

**Report to:** Transport Committee

**Date:** 10 May 2019

**Subject:** **Rail Matters Affecting West Yorkshire**

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Is this a key decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information or appendices?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, state paragraph number of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, Part 1:	

## 1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To update the Committee on rail matters affecting West Yorkshire. Rob McIntosh, Route Managing Director for London North East and East Midlands, will be in attendance at the start of the meeting.

## 2. Information

### Rail Operations Performance Update

- 2.1 Rail performance figures for the period April 2018 to March 2019 are set out in **Appendix 1**.
- 2.2 Northern's PPM (industry performance measure) for Period 13 (3 March – 31 March 2019) was 86.7%. Whilst this is slightly down on the same period last year when the PPM was 87.5% it is remaining at a consistent level following the December 2018 timetable change. The percentage of trains with less capacity than specified was 5.4%. The level of significant lateness and cancellations has risen and was at 3.0% in this period.
- 2.3 TransPennine Express's PPM for Period 13 was 83.5%, again slightly down on the same period last year where their PPM was 84.0% and is lower than the

previous period. The level of trains without the required capacity was 0.84%. The level of significant lateness and cancellations has risen and was at 7.3% in this period.

- 2.4 Following the performance issues of last year and the major impact on passengers, the need for additional performance data has been strengthened. Working with its partner authorities including the Combined Authority, Transport for the North is proposing an alternative approach to performance monitoring which better reflect the impact on passengers, particular by bringing emphasis to the importance of performance in peak periods. This information is now available. Combined Authority officers propose to introduce this in to the report for the next Transport Committee as a change in how Public Performance Measure is calculated was introduced on the 1 April 2019 and therefore the new reporting will be on this basis.

#### Rail infrastructure matters

- 2.5 As previously reported to the Committee in November 2018, following the problems of the May 2018 timetable change, rail industry expert Richard George was appointed by the Department for Transport to work with Transport for the North (TfN) and across rail industry bodies with a focus on restoring reliability to the North's rail network.
- 2.6 A clear message from Richard George's analysis is the finite capacity of the current rail infrastructure in the North to accommodate additional services and longer trains.
- 2.7 A programme of platform extensions has been underway across the network in anticipation of longer trains. This work is ongoing, but is well advanced. Significant improvements were also delivered on the Calder Valley line in 2018 to improve capacity, reliability and ultimately to speed up journeys. These projects were reported to Transport Committee on 9 November 2018.
- 2.8 Other infrastructure work is underway, but not as anticipated in initial industry plans. The main example of this locally is the work to create a new Platform 0 at Leeds station, together with changes to Platforms 1 to 6 to accommodate more frequent and longer trains. As widely reported in late March, this work is necessary to allow longer 6-car trains to operate on the lines to Skipton and Ilkley, impacts on the ability to run more trains on the line to Harrogate, and is also an important part of LNER's proposal to run additional services through to Bradford Forster Square and Harrogate. The initial programme anticipated this project would be complete for December 2019. Ultimately, DfT agreed the final scope and funding for this scheme in summer 2018 for delivery by the December 2021 timetable change.
- 2.9 Leeds station and the network around central Leeds is crucial to the effective operation of services across the City Region, since almost all trains run to and from or through Leeds. As confirmed by the initial Richard George analysis, the effective operation of the network in and around Leeds, together with central Manchester, is crucial to the effective operation of the network across the North.

- 2.10 It is becoming increasingly clear that Leeds station and its associated network is one of the main local constraints to running more frequent and longer trains across the City Region. For example, the full benefit of the significant works completed on the Calder Valley line in 2018 cannot be fully realised unless network constraints in and around Leeds (and central Manchester) are addressed.
- 2.11 The benefit of platform extensions at Woodlesford and stations in the Five Towns area can only be fully realised if Platform 17 at Leeds station is lengthened. At present it can only accommodate two trains if they are both of two carriages maximum. Failure to extend Platform 17 (or otherwise address this problem) will constrain the ability to increase capacity on the lines to Castleford, Pontefract and Barnsley and beyond and wider on the City Region network. Together with the Calder Valley line constraints highlighted above, these are examples of why addressing network capacity and capability in and around Leeds station has a wide-ranging impact across the City Region.
- 2.12 Together with the ongoing work being led by Richard George, Network Rail is now also leading packages of work to understand the implications of the network constraints in and around Leeds station which are a barrier to service improvements. Combined Authority officers are participating in this work. The focus is on what network infrastructure work is necessary to reliably deliver the existing service commitments in the short term, through to developing a clear strategy in the medium to longer term to accommodate ongoing growth on City Region rail services in the context of HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail proposals. It is important that this work is well-resourced to secure clarity as soon as possible what the short and long term investment plans need to include.
- 2.13 Other than the Platforms 0 to 6 project currently underway and set out above, there are no other funded enhancement projects to address network capacity and capability in and around Leeds station. Any projects that are identified as required by the analytical work currently underway will need to be promoted through the new Rail Network Enhancements Programme (RNEP) process for funding.
- 2.14 The current RNEP funding programme for Control Period 6 (2019 to 2024) is understood to be over-subscribed, although DfT has not published details. It is therefore important to ensure that this investment is recognised as a high priority across the City Region and through the TfN Investment Programme process.
- 2.15 Together with unlocking network capacity in central Manchester, addressing network capacity in and around Leeds is a crucial component for delivering almost all potential service improvements across the City Region in terms of running more or longer trains.

## TransPennine Route Upgrade

- 2.16 At the time of writing, a formal announcement on TransPennine Route upgrade is awaited. An announcement was initially expected around the turn of the year. Government has reiterated it is committed to spending £2.9 billion on the TransPennine Route Upgrade, which forms part of the commitments from the RNEP from 2019 to 2024.
- 2.17 A detailed update on TransPennine Route Upgrade was provided at Transport Committee on 15 March 2019, and Combined Authority officers continue to work in close liaison with officers from Kirklees Council and Leeds City Council together with Network Rail to influence detailed design and implementation matters.

## Williams Rail and Rail North Partnership (Blake Jones) Reviews

- 2.18 The Williams Rail Review was commissioned by Government following the collapse of rail services in May 2018. It is a root and branch review of the entire rail industry, with its proposals for reform to be published in autumn 2019, alongside a Department for Transport White Paper on implementation.
- 2.19 The Review has now launched two calls for evidence so far, both of which the Combined Authority has responded to. Combined Authority Leaders and Transport Committee members have inputted to and endorsed both responses via correspondence.
- 2.20 In the latest call for evidence, the Review team are testing their thinking on:
- Proposed objectives for the railway;
  - The high-level problems that successful reform will need to tackle;
  - Assessment criteria that the Review will use to drive the subsequent phases of its work and use as a basis for trade-offs as described below; and
  - Views on how the assessment criteria should be balanced to help decide on trade-offs in the future.
- 2.21 Cllr Blake on behalf of TfN, and the Minister for Rail at the Department for Transport (DfT) undertook a joint TfN/DfT Review into the issues following the May 2018 timetable debacle, "The Rail North Partnership Review". A small review team was established consisting of officials from TfN, DfT and West Yorkshire Combined Authority and views were obtained from Local Transport Authorities in the North, LEPs, Transport Focus, train operators, TfN, DfT and the Rail North Partnership.
- 2.22 It is anticipated that the Rail North Partnership Review will be published in May 2019.

## Access for All

- 2.23 The Combined Authority has welcomed the announcement that our joint bid with train operator Northern, has resulted in two West Yorkshire rail stations being selected to benefit from additional funding being made available to extend the 'Access for All' programme. Both Todmorden and Menston rail stations will, subject to a feasible design being possible, receive an accessible, step free route into the stations, as well as to and between every platform over the next five years.
- 2.24 It is however disappointing that station nominations for Batley, Ben Rhydding, Knottingley and Pontefract Monkhill were unsuccessful. Following DfT advice, stations requiring access improvements along the Transpennine route, with the exception of Batley which is accessed by a stepped subway, were not included in the station nominations due to the Transpennine Route Update.
- 2.25 The announcement, which can be found at the following website, also confirms that locations selected for funding in 2014 and which have not yet been implemented, would be completed during this current railway budget period. Garforth rail station falls into this category:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/access-for-all-73-stations-set-to-benefit-from-additional-funding>

- 2.26 The Combined Authority also supported the successful North Yorkshire County Council and Transpennine Express bid for Selby station.
- 2.27 The Combined Authority will continue to work towards more stations being made fully accessible including the development of station improvements which will form part of the Transpennine Route Upgrade and the projects currently being developed for Cross Gates and Horsforth which will be funded by the Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme (LPTIP).

## Rail Operations Performance Update

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- 2.30 TransPennine Express's PPM for Period 13 was 83.5%, again slightly down on the same period last year where their PPM was 84.0% and is lower than the previous period. The level of trains without the required capacity was 0.84%. The level of significant lateness and cancellations has risen and was at 7.3% in this period.

- 2.31 Following the performance issues of last year the need for additional performance data has been strengthened. Transport for the North is proposing an alternative approach to performance monitoring which better reflect the impact on passengers, particular by bringing emphasis to the importance of performance in peak periods. This information is now available. Combined Authority officers propose to introduce this in to the report for the next Transport Committee as a change in how Public Performance Measure is calculated was introduced on the 1 April 2019 and therefore the new reporting will be on this basis.

#### Forthcoming Rail Service Changes and New Rolling Stock

- 2.32 Further to the report provided to the Transport Committee's March meeting, little further information is currently available regarding rail service changes.
- 2.33 LNER, TransPennine Express and Northern were all due to start introducing new trains in 2018. These will provide a combination of benefits, including more seats, better passenger facilities, more trains, and retirement of outdated trains, notably Pacer trains.
- 2.34 LNER has announced that its new Azuma trains will start entering service from 15 May 2019. It is expected that most of the services to and from Leeds will change over to the new trains by summer. These trains will provide a substantial increase in the number of seats available on the LNER route.
- 2.35 TransPennine Express is expecting to introduce two new fleets of trains in Yorkshire in 2019. The first fleet, 'Nova 3', was initially expected in service from May 2018, but it will be summer 2019 before these trains start to enter service.
- 2.36 New trains on TransPennine Express are crucial for providing extra capacity. The May 2019 timetable change will further limit the ability to run existing trains in six car formation at peak times. Trains to be shortened under a plan to improve the reliability of services are understood to include the 17:18 from Leeds to Dewsbury, Huddersfield and Manchester Airport, reduced from six to only three carriages. TransPennine Express remains hopeful that this will be a short-term issue, but there are clear ongoing risks associated with the introduction of brand new trains.
- 2.37 More positively, on 12 April 2019, TransPennine Express announced that they had accepted the first of 44 new five-carriage trains, the 'Nova 3' train, following the completion of a comprehensive approvals process. The first two new 'Nova 3' trains to be introduced into regular service are planned to operate the following peak time trains:
- 05:56 Liverpool Lime Street to Scarborough
  - 06:56 Liverpool Lime Street to Scarborough
  - 16:44 Scarborough to Liverpool Lime Street
  - 17:44 Scarborough to Liverpool Lime Street

- 2.38 Northern was due to introduce new diesel and electric trains in West Yorkshire in 2018 bringing a welcome boost to capacity and improved passenger experience. However, these fleets are also running behind schedule as teething problems with the new trains are ironed out. Notwithstanding this, the plan remains to introduce new electric trains on the Leeds – Doncaster local services from May, with new diesel trains following later in the year on services on the Calder Valley line.

#### East Midlands Rail Franchise

- 2.39 On 10 April 2019 DfT announced that the East Midlands rail franchise is to be awarded to Abellio, to start from August 2019. While the franchise primarily serves parts of the country beyond the immediate Leeds City Region, it is of some relevance:
- It was expected that the small number of daily trains connecting Leeds with Loughborough, Leicester and stations to London St Pancras would cease running, but in fact Abellio are committed to retaining them – though sadly not making the service all-day and regular as the Combined Authority had advocated in the consultation;
  - Connections from East Coast (LNER) services to locations in Lincolnshire should significantly improve, including Doncaster – Lincoln; Grantham – Sleaford – Skegness and Peterborough – Spalding (Peterborough – Norwich will continue as now).

### **3. Financial Implications**

- 3.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

### **4. Legal Implications**

- 4.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

### **5. Staffing Implications**

- 5.1 There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

### **6. External Consultees**

- 6.1 This paper has been fact-checked with Network Rail, and is based on information provided by the train operating companies.

### **7. Recommendations**

- 7.1 That the Committee notes the progress being made on rail matters affecting West Yorkshire as presented in the report.
- 7.2 That the Committee urges DfT and Network Rail to prioritise the technical capacity analysis needed to determine the rail network requirements in and around central Leeds necessary to bring clarity on the investment required to

deliver committed service improvements and accommodate growth across the City Region.

- 7.3 That the Committee endorses the activity necessary to prioritise the importance of addressing rail network capacity in and around central Leeds for improved services across the Leeds City Region and beyond, and the need for ongoing activity to make a strong case for investment by working with the rail industry and Transport for the North to make sure this is reflected in investment plans.

## **8. Background Documents**

- 8.1 None.

## **9. Appendices**

Appendix 1 Train Operator Performance Graphs