

Report to: Transport Committee

Date: 3 July 2020

Subject: **Rail Strategy Update**

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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 Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update members on several related strategic rail items in the context of the Combined Authority's emerging Rail Vision. It seeks Members' continued support for engagement with the rail industry and TfN to make the case for the necessary investment in the network.
- 1.2 Taken together these items represent significant progress in developing a clear plan for accommodating growth and development of the rail network in the next 10 to 15 years ahead for the delivery of major projects such as HS2 and the new-build element of Northern Powerhouse Rail.
- 1.3 This report updates on:
- Recent work on the development of a Rail Vision for West Yorkshire, including engagement with Council partners and Transport Committee.
 - The Combined Authority's submission to the National Infrastructure Commission's Rail Needs Assessment for the Midlands and the north consultation.
 - The Combined Authority's submission to the New Stations Fund.
 - The completion of the Leeds Area Continuous Modular Strategic Planning (CMSP) analysis and recommendations and next steps.

- The development of the business case for the Leeds Existing Station Programme.
- 1.4 Matt Rice, Network Rail's Route Director will attend the start of the meeting to present on the findings of the Leeds Area CMSP Rail Study and to set out the next steps.

2 Information

West Yorkshire Rail Vision

- 2.1 Work is underway to develop of a new Rail Strategy for West Yorkshire. With significant changes within the rail landscape, it is more important than ever that we have a strategy that is both current and, at the same time, adaptable to the ever-changing world. We need the strategy to support us to:
- Work in partnership with the rail industry to secure delivery of committed improvements.
 - Influence the rail industry and help to shape the development and delivery of future interventions.
 - Guide development of rail priorities for the region and establish inputs to a coherent programme.
 - Challenge the industry to maintain high standards of passenger experience and service delivery.
- 2.2 Combined Authority officers have been working to develop a framework for the new Rail Strategy – identifying challenges and opportunities for our region, establishing principles for how the strategy will respond to our region's needs, and defining key themes that will be used to organise the strategy. These principles map back to our identified priorities, as set out in the emerging Strategic Economic Framework, including inclusive growth, tackling the climate emergency and delivering 21st century transport.
- 2.3 Four key themes have been identified – 'Capacity', 'Connectivity', 'Standards', and 'Implementation'. A clear focus on the passenger will be at the heart of the strategy and will be embedded within each of the key themes.
- 2.4 Specific work areas have been progressed to develop a programme and work plan for the strategy, to integrate the work with wider policy and strategy – including the emerging Connectivity Strategy, and to commission detailed technical work to provide a robust evidence base on which to build.
- 2.5 Combined Authority officers have embarked on a programme of engagement with local partners across the region. Interactive workshops have been held with Transport Committee to gather inputs of priorities for rail, including in-depth district-by-district sessions with members. Partner council officers have also been engaged through the Chief Highways Officers group and through one-to-one sessions with each district.

- 2.6 With a clear need to work in partnership with the industry, early engagement has also taken place with the Train Operators Forum. With a view to greater collaboration in strategic planning going forwards, consideration is being given to a greater focus on the medium to long term needs of the region.
- 2.7 A draft 'vision' document is currently in production, drawing on the work to date, and with a strong focus on the priorities for rail that have been identified through engagement with Transport Committee. Emerging key messages on priorities have been drawn from the input to date, including:
- Substantial investment in rail in our region required – significant barriers to travel need to be addressed urgently.
 - Rail is vital for the success of the economy, supporting inclusive growth, and tackling the Climate Emergency.
 - Need to expand the reach of major projects – with much greater focus on enhancing local connectivity.
 - Wider focus on the full door-to-door journey – rail as part of an integrated transport network – with access for all.
 - Clear aspiration to maximise potential of existing infrastructure – address clear disparities in access to rail and services levels.
 - Increasing role for rail in wider serving wider journeys – e.g. health & education / leisure & tourism / freight.
 - Quality standards need to be high across the region – reflecting varied needs. Simplicity and reliability are vital for passengers.
 - Need to develop consistent standards for the rail service offer throughout the region – including minimum frequency.
 - The strategy should be flexible to reflect future uncertainty / changing markets – and potential impact of the Williams Review.
- 2.8 Local engagement and initial analysis to date has underlined the importance for the Rail Strategy to address local accessibility, with an emphasis on enhancing local services. This implies a focus not just on major projects, but also ways to address barriers to accessing the network, including access to stations, better integration with bus services, and joined up information and ticketing.
- 2.9 The new emerging Rail Strategy provides the overarching context that sets the tone for the Combined Authority's ongoing involvement in a wide range of strategic rail activities. Each area of work draws on the priorities established as part of the development of the new strategy. Key areas of current activity are outlined in the section below.

Strategic Updates

- 2.10 Within the context of the Rail Vision work underway, the Combined Authority has been engaging in a number of strategic rail initiatives in partnership with the rail industry and Transport for the North.

Integrated Rail Plan for the Midlands and the north: Combined Authority submission to the Rail Needs Assessment for the Midlands and the north consultation

- 2.11 In February 2020 the Oakervee Review was published which was a report undertaken for the Government looking at whether and how to proceed with HS2. The report recommended that HS2 should go ahead, including the full Y shaped network to Leeds and Manchester but a further study to develop an Integrated Rail Plan (IRP) embracing HS2 alongside other rail investment programmes should be undertaken. The study should also look at how to quickly bring forward rail improvements for the Midlands and the North of England.
- 2.12 The IRP which is being developed over the summer will be informed by a rail needs assessment from the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) who issued a call for evidence at the end of March 2020. The NIC asked stakeholders including the Combined Authority to contribute by responding to a set of eleven questions. These focussed on how best to integrate and phase HS2 phase 2b with other transport programmes such as Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR), Trans-Pennine route upgrade (TRU) and local aspirations for rail improvements to unlock capacity and improve connectivity. The NIC were also very interested in how these proposals align and contribute to wider economic and environmental objectives both locally and nationally. The deadline for responses was 29th May 2020 and the submission provided at **Appendix 1** was on behalf of both the Combined Authority and the West & North Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce.
- 2.13 In our submission we call for a delivery plan which addresses the following:
- Sustainable inclusive economic growth which helps deliver decarbonisation and drives recovery and rebalancing post Covid19.
 - Delivering on local and national capacity and choice for rail passengers.
 - Increased capacity for freight.
 - A sequencing plan to deliver benefits much earlier and as they arise.
- We suffer from severe constraints on our network, particularly the routes into and through Leeds. Whilst the city will benefit from HS2, NPR and TRU this is a good example of where each project is only taking a project specific view at present. Without a coordinated short, medium and long term plan however, each project is likely to store problems for the next or only consider certain market needs not the totality.
- 2.14 In our submission we have focussed on five key pieces of infrastructure which need to be delivered but planned in such a way that each should be an enabler for another:

HS2 Phase 2B - Completion between the Midlands and Leeds in full – every year of delay costs the Leeds City Region economy £1.7 billion. There is potential to deliver benefits sooner which includes early delivery of the HS2

station alongside a link south to Clayton North to enable early introduction of NPR services to Sheffield.

NPR - Delivery of the full NPR network including a new line linking Leeds, Bradford and Manchester and a new through station in the centre of Bradford which could accommodate both NPR and Calder Valley services.

TRU - Completion by 2026 including electrification between Huddersfield, York and Selby and the Garforth touchpoint to provide additional capacity now to support economic recovery.

Leeds Station – Pedestrian capacity – the station is at capacity in terms of passenger numbers and will fail by 2026 impacting services and constraining growth. £8 million needs approving this year to continue our partnership to develop an outline business case to meet forecast growth requirements and plan how to deliver this in a phased manner. This is business critical to achieving a sustainable travel hub.

Network capacity – track and platform capacity at and around Leeds station is severely constrained and a bottleneck which impacts the local, regional and national network. Network Rail have identified potential interventions that are required to deliver future train services and support economic growth to 2043. This includes additional capacity on both eastern and western approaches to the station.

Electrification - A rolling programme to create an electrified City Region metro rail network starting with the Calder Valley line to decarbonise the railway and the economy.

- 2.15 We also cover in our submission the emerging thinking from the West Yorkshire Rail vision work covered earlier in this report including the need to address local connectivity gaps and also the requirement for continued investment in the East Coast Main Line.
- 2.16 We have expressed our willingness to work with the NIC and contribute to the IRP over the coming few months prior to their report being presented to the Government at the end of this year. This is to ensure the best outcome for the City Region to bring forward transformational rail improvements as quickly as possible.
- 2.17 To support the IRP submission, the Combined Authority alongside Leeds City Council and other HS2 East authorities commissioned a report which makes the case for delivering the HS2 Eastern Leg (from the East Midlands to Leeds) early and in full. The report available to download from www.hs2east.co.uk highlights the £58 billion transport investment deficit for Eastern authorities and how HS2 and supportive transport investments will create 150,000 additional jobs, contribute to a levelling up of the UK economy and support a reduction in carbon emissions.

New Stations Fund submission

- 2.18 It was reported to the Transport Committee at its meeting on 15 May 2020 that the Combined Authority would develop applications to the government's third round of the New Stations Fund (NSF). This is a £20m fund launched in February 2020 which could part-fund the delivery of new stations. The Combined Authority submitted two applications on 05 June 2020 for the new rail stations proposed at White Rose and Thorpe Park. The Department for Transport will carry out assessment of the NSF applications in August 2020 with an announcement on successful submissions expected in Autumn 2020. In the meantime, work is continuing to progress the development of the stations with existing funding.

Leeds Area Continuous Modular Strategic Planning (CMSP) Rail Study

- 2.19 As part of the industry's strategic planning process, Network Rail has recently completed a study on behalf on the industry seeking to identify how the rail network in and around Leeds can accommodate forecast growth and aspirations over the period between now and 2043. The focus is on Leeds and its surroundings, stretching westwards as far as Bradford and Skipton, northwards as far as Harrogate, eastwards as far as the approaches to York, and south towards Wakefield. Because of the pivotal nature of Leeds and its approaches, getting this area right in terms of unlocking congestion and providing train capacity is critical for West Yorkshire and the Leeds City Region as a whole – and its impacts are felt far wider across the North.
- 2.20 Whilst Network Rail has led the study, the Combined Authority has been closely involved over the last two years in the work, including in helping to frame the travel demand growth assumptions that should be used, and the ways in which this should be provided for in terms of the train services required for the future. The study has regard also to the implications of High Speed 2 and of Northern Powerhouse Rail. Based on analysing the pressure that all these future demands will place on the network, it has identified a potential programme of interventions to enhance the capacity of the network. These include, for example, stations where additional and/or longer platforms are needed, junctions where train conflicts may need to be removed by "grade-separation" (i.e. flyovers / diveunders), and stretches of two-track line that are likely to need four-tracking.
- 2.21 The potential interventions identified were linked to specific timescales, to show the short-, medium- and longer-term requirements, and order-of-magnitude costs estimates were given. It is important to emphasise that the work is the start of the process to deliver infrastructure enhancements, and that further progress will be subject to further refinement as well as, critically, to a positive business case. Undoubtedly the support of bodies such as the Combined Authority will place a major role in securing such progress and ultimately the funding of the intervention programme required.
- 2.22 It is notable that the starting point of this this particular study was that the current infrastructure in and around Leeds is already insufficient to cater for

present-day levels of demand and for the services that ought, according to the specifications of the franchises let in 2016, to have been operating by December 2019. Therefore, in parallel with and closely linked to the strategic study, Network Rail is also progressing the development of a series of high-priority schemes for delivery as a matter of urgency, to unlock the most pressing issues at Leeds and on the approaches to the station. It is hoped that these interventions will in practice follow directly on from the completion of the current works to provide the new Platform 0.

- 2.23 Key areas identified as constraints in the study are platform capacity at Leeds, Bradford Forster Square and Castleford stations, constraints on both the western and eastern approaches to Leeds Station, platform lengths across the study area and line capacity constraints between Armley Junction and Springs Junction. Pedestrian capacity at Leeds Station is found to be insufficient in the future with key areas identified as constraints at the gate lines, vertical circulation to platforms and constraints around Platform 17. Traction power supply is also a constraint in the Leeds Area.
- 2.24 The study has provided potential solutions to these constraints, in the form of infrastructure and operational interventions. The infrastructure solutions have been developed to an outline design and order of magnitude cost to provide a series of interventions. The short- and medium-term interventions identified are now being taken forward by the industry through a business case approach.
- 2.25 In parallel, the Combined Authority has also been carrying out independent work examining the pressures on the network, and identifying future infrastructure needs, on a wider West Yorkshire canvas, and taking into account our own demand growth forecasts and connectivity aspirations. The first stage of this work, focusing on infrastructure needs driven by demand growth, has recently reported, and this has provided independent evidence strongly suggesting that the conclusions and recommendations in the Leeds Area CMSP Rail Study are sound.
- 2.26 On this basis, it is suggested that the Combined Authority should make clear its support for Network Rail and the wider industry (including funders) to develop the Leeds Area CMSP Rail Study recommendations and obtain a commitment to their implementation. The result would be a phased and consistent set of interventions that will in a logical fashion provide the capacity and connectivity on the rail network that are needed now and will support its growth over the next two decades.

Leeds Existing Station Programme (LESP)

- 2.27 Leeds railway station is the busiest station in the North of England and is an important transport hub in this region. The station serves inter-city services to London, is an important stop on the Cross-Country network to Scotland, Midlands and Southwest England and it serves major Northern destinations including services to Manchester, Liverpool and Newcastle. It is also an important commuter station for local services, 80% of services in the West

Yorkshire area originate or terminate in Leeds Station. The number of rail passengers traveling to Leeds is predicted to increase by 34% by 2026 and by 81% to 2043. It is forecasted that the station will reach capacity by 2026 and urgent intervention is required to ensure this does not become a barrier to regional growth.

- 2.28 Redevelopment of Leeds station is crucial to support the growth of the city and the region. One of the key focuses of the redevelopment is to increase capacity for pedestrians and interchange passengers within the station to meet the projected growth in demand. It is closely aligned to the proposed improvements at Leeds station and approaches identified in the CMSP process.
- 2.29 In November 2017, the Leeds Integrated Station Masterplan (LISM) was published outlining proposals for redeveloping the station. It was jointly developed by the Leeds City Council, the Combined Authority, Network Rail, TfN, London Continental Railways and HS2.
- 2.30 To take this ambition forward, Network Rail and the above-mentioned public-sector partners have developed the Strategic Outline Business Case for a package of station enhancement works known as the Leeds Existing Station Programme (LESP). LESP is focused on resolving critical station user capacity issues, improving the passenger experience, better integrating and connecting the station with the city, building resilience to accommodate potential future rail programmes and enhancing the station retail offer.
- 2.31 The SOBC was submitted to the Department for Transport in December 2019. The submission seeks to establish Government endorsement for the proposition and seek approval for the release of funding for the next stage of work i.e. a 'Decision to Develop' within the Rail Network Enhancement Pipeline (RNEP). We are still waiting for a decision from the Government.

3. Clean Growth Implications

- 3.1 Championing growth and development of the local rail network is an important way in which the Combined Authority can facilitate modal shift to more sustainable modes of transport and support continued economic growth

4. Financial Implications

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

5. Legal Implications

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

6. Staffing Implications

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

7. External Consultees

7.1 The content of this report has been shared with Network Rail for comments prior to publication.

8. Recommendations

8.1 Transport Committee is invited to:

- (i) Note progress on development of the West Yorkshire Rail Vision and to endorse the proposed next steps.
- (ii) Note and endorse the Combined Authority's response to the Rail Needs Assessment for the Midlands and the north consultation
- (iii) Note and endorse the Combined Authority's submission to the New Stations Fund scheme.
- (iv) Welcome the publication of the Leeds Area Continuous Modular Strategic Planning study by Network Rail, and to endorse the need to actively support the case for development and funding of the recommended projects in partnership with Network Rail and Transport for the North.
- (v) Note progress on development of the Leeds Station Existing Programme business case and to endorse the need to actively support the funding case for this project in partnership with Network Rail, Leeds City Council and Transport for the North.

9. Background Documents

Rail Network Capacity in West Yorkshire. Set out in **Item 9** – West Yorkshire Transport Committee, 10 January 2020. Available via:

<http://westyorkshire.moderngov.co.uk>

The Leeds Area Continuous Modular Strategic Planning Rail Study is expected to be published by week commencing 29 June 2020, and it will be available on the Network Rail website here:

<https://www.networkrail.co.uk/running-the-railway/long-term-planning/>

National Infrastructure Commission background and information on the Rail Needs Assessment for the Midlands and the north, available at:

<https://www.nic.org.uk/our-work/rail-needs-assessment/>

10 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Combined Authority response to the Rail Needs Assessment for the Midlands and the north consultation