

Rt. Hon. Patrick McLoughlin M.P. & Mayor Boris Johnson
C/o Rail Partnership Engagement
Transport for London
5R3 Palestra
197 Blackfriars Road
London SE1 8NJ


17 March 2016

Dear Patrick and Boris


A new approach to rail passenger services in London and the South East


Thank you for consulting  on a new approach to rail passenger services in London and the South East. 



Having reviewed the consultation document,  broadly welcomes the new approach and fully supports the objective to improve services and support economic growth. Our response to the individual consultation questions is as follows: -

Q1 - Do you agree with the principle of a partnership to better integrate the specification of rail passenger services across London and the South East?

A1 –  broadly supports the proposal put forward for a partnership between TfL and the DfT to improve the quality and reliability of rail services across London and the South East. This support is predicated on the new partnership working closely with the LEP and local transport authorities outside of Greater London. A mechanism for these bodies to be represented and given decision-making powers on the partnership is crucial, given their ability to help lever local investment to drive forward growth and their role in representing local businesses and commuters that use the South East rail network.

 welcomes the DfT and TfL putting safeguards in place that afford the rail commuter living in Kent and Medway the same level of priority as those commuters living within London.

Q2 - Do you agree with the principles that the partnership will work to? Are there any specific issues that have not been captured?

A2 – [REDACTED] shares the ambitions of the DfT and TfL to see:

- More frequent services, better interchanges, and increased capacity – to support growth, carry more people and help address crowding.
- Greater reliability for all passengers – putting excellent performance at the heart of train operator contracts.
- High standards of customer service – including more integrated information, fares and ticketing, as well as weekend and night services, and a more accessible network.

[REDACTED] commends the commitment to increase reliability and capacity on the rail network, and the investment by Government (that should follow as a consequence) in infrastructure improvements (such as rolling-stock, additional crews, and the number of station staff).

In addition to the three TfL and DfT ambitions, [REDACTED] wishes to propose three further principles for consideration:

- A fourth principle would be to **retain the existing train pathways**, and seek to **expand the choice of destination** wherever it is pragmatic and economically feasible to do so. For example Maidstone, [REDACTED], seeks the restoration of direct services to the City of London (Cannon Street/London Bridge) at peak times.
- The fifth principle [REDACTED] wishes to see delivered is the **significant reduction in journey times for Kent and Medway commuters**.
- The sixth principle is for the **pricing of fares to be more equitable across London and the home counties** that surround London.

It is evident that Kent commuters, travelling equivalent distances, pay hundreds of pounds more per year for slower services than commuters residing in other home counties, such as West Sussex, Surrey and Buckinghamshire.

To provide two examples of the disparity:

- A West Malling commuter pays £916* per year more to travel on a 40mph train than a commuter from Haywards Heath in West Sussex travelling on a 47mph train.
- A Sevenoaks commuter pays £152* per year more to travel on a 38mph train than a commuter from Woking in Surrey travelling on a 56mph train.

*[*Based on purchasing a London Travelcard Zones 1-6 ticket from the station in question. Data from <http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/>]*

[REDACTED] considers it is imperative that a fair and equitable deal is provided for commuters irrespective of which county they reside in.

Q3 - Do you agree with the proposed governance arrangements?

A3 – [REDACTED] supports the proposal for the partnership “to take into account the views of local authorities, LEPs, and other local organisations as part of its work to recommend the

specification and management arrangements". However, it would be helpful to understand in greater depth the process by which the views will be "taken into account" to ensure the interests of Kent and Medway's rail passengers, and similarly those of other non-London authorities, are properly represented.

As stated in our response to question one, [REDACTED] wishes to ensure the same level of priority is afforded to all commuters regardless of their place of residence.

Q4 - What form do you propose the input from local authorities and LEPs could take?

A4 – [REDACTED] agrees that the inclusion of representatives on the Board from the non-London authorities and LEPs could ensure a balanced approach to delivering a better railway for all rail passengers in the London and South East region.

The input from local transport authorities and LEPs should support the DfT and TfL by providing a strategic overview of the needs of organisations, businesses and residents within their geographical area, and by shaping the principles and detail of the specifications to enhance the rail network and improve the travelling experience of passengers.

In addition to creating a mechanism for local transport authorities and the LEPs to feed into the partnership, [REDACTED] would seek confirmation that other local authorities without transport responsibilities (i.e. the Districts and Boroughs) will be formally consulted on new contracts (such as the potential new rail operator contract) in order to achieve the most comprehensive stakeholder view.

Secondly, the input from local transport authorities and LEPs is required to ensure the safeguards protecting long-distance rail services through the suburbs to their London termini are adhered to.

Q5 - Do you agree with the safeguards for transfer of inner suburban services to TfL, as set out here?

A5 – [REDACTED] supports the two safeguards specified in the consultation, but would seek to see these expanded to include [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
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[REDACTED]