

**Local Government North Yorkshire and York****18 July 2014****RAILWAY MATTERS UPDATE – JULY 2014****1. Rail devolution of rail services to the North**

- a. Local Authorities and the PTE's across the North are developing proposals for the devolution of rail powers to the north through a body known as Rail North.
- b. Rail North has three over-arching objectives:
  - i. To support economic growth by delivering more rail capacity and better rail connectivity
  - ii. To improve the quality of the railways in the North, with a better offer for passengers encouraging more use
  - iii. To deliver a more efficient railway and to secure greater value for money for the support from the public purse
- c. Work towards devolution of the North of England's railway services continues to progress and is now entering a phase where decisions affecting local authorities in the North are due to be made.
- d. North Yorkshire County Councils position on devolution has been one of support in principle, however with caveats in relation to the detail of Risk; Governance, Democratic Accountability and Competence.
- e. Rail North, in so far as it has an identity, has secured an understanding from Secretary of State that they (RN and DfT) will work in partnership throughout the franchise process and subsequent management of the franchise agreement.
- f. It is now the position that this partnership is felt to be on a pathway to full devolution that is being developed and that this will require rigorous democratic governance arrangements in place across the Northern Authorities.
- g. At the present time NYCC have member representation on the shadow bodies.
- h. By Autumn 2014 governance arrangements need to be agreed by all Rail North Transport Authorities.

- i. Over the summer, one to one briefing and roadshows will be held with local transport authorities to advise on the mechanism for participation and on the impact and opportunity of participation in a Rail North Association

## 2. Northern and Transpennine Rail Franchises

- a. Department for Transport have issued a consultation on the Transpennine Express and Northern Rail Franchises, (<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/future-of-northern-and-transpennine-express-rail-franchises>) responses are required by **18th August 2014**. The consultation will inform the Invitation to Tender (ITT) which will be issued to bidders in December 2014.
- b. The consultation is issued as a joint DfT and Rail North consultation, and as such Rail North will not be responding directly. Rail North officers have been working closely with DfT officials to draw up the document to secure as many of the aspirations of Rail North as possible, whilst meeting Treasury aspirations for a low cost Railway.
- c. Districts have been asked to provide information / evidence and copies of responses to North Yorkshire County Council for inclusion in the response. Districts can also respond directly.
- d. The two franchises will commence on February 2016 and operate for between 7 and 10 years.
- e. The DfT have asked a series of questions relating to rail services across the North and are looking for evidence as part of the response. The questions are themed around :-
  - i. Fares and ticketing – with questions around increasing below average fares, reduction in services at lightly used stations (11 of the 46 North Yorkshire stations may fall in this category) to get improvements in quality frequency and rolling stock. Reduction in station staffing and ticket office hours is also included.
  - ii. Community - how can they play an active part and are there opportunities being missed. Alongside of this there are questions about the availability of third party funding and are there factors that may impact on demand for travel on the franchises, this is where evidence is required e.g. Local Plans, economic data etc.,
  - iii. Access to the Railway – how can access to stations be improved.
  - iv. Timetable questions though slightly different apply to both franchises :-
    - 1. Should the timetable be market led or strictly specified and why, where should trains stop, frequency, journey times and connectivity especially with Manchester Airport.
    - 2. Early / Late trains – where would we want earlier and later trains and why.
    - 3. Weekend trains – where should they serve and why.

4. Should the Scarborough – York service transfer from Transpennine to Northern.
  5. Impact of Electrification: – **Middlesbrough** (serve Northallerton and Thirsk) as the route to Middlesbrough is not being electrified services may terminate at York or Leeds or continue as now. **Scarborough – York** as the route is not being electrified services may terminate at York or Leeds.
  6. Similar questions are being asked about other routes across the North that are not being electrified. The most sensitive is the route from Cleethorpes – Doncaster.
  7. Specifically within the Northern franchise area, stops at low usage stations are again raised.
- v. Anything else that we feel is relevant.

### 3. East Coast Main Line issues.

#### a. Inter City East Coast Franchise

- i) The bidders are East Coast Trains Ltd (First Group plc), Keolis/Eurostar East Coast Limited (Keolis (UK) Limited and Eurostar International Limited), Inter City Railways Limited (Stagecoach Transport Holdings Limited and Virgin Holdings Limited) and all have had meetings to go through our consultation response.
- ii) The bids are currently being assessed by the DfT with an announcement by the Secretary of State in the early Autumn.
- iii) The new franchise will start in March 2015 and last up to 9 years.
- iv) As part of the bid process the DfT have asked the bidders to **consider** serving four potential new destinations and this included Scarborough and Harrogate (via York).
- v) Due to the confidential nature of the bids we have not been able to see what bidders have proposed.

#### b. East Coast Main Line Authorities Group (ECMA)

- i) ECMA represents all Local Authorities along the East Coast Main Line, including Regional Transport Partnerships in Scotland. Elected Members meet at least twice a year and Officers meet regularly through a rail technical group and economic group. City of York are in the lead.
- ii) Research was commissioned and a “manifesto” for the line will be launched at Holyrood House with MSP’s on 15<sup>th</sup> July and in Westminster with Leaders, Ministers, MP’s etc., on 17<sup>th</sup> July.
- iii) The key messages from the research are that the economies could generate over £5 billion in additional Gross Domestic Product if passenger services were improved to what has been described as

a “Silver Standard” (8 InterCity train paths an hour to / from London (25% increase) and at an average speed of 100mph). Reliability, Resilience and Connectivity along the route including serving new destinations and emerging sectors are also seen as vital.

- iv) There are many strategic decisions that need to be made about the East Coast Main Line over the next few years and ECMA will have a vital role in representing all the communities.
- v) The research shows that investment in both the ECML and the eastern arm of HS2 is complementary; with through services from HS2 creating the conditions along the whole ECML that would generate a higher total Gross Domestic Product of £9 billion. Thus, investment in the ECML needs to be made as well as investment in HS2 to allow both to perform to their full economic potential.

#### **4. Update on HS2 affecting NY, York and the East Riding.**

- a. HS2 Limited are currently working through responses to the consultation on the Preferred Route earlier in the year and should be reporting back by the end of 2014.
- b. The North Yorkshire County Council position is :-
  - i) North Yorkshire County Council supports the HS2 initiative and is keen to engage in a productive way, with HS2 and DfT officers over issues raised in our response. In particular we would welcome discussion about the connection to the classic network, the alignment through North Yorkshire and the impacts of HS2 operations on the classic network through Northallerton Station.
  - ii) The East Coast Main Line is an important long distance rail network linking many towns, cities and communities along its route and should continue to receive investment for growth and reliability.
  - iii) Build from the North – given the long timelines, and especially the late start date (2027) of the Leeds phase, bringing forward the Northern route would have additional economic benefits in frontloading construction jobs and delivering the benefits of HS2 sooner.
  - iv) Ensure compensation arrangements properly compensate residents and businesses that are affected. This is something we need the Task Force to recognise and engage with more proactively, using local authorities to facilitate further conversations with communities.
  - v) Keep close control on costs to ensure HS2 is delivered on time and within the budget.
  - vi) York station will be a major hub for rail and it is vital that there is no impact on how the station operates for local, national and potentially international services. Many North Yorkshire residents will use York station to join the HS2 network and the passenger facilities need to be brought up to the standard of the new build HS2 stations.

- c. Leeds City Region, surrounding Districts, NYCC, DfT, Network Rail and HS2 are meeting regularly to ensure that the maximum benefits are achieved from HS2, the concentration so far has been on ensuring the best connectivity to the HS2 network. Atkins Consultants have been appointed to develop a Connectivity Strategy by the end of the year and will be arranging meetings with partners in the next few months. The Consultants will be looking for evidence, etc; identifying the benefits / opportunities of HS2 with the partners to build the strategy going forward. The work will feed into the other HS2 connectivity work taking place, including the recent Chancellor's on HS3 and connecting the Northern Cities.
- d. HS2 have contacted Local and District Councils for information on highways and environmental issues
- e. Network Rail and DfT are also now working up plans for the route "onto and using the classic networks of the East Coast Main Line (just South of York to the North East) and West Coast Main Line" and also how best to serve Scotland. There will be further Network Rail consultation with Local Authorities on these issues over the next 18 months.

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