

“A New Approach to Rail Passenger Services in London and the South East”

Response from [REDACTED]

Q.1 Do you agree with the principle of a partnership to better integrate the specification of rail passenger services across London and the South East?

[REDACTED] strongly supports the objective of achieving better strategic direction of rail services which fully reflects local priorities for growth and delivers better outcomes for local people.

Q.2 Do you agree with the principles that the partnership will work to? Are there any specific issues that have not been captured?

The proposals for high quality comprehensive services will be widely welcomed. But many passengers outside London will regard these goals as extremely ambitious when contrasted with their daily experiences at present. [REDACTED] therefore urges the need for a transparent process for setting performance standards and measuring actual outcomes.

Q.3 Do you agree with the proposed governance arrangements?

The proposed Partnership will constitute an additional tier of management with attendant costs. [REDACTED] emphasises the importance of publicising clear and concise Partnership objectives together with robust performance measures. Given the compact nature of London, as compared with the dispersed rail network across the South East, stakeholders outside London will want the means to give particular scrutiny to the Partnership’s priorities.

Q.4 What form do you propose the input from Local Authorities and LEPs could take?

These stakeholders will be critical for achieving the Partnership’s overarching goals for supporting growth and meaningful local outcomes. This will require formal and transparent mechanisms for consultations about future strategies, regular stakeholder forums, and accountability for outcomes. The Partnership should also require these key stakeholders to demonstrate how they themselves will establish similarly robust relationships with other local stakeholders such as rail user groups.

Q.5 Do you agree with the safeguards for the transfer of inner suburban services to TfL set out here?

Stakeholders outside London will attach high importance to the promised safeguards for frequency, journey times and stopping patterns of longer distance services to and from London. [REDACTED] wants to highlight the pressures

suffered by longer distance travellers whenever service disruption occurs. Efficient long distance services with adequate capacity will give more commuters confidence to move out of London, thereby reducing stresses on inner London services. Performance in this regard will be a key test for the Partnership's success.

Q.6 Are there any other outcomes you might expect to be achieved?

Ambitions for faster and more reliable rail journeys between London and the south coast (with the exception of Brighton) are currently blighted by infrastructure constraints. The Brighton Mainline (and hence also the East and West Coastways) is overloaded, particularly in peak hours. The Charing Cross to Hastings line could only be significantly improved at inordinate cost. By contrast the St Pancras to Ashford high speed line has spare capacity. [REDACTED] therefore joins with other south coast stakeholders in urging the new Partnership to champion the project now being developed by Network Rail to extend high speed 'javelin' services from Ashford to Rye, Hastings and Bexhill – and, if viable, further west.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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