

[REDACTED]

Rail Prospectus Consultation  
Great Minster House  
33 Horseferry Road  
London  
SW1P 4DR

[REDACTED]

Date: 17/03/2016

Dear Sir/Madam

**DfT/TfL Rail Prospectus consultation – [REDACTED] Response**

We do support the idea of a DfT/TfL partnership and the plans for a London Metro Service as set out in our answers below. We would also like to see the partnership go further and have greater responsibility for infrastructure investment decisions.

**Do you agree with the principles of a partnership to better integrate the specifications of rail passenger services across London and the South East?**

Yes. We support the creation of a partnership between the DfT/TfL, which will be responsible for the procurement and specification for the day-to-day management of the railways. We believe that the London Mayor's involvement, in setting train service specifications, will be preferable to the current situation, whereby the DfT is solely responsible for setting the specification of rail franchises which serve the capital and its surrounding travel to work area.

While this consultation is wholly concerned with the operational issues rather than strategic we want to take this opportunity to also voice our support for greater local involvement in the strategic planning of new rail infrastructure which is vital to supporting the growth of housing and jobs in London and the South East of England.

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

We agree fully with the principles of having greater reliability for all passengers and high standards of customer services. The principle of having more frequent services, better interchanges and increased capacity is something that we support with the caveat that this should not simply be limited to improvements on existing routes and stations. There needs to be a strategic plan which reviews and sets out how revised services can introduce new links and improvements in connectivity.

[REDACTED]

An issue which hasn't been fully captured is the principle of improved rail services being explicitly linked to spatial plans. Rail infrastructure improvements should be reviewed and prioritised on the basis of their ability to support new housing and jobs as set out in the relevant spatial plans for the region – whether that is within London or the wider south east.

The great success of passenger growth on the London Overground orbital link, which TfL took responsibility for in 2007 is instructive on how this partnership should work. The success of the London Overground was underpinned by investment in new track and infrastructure, which created an orbital railway with new connections that passengers valued. The same approach needs to be taken for wider London services with a review of how the existing infrastructure could support new rail connections in areas where there is huge latent demand. For [REDACTED] to fulfil its potential for economic growth we are reliant upon new passenger services which, like the Overground London Orbital, largely makes use of existing rail infrastructure. The boroughs plans are detailed below but we will not be alone in wanting changes to routes in order to deliver economic growth.

Our specific concerns are that any increases in frequency of service on the Hounslow Loop into and out of Waterloo will reduce the capacity of the line to facilitate new connections, such as that proposed by [REDACTED] for a new Hounslow to Old Oak Common Overground extension. Whilst we welcome an increase of frequency to 6tph (which is essentially being proposed by Network rail as part of CP5), any further increase would be a cause for concern. Providing more seats to the same destinations does not increase the proportion of people who can reach our key employment areas within 60mins by public transport - which is a key request made by [REDACTED]. In particular we feel it essential that we are able to link [REDACTED] with Crossrail/HS2 and the Old Oak opportunity area if our proposals for housing and employment growth in the metropolitan town centre of Hounslow and in the Great West Road Strategic Outer London Development Centre are to be realised. Improving orbital connections will also help improve the attractiveness of public transport as an alternative to the private car, which is a key objective of our, and the Mayor's, transport strategy.

The issue of capacity is of particular concern if the Hounslow loop is used as a release valve for the Richmond line given the issues with level crossings on this section of track. This also raises questions about how the balance between the needs of suburban London via out of London is to be achieved. Proposals to route more fast or semi-fast services from Reading via Hounslow, whilst providing extra capacity into Waterloo for people outside of London, do not provide benefit to many of [REDACTED] and once again compromise future opportunities for new services and connections that may use this infrastructure. [REDACTED] will strongly object to the use of the line by services that offer no benefit for those who live or work in Hounslow [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

As TfL/DfT will be aware, the council also has aspirations to reopen the Southall – Brentford (Golden Mile) freight line for passenger use. At the current time [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]. We note that this franchise is up for negotiation next year, yet there does not appear to be any mention of these services as being devolved to TfL in this document? Whilst it is understood that Crossrail will be running on this line, can the status of service proposals such as [REDACTED], and also existing branch lines which currently form part of this franchise, be clarified in the light of the prospectus?

Lastly [REDACTED] has put forward proposals for an alignment that would achieve rail access to Heathrow from the Windsor lines. The proposed infrastructure solution would facilitate access to Terminal 5 from both London and Country services. A new station in the Bedfont area will unlock significant opportunity for many thousands of homes and jobs in London's borders. This station would nominally be in travelcard zone 6, however it is not clear whether the vision for a London Suburban Metro would stretch west of Feltham. Clearly with services operated by TfL already stretching to Reading (Crossrail) there is potentially a case to include all Windsor and Reading services in the devolution proposal. Regardless, we would like clarity on whether TfL /DfT feels that a southern rail access proposal, on whatever alignment is eventually agreed, would be run under a devolved arrangement or would form part of another franchise.

### **Do you agree with the proposed governance arrangements?**

We support responsibility for inner London suburban rail services being devolved to TfL as set out in the rail prospectus.

### **What form do you propose the input from local authorities and LEP's could take?**

The question of how LEPs and local authorities can best engage and input to the specification with the partnership is crucial. It was raised at the stakeholder event hosted by the DfT/TfL, held on Friday 11 February and it was stated that there are an estimated 72 LEPs and local authorities which have a stake in the rail services the partnership would be responsible for. We support the creation of regional meetings based on groupings of mainline termini. For example, local authorities and LEPs served by Waterloo and Victoria (with Clapham junction as a common link between the two) could form one region. This would provide a forum where relevant parties could discuss how inner suburban and long distance routes could be accommodated along particular routes.

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

We agree that there should be no detrimental effect on fares. The second safeguard states that extra capacity being provided on peak local London services will only be delivered if there are no adverse impacts on the frequency, journey times or stopping patterns of longer distance services to and from London. This would be the ideal scenario but if large benefits can be delivered to the local London services for only minor dis-benefits to longer distance ones we would still like to see these be taken forward.

### **Are there other outcomes you might expect to see achieved?**

We noted [REDACTED] that [REDACTED] is keen to help match fund any potential improvements for station accessibility and we do not think it would be overly difficult to achieve full accessibility from platform to street across all mainline rail stations [REDACTED]. We therefore welcome any focus on this area of work.

We also note in this response that a number of rail stations [REDACTED] have station car parks of varying sizes. With the possible exception of some disabled parking, we

do not see any policy rationale for car parking provision within London as it is eminently feasible to access stations via public transport, walking and cycling. These spaces are potentially valuable development opportunities and could provide opportunities to deliver affordable housing and/or improved amenity spaces/commercial opportunities for local residents to enjoy. It is not clear whether the freeholder of the stations, currently held by Network Rail, is also going to be passed to TfL. Can this be clarified?

Can the aspiration to have a 4tph service, preferably 6tph service be confirmed to include Sunday working?

The detail of how this partnership develops and how stakeholders can engage and influence the specification for rail services will also be key and we look forward to being involved in the development of the partnership in the coming months.

Yours sincerely,

