

Transport for London / Department for Transport Prospectus

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

Response from [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] welcomes the opportunity to comment on the joint Transport for London (TfL) and Department for Transport (DfT) prospectus "A New Approach to Rail Passenger Services in London and the South East". [REDACTED] makes the following responses to the set questions:

Question 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] *supports, in principle, greater devolution of rail franchising and broadly welcomes a DfT/TfL partnership approach in the context of rail passenger services in London and the South East, and the opportunity for local authorities to have a greater say in the development of franchise specifications.*

However, [REDACTED] does have concerns about the impact of rail devolution on Freedom Pass costs for the Borough. As a consequence of the GLA Act 1999, any devolution of suburban rail services to TfL, will result in Freedom Passes becoming valid for use during weekday morning peaks and London Boroughs shall become liable for meeting the costs, as well as meeting the costs associated with the use of Freedom Passes for travel outside of London. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] supports the London Councils' on-going lobbying of TfL on this matter, and agrees with the London Councils' view that it is important that these discussions with TfL lead to a satisfactory agreement with London's local authorities in order to secure their support for greater rail devolution.

It is noted that the Prospectus does not contain proposals for new rail infrastructure or changes to rail infrastructure governance, because the funding and structure of Network Rail is currently being reviewed by Nicola Shaw. However, [REDACTED] believes that once the review has been completed the partnership approach should be extended to include greater local control in London over rail infrastructure planning to ensure that rail investment is coordinated with rail service improvements and includes input from local authorities.

Question 2

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

And;

Question 6

Are there other outcomes you might expect to see achieved?

██████████ broadly agrees with those Principles and Outcomes listed in the prospectus but believes that the following should also be included:

Additional Principles

- Value for money for passengers, including affordability of fares.
- Safety and security.
- Cost effectiveness and efficiency.

It should also be emphasised that the objectives need to be delivered over the lifetime of a franchise and, therefore, there needs to be mechanisms that allow changes to be made to the contracted service within the franchise term.

Additional Outcomes

More frequent services, better interchanges and increased capacity:

- *reviewing freight paths to identify possible additional passenger capacity during peak times*

Greater reliability for all passengers:

- *through the specification of franchises ensure train operators adequately engage with its customers*

High standards of customer service:

- *it should be emphasised how important the provision of information is especially at times of planned and unplanned disruption*
- *All day staffing of stations*
- *Part-time season tickets*
- *Loans for season tickets*
- *Off-peak travelcards*
- *Better awareness of existing discounts, such as the daily cap for Oyster and contactless payment, and the Jobcentre Plus Travel Discount*
- *Concessionary fares for those on low incomes*

██████████ believes that service and infrastructure improvements should be pursued and implemented as soon as possible and not have to wait until a re-franchising process is undertaken.

Question 3

Do you agree with the proposed governance arrangements?

The information in the prospectus on governance is at a very high level and provides very little detail. However, the general principles appear to be reasonable.

Question 4

What form do you propose the input from local authorities and LEPs should be?

It will be crucial that local authorities provide input from the start of the process of preparing a new franchise specification. [REDACTED] believes that all local authorities whose areas will be served by the franchised service should be invited to engage in the full process as a member of a stakeholders' advisory panel through regular meetings.

Question 5

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

It is important that the issue over Freedom Passes, raised in our response to Question 1 above, is fully addressed prior to the further transfer of inner suburban services to TfL.

In addition, [REDACTED] makes the following comments relating to Appendix II "Possible Improvements in Support of a London Metro" in the context of the South East London section:

- *Short term ('to 2018' implied):*
 - *[REDACTED] would support delivery of extra rolling stock to facilitate roll-out of more 12-car trains.*
 - *More information is required on what sort of service changes might be planned for existing lines on opening of Crossrail to Abbey Wood in 2018. [REDACTED] would oppose fewer trains as it is essential to ensure good connections at Abbey Wood in/out of Crossrail.*
- *Medium term (new franchise – implies post-June 2018):*
 - *Good, consistent reliability improvements would be very welcome. Actions should also be taken to deliver better reliability even earlier than this. Reliability needs to be considered in terms of both routine operations and potentially serious and/or recurring infrastructure failures (e.g. embankment stability around Barnehurst).*
 - *All-day station staffing is strongly supported – a matter of concern for [REDACTED] for some time.*
 - *Other quality improvements proposed (cleaner, "refreshed" stations; train refurbishment) are also to be welcomed, to give the system "as is" a thorough spring clean prior to bigger interventions. The Networker trains have been in service for 25 years and are in real need of extensive refurbishing.*
 - *Integrated fares – fares simplification is to be supported provided it does not result in more expensive journeys. Better value travel is very important; improvements should include better discounts for regular travellers using services less than five days per week.*

- *Off peak enhancements – more off peak trains/better frequencies are to be supported, including more regular “loop” services to provide north-south links within the borough, especially for connections with Crossrail.*
- *Long term (no timescale stated):*
 - *A new interchange at Brockley with Bexleyheath-Victoria services would be welcome, to assist orbital journeys to/from south London (e.g. Croydon).*
 - *Upgrades to Lewisham as an interchange would be welcome, especially if more Sidcup line trains are able to call there.*
 - *Better signalling, to improve both reliability and frequencies would be welcome.*
 - *More high-capacity trains: here, there is a trade-off between maximising seating and maximising capacity. [REDACTED] is aware that passengers (from the south and east of the borough particularly) would not welcome significantly more trains with fewer seats – particularly bearing in mind the needs of passengers who are travelling for longer or who are less able to stand.*
 - *Making 12-car operation the norm is to be welcomed.*
- *Further capacity enhancements:*
 - *Capacity freed up at Lewisham needs to be used to enhance both peak and off-peak service levels in the borough to/from central London and to maximise the number of Sidcup line trains that are able to call there (e.g. for interchange with Bakerloo/DLR).*

Officers from [REDACTED] would be happy to meet with representatives from TfL and DfT to discuss [REDACTED] comments further. [REDACTED] would welcome continued engagement with TfL/DfT on this matter.

It would be appreciated if you would acknowledge receipt of our response by email to:

[REDACTED]