

# Transport for the North Audit & Governance Committee - Item 5

**Subject:** Operational Rail Recovery Plan

**Author:** David Hoggarth, Strategic Rail Director

**Sponsor:** Iain Craven, Finance Director

**Meeting Date:** Thursday 16 July 2020

## **1. Purpose of the Report:**

- 1.1 To provide members with an overview of the operational rail recovery plan.
- 1.2 To provide background for a presentation to be made at the meeting by Transport for the North's Strategic Rail team.

## **2. Executive Summary:**

- 2.1 The Covid-19 crisis has created a risk that passenger confidence is reduced, and demand fails to recover such that Transport for the North's ability to promote and develop enhancements to rail services is severely diminished. This risk is captured in Transport for the North's corporate risk register and mitigations are being considered through the Rail North Committee.
- 2.2 This report highlights the development of a 'roadmap to recovery' for rail services and the Committee will be provided with a presentation which will include feedback from the Rail North Committee meeting.

## **3. Consideration:**

- 3.1 At the last meeting of the Committee, a Covid-19 update was considered. Committee members raised concerns around the government's messaging about the use of public transport during the pandemic. There were concerns that the negative messaging could be very damaging, stigmatising the use of public transport in the future. It was also highlighted that bringing passenger levels back to pre-Covid levels was critical for the viability of the railways, the nationwide economic recovery and also the climate change agenda and it could be

a reputational risk for TfN potentially impacting on a significant part of the TfN's rail agenda overall.

- 3.2 Transport for the North's Corporate Risk register contains a risk relating to the impact of Covid-19 on the demand for rail services and specifically the risks that passenger enhancements might be delayed and future schemes could be less viable. A potential impact on TfN's reputation has been added to the risk register following the comments made at the previous meeting.
- 3.3 Rail North Committee is considering the impacts and a 'roadmap to recovery' at their meeting on 14 July 2020. A presentation will be made to this meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee covering the main points of discussion and agreed outcomes from the Rail North Committee meeting.
- 3.4 The report to Rail North Committee highlights that demand for rail (measured by the number of passengers) fell to as low as 5% of normal levels at the start of lockdown. There has been a gradual increase in demand as lockdown has eased such that passenger levels are now 15-20% of normal levels at some of the major stations.
- 3.5 Available capacity is still severely reduced meaning that there is a limit to the number of passengers that can be carried even under the more relaxed social distancing guidance. As a result of that limited capacity, the industry messaging (supported by government) to date has been that trains are for 'essential travel' only.
- 3.6 However, there is still the capacity for more passengers to travel on some services and plans are under development for services to increase towards normal levels over the coming months. Operators have also taken a number of positive measures to ensure that services are as safe as possible and to increase passenger confidence. These include:
- Wearing of face coverings by passengers and staff;
  - additional cleaning regimes on train and station;
  - measures at stations and on trains to support social distancing
  - measures within the rail environment to protect rail industry and support staff.
- 3.7 The Rail North Committee set out a potential 'roadmap to recovery' highlighting some of the positive impacts of the current position to embrace and some impacts to be avoided. The main points were:
- Help rebuild passenger confidence;
  - support more positive messaging about rail and public transport;
  - build on the better operational performance seen during the crisis; and
  - support the change in working habits with more flexible ticketing.

- 3.8 The objective of the 'roadmap' is to identify the steps to be taken by the industry and others to re-build confidence and avoid, as far as possible, the risk of an ongoing detrimental impact on the rail sector. A verbal update will be provided following the Rail North Committee meeting.

**4. Recommendation:**

- 4.1 That the Audit and Governance Committee receives and considers an update on the operational rail recovery plan.

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**Required Considerations**
**Equalities:**

Age	Yes	No
Disability	Yes	No
Gender Reassignment	Yes	No
Pregnancy and Maternity	Yes	No
Race	Yes	No
Religion or Belief	Yes	No
Sex	Yes	No
Sexual Orientation	Yes	No

<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Director</b>
Equalities	A full impact assessment has not been carried out because it is not required for this report.	David Hoggarth	David Hoggarth

**Environment and Sustainability**

Yes	No
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<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Director</b>
Sustainability / Environment – including considerations regarding Active Travel and Wellbeing	A full impact assessment has not been carried out because it is not required for this report.	David Hoggarth	David Hoggarth

**Legal**

Yes	No
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<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Director</b>
Legal	There are no legal implications for Transport for the North	Deborah Dimock	Julie Openshaw

**Finance**

Yes	No
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Consideration	Comment	Responsible Officer	Director
Finance	There are no direct implications for Transport for the North as the revenue risk is retained by the DfT, but the report deals with broader risk to TfN in making the case for enhancements.	Paul Kelly	Iain Craven

### Resource

Yes	No
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Consideration	Comment	Responsible Officer	Director
Resource	There are no human resource issues for Transport for the North.		

### Risk

Yes	No
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Consideration	Comment	Responsible Officer	Director
Risk	This report discussed the corporate risk identified for operational rail as a result of the Covid-19 crisis.	Haddy Njie	Iain Craven

### Consultation

Yes	No
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Consideration	Comment	Responsible Officer	Director
Consultation	A consultation has not been carried out because it is not required for this report.	David Hoggarth	David Hoggarth