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

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Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this consultation and for the excellent briefing on Friday 11th March at Marsham Street.

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We turn now to the Consultation questions:

Question 1. Do we agree the Principles of a Partnership? Yes.

Question 2. Do we the principles that the Partnership will work to? No – see below.

Are there any specific issues that have not been captured? We are concerned to note that journey times are not mentioned. We appreciate and understand the conflicting demands on line capacity and the balance between station stops and journey times has been a challenge since the railways were built. This is a particular problem with the Reading – Waterloo where journey times are extended and average speeds barely above 30mph, something on which we seek improvement in the next SW franchise. We appreciate that stopping patterns and journey times are essentially another compromise and we would have concerns on how the relative priorities would be decided to achieve journey time reductions.

Question 3. Do we agree with the proposed governance arrangements? Yes - subject to Berkshire representation on the Partnership forum.

Question 4. What form do we propose the input from local authorities and LEPs should be? Essentially as now via written submissions to consultations which gives all local authorities and LEPs the opportunity for considered input.

Question 5. Do you we agree with the safeguards for transfer of inner suburban services to TfL? Yes with certain reservations. We are very conscious that stops by the Reading – Waterloo services are valued by passengers at Feltham, Twickenham and Richmond because it gives them a ‘fast’ train to Waterloo. But for passengers from Berkshire and Surrey these stops extend journey times and create overcrowding. Therefore we seek improvement where possible on simply “no adverse impacts on the frequency, journey times.... “ and realise that we are suggesting changes to the stopping patterns (to enable journey time reductions) which is contrary to the principles suggested. We do not accept that the current service represents the optimum solution which must be safeguarded.

Question 6. Are there other outcomes we expect to see achieved? No. We appreciate that ticketing is currently very much a live topic on which much development under way. We are also fully aware of the leadership of TfL in this field.

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