillor Richard Hannigan	North Lincolnshire

David Hern	North Yorkshire LEP
Councillor Nick Forbes	North of Tyne Combined Authority
Councillor Peter Jackson	North of Tyne Combined Authority
Councillor Jon Collins	Nottingham
Mayor Dan Jarvis	Sheffield
Councillor Chris Read	Sheffield
Councillor Abi Brown	Stoke-on-Trent
Councillor Daniel Jellyman	Stoke-on-Trent
Paul Booth	Tees Valley LEP
Jerry Hopkinson	Tees Valley LEP
Councillor Keith Aspden	York
Councillor Andy D'Agorne	York

## **1.0 Welcome and Apologies**

**Action**

- 1.1 The Chairman welcomed Members and explained that the meeting was being webcast for the first time. The Chairman explained to Members that he would close the meeting at 15.15 at which point Doug Oakervee and Tony Berkeley would brief Members about the HS2 review. This would provide Members with an opportunity to listen to them and contribute their views on the review, as this will be the only opportunity for the Board to understand progress on the review before the work is completed at the end of October.

The Chairman requested concise presentations, contributions and comments in order to facilitate this.

- 1.2 The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting particularly Paul Maynard MP.

- 1.3 The apologies listed on the agenda paper were noted.

## **2.0 Declarations of Interest**

- 2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

## **3.0 Minutes**

- 3.1 It was confirmed that Cllr Stewart Swinburn had been in attendance at the meeting.

- 3.2 The minutes of the meeting of the Transport for the North Board held on 31 July 2019 were considered and there were no matters arising from them.

**RESOLVED:** That subject to the addition of Cllr Swinburn to the list of attendees, the minutes of the Transport for the North Board held on 31 July 2019 be approved as a correct record subject to the addition in 3.1

## **4.0 Strategic Rail Investment Priorities**

The Chairman provided background to this item. At the previous meeting Members wanted to see the wider Transport for the North investment priorities in order to determine the level of ambition and any cross implications of different proposals.

The Chairman explained that this item would allow Members to reset the priorities and provide clarity to the Executive as to what should be pursued over the coming months.

- 4.1 The Chief Executive of Transport for the North presented information on rail investment in the North and outlined the current priorities. He explained that £1 billion was already being invested in rolling stock with much of this already in service and more to come in the next 6-12 months.

The centrality of the strategic outline business case to economic agglomeration in the region was highlighted with its implementation providing greater job opportunities in the north. The need for devolution of powers was also highlighted.

- 4.1.1 The Chairman stressed the importance of agglomeration and connectivity in order to grow the Northern economy faster and highlighted the importance of rail freight and the joining up of the 2 coasts in achieving this. This will assist the attempt of achieving a zero carbon target by 2050.

## 4.2 **Rail Freight**

A presentation on rail freight from Peter Kennan was received.

- 4.2.1 The positive impact of moving freight by train was highlighted. One freight train removes 70 HGV's from the roads leading to improved journey times for other road users, reduced transport costs and improved air quality.

Passenger-freight tensions were highlighted with passengers having the perception that freight causes delays.

- 4.2.2 5% of UK freight goes by rail.

There are 45,000 enterprises in the warehousing distribution sector in the North and 12% of workers in the North West work in this sector.

Peter explained that taking light weight freight from roads in order to ease congestion on motorways is not an option as spot loads are unprofitable, however using trains for heavy weight bulk transport over reasonably long distances is profitable.

Due to problems of loading, gauge and rail access, having lorries on trains is an ambition for the future.

Peter explained that awareness needs to be raised that the railway is for both passengers and freight. Moving freight by rail will have a positive environmental impact and this will help local authorities to

meet their carbon emissions targets. Investment with national partners is also needed as is a W10 and W12 route connecting Northern cities.

#### 4.3 **TransPennine Route Upgrade (TRU)**

4.3.1 A presentation on the Transpennine Upgrade by the Major Programme Director for Network Rail was received.

4.3.2 The Major Programme Director for Network Rail highlighted the benefits of the project including a reduction in the time it takes to get between Manchester and York and York and Leeds and an increase in capacity from 850 seats an hour to over 3,200 seats an hour. In order to achieve this a four track fully electrified section is needed east of Huddersfield which will allow fast trains to overtake slow trains.

A hierarchy of principles as to how this work will best be undertaken was outlined with the emphasis on minimising disruption whilst taking level of cost into consideration.

Disruption will be reduced from the anticipated 39 weeks a year to an average of 8 weeks a year of blockades over the seven years. Only a single blockade will take place at a time and whenever blockades are in place there will be 3 diversionary routes. No blockades will happen at times of major cultural and sporting events in the area.

Consultation has taken place with user groups with 3 key messages coming from this. Passengers have requested that there be strong lines of communication, that they would prefer diversion routes rather than having to go by bus or coach and that if changes are required no more than 1 change is the preference.

A procurement exercise is under way and a Transport and Works Act Order has been needed on the 12km section east of Huddersfield. Consultation is being undertaken with the owners of 260 parcels of land and 25,000 line side landowners 1km either side of the railway.

4.3.3 The government's position in relation to TRU was outlined in a letter from the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State to the Chairman and the Chief Executive that was tabled at the meeting.

The Minister Paul Maynard MP added that he understood the interdependency between HS2, NPR and TRU and that he was seeking to ensure that what is in the TRU will go ahead whatever happens to HS2 and NPR. He confirmed that he was committed to working with Transport for the North to see the improvements in TRU delivered.

#### 4.4 **Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) Update:**

The Chairman took the report on NPR as read and provided background with regards to the work that had taken place since the last meeting regarding Manchester Piccadilly and Stourton.

The Chairman stated that the report gives an additional option of having an independent person come in to give a like for like comparison

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on the options available at Manchester Piccadilly and invited comment from both Mayor Burnham and Councillor Blake

- 4.4.1 Mayor Burnham thanked the Chief Executive, the Northern Powerhouse Rail Director and members of the Transport for the North team who have been working on this since the last meeting.

The crossover between NPR and HS2 were highlighted. In relation to Piccadilly Mayor Burnham stated that there has never been an optimal solution and the position has always been what can be done to make it work rather than what makes it work properly.

Mayor Burnham welcomed the appointment of the independent expert although the Northern Powerhouse Rail Director was unable to confirm who this would be. Whilst welcoming the move he asserted that he wanted the work to be truly independent and that it shouldn't just validate the preferred option and wants this work to provide independent advice on all available options.

- 4.4.2 Councillor Blake also supported the appointment of an independent expert and hoped that whoever is appointed will also work with Leeds and West Yorkshire.

The link between NPR and HS2 was emphasised and it was stated that these cannot be dealt with separately.

Concern was expressed about the parliamentary timetable for the deposit for the Hybrid Bill and whether this was likely to be December. Councillor Blake stated that she had put a challenge in via the Chief Executive as to why parliament can only deal with one hybrid Bill at a time and is awaiting the response.

- 4.4.3 Mayor Burnham queried whether things would have been done differently if HS2 and NPR had been combined and if everything was considered as one railway network. The Chairman suggested that this should be put to Doug Oakervee later.

- 4.4.4 The presentation of the Chief Executive on the context of TRU, HS2 and NPR were noted.

- 4.4.5 The Chairman thanked those who delivered presentations.

The Chairman stated that that there is already a high level ambition outlined in the Strategic Transport Plan however this needs reviewing and reasserting or amending.

- 4.4.6 Mark Roberts requested clarity on the next steps for freight on trains.

The Chairman said that there is a Transport for the North Freight Strategy but the direction that this takes is in the hands of the Government.

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The Minister confirmed that Departmental representatives will be attending the next Transport for the North Board meeting who will be able to provide an update.

- 4.4.7 Councillor Blake emphasised the fact that TRU and NPR are different and serve different places as she felt that this was unclear in the paper.

Councillor Blake stated that work also needs to be done on stations whilst the lines are closed. Stations need to be made fully accessible and station buildings decarbonised.

The issues of cut down trees along the lines being replaced in other areas was also raised with Councillor Blake questioning if this is being done and how many were being replanted.

- 4.4.8 Mayor Burnham highlighted the unfairness of non TRU stations not getting upgrades. The situations at Greenfield and Mossley stations were highlighted as they are not accessible to wheelchair users yet have not been given a station upgrade through being excluded from accessibility funding but not being part of TRU. Mayor Burnham requested that these stations should have access to this funding.

He also requested that an agreement be put in place that any of the unspent £2.9 billion be spent on stations that are not currently getting upgrades.

- 4.4.9 Mayor Burnham highlighted the importance of freight going by rail and of the line having freight clearance. This will help get lorries off the M62 whilst enhancing the competitive position of Liverpool and Hull as ports.

- 4.4.10 Dearne Valley, The Hope Valley Capacity Scheme, Colne to Skipton and the East Lancashire line through to Hebden Bridge were all discussed.

Peter Kennan commented on the economic benefits of the Dearne Valley scheme reported in the Northern Powerhouse rail report at the July meeting and was pleased to see this. He also made note of the Hope Valley Capacity Scheme upgrade dealing with the South Transpennine Route which is vitally important for Manchester to Sheffield connectivity. Completion on this scheme has been delayed until 2024. The upgrade will increase fast train capacity by 50%. It was stated that there are no diversionary routes to deal with disruption when work eventually happens or adequate roads to take users off the rail network.

Peter Kennan requested refocussing some time on the upgrade as well as urging Network Rail to accelerate the decision on this so work can start soon.

- 4.4.11 Councillor Michael Green stated that a business case was produced for the Colne to Skipton line earlier in the year and sent to the previous Secretary of State and a response is still being awaited. This line will give significant economic benefits to East Lancashire and West and North Yorkshire.



The East Lancashire line through to Hebden Bridge was highlighted as a particularly slow line and unattractive to passengers.

- 4.4.12 Mayor Rotherham supported the case for more freight going via rail, stating that a million HGV miles could be taken off the motorways if more freight went by rail. Whilst understanding the arguments about spot freight being costly he argued this may be different regarding a port and it could make spot freight more competitive. Mayor Rotherham called for a joining of Liverpool and Hull and the areas in between.
- 4.4.13 Mayor Ben Houchen stated that he did not believe that this represents a Northern Powerhouse as the North East, rural, North and East Yorkshire and North East Lincolnshire has little or no benefit from either HS2 or NPR.
- 4.4.14 There was a call for an East West route for freight to be considered in future planning.
- 4.4.15 The Chief Executive stated that the strategic outline business case for Northern Powerhouse Rail gives significant investment in the East Coast Mainline which will increase both the speed and frequency of trains to the North East.
- 4.4.16 The Chief Executive informed Members that the proposed submission to the Oakervee review would be circulated to them for comment prior to submission and that this would include Mayor Burnham's comment around whether things would have been done differently if HS2 and NPR had been combined and considered as one railway network.
- 4.4.17 The Chairman drew the debate to a close and stated that the points raised by Members would be looked at offline and responses provided.

The Chairman reaffirmed the commitment to a one North position but stated that things could not be spread too thinly. Members were signposted to the Strategic Transport Plan where all projects are outlined. However if gaps exist in the plan these will be worked on and embraced.

Members were informed that big strategic investment capital programmes work can be fast tracked as they are part of Network Rail's forward programme and these works can be undertaken quickly.



The Chairman stated that the organisation is in a good position to contribute to Oakervee Review and to proceed with the Prime Minister's challenge to come up with a deal to accelerate NPR.

Feedback was requested once Members had had time to reflect on the discussions and the minister's letter

#### 4.5 HS2 Review Update:

**RESOLVED:** 1. That the presentations and subsequent discussions be noted.  
2. That Members would receive further information off line about the individual issues they raised.

### 5.0 Corporate Planning

5.1 The Chairman requested that the paper be taken as read and invited Councillor Blake to talk through the key points in the report.

5.2 Councillor Blake stated that the paper outlines the ambition and progress that is being made to establish a Northern Transport Charter which she hopes will be brought forward later in the year.

Members were provided with background as to how the working group had got to the current position. The 4 ambitions at the heart of the Charter were outlined; championing an inclusive and sustainable North, a long-term northern funding settlement, leading strategic transport delivery and putting the north's rail passengers first.

At the August meeting of the working group the decision was taken to look at the future governance structures of Transport for the North and how these could be developed and evolve over the next 5 years in order to draw down further powers.

This is the first of 2 papers with a second paper due to be presented at the December Board.

Councillor Blake was thanked for her work in leading the working group.

5.3 Mayor Steve Rotheram referred to the second bullet point of section 3.15 of the report and requested that subsidiarity be considered in relation to this.

5.4 Peter Kennan asked how those not involved at officer level can input into the report. Councillor Blake welcomed comments from any Members not involved.

5.5 The Chairman asked for comments on the Roadmap for Devolution which will be looked at in December.

**RESOLVED:** 1. That the report be noted

2. That the Charter in its current format be approved.

## **6.0 R Governance**

6.1 To receive Nomination for the Vice Chair of the Board

6.1.1 Nominations were invited from the majority party for the position of majority Vice Chairperson for the forthcoming year. Cllr Louise Gittins was nominated by Councillor Judith Blake and seconded by Mayor Rotheram and this was approved by the Members of the majority party.

6.2 Mayor Rotheram presented the proposal to include Trade Union representatives on Partnership Board. He commented that including the 3 Regional Secretaries of the Trade Union Congress on to the Board would allow for a further democratisation of the board. He added that their involvement would better inform and improve the work of the Board and have an effect upon the current gender imbalance although not fully solving the problem and that like the LEPs the TUC members would have no voting rights.

6.3 Members expressed differing views on the proposals. Those who supported it felt that it should be embraced as members of Trade Unions are delivering the work on the ground and their membership would give the Board different ideas and a new way of approaching its work. Those supporting the proposal stressed that at a time when the Board is looking to deliver on economic ambitions it needs to have people on board who are going to make this happen. It was also felt that the voice of workers is never heard on the board and that they play a crucial role in delivery.

Those opposed to the proposal felt that the size of the Board is sufficient already and did not feel that inviting the Trade Unions on to the board would address the gender imbalance. It was also suggested that just inviting Trade Unions was narrow and that other groups, such as environmental or passenger organisations, should also be considered.

Following the discussion the Chairman suggested that a paper on the general governance of the board should be tabled at the December meeting.

The Chairman explained that co-option of new Members to the Board would need the consent of all Constituent Authority Members which consultation had established was not possible to achieve. He clarified that the change being proposed would only affect the Partnership Board as this does not need all Constituent Authority Members to agree. If the proposal was agreed there would be different membership of the Board and Partnership Board and the implications of this were explained.

The Chairman suggested bringing a wider governance paper to the December Board and Mayor Rotheram was asked if he would accommodate this proposal.

- 6.4 Mayor Rotheram clarified his initial comments and stated that he did not say that LEPs only represent business, nor had he stated that the proposal would fix the current gender imbalance.

Mayor Rotheram stated that union involvement would improve the lot of those living in the country. He reminded Members that the TUC Secretaries would not have voting rights but could add to the debate.

- 6.5 Mayor Houchen stated that as he did not believe he had all the facts and other groups should also be considered, there should be a review of the wider membership of the group to include other groups and that a paper should be sent to the December Board on this.

- 6.6 An adjournment was requested to establish if an agreed position could be arrived at without the matter being put to a vote. The meeting was accordingly adjourned for a short period and reconvened at 14.40.

- 6.7 The proposal to include the matter in a report to December Board was agreed by Members.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That Councillor Louise Gittins be appointed majority Vice Chair of the Board for the forthcoming year.
2. That a governance paper be brought to the December Board to include examining the wider membership of the Partnership Board.

**7.0 V Report from Rail North Committee**

- 7.1 Mayor Burnham raised the issue of the performance report that the Rail North Committee received particularly performance on Sundays. He highlighted the fact that Northern were given dispensation to cancel 90 journeys in order to bring some stability to the system however a further 160 journeys were cancelled and this will be rolled over into the Christmas period.

Attention was also drawn to the fact that rail performance was worse in the summer of 2019 than it was in the summer of 2018. Rail operators were criticised in their attempts to blame the deteriorating figures on the weather since weather alone does not explain the deterioration in rail services. Mayor Burnham suggests that there is something fundamentally structurally wrong with the way rail operators are approaching matters and the fact that they seem in no way accountable to the Transport for the North Board.

The Chairman enquired if any actions are being taken. The Chief Executive stated that the operators are now reporting improvements but the Rail North committee are worried about the fragility of the system and worried about the autumn when traditionally bad weather has affected performance

The Chairman stated that he will take this offline with Chief Executive as to how this is followed up.

**RESOLVED:** That the update be noted.

## **8.0 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)

The Chairman thanked the public and the press for their attendance.

## **9.0 Corporate Risk Review**

Due to a lack of time the Chairman deferred this issue but stated that if Members had any comments on the register then these could be sent to Iain Craven.

## **10.0 IST Update**

10.1 The Chief Executive presented an update on the current position regarding Phase 3. Following instruction from the Board at the July meeting further work on the options has been undertaken by the Programme Board and the Board was asked to consider a shortlist of 3 options.

10.2 Councillor Judith Blake expressed disappointment that the paper had been received late and felt unable to make a decision due to not having had sufficient time to read the paper and consider the options. She stated that the principle of good governance dictate that papers of such importance should not be received at such short notice.

10.3 Peter Hendy highlighted the potential impact that implementation of the Williams Review might have in terms of national fares reform and ticketing arrangements.

10.4 Members discussed the options presented to them as well as alternatives.

10.5 The Board requested that an active pause be taken whilst the Chief Executive and the IST team continue to work on proposals and a further paper will be presented to the Board at the December meeting.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the report be noted.
2. That a further report be presented to Board at its meeting in December.

**11.0 Northern Powerhouse Rail: HS2 Phase 2b interfaces**

**11.1** The Chief Executive updated members on the development of Northern Powerhouse Rail.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the Executive continue with the work they are currently doing.

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