

# HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

## Decision Report

<b>Decision Maker:</b>	Executive Member for Environment and Transport
<b>Date:</b>	11 July 2017
<b>Title:</b>	Hampshire County Council's Rail Position Statement
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

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### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this paper is to update the Executive Member on recent developments in the rail industry and on future opportunities to influence the rail agenda so as to advance the County Council's own corporate objectives.
- 1.2. With the recent establishment of a shadow Sub National Transport Body for the South East (TfSE) it is timely for the County Council to agree its own position on rail, hence the attached draft Rail Position Statement which summarises rail priorities for Hampshire. This 'statement' follows on from points raised during the briefing of County Council members in 2016 and is designed to aid external discussions. The statement will be kept under review and further developed as and when appropriate.
- 1.3. Whilst the County Council has no statutory responsibility for rail services or for the delivery of rail infrastructure, as a Highway and Transport Authority it has a strong interest in continuing to work with partners to influence the industry to help increase the rail modal share and so reduce pressure on the highway network.
- 1.4. Better connectivity, including improved rail links in and beyond Hampshire, is critical for the county's growth and future economic prosperity, including improved rail access to an expanded Heathrow. Greater capacity on the rail network and improved services, including better facilities & interchanges at Hampshire's 49 railway stations, will help make rail travel a more attractive and feasible option for local residents and visitors alike. Providing increased capacity for freight services, especially those that serve UK export industries reliant on access to the Port of Southampton is also of increasing national economic importance.
- 1.5. The County Council's vision is for rail to become a more significant part of the overall transport offer. Better rail services would broaden the range of travel options, help ease congestion on roads, and provide faster and more reliable journey times. Bringing forward investment in the rail network that

serves Hampshire would help improve the Hampshire's connectivity and, in doing so, bring about both economic and environmental benefits.

1.6. This paper seeks to

- provide brief background information about the rail industry, including responsibilities for rail infrastructure and services;
- summarise key developments and suggested rail priorities for Hampshire;
- secure approval of the draft Rail Position Statement, (Appendix 1); and
- outline future opportunities to influence the rail agenda.

## **2. Contextual Background - the increasing significance of Rail**

- 2.1. Although Hampshire's economy is heavily dependant upon its road network, with two thirds of commuters choosing to drive to work, rail is likely to become an increasingly important part of future integrated transport solutions. Many of Hampshire's key strategic roads are already near to full capacity during peak journey times. This pressure will further increase as major new housing developments sites, such as those off the M27 and to the west of Basingstoke, come forward. Investment in the rail network is needed to help sustain Hampshire's expanding economy and meet the needs of its growing population.
- 2.2. Furthermore, rail corridors which run through Hampshire, together with the A34/M3 corridor, link industries in the Midlands and the North with the international Port of Southampton. These strategic routes will be of increased national economic importance as the country seeks to expand its trade with international markets post Brexit. The Port of Southampton is already the UK car industry's primary port, and 40% of cars arriving at the port for export arrive by rail. The Port has major plans to expand, but this will partly depend upon good surface access to the Port.
- 2.3. Looking further ahead, the £17.6 billion expansion plan for London Heathrow Airport could have major implications for the region's economy and its transport network. Responding to the recent consultation on the Draft Airports National Policy Statement, the County Council has called for the delivery of Western Rail Access and Southern Rail Access to be an essential part of the expansion plan.
- 2.4. The County Council will therefore continue to work with local and regional partners, including Hampshire MPs, the Enterprise M3 and Solent LEAs, and through the emerging Sub National Transport Body (TfSE) in an effort to influence the Department for Transport's rail policy and encourage national agencies, such as the National Infrastructure Commission, to make the economic case for improving surface access to the UK's main seaports and an expanded Heathrow Airport.

### **3. Network Rail and Hampshire's Rail Infrastructure Priorities**

- 3.1. Network Rail is a state owned, not-for-dividend company that has commercial and operational freedom to manage Britain's railway infrastructure, within regulatory control frameworks. It is responsible for the operation, maintenance and enhancement of the rail network. The Office of the Rail Regulator (ORR) must ensure Network Rail manages the network efficiently and meets user needs.
- 3.2. Network Rail's investment programme for renewals and enhancements is currently planned in five year Control Periods. From Control Period 6 (CP6), starting in 2019, it is expected that the plans for enhancements will move to a rolling investment programme rather than the fixed five year programme plans, which will continue for maintenance and renewals. It is important that the limited funding for enhancements is directed towards strategic priorities.
- 3.3. Network Rail's long term planning process identifies future demand for passenger and freight services over a 30 year period. Locally, the Wessex Route Study has identified the short term (CP6) and long term investments required to support future demand. From a Hampshire perspective, the key issues that have been identified in the Route Study include:
  - Provision of additional peak capacity for commuter journeys to/from London;
  - Reducing generalised off peak main line journey times (taking account of both train frequency and actual journey time);
  - Accommodating off peak capacity requirements; and
  - Accommodating demand for freight services.
- 3.4. In addition to the above, other priorities for Hampshire include:
  - Improving rail access to/from London Heathrow;
  - Improved east-west and local rail connectivity within South Hampshire;
  - Improving links to main line hubs for journeys within Hampshire (e.g. Basingstoke); and
  - Improved rail links and services to other parts of the country.
- 3.5. Section 5 of this report outlines the infrastructure and service enhancements considered necessary to accommodate future passenger and freight demand in Hampshire, as detailed in the accompanying Rail Position Statement (Appendix 1).

### **4. Rail Franchises**

- 4.1. There are four rail franchises that provide services covering parts of Hampshire, including the Great Western run by GWR, Southern Rail run by Govia Thameslink, and the Cross Country franchise. However, the most important franchise for Hampshire by far is the South Western franchise which, from 20<sup>th</sup> August 2017, will be run by First MTR until summer 2024.
- 4.2. For many years the County Council has enjoyed a positive relationship with the South Western main line's current franchisee, Stagecoach South West Trains. It is now keen to develop a strong and effective relationship with

First MTR, with the potential of establishing a new strategic rail alliance. Early indications about improvements planned for the new franchise are very encouraging.

- 4.3. The establishment of TfSE is an opportunity for the South East region to secure more direct influence over future rail franchise specifications, starting with the new Cross Country and Great Western franchises which are due to start in 2019 and 2020 respectively.

## **5. Rail Position Statement**

- 5.1. The Rail Position Statement (Appendix 1) sets out the County Council's current vision and key priorities for rail, to support its corporate objectives, through increasing rail's modal share for passenger and freight movements in and beyond Hampshire.
- 5.2. It is anticipated that the Statement will need to be reviewed and updated on a regular basis, to reflect national policy and ongoing developments in the rail industry.
- 5.3. The Statement is designed to help the County Council make the case for rail improvements. It notes the importance of working both through TfSE and directly with rail industry partners to build on strong relationships already established and to secure further improvements. Specifically it identifies three overarching objectives as set out below.

### **1. To improve Hampshire's connectivity to key hubs beyond Hampshire**

- **Passenger journeys to and from London** – improvements are needed to accommodate rising commuter demand and to improve general journey times. To better meet peak period commuter demand, short term priorities include capacity improvements between Clapham Junction and London Waterloo, plus grade separation and an additional platform at Woking. Medium to longer term priorities include grade separation at Basingstoke, improved capacity at Guildford and Southampton Central railway stations, Crossrail 2 and digital signalling east of Woking;
- **Passenger journeys to and from major airports** – re London Heathrow this means pressing for the delivery of both the Western Rail Access and the Southern Rail Access Schemes as essential planning requirements to provide direct services to and from Hampshire or, at least, high quality interchange with airport services. With regards to London Gatwick, Hampshire will want to press for increased service frequency and improved journey times;
- **Passenger journeys to and from other parts of the UK** – this includes seeking improvements to services run by the Cross Country franchise, including benefits offered by Electric Spine and East West Rail; seeking improvements to the Great Western franchise; seeking a 'regional plus'

option for Crossrail 2 with longer distance connections into Hampshire; securing direct services via the Heathrow Southern Rail Access scheme to Old Oak Common in order to connect to HS2 and Crossrail; and improved connectivity along the South Coast; and

- **Rail freight movements through Hampshire to and from the Port of Southampton** – bringing forward rail infrastructure enhancements to accommodate planned growth in freight movements, such as grade separation at Basingstoke and delivery of the Electric Spine project.

## 2. To help improve physical connectivity within Hampshire

- **Rail links in Southern Hampshire** – Improving local rail services, examining more radical solutions (e.g. tram-train), opening new stations/lines, where a business case exists, integrating local rail services seamlessly with other public transport modes, provision of Park and Ride opportunities and providing station/interchange improvements; and
- **Rail links in Northern Hampshire** – Securing improvements to rail services, integration with other public transport modes, and providing station/interchange improvements, including electrification of the Salisbury to Basingstoke and Salisbury to Southampton routes as part of the Electric Spine project.

## 3. To improve integration

- **Ticketing** – Providing appropriate ticketing options, including smart and flexible ticketing options, seamlessly integrated with other public transport; and
- **Railway Stations** – better waiting and other facilities, improved accessibility for disabled people, and better interchange with all modes; and
- **Community Rail Partnerships** – Continuing to work with Community Rail Partnerships within Hampshire to improve passenger and other facilities, noting that they need to move to a self funding arrangement.

## 6. Next Steps

6.1. It is suggested that, subject to approval, the Rail Position Statement be used to exploit future opportunities to potentially advance the County Council's transport and economic objectives. These opportunities include:

- To inform the Parliamentary debate on the Airports National Policy Statement, following on from the recent consultation, and reiterating the case for delivery of both the Western Rail Access and Southern Rail Access to London Heathrow in a way that not only serves London but also services from the south west;

- Responding to Network Rail's consultation, expected later this year, on its proposed investment programme for CP6; and
- Responding to consultations on future franchise specifications for the new Cross Country franchise, due to be awarded in July 2019, and the new Great Western franchise, due to be awarded in April 2020.

6.2. The Rail Position Statement will help inform rail discussions with partners in TfSE. Even whilst still in shadow form, TfSE may provide a strong platform from which to lobby the Department for Transport and influence rail planning and investment decisions. The County Council will wish to exploit this and raise awareness about its rail priorities and the associated economic and environmental benefits they could bring.

## **7. Consultation and Equalities**

- 7.1. Although the draft Rail Position Statement has not been subject to a public consultation, it builds on work undertaken by Network Rail and others to identify necessary rail enhancements, which were themselves subject to a public consultation.
- 7.2. The Rail Position Statement notes the need to provide improved accessibility for mobility impaired people at stations.

## **8. Recommendation**

- 8.1. That the draft Rail Position Statement (Appendix 1) be approved as a basis for on-going discussions with partners, including with the shadow Sub National Transport Body for the South East (TfSE).

**CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:****Links to the Corporate Strategy**

<b>Hampshire safer and more secure for all:</b>	Yes
<b>Maximising well-being:</b>	Yes
<b>Enhancing our quality of place:</b>	Yes

**Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents**

**The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)**

DocumentLocation

None

## **IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:**

### **1. Equality Duty**

1.1. The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

**Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:**

- a) The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- b) Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- c) Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

### **1.2. Equalities Impact Assessment:**

The project/proposal will have a low or no impact on groups with protected characteristics. The report supports further accessibility improvements for mobility impaired people at railway stations.

### **2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:**

2.1. No impact identified.

### **3. Climate Change:**

- a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?
- b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

The Rail Position Statement outlines a range of measures to increase the number and proportion of passenger journeys and freight movement made by rail. This modal shift will have a positive impact on carbon footprint, as rail is a carbon efficient mode, particularly compared to road based transport.