

[REDACTED]

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

Date: 16<sup>th</sup> March 2016

—  
Dear Sir/Madam

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposals contained in your Rail Prospectus, which we very much welcome.

Please find our response below.

**A new approach to rail passenger services in London and the South East - DfT / TfL / Mayor of London (January 2016)**

**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 the principle of a partnership between the DfT and TfL to better integrate the specification of rail passenger services across London and the South East. We recognise the importance of achieving the right balance between suburban stopping trains and longer distance fast trains on London's congested rail network. This partnership should assist in meeting the needs of both while also making improvements to suburban train frequencies to meet the needs of London's growing population and economy. We also welcome the commitment to give local authorities and other partners more of a say in the specification and management of rail services.

The improvement of suburban rail services is a key element of [REDACTED] [REDACTED] as this would help us get people out of their cars and onto public transport. [REDACTED] desire for Tramlink, Crossrail 2 and bringing the London Overground to Sutton. These services are all interrelated and will raise the level

[REDACTED]

of public transport accessibility and connectivity considerably. [REDACTED] does not have any Underground services and has missed out on other major rail investment in recent years, including the proposed Crossrail 2 service which will not serve [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. Therefore the proposed improvements to heavy rail services, [REDACTED], are crucial to support the borough's growth plans and enhance connectivity and accessibility for residents and businesses.

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

[REDACTED] supports the principles that the partnership will work to which will improve services and stations both for existing passengers and projected future growth. However, in terms of funding, it should not necessarily be seen as essential to reduce the cost to the Government and taxpayers. The railway performs a wider social and economic as well as transport function and should be seen as a public service to be funded largely by taxpayers, as with roads, rather than largely by fare payers. The UK already has some of the highest rail fares in the world and it would be unfair to expect passengers to foot more of the bill for the railways cost. A recent report from London Travelwatch (Living on the Edge December 2015) highlighted the impact of high public transport fares on low paid workers living in outer London. We therefore strongly support proposals to fully integrate London's suburban rail services with TfL's zonal fares system. We would also support the wider roll out of Oyster outside London to places such as Epsom. It is important that the fares structure incentivises off-peak travel through lower fares off peak, including contra-peak flow at peak times.

We support the idea of unlocking development value in transport land and stations, and making best use of private sector funding wherever possible, to reduce the burden on the fare and tax payer. However, transport improvements should be seen as being desirable in their own right rather than being entirely development-led.

In summary, the principles of the partnership should ensure that the passenger is put at the heart of rail planning and operations, and that targets and operational convenience do not work against passenger interests.

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

[REDACTED] supports the proposed governance arrangements which would involve transferring responsibility to TfL for inner suburban services. Some clarity is required as to where the boundary of responsibility between TfL and the DfT would lie, as [REDACTED] is served by both inner and outer suburban services. Indeed, we consider the terminology of inner and outer suburban services to be somewhat misleading. [REDACTED] is considered to be an outer London suburb but is

served by so-called inner suburban services as well as those 'outer suburban' service from outside Greater London. 'London' and 'Country' services may be better terms.

As well as giving local authorities greater input into service specification, the South London Partnership, which represents a number of south London boroughs, should have a say, as well as bodies such as London Councils and the London Assembly.

A forum should be established that brings together London Boroughs and neighbouring counties to ensure a joined-up approach to managing both inner and outer suburban services.

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

Local authorities should be able to contribute to the franchise specification and timetabling as well as decisions regarding infrastructure in their areas. They should be consulted closely at all stages of the process, as well as on on-going investment and operational management issues.

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

The council supports the safeguards set out such as there being no detrimental effect on fares and no adverse impact on frequency and stopping patterns. Indeed we would expect to see all lines and stations benefit from these proposals, including the Thameslink loop line and the Epsom Downs line. Whilst welcoming potential new routes such as to London Bridge, we would not want to see existing route patterns lost, particularly the stopping services between Sutton and Victoria via Hackbridge. Requiring Victoria-bound passengers to interchange at Streatham would incur a journey time penalty unless frequencies are enhanced close to Underground levels, and these trains may already be full, forcing passengers to stand at peak times.

On the Sutton to Victoria line via Hackbridge, Carshalton station serves a substantial residential area as well as Carshalton FE College, three secondary schools, the Council's Denmark Road offices and visitors to heritage, theatre, leisure and recreation attractions in Carshalton. Hackbridge is a major growth centre, with up to 750 new homes soon to be built on the former Felnax industrial area opposite, as well as new homes on the industrial site next to the station. In addition Hackbridge station currently serves significant commuter traffic from a wide area due to it being in zone 4.

It is important to recognise the existing travel patterns that people have established and based their life decisions on. Furthermore journey times should not be adversely affected, and where possible improved through better timetabling and stopping patterns.

The document seems to suggest that longer distance services will be given priority over local stopping services. In order to increase metro frequencies as proposed, we would expect to see sufficient paths allocated for local inner-suburban services.

Extensive consultation should be carried out before any final decisions are made on route and service specifications.

Provision also needs to be made for any increase in Freedom Pass costs that might accrue to London Boroughs with TfL takeover of rail services in London.

It is important that sufficient funding is provided to TfL to enable the proposed service and station improvements to be made as well as beneficial changes to the fares structure.

— Our main aims are for frequency (at least 4 per hour on all lines), reliability, comfort and high quality services including decent stations, modern rolling stock and renewed signalling and infrastructure to increase the speed of services, and reduce delays.

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

We would expect Sundays to have a similar level of service to Saturdays and would expect that sufficient drivers are recruited to ensure that Sunday services can be fully resourced. Boxing Day services should also be introduced as standard.

It is important that station staffing levels are maintained and where necessary increased, and that stations are staffed from first to last train to ensure passenger safety and provide assistance.

We trust that you will take these comments on board and we look forward to working with you on these proposals.

Yours faithfully,

