Hi,

I'd like to provide my feedback on the consultation document published back in January 2016. I write this with my own personal experiences, and those I see daily whilst running ██

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?

Yes - with London ever expanding outwards beyond the zone 6 (now 9) that we once existed in, it's important that those commuting into the inner zones have a decent level of rail services, comparable to other major cities around the world.

Having this under the governance of one body (TfL) will help bring consistency to the service, and put the interests of those using the railway first. Including those visiting our country from abroad.

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

In principle - yes.

1. I note that infrastructure investment is highlighted here - it is important that specifications for new rolling stock/reassignment of rolling stock is addressed as early as possible. In the Southeastern Metro region, we had years of engineering work around a decade ago to extend platforms for 12-car working, and yet we only have a handful of services taking advantage of that. This is an easy win for peak services, whilst providing enough spare stock for maintenance - failed trains is a problem we see all too many times on Southeastern, which can lead to knock-on delays of hours...as seen earlier this week on Monday with a failed train mid-afternoon causing delays past evening peak.

3. Customer service standards need to be increased - too often do I read that the attitudes of staff being far from the standards that I see across the Underground.

A simpler fare structure will also be welcomed - for example there are way too many from Dartford, and unless you know where to look, you may pay more for an off-peak journey than you should...even before factoring in Oyster/Contactless! Rail users should be able to buy a ticket and know they're getting the best deal.

Question 3
Do you agree with the proposed governance arrangements?

Yes - however it would be prudent for the DfT/TfL to consult with local rail groups in the areas that would be affected for their feedback on the specifications laid out for operators under this proposal

Question 4
What form do you propose the input from local authorities and LEPs could take?

As per question 3 - they should be allowed to feedback on the specifications.

Whether or not rail groups are asked to feedback via local groups or directly is another question. Personally it would be better for the DfT/TfL to openly ask groups for their feedback without relying on LAs/LEPs to feed this back

Question 5
Do you agree with the safeguards for transfer of inner suburban services to TfL, as set out here?

Yes - and welcome details on how longer distance services will fall into this - there's understandable concerns from those who travel from further outside of the Greater London boundary that their services will be cut. Defining 'adverse impacts' may help ease this concern.

Question 6
Are there other outcomes you might expect to see achieved?

What is laid out in the prospectus is a good starting point.

Working better with Network Rail to deal with incidents on the railway may help reduce some of the delays we see daily, or even the ability to route services in a sensible manner to reduce delays.

As we go forward into the future, reducing the defined pathway for a train for its working throughout the day could help reduce future delays. Sometimes turning a train round early so its path is restored, is counter-intuitive and disruptive for the rail user. With better algorithms and the whole network to play with, the effects of infrastructure/rolling stock failing could surely be reduced?

Whilst the document looks at how things could be improved, it's also important to ensure that when rail users are delayed, there is an appropriate level of compensation paid - ideally proportional to the timetabled journey time - I hope that with the introduction of smart ticketing that this would be easier to achieve in an automated fashion.

Please feel free to contact me if you'd like any other feedback