



Transport Delivery Committee

Date	18 March 2019
Report title	Rail Business Report
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Report has been considered by	Councillor Phil Davis – Lead Member Rail (Interim)

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Transport Delivery Committee is recommended to:

- **Note** the content of the report
- **Approve** that TfWM enters into a Partnership Commitment with Vintage Trains

1.0 Purpose

To provide an update relating to the performance, operation and delivery of rail services in the West Midlands including on rail operator partnership agreements and West Midlands Rail Executive (WMRE) activity.

2.0 Section A – Background

- 2.1 Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) and West Midlands Rail Executive (WMRE) currently work to influence the management and delivery of rail services and projects.
- 2.2 This report provides a summary of rail activity in the TfWM and wider WMRE areas between October 2018 and February 2019.

3.0 Section B – Rail Review

3.1 In advance of any emerging findings from the William’s Review, Network Rail has taken the initiative and set out proposals for creating 13, more locally focussed routes within a new regional structure. The new London North Western (South) route will have responsibility for delivery of its operations, maintenance and renewals and also for day to day delivery of train performance and will work closely with their local train operating partners.



- 3.2 The routes will be supported by five Network Rail regions, each led by a managing director. These will be Scotland, Wales & Western, London North Western, Southern and Eastern.
- 3.3 A number of previously centralised services and functions will also be devolved to region or route level (details to be confirmed) which should hopefully allow Network Rail be more responsive to customers and passengers and better deliver future plans. (See also Grand Collaboration section below).
- 3.4 On the 26th February the Review Chair Keith Williams announced his initial findings. The key learnings were that the industry needs to be aligned to face the same way – towards the passenger - and that Franchising in its current form is no longer working. However, he also made clear that in his view ownership of the industry per se was not in of itself the cause of the industry’s shortcomings.
- 3.5 WMRE is working closely with the Rail Devolution Network to ensure that the voice of devolved bodies such as WMRE continues to be heard. A meeting between WMRE and Keith Williams has been scheduled for April 2019.

4.0 Section C – West Midlands Franchise

4.1 The 10th December 2018 marked the first anniversary of the West Midlands rail franchise. The inaugural year of operation has witnessed a considerable amount of activity, and the following milestones have already been reached:

- a) Launch of the West Midlands Railway (WMR) Brand;
- b) Start of the rollout of the WMR livery on trains and at stations;
- c) Transfer of Wolverhampton station to West Midlands Trains' control;
- d) Introduction of a service quality regime to improve standards at stations, on trains, and in customer service;
- e) Opening of a brand new station at Kenilworth;
- f) Commencement of electric services to Bromsgrove;
- g) Orders placed for two new fleets of trains for use in the West Midlands;
- h) More generous compensation for customers when their services are cancelled or delayed;
- i) Abolition of charges for lost property;
- j) Station gatelines staffed from first to last train;
- k) Provision of a more passenger friendly timetable on the Cross City Line during autumn;
- l) Constructive dialogue opened with the two main rail trade unions regarding potential changes to the way WMT intend to operate their trains; and
- m) Creation of two business units, with one focused solely on the West Midlands and aligned with the WMR brand.



From clockwise top left: Wolverhampton station, Class 172 in the full WMR livery, Kenilworth station, the Bull at the Bullring during the WMR brand launch.

- 4.2 The first year of the Franchise has not been without event. The most notable omission from the list of achievements is the introduction of a brand new timetable in December 2018. This was deferred to May 2019 by the Secretary of State for Transport in July 2018 following the difficulties experienced by other operators elsewhere in the country in implementing their planned timetable changes in May 2018.
- 4.3 The consequence of the Secretary of State's decision is that customers in the West Midlands will have to wait until May 2019 for the new services and journey time improvements that were promised for December 2018. In short these betterments include:

- a) New cross-Birmingham linkages creating better connectivity to London and Birmingham International;
- b) Better evening services on most routes;
- c) Uplift in Shrewsbury Line frequency on weekdays, Saturdays and Sundays;
- d) Later services on Coventry, Cross City, and Wolverhampton Lines;
- e) Electric services on the Chase Line.

4.4 The punctuality and reliability of WMT services has begun to improve, and in December and January WMT met or exceeded many of the performance targets laid down in their Franchise Agreement. Despite this welcome development, below target performance during the earlier part of 2018 means that WMT will need a very strong finish the current financial year if they are to achieve many of their annual benchmarks.

4.5 More than half of WMT's delays have been caused by Network Rail. These include issues ranging from points and signal failures, to trespass and railway suicides. To improve the coordination between WMT and Network Rail, the two parties have entered into an alliance agreement. During 2019 this will see Network Rail and West Midlands Railway co-locate their operational controls. This should have the effect of improving service recovery and contingency planning. In another example of smarter working, Network Rail have seconded a suicide prevention specialist to WMT.

4.6 The pace of change will not slacken during 2019. As well as being required to continue the work to recover punctuality and reliability, there are a significant number of committed obligations that are due for delivery in the next 12 months. These include:

- a) Complete the rollout of the WMR livery on trains (May 2019);
- b) Begin installation of new customer information screens (May 2019);
- c) Introduction of a new timetable in May 2019;
- d) Entry into service of eight additional diesel trains for use on the Snow Hill Lines (May 2019);
- e) Provision of a new uniform for WMR employees (May 2019);
- f) Start of rollout of new and refurbished ticket vending machines (Spring 2019);
- g) Co-locate the WMR and Network Rail control office's (August 2019);
- h) Completion of WMR branding at stations (October 2019);
- i) Launch of free Wi-Fi on all services (except the Stourbridge Junction to Stourbridge Town Line) by December 2019; and
- j) Complete works at Tyseley and Soho train depots to create additional maintenance capacity (December 2019);

Safety and Security

4.7 WMT's initiative to allow customers to donate their delay-repay compensation to the Samaritans raised £7,186 during the Period. On Monday 21 January WMT also joined with the Samaritans to raise awareness of Brew Monday.

This annual campaign encourages railway staff and customers to take time out for a cup of tea and a chat. Brew Monday coincides with ‘Blue Monday’, which is considered to be the most difficult day of the year. Stations in the region which saw a Samaritans presence included New Street, Dudley Port, Coventry, Solihull, Leamington Spa, Worcester Foregate Street, Wolverhampton, Stoke-on-Trent, and Marston Green.

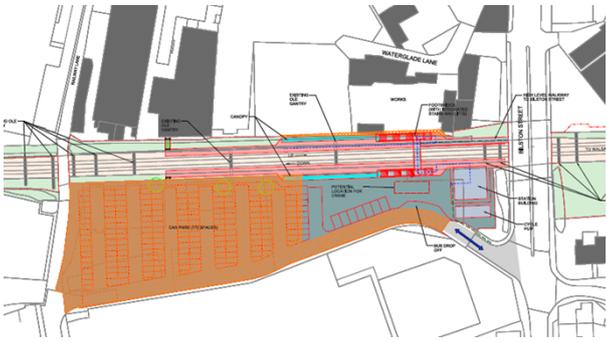
Community Engagement

- 4.8 This Christmas, WMR colleagues supported Network Rail in hosting a Christmas meal at Birmingham New Street for the homeless. A section of the concourse was transformed into rows of decorated tables, gift wrapped presents and a three-course meal courtesy of homeless charity Midlands Langar Seva Society was served to over 200 individuals.
- 4.9 To mark the 40th anniversary of the Cross City line, WMR is hosting a competition to find community groups on the route to celebrate. The competition is open to local charities, young person’s clubs, sports teams or other groups that make a difference to the communities in which they serve and will be celebrated at one of the 24 stations. Nominations can be submitted via the WMR website and winners will receive a plaque of recognition at their local station, a VIP visit to see the new trains for the route, and 10 free tickets for journeys across the WMR and London Northwestern Railway networks to aid in their fundraising efforts.
- 4.10 Joint funding is now agreed by all stakeholders for Heart of England Community Rail Partnership with councils hosting the employed post of ‘Community Rail Support Officer’ now confirmed. It is anticipated the CRP will be launched by March 2019, covering 37 stations.

5.0 Section D – Rail Programme

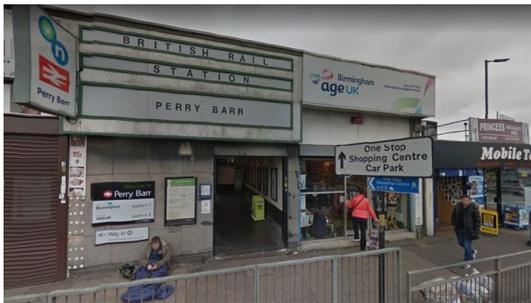
5.1 Update on principal projects as per table below:

Scheme	Update
<p>Snow Hill 3rd Access</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intrusive surveys have been completed. • Project is at outline design stage. • HAZOP workshop completed. • Budget pressures due to increased cost of gate lines etc

Scheme	Update
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing engagement with TOC regarding the operation of the third access. • Completion Winter 2019.
<p data-bbox="108 472 679 510">Package 1 – Willenhall and Darlaston</p> <p data-bbox="108 539 261 577">Darlaston</p>  <p data-bbox="108 1032 261 1070">Willenhall</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRIP 3 Option Selection Report Revision 3 has been signed off internally and issued to work nearing completion. • The Outline Business Case was submitted 12 Feb 19 with approval expected Jul 19. • Change request for additional development funding requested due to changes to project scope including larger car parks, footbridges and lifts. • Viable train service options have been identified for both packages but have yet to be finalised

Scheme	Update
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Scheme	Update
<p>Package 2 - Camp Hill Line stations –</p> <p>Moseley</p>  <p>Kings Heath</p>  <p>Hazelwell</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Outline Business Case was submitted 12 Feb 19 with approval expected Jul 19. • Intrusive surveys have commenced and, including boreholes and structural assessments. • Timetable study to progress to next stage with ongoing collaboration with Network Rail and West Midlands Trains. • Land acquisition being progressed with CPO as fall back option. • Completion – December 2021 but is dependent on train service, land, planning and construction risks.

Scheme	Update
<p>University</p>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project team and designers have been working together to bring the station budget within the funding envelope of £40m whilst meeting partners' expectations. • Planning permission – Autumn 2019 • Complete GRIP 4 (Outline Design) – Autumn 2019 • Construction – 2020-21 • Completion – December 2021 • Funding partners on board and aware of the timeframe for heads of terms to be agreed – spring 2019. • Surveys to be completed March 2019.
<p>Perry Barr</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRIP 2 report confirms the East side option is not deliverable within the budget or for the CWG. • Streamlined programme reduces time for GRIP 3 and merges GRIP3/4 – Network Rail supportive of this approach. • Construction – 2020-21 • Completion – December 2021 • Land being obtained through BCC CPO process. • Station to remain on the west side of A34.

Scheme	Update
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="820 248 1321 353">• Bus interchange to remain outside One Stop shopping centre. <li data-bbox="820 432 1321 497">• Options for work to the existing subway under consideration.

5.2 As part of the GRIP 3 design process for Package 2 Moseley, Kings Heath and Hazelwell stations, a public engagement exercise was undertaken on station design options. This ran from the 19th November to the 14th December 2018. The public were able to have their say via a series of ‘drop in’ events in the community, via the TfWM website and social media.

5.3 616 responses were received, regarded as a very good response rate. 90% of the public rated the station designs as ‘good’ or ‘very good’. Some excellent suggestions were made on what features would enhance the value of the stations to the local community – planting/ vegetation, locally-inspired artwork, community space, reflections of local famous people were popular suggestions. WMRE (with WMT) is working through opportunities for early ‘community station adoption’, drawing upon the really positive interest from community groups. Our continued collaborative working with BCC Highways in the pre-application phase will ensure potential issues of highway safety and the management of on-street parking are acceptably addressed as these were raised as concerns in the public engagement.

5.4 The activity programme for Package 1 public engagement on designs for Willenhall and Darlaston has been finalised, scheduled to run between 4th March and 5th April 2019.

6.0 Section D – Single Network Vision & Grand Rail Collaboration

6.1 Momentum continues to build on the proposed Grand Rail Collaboration (GRC) – a novel partnership of track, train and local government. The aim of the GRC is to create a governance structure that aligns rail industry geographies and incentives into a cohesive form in order to engender a greater sense of collegiate responsibility. Those rail industry geographies would match the local authority structures for the West Midlands “travel to work” area, already established over recent years through the development of the West Midlands Rail Executive.

6.2 An implementation working group - including WMRE - has been established to identify the key activities that will be required to make this aspiration a reality, but crucially support has already been provided by Andrew Haines, the incoming Chief Executive of Network Rail, and Peter Wilkinson, Passenger Services Director at DfT.

6.3 Chiltern Railways Partnership Agreement

6.4 The Annual General Meeting of the Chiltern Partnership Agreement will take place on the 27th February at Moor Street station. The meeting will reflect on the first half year of the Partnership Agreement and look at what the priorities for the Partnership will be for 2019. It will celebrate some of the key things that the two organisations have been working on together, including developing concepts for the redevelopment of Moor Street station, delivering additional cycle parking at Solihull and establishing the groundwork for a new Heart of England Community Rail Partnership. Discussion of top priorities for 2019 will focus around improvements to the St. Martin's Queensway walkway between New Street and Moor Street stations, rebranding of Solihull station as a multi-modal interchange and preparing for the roll out of Swift pay-as-you-go at Chiltern stations.

6.5 Virgin Trains Partnership Agreement

6.6 Recent priorities for the Virgin Partnership Agreement have been centred on the management of events. At the first Partnership Board meeting on 19th October, Virgin gave an overview of the excellent recent work that the company had been doing to give passengers a better experience during these large events, in particular before and after football fixtures. As a result of this, Virgin Trains have been invited to be part of TfWM's Major Events Management Board, have participated in a workshop to look at how rail will interface with TfWM's new Regional Transport Co-ordination Centre and are part of the new rail group that will co-ordinate rail's input to the Commonwealth Games.

6.7 Vintage Trains Partnership Commitment

6.8 Since the New Year WMRE has been developing a Partnership Commitment with Vintage Trains, the open access operator based at Tyseley Steam Depot. Vintage's vision is to provide schedule mainline steam services in the region and beyond, building on the success of their existing Shakespeare Express summer service from Birmingham to Stratford-upon-Avon. The aim of the Partnership Commitment is to stimulate the West Midlands economy through the power of steam. The Partnership Commitment document can be found in Appendix A.

7.0 Section E – Stations Alliance and Rail Investment Strategy

7.1 Following approval at the December WMRE Board meeting, the Rail Investment Strategy (RIS) was finalised and then published on the WMRE website. A press release was issued on 15 January. The supporting Systra report and full details of the tested train service scenarios are also available on the WMRE website here:

<http://www.wmre.org.uk/strategy/wmris/>



- 7.2 With the RIS finalised and published, we shall be developing an implementation plan which identifies the approach WMRE will be taking to deliver the various proposals that are outlined in the strategy. We shall also be developing a “Prospectus for Rail” which brings together elements of the RIS with the Single Network Vision and other WMRE workstreams. WMRE is currently scoping out the process and timescales for producing this.
- 7.3 After a number of iterations and reviews, the Stations Alliance Framework Agreement (AFA) which underpins the aims and activities of WMSA was signed on 6 December 2018. The WMSA three-tier governance structure is designed to complement pre-existing arrangements in partner organisations that allows progress to be made by approaching station-based issues collectively under the banner of WMSA.
- 7.4 Adjustments have been made to the membership of the various levels of governance, principally affecting Steering Group after a review of its efficacy. This group is now much more focused on delivery and the members are key people from WMT and NR that have an appropriate delegated authority to make decisions.
- 7.5 The wide-ranging approach of WMSA gains clarity at Steering Group with a number of working/focus groups set up to examine the detail of individual deliverable outputs. These groups are made up of functional experts from all partner organisations, supported by WMRE.
- 7.6 Areas of focus for working groups include: Property Alliancing; Process Streamlining; Graffiti Removal; Birmingham Snow Hill station (short- and medium-term enhancement of customer experience); and Station Master Planning.
- 7.7 In the spirit of alliancing and collaboration, WMSA will lead on Station Master Planning activity for WMRE. Given the many synergies between the aims of master planning and WMT’s station travel plan toolkit, the two objectives will be approached in concert and the specialist working group is now underway.
- 7.8 Our new framework and approach to station-related issues encourages a focus on end results rather than strict adherence to specific responsibilities, and

permits new ways of thinking to approach long-standing issues. Discussions are starting to take place over possible solutions to never-repaired faults etc. To aid this process a “Too-Difficult” list being created.

8.0 Section G – Financial Implications

- 8.1 There are no direct financial implications as a result of this update report. Although the latest status position covering the Rail Programme, Rail Investment Strategy and Stations Alliance is for noting in this report there are a number of financial risks and challenges against these that will be need to be carefully considered. This will form a key element as part of progressing the further development and/or delivery of these.
- 8.2 Any costs incurred or support provided by TfWM or West Midlands Rail Executive from supporting the activity in relation to the Chiltern, Virgin and Vintage Trains partnership agreements will be met from within agreed funding and resources.

9.0 Section H – Legal Implications

- 9.1 Section 113A(1)(a) of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 gives the WMCA a power of competence appropriate for the purposes of carrying-out any of its functions.
- 9.2 Part 3, Paragraph 7(2)(a) of The West Midlands Combined Authority Order 2016 (2016 No 653) confers that the functions relating to transport functions in the constituent area are exercisable by the CA. Transport for West Midlands is an executive body of the WMCA.
- 9.3 Legal have been instructed to give advice regarding the CPO. Legal will also provide specific legal advice regarding any partnership commitment agreements as and when instructed to do so.

10.0 Section I – Equalities Implications

- 10.1 There are no equality implications in relation to this report.

11.0 Section J – Geographical Scope

- 11.1 This report covers rail services within the WMRE geographical area, which includes the seven authorities which make up WMCA as well as the nine Shire and Unitary authorities which ring the Met area.

12.0 Section K – Inclusive Growth Implications

12.1 There are no direct inclusive growth implications arising from the contents of this report.

Appendix A – Partnership Commitment with Vintage Trains

Vintage Trains and the West Midlands Rail Executive: working together to stimulate the West Midlands economy through the power of steam.

We, Vintage Trains and the West Midlands Rail Executive, recognise the value that mainline steam brings to the region through:

- Preserving engineering skills that would otherwise be lost
- Together with the adjacent West Midlands Trains depot, providing local employment at Tyseley works
- Bringing local, national and international tourists to the West Midlands
- Keeping alive a unique historical experience for future generations
- Promoting the region's rail network
- Providing opportunities to regenerate stations

In recognition of this value that mainline steam brings to the region, the West Midlands Rail Executive commits to:

- Expressing support for the crucial role Vintage Trains plays in the region when providing input to future franchises
- Flagging the importance of Vintage Trains' paths in the timetable when responding to timetable consultations, and in particular the criticality of preserving paths from Birmingham to Stratford-upon-Avon
- Supporting Vintage Trains' role in the Heart of England Community Rail Partnership
- Involving Vintage Trains in future plans for Birmingham Moor Street station
- Inviting Vintage Trains to participate in the region's rail industry stakeholder conference
- Collaborating with Vintage Trains in identifying opportunities for station improvements at Tyseley and Stratford-upon-Avon through the West Midlands Stations Alliance
- Keeping Vintage Trains informed with emerging rail plans for the Commonwealth Games, bearing in mind the potential opportunities mainline steam could bring for providing a wider sense of occasion around the time of the games