

# **Transport for the North Scrutiny Committee Meeting Report Item 8**

**Subject:** Rail Reviews

**Author:** Matthew Oxby, Transport Planner

**Sponsor:** David Hoggarth, Strategic Rail Director

**Meeting Date:** 6th June 2019

## **1. Purpose of the Report:**

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the Williams Rail Review and the development of Transport for the North's input to the call for evidence.
- 1.2 It also provides an update on the Blake Jones Review.

## **2. Executive Summary:**

- 2.1 Transport for the North's response to the Williams Review call for evidence has been developed in consultation with lead members from the North's local transport authorities through the Rail North Committee.
- 2.2 Transport for the North has responded to the Review Team's four questions on the evidence papers, draft objectives and assessment criteria for the review.
- 2.3 Transport for the North's submission to the call for evidence is an evidenced proposition to have greater control over the railway in the North to assist in delivery of the Strategic Transport Plan.

## **3. Williams Rail Review Update and Transport for the North Input:**

- 3.1 The Williams 'root and branch' review of rail is described as the most significant since privatisation and will consider ambitious recommendations for all aspects of the industry.

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- 3.2 At the Transport for the North Board meeting in Chester on 7th February 2019, officers undertook to consult with members on the Transport for the North response to the Williams Review. Transport for the North Board and Rail North Committee have been informed that Transport for the North will make a substantial contribution to the Williams Rail review based, in part, on the recommendations from the Blake Jones Review of the Rail North Partnership.
- 3.3 Transport for the North Partnership Board on Thursday 4 April 2019 considered the Joint Review of the Rail North Partnership and Transport for the North's input to the Williams Review. Partnership Board were informed how Transport for the North's response to the Williams Review call for evidence will distil our evidence to the scope of the review and be developed through lead officers, for consultation with the Rail North Committee.
- 3.4 Transport for the North Partnership Board were also informed that Transport for the North will seek to work with the Williams Review team on a proposition for the North – an evidenced expression of governance and commercial arrangements for the rail industry in the North to assist in delivery of Transport for the North's Strategic Transport Plan. The desired outcome being a model that puts customers at its heart, with the rail industry made accountable through a golden thread to local politicians.
- 3.5 On 19 March 2019 Keith Williams gave an update on progress of the Rail Review at Accelerate Rail 2019 conference, and announced draft objectives and assessment criteria for consultation, alongside further evidence papers. The review asked four questions on the evidence papers, draft objectives and assessment criteria. The Committee were consulted on the Transport for the North response which was developed in consultation with lead officers. The Transport for the North response to the four questions provided to the review team by the 30 April deadline is attached at Appendix 1.
- 3.6 To develop Transport for the North's submission to the call for evidence that is open until the end of May, a workshop with nominated lead officers was held on 2 May 2019. The workshop provided a steer for the detail of the proposition. This proposition was presented to Rail North Committee at their 14 May meeting.
- 3.7 An outline of Transport for the North's proposed submission to the call for evidence is attached at Appendix 2. The slides presented at the Rail North Committee meeting are attached at Appendix 3.

- 3.8 Whilst evidence-based, TfN's initial submission to the Williams Review will necessarily be focused on high level principles. Ultimately any form of greater involvement from the North will require a business case to be developed and submitted setting out how the proposals would work in detail.
- 3.9 It is therefore intended to commence work on the more detailed development of a TfN proposition during Summer 2019, commencing with a scoping exercise to be completed by the anticipated publication of the Williams Review White Paper (Autumn 2019). There is an opportunity for Scrutiny Committee to consider aspects of the proposition in more detail at future meetings.

#### **The Blake/Jones Review**

- 3.10 The Blake/Jones Review of the Rail North Partnership is being undertaken by Cllr Judith Blake and the Rail Minister, Andrew Jones. The focus of the review is the impact of the problems that occurred a year ago with the introduction of the May 2018 timetable.
- 3.11 The review is being finalised ready for a planned publication later in June. It forms part of the evidence base for the Transport for the North submission to the William's Review. The Rail North Partnership review will make a series of short-term recommendations aimed at putting passengers at the heart of decision making in the industry and helping ensure the events around the May 2018 timetable change and the severe impact on people and businesses cannot happen again. The longer-term themes that are likely to be carried through into the William Review include:
- The need for a more effective 'guiding mind' for rail services in the North;
  - Greater integration of track and train through more accountability of the infrastructure provider;
  - Stronger alignment of infrastructure and train service planning and with the Strategic Transport Plan produced by Transport for the North; and
  - The potential for further devolution of rail responsibilities to the North.
- 3.12 It is intended that an Action Plan for implementation of the review will be presented to a future TfN Board. There may be further amendments required to the TfN Constitution to facilitate

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implementation of the actions. Any further amendments would be developed once the review is published.

#### **4. Conclusion:**

- 4.1 The Williams Rail Review is a root and branch Review of the rail system in the UK and Transport for the North is making a substantive response to the Review Teams' call for Evidence.
- 4.2 Transport for the North has responded to four questions on the evidence papers, draft objectives and assessment criteria for the Williams Review.
- 4.3 Transport for the North is providing further input to the call for evidence at the end of May 2019. A proposition will be developed in more detail over summer 2019.

#### **5. Recommendations:**

- 5.1 That the Scrutiny Committee notes the update on the Williams Rail Review and the development of Transport for the North's input to the call for evidence.
- 5.2 That the Scrutiny Committee considers what future engagement it would like on the Williams Review and development of a proposition for further devolution.

#### **6. Appendices:**

- 6.1 Appendix 1 – Transport for the North response to the four questions on the evidence papers, draft objectives and assessment criteria for the Williams Review
- 6.2 Appendix 2 – Outline of Transport for the North's proposed submission to the call for evidence
- 6.3 Appendix 3 – slides presented at the 14 May 2019 Rail North Committee meeting

### List of Background Documents:

The following background papers were considered in preparation of this report –

Evidence Papers published on the Williams Review page on the Department for Transport website here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/the-williams-rail-review>

### Required Considerations

#### Equalities:

Age	No
Disability	No
Gender Reassignment	No
Pregnancy and Maternity	No
Race	No
Religion or Belief	No
Sex	No
Sexual Orientation	No

Consideration	Comment	Responsible Officer	Director
Equalities	A full Impact assessment has not been carried out because the report does not propose any new strategy or service provision	Transport Planner	Strategic Rail Director

#### Environment and Sustainability

Yes	No
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<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Director</b>
Sustainability / Environment – including considerations regarding Active Travel and Wellbeing	A full impact assessment has not been carried out because the report does not propose any new strategy or service provision	Transport Planner	Strategic Rail Director

### Legal

No
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<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Director</b>
Legal	There are no legal implications in relation to this stage of work.	Transport Planner	Strategic Rail Director

### Finance

No
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<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Director</b>
Finance	There are no direct financial implications associated with the submission to Williams Review. The financial implications would be established as part of the development of any detailed proposition.	Transport Planner	Finance Director

### Resource

No

<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Director</b>
Resource	The resource implications will be considered during the development of a more detailed proposition.	Transport Planner	Strategic Rail Director

### Risk

No

<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Director</b>
Risk	A risk assessment has not been carried out at this stage.	Transport Planner	Strategic Rail Director

### Consultation

Yes

<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Director</b>
Consultation	Consultation has been carried out with lead officers from partner authorities and the Rail North Committee to develop the proposed submission to the call for evidence. Member authorities will be consulted on the proposition as it is developed further.	Transport Planner	Strategic Rail Director