

**Open Report on behalf of Andy Gutherson, Executive Director – Place**

Report to:	<b>Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee</b>
Date:	<b>28 October 2019</b>
Subject:	<b>Engagement with Network Rail and Rail Franchise Update</b>

**Summary:**

This item provides an update on various rail matters in Lincolnshire. Representatives from Network Rail, London North Eastern Railway (LNER) and East Midlands Railway (EMR) will be in attendance to outline current proposal and answer questions.

**Actions Required:**

The Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee is invited to discuss progress on rail related issues with representatives of Network Rail, London North Eastern Railway and East Midlands Railway and to consider the role of rail in Lincolnshire going forward.

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 As highlight to this Committee at its March meeting earlier this year, despite various well documented problems within the rail industry nationally, rail usage in Lincolnshire has continued to show strong growth in recent years. The latest station usage figures produced by the Office of Road and Rail (ORR) show some 5,455,900 passengers using the county's stations during 2017/18. Over the last 10 years, the total growth in passenger numbers has been 27.8%.
- 1.2 Network Rail owns, operates and develops Britain's railway infrastructure which includes 20,000 miles of track, 40,000 bridges, tunnels, viaducts, signals and level crossing. Network Rail's role is to deliver a safe and reliable railway and manage the delivery of key projects that form part of the Railway Upgrade Plan. Network Rail is a public company, answerable to Government via the Department for Transport (DfT). Earlier this year, Network Rail began a major restructuring with the aim of improving relationships with customers and stakeholders and driving better train performance and outcomes for passengers and freight users. The organisation is now split into 14 geographically-based routes across 5 over-arching regions.

- 1.3 Network Rail is a key partner working with Lincolnshire County Council to manage the interface between our respective transport infrastructures. Relationships between the two organisations are critical to managing the ongoing delivery of a range of activities and projects. Appendix A summarises the ongoing position with many of these. Paul McKeown, Investment Director, Eastern Region will be attending the meeting on behalf of Network Rail to update the Committee on the current position and answer questions.
- 1.4 Rail services are currently run by Train Operating Companies (TOCs), generally through franchises let by the Department of Transport. However, as mentioned in the committee paper in March this year, the Williams Review is currently task with examining the organizational and commercial structure of the rail industry and developing revised arrangements. A Rail White Paper setting out future proposals is expected from government later this year.
- 1.5 As Members will be aware from previous reports, several improvements to rail services across Lincolnshire have been secured in recent years, including:
- improved services on the Lincoln - Nottingham line, resulting in a substantial increase in patronage at Hykeham station (up from 34,200 in 2012/13 to 143,500 in 2017/18 – a four-fold increase)
  - new direct services between Lincoln and Leeds via Sheffield,
  - the return of hourly weekday and Saturday services from Sheffield to Gainsborough Central station, and
  - enhanced Sunday services on the Lincoln - Nottingham, Grantham - Nottingham and Lincoln - Sheffield lines.
- 1.6 Further enhancements are also planned, secured through the franchising process. To this end, representatives from both LNER and East Midlands Railway will be in attendance to outline recent and proposed changes:
- Phil Dawson (Regulation & Track Access Manager) from LNER, who will update Members on the much-anticipated additional direct Lincoln-London services which began on 21<sup>st</sup> October, and
  - Max Taylor (Senior Commercial Strategy Manager) and Laura Etheridge (Stakeholder Manager) from East Midlands Railway, who will similarly update Members on improvements planned across Lincolnshire as part of the new East Midlands rail franchise which began on 19<sup>th</sup> August.

## The Future Role of Rail in Lincolnshire

- 1.7 Whilst there have been several rail success stories across the county in recent years with yet more planned, the challenge going forward will be to secure further enhancements to support economic growth across Lincolnshire. Key to this will be continuing to work closely with the rail industry.
- 1.8 In respect of the Northern franchise, the authority is already heavily involved as an associate member of Transport for the North and the Rail North Committee, which inputs into the management of the franchise overseen by the Rail North Partnership. Transport for the East Midlands (of which the authority is a member) is currently in the process of negotiating an ongoing role for the organisation in the management of the new East Midlands franchise which will hopefully allow greater local influence on potential future improvements. Ultimately, the outcome of the Williams Review and the promised Rail White Paper will provide a clearer remit on how the various parts of the rail industry will in future work together with local stakeholders for the benefit of rail passengers.
- 1.9 Work is currently ongoing on developing transport strategies for both Lincoln and Gainsborough urban areas. This includes consideration of the role that rail can play in delivering the future growth planned for these areas. The rail industry has been included within the consultation exercises carried out. Members will be updated on progress with these two strategies at future meetings. As further strategies are developed or updated for other towns across the county, the part that rail can play in the future will similarly be considered.
- 1.10 The 4 Local Plans covering for Lincolnshire currently allocate land for some 82,000 dwellings over their respective plan periods. Inevitably this level of growth will increase the demand for travel across the county. Members are invited to consider and discuss with the representatives of the rail industry present:
- how rail might play a role in delivering this future growth of Lincolnshire,
  - where the pressures will be most apparent, and
  - what aspirations for improved rail services the authority should consider for the future beyond the current franchises.
- 1.11 To assist in discussions, the diagram attached at Appendix B shows the rail service provision with all the current franchise commitments in place, along with those locations where substantial housing growth is proposed within the current local plans.

## 2. Conclusion

The Highways and Transport Committee is invited to consider and comment on the various rail proposals outlined by the rail industry representatives and to discuss the role of rail in the future growth of the county.

## 3. Consultation

### a) Have Risks and Impact Analysis been carried out?

No

### b) Risks and Impact Analysis

Not applicable

## 4. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Network Rail Account Plan
Appendix B	Lincolnshire Rail Network

## 5. Background Papers

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
Rail Update Paper - Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee - 11th March 2019	<a href="http://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk">www.lincolnshire.gov.uk</a>

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