

***Winner of CILT award for best practice in passenger transport (2013)***

***promoting quality public transport.....***

## **CONFERENCE REPORT**

**Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2016 – The Mechanics Centre, Princess Street,  
Manchester**

**Conference kindly supported by Rail North, First TransPennine Express  
and Arriva Rail North**

### **1. Welcome and Introduction**

The Chairman, Chris Dale, welcomed delegates to Manchester and thanked Rail North Ltd., First TransPennine Express and Arriva Rail North for their generous support to the Conference.

He referred to the to the devastating bus service cuts being proposed by Lancashire County Council following withdrawal of subsidy and the effect that these will have on those areas that would suffer the worst of the cuts, particularly rural districts. He also mentioned the challenges that the rail industry had faced due to recent weather related incidents, notably on the West Coast Main Line and the Settle/Carlisle route and commended the train operators and the railway industry for their efforts to provide alternative services.

He then drew attention to the Transport Workshop being held on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> March in Manchester to examine the effect of bus cuts throughout the region to social, business and leisure travellers and urged members to attend.

He had also carried out his ongoing governance work as Chairman as well as keeping the TOWN Facebook and “Linked-In” pages up to date publishing almost daily articles on issues affecting passengers.

### **2. Welcome to Manchester**

***Cllr. Andrew Fender, Chair, Transport for Greater Manchester***

Cllr Fender welcomed delegates to Manchester and referred to the rich history the city region had in innovations and provision of passenger transport starting in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. TfGM was now concentrating on the future of transport through its 25 year Vision Strategy offering multi transport options to passengers. These included innovations like:

- The new Guided Busway between Leigh and Manchester.

- The 3rd phase of Metrolink, including the 2<sup>nd</sup> city crossing, due for completion in less than 1 year.
- The improvement of transport inter-change points in the wider region.

He then referred to the importance of the devolution of transport management through Transport for the North. The population of the North is forecast to grow to a size larger than many EU countries. Transport is currently comparatively slow and requires major overhaul to complement the aspiration of the Northern Powerhouse and the governance of Transport for the North will enable the provision of a 21<sup>st</sup> century transport system.

### 3. Devolution in Manchester and the North West

#### *Dr Jon Lamonte, Chief Executive, Transport for Greater Manchester*

Dr Lamonte described the makeup of Greater Manchester, having 2.7 million residents, 10 local authorities, 1 million international visitors, and 97,500 businesses.

The new **Vision Strategy** looking forward as far as 2040 will be published for consultation in the Spring and will be designed primarily to support economic growth at the same time as protecting the environment. It will focus particularly on the further development of Manchester International Airport, City links across the North and the transport network across the region and its outreach.

He then referred to the forthcoming **Bus Reform Bill** that will offer local authorities options for future best practice and governance of bus operations. This may include franchising with private sector operators to improve quality, and ongoing improvement of skills and their application. The Bill is scheduled for publication in the Spring of 2017 and become operational during 2018.

Devolution of transport responsibilities in Greater Manchester under an elected Mayor will offer the single management of **highways** giving the opportunity of an investment programme, joined up planning, to manage such issues as roadworks, bus routings, traffic management, as well as preserving and enhancing air quality.

Greater Manchester currently has 97 **rail stations**, 80% of which are small stations and 52 of which have accessibility issues that need to be addressed in some way. Longer term franchising is preferred to facilitate better programming of planning, operational improvements and integration. A single fare structure with the option of SMART ticketing is also on the wish list.

He then went on to discuss **Transport for the North** and the opportunities it will offer. Being a statutory body it will carry major influence to the benefit of the 16 million people resident in the North and the 7.2 million jobs in the region. It will cover the interests of travel by all transport modes and needs, including both passengers and freight. Its first strategic report will be published in the Spring of 2016.

#### **4. The Arriva Rail North Franchise**

***Roger Cobbe, Policy Director, Arriva Rail North***

Arriva has 55,000 employees throughout 14 countries and is involved in 7 rail franchises in the UK. Having won the franchise to provide train services across the North of England, Arriva Rail North is now in the process of mobilising its structure for management and operation of services. It will be investing £1 billion into the franchise.

4 regional directors are being appointed with the responsibility to provide local leadership, engage with stakeholders and relations with employees. There will also be initiatives for partnerships and alliances with other rail companies where this will be in the interest of users.

The new fleet of trains is being procured that will consist of 55 diesel and 43 electric trains with a total of 281 new vehicles. They will be 100 mph capable, air conditioned, and will offer a seat reservation system. The current fleet of 155 Pacer trains will be phased out by 2019 followed by the 153 units.

2000 more train services per week (12% increase on present) will be offered with faster journeys. From 2019 a Northern Connect brand will be introduced to link all towns and cities with population over 85,000 and 90% of these services will be provided by the new train fleet.

Stations will benefit from a £38 million improvement fund with all stations above 3000 per annum footfall providing ticket sales with at least a ticket machine and an additional 45 being staffed over and above the present level, bringing up to 243 the number with staffed ticket sales availability.

Community Rail Partnerships will form an integral part of the stakeholder strategy and the present contributed funding level from the TOC will be doubled with new governance structures in place.

Service levels will be enhanced with 4 Northern trains per hour linking Preston and Manchester (in addition to the 1 TransPennine service), and through services to Manchester Airport from Barrow, Windermere, Blackpool with some extended to Stoke on Trent and Crewe. Manchester services from Wigan will number 7 trains per hour and Blackburn will offer 2 trains per hour. At Manchester Airport there will be 9 arrivals before 7.00 am and new direct routes from Bradford, Burnley, and Warrington will be introduced. Hourly Sunday services will be provided on 5 routes.

#### **5. Taking the North Further – Transforming TransPennine Express**

***Chris Nutton, Programme Director, First TransPennine Express***

First Group won the TransPennine Express franchise and will now operate as the sole franchisee having parted company with previous partner, Keolis. FTPE will invest £500 million into the franchise, introducing 220 inter city standard vehicles to its fleet with 125 mph capability commencing 2017, thus increasing it to 310 vehicles. 87 of its current fleet of vehicles will be retained and transformed. This will result in faster journeys and more seat availability.

North West Public Transport Users' Forum Community Interest Company trading as TravelWatch NorthWest  
Company No. 6181713

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In 2018 new trains will be introduced to the Scotland services and a new Liverpool to Glasgow service will be launched. From 2019, services to the North East will be increased and one will be extended to Edinburgh. Free WiFi and a better catering offer will feature in all services from early in the franchise period.

A new ticketing offer will be available for 16 – 18 year olds and job seekers and an £18 million station improvement programme is planned. Support for Community Rail Partnerships where services connect to them will be continued. In addition a fund of £29 million will be provided for innovative improvement projects.

7 executive Directors from the current franchise will transfer to the new one and Leo Goodwin has been appointed to the post of Managing Director. The level of collaboration with stakeholders will be continued into the new franchise.

## **6. Rail North: role, responsibilities and opportunities**

***Pete Brunskill, Interim Stakeholder Manager, Rail North***

Rail North Ltd is made up of the 29 Local Authorities in the North of England with transport responsibilities and they are all partners in its management. It has formed a partnership with DfT to deliver and manage the train franchises of Northern Rail and TransPennine Express. Devolution will offer local accountability, accelerated decision making, and capturing additional investment, resulting in better outcomes for passengers and, ultimately, the economy. A 20 year Vision strategy is being put in place to influence future decisions and development. Eventually Rail North will be absorbed into Transport for the North.

The 4 stated Objectives of Rail North to guide development and improvements are: Connectivity, Capacity, Coherence and Cost Effectiveness

It is putting a management team in place consisting of a Partnership Director, Franchise Manager (Northern), Franchise Manager (Trans Pennine Express), Contracts Manager and Head of Investment Planning

## **7. Questions and Discussion**

A session of Questions and Discussion on the previous presentations followed.

Consultation with neighbouring regions of the North was queried and assurances were given that ongoing liaison and dialogue was taking place with Scotland, Wales and both West and East Midlands.

Concern at the level of the future of Hope Valley services at intermediate stations into Sheffield was expressed and R Cobbe said longer trains were contemplated as and when new trains become available.

Engineering disruption – in TPE franchise agreement to work with TWWN.

Any future aspiration for the expansion of Metrolink services outside the Greater Manchester boundary will be dependent on funding contributions from local transport authorities but tram/train may be a potential future solution.

Concern at the effect of increased North TPE services on local services – capacity increases in connection with electrification and longer trains (& platforms) to be looked at (C Nutton “no cuts to local services”). Also work on fares anomalies across PTE boundaries to be examined.

Reddish South – deserved more services.

Through services from West Cumbria to North Lancashire will be addressed with appropriate partner working and potential solutions.

## **8. Bus Priority in Greater Manchester**

***Phil Havenhand, Programme Manager, Cross City Bus Package, TfGM***

The 7km guided busway from Leigh to Ellenbrook will result in shorter bus journeys, improved quality passenger experience, and better connectivity. It was evolved following calls for a better service along the route of the A580 corridor as new housing and business developments have taken place.

The busway offers 7 stops and will be fully operational with an intensive service from April 2016. It was developed at a cost of £68 million and will feature new double deck low emission vehicles with free WiFi, leather seating, table seats on the upper decks and USB charge points. Buses will operate under the “Vantage” brand and will feature an attractive and unique livery.

Upgrade improvements have been made at Leigh bus station and bus priority lanes on feeder roads to and from the busway have been provided. Ancillary projects have also been provided as part of the funding package including a multi-user path running adjacent to the busway and a number of park and ride sites. Details can be found at [www.tfgm.co./buspriority](http://www.tfgm.co./buspriority)

In discussion it was stated that advice was taken from Cambridgeshire where a guided bus way had operated for some time. Frequent intersections will allow fast retrieval of any vehicle breakdowns with minimal disruption to passenger journeys. A series of marketing initiatives are taking place to publicise the busway.

## **9. Lancashire Bus service cuts**

***David Butterworth, Deputy Chairman TWNW***

Bus services throughout Lancashire are under threat following the decision by Lancashire County Council to withdraw all subsidy to bus services in the County. A public consultation is currently taking place on the 45 routes under threat but this ends only 1 day before the cuts are due to be implemented on 1<sup>st</sup> April next with some being withdrawn well beforehand bringing into question the validity and seriousness of the consultation.

The result of the withdrawal of bus services will leave many communities without any public transport, isolating them from health care centres, work, education, social travel and general leisure travel. TWNW together with many other organisations has deplored this situation and continues to press the transport authorities to find solutions for its residents and taxpayers.

## 10. Next Conference

Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2016, at the Town Hall, Blackpool

### Attendance

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Name	Organisation
Adam Clark	Stagecoach Manchester & Wigan
Adrian Swift	
Alan Godson	Rochdale Council
Alan Jackson	Railfuture North West
Andrew Walker	High Peak and Hope Valley CRP
Andy Barlow	Friends of Walkden station
Babs Allen	Friends of Hattersley Station
Barry Dobson	Arriva Merseyside
Barry Dreincourt	TravelWatch NorthWest
Bob Withy	North Cheshire Rail Users Group
Brian Grey	Wirral Transport Users Association
Brian Roberts	Ormskirk, Preston, Southport Travellers Assoc.
Cedric Green	North Cheshire Rail Users Group
Chris Coleman	RATP Dev
Chris Dale	TravelWatch NorthWest
Chris Holmes	TravelWatch NorthWest
Chris Jarvis	Institute of Transport Administration
Chris Mephram	Transport for Greater Manchester
Chris Nutton	First Transpennine Express
Chris Smyth	Heritage Railway Association
Clare Cornes	Transport for Greater Manchester
Cllr Andrew Fender	Transport for Greater Manchester Committee
Cllr David Chadwick	TfGM Committee Bolton
Cllr Geoff Abell	TfGM Stockport
Colin Barnett	
Colin Kennington	TravelWatch NorthWest
Craig Harrop	Northern Rail
Craig Wright	Goyt Valley Rail Users Association
Dave Koring	Severn Dee Travel Ltd
David Burton	South East Lancs Rail Action Partnership
David Butterworth	TravelWatch NorthWest
David Culshaw	Friends of Hindley station
David Jones	Arriva Rail North
David Sumner	Friends of Rose Hill Station
David Thrower	



Dwayne Wells	First UK Bus Greater Manchester
Fred Consterdine	
Geoff Kerr	
Graham Meiklejohn	First Transpennine Express
Harry Boardman	Mid Cheshire Rail Users Association
Ian Conway	Lakes Line Rail Users Group
Ian Stuart	
Ian Watson	
J Douglas	Representing Andrew Bingham MP
James Harkins	All Party Parliamentary Light Rail Group
Janet Briggs	North Cheshire Rail Users Group
Jason Prince	Transport for Greater Manchester
Jim Froggatt	TravelWatch East Midlands
Jim Trotman	Community Rail Cumbria
John Aaron	
John Benson	Chinley & Buxworth Transport Group
John Berry	Ormskirk Preston Southport Travellers Assoc.
John Bone	
John Hart	TravelWatch NorthWest
John Moorhouse	TravelWatch NorthWest
John Owen	TravelWatch NorthWest
John Ryan	Wirral Transport Users Association
John Warner	Kendal & District Bus Users
Jon Lamonte	Transport for Greater Manchester
Judie Collins	Friends of Altrincham Interchange
Keith Banks	
Keith Pennyfather	
Keith Whitmore	
Ken Swallow	Chartered Institute of Logistics & Transport NW
Leonard Green	TravelWatch NorthWest
Malcolm Conway	TravelWatch NorthWest
Malcolm Richardson	Blackpool & Fylde Rail Users Association
Margaret Mitchell	
Mark Barker	Arriva Rail North
Mark Salter	Transport for Greater Manchester
Martin Clarke	Transport Focus
Matthew Worman	Northern Rail
Mike Bishop	Friends of Handforth Station
Mike Laycock	Wirral Transport Users Association
Mike Machin	Lancaster & Morecambe RUG
Neil Williams	
Owain Roberts	Transport for Greater Manchester
Paul Grant	Lancaster & Morecambe Rail Users Group
Paul Kampen	Friends of the Settle-Carlisle Line
Paul Levet	Friends of the Settle-Carlisle Line
Paul Rowen	Transport Focus
Pete Brunskill	Rail North
Peter Garvey	Greater Manchester Transport Campaign
Peter Lamkin	Wrexham Birkenhead Rail Users Association
Phil Cummins	Arriva North West

Phil Havenhand	Transport for Greater Manchester
Phil Pearson	Network Warrington
Phil Smith	ROSSO
Philip Briggs	North Cheshire Rail Users Group
Philip Harrison	
Richard Chapman	Rochdale MBC
Richard Knowles	Stalybridge to Huddersfield Rail Action Group
Richard Lysons	Friends of Littleborough Station
Robert Florence	North Cheshire Rail Users Group
Robert Kenyon	Hyndburn Borough Council
Robert Talbot	TravelWatch NorthWest
Roger Cobbe	Arriva Rail North
Roger Frankland	Lancaster & District Rail Users Group
Ronald Schwarz	Railfuture
Roy Chapman	
Roy Greenhalgh	Network Rail
Sally Buttifant	Mid Cheshire CRP
Sandra Dutson	
Sarah Cunningham	First/ Keolis TransPennine Express
Simon Reynish	Chartered Institute of Logistics & Transport NW
Simon Temple	
Stephen Clapham	Friends of Eccles Station
Stephen Forde	Manchester Community Rail Partnerships
Steve Hopkins	Friends of Eccles Station
Terry Durrance	Ormskirk Preston Southport Travellers Assoc.
Tim Nicholson	Peak District National Park
Tim Young	Campaign for Better Transport Lancashire
Tony Fawthrop	Greater Manchester Transport Campaign
Tony Potts	Copeland Rail Users Group
Tony Young	TravelWatch NorthWest
Trevor Bishop	Railfuture North West