

Our Ref: LG/SK

6 December 2019

Councillor Kim Groves

Chair of Transport Committee

West Yorkshire Combined Authority/ Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership (the LEP)

Wellington House

40-50 Wellington Street

Leeds

LS1 2DE

Dear Cllr Groves,

Re: Recent Rail Performance

I hope you are well. Thank you for your recent e-mails and for your time in attending the launch in York of our new Nova fleet. I was pleased then to have had the opportunity at that event to discuss the planned introduction of this fleet and the performance issues that have been affecting services recently. In replying to your e-mail I would like to comment on performance matters and outline minor changes we are making to the December 2019 timetable to ensure a more resilient service for customers.

We are currently introducing 220 additional train carriages into the TransPennine Express network. As you will be aware, we started operating Nova 3 between Liverpool and Scarborough in late August, Nova 1 between Liverpool and Newcastle in late September, with Nova 2 entering service last weekend between Manchester Airport and Scotland. Once all new trains are in service, we will have doubled seating capacity across our network.

The introduction of these new trains, due to delays in delivery of Nova 2 and Nova 3 from CAF, is highly compressed meaning all three Nova fleets are being introduced at the same time. This has resulted in having a large number of trains to accept/introduce, combined with a training programme for operational and customer facing colleagues, in a shorter than planned time period.

The effect is the need for a balance between accelerated colleague training to introduce the new

trains, and the additional capacity they provide, to be introduced and the operational requirements of the existing timetable and service delivery plan. Aligned to this has been an emerging issue of a maintenance backlog for Nova 1, due to the impact of disruption on enabling trains to visit maintenance locations as planned across the network, which has had an impact on availability.

While managing this has had a consequence in part on performance and reliability, we have also faced a number of other issues that have affected performance in recent months. This is not a repeat of the issues that were faced following the May 2018 timetable change, but rather a combination of standalone incidents. To set this into context, 10.7% of PPM loss in Period 8 was due to flooding. The combination of planned service alternations for driver training and the severe and high impactful infrastructure availability incidents has resulted in a number of days when the service performance delivery to customers was significantly short of where we would want it to be.

In response to recent performance levels we have created a new short term planning team to support our Control and Resources functions to help improve performance further and management of service disruption. We are also making a small number of amendments to our timetable for December 2019 to ensure that we provide customers with a more reliable service. The attached document provides further details on these amendments; in summary they are:

- **Class 185s instead of Nova 1s:** Retiming of 10 daily Manchester Airport – Newcastle services to continue to operate as Class 185s rather than Nova 1s from 15 December 2019 to 17 February 2020 inclusive. This has resulted in a small reduction in calls at Northallerton and Darlington reflecting a 5% and 1% reduction in daily services at these stations respectively
- **Withdrawal of selected Liverpool – Edinburgh services:** On weekdays and Saturdays we will withdraw 10 trains in each direction per day planned on the Liverpool – Edinburgh corridor from 15 December 2019 to 05 January 2020 inclusive, while seven trains in each direction are withdrawn on Sundays and on certain pre/post-Christmas dates.

These service amendments represent 5% of the overall TPE timetable. Despite this, the new trains introduction programme and related rolling stock cascades (Manchester Piccadilly – Hull and also Manchester Airport – Cleethorpes) will mean that there will be 30% peak capacity uplift on TPE services at December 2019 when compared with May 2019

As a result of the above, and the further details in the attached document, we expect to see performance progressively improve following the introduction of the December 2019 timetable, whilst recognising we will still need to complete the roll out of the new trains.

In recognition of the recent downturn in performance and the measures we are taking at the December 2019 timetable change, we are proposing to offer eligible rail season ticket holders enhanced compensation over and above what they receive through Delay Repay. We will also defer the planned introduction of a penalty fares process until February 2020.

I appreciate your continued support for the rail industry and hope that the introduction of our new trains will help address a number of the issues that people have been raising with you.

I would also like to confirm that TPE supports in full the transformational projects submitted under your Transforming Cities bid and that we will be a strong and cooperative partner with West Yorkshire Combined Authority, Leeds City Region, their local council partners and Network Rail in delivering these projects in the event of a successful bid. By way of a further update, we are at the design stage for the new toilets and waiting shelter for Dewsbury station, which are being part funded by West

Yorkshire Combined Authority and works to install these projects will commence during the first half of 2020.

I hope that this reply of assistance regarding performance and planned aligned changes to the December 2019 timetable, and I look forward to meeting you at our next quarterly update meeting on Monday.

Kind regards

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Leo Goodwin', with a stylized, cursive script.

Leo Goodwin
Managing Director