



## **ALL PARTY PARLIAMENTARY YORKSHIRE AND NORTHERN LINCOLNSHIRE GROUP**

Co-Chairs: Andrew Percy MP, Barry Sheerman MP  
Vice Chairs: Jason McCartney MP, Meg Munn MP, David Ward MP  
Treasurer: Martin Vickers MP      Secretary: Linda Riordan MP

3 April 2014

The Rt Hon Patrick McLoughlin MP  
Secretary of State for Transport  
Department for Transport  
Great Minster House  
33 Horseferry Road  
London SW1P 4DR

Dear Mr McLoughlin,

### **TRANSPENNINE ROLLING STOCK: YORKSHIRE AND NORTHERN LINCOLNSHIRE APPG CONTINUING CONCERNS**

Many thanks once again for agreeing to meet with the Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire APPG on 3<sup>rd</sup> June, at which a number of important transport issues will be raised. Nearer the time we will set these out, but in the meantime we wish to raise with you further the issue of the nine "class 170" trains being transferred to Chiltern Railways from TransPennine Express. This has emerged as a key concern amongst Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire Parliamentarians and we would greatly welcome a response in advance of our 3<sup>rd</sup> June meeting.

At a hastily arranged APPG session last week, a number of MPs met with representatives of Rail North, METRO and North Yorkshire County Council, to discuss the wider context of the rolling stock transfer decisions and the likely implications for rail routes across the North of England. A copy of the briefing paper prepared by Rail North and circulated at the meeting is attached for your information.

Members were reminded that, during the recent Westminster Hall Debate, your Ministerial colleague Stephen Hammond committed the Department to finding a "solution", which has been strongly welcomed. Nevertheless, a number of concerns and uncertainties remain and it would be extremely helpful, therefore, to receive your specific reassurances on two particular matters:

- Firstly, that the "solution" that DfT has committed to finding should not allow for even any temporary reduction in carriages – for example, through running current services formed of more than one carriage as single unit trains; or by reducing the number of timetabled services overall. These scenarios are seen as unacceptable, given the need to tackle the existing levels of significant overcrowding on TransPennine and many local routes across Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire. Should any shortage of trains on TransPennine Express routes simply be offset, for example, by moving trains from Northern Rail, our concern is that this would only serve to cause consequential overcrowding on other services across Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire, as well as the wider North of England.

Secondly, that the "solution" should not lead to a reduction in the quality of the trains in operation on these routes. In other words, the class 170s must not be replaced by inferior 'Pacers' or 'Sprinters', which already dominate far too many rail routes in the North of England. It is important to emphasise the impression of neglect and under-investment that such old and out-dated rolling stock already presents to both customers and potential investors in our local economies; and as a group of MPs we urge your Department in its negotiations and discussions on this matter to not further downgrade rolling stock in the North of England.

Members were also keen that, over time, a more strategic approach to the rolling stock across the county and the North of England in particular should be developed; and that the franchise for the retendering of both TransPennine and Northern Rail's services should also involve the active engagement of local MPs, possibly through the APPG.

We look forward to your response on these issues and, of course, to welcoming you to our APPG meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> June.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew Percy MP  
Joint Chair  
Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire  
All Party Parliamentary Group



Barry Sheerman MP  
Joint Chair  
Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire  
All Party Parliamentary Group

Also sent on behalf of the following:

- Baroness Harris of Richmond
- Kevin Barron MP
- Nic Dakin MP
- Craig Whittaker MP
- Paul Blomfield MP
- Clive Betts MP
- Gerry Sutcliffe MP
- Simon Reeve MP
- Lord Shutt of Greetland
- Meg Munn MP
- Diana Johnson MP
- Linda Riordan MP
- Jason McCartney MP
- David Blunkett MP

## Westminster Debate on Rolling Stock in the North

12 March 2014

### Introductory speech

Angela Smith (Stocksbridge and Penistone) - Loss of 9 trains, 13% loss. DfT clearly involved in this – need clarification from Ministers

Short franchise of trans-Pennine Express (TPE) means they have problems leasing trains (10 month extension). That's why the company are moving them to southern services which have longer franchises.

Northern Hub provides extra capacity but not more rolling stock.

Need clarity on what Ministers knew in advance of this decision.

New trains not disability suitable but nor are the very old trains that Northern Rail using – problem of them having to modify the trains to meet these requirements. Need new trains that are fit for purpose. Old trains are unpopular and users feel treated to a second class service. Leasing agreement problems. Quality of rail stock is an important issue too.

Needs assurance that TPE will not lose its franchise or be unable to provide a service due to lack of rail stock. Lack of reality to the devolution ideas for the north. 'Flies in the face of true devolution'.

Huge lack of northern investment and government focus. Not enough trains in the service.

This is a result of the West Coast franchise - i.e. causing delays in the East Coast and wider "domino" effect.

### Comments from other attendees

David Blunkett (Sheffield Brightside and Hillsborough) – Shock at apparent Government attitude. Lack of consideration of northern rail users by government. HoC government response last week was unacceptable.

Graham Stringer (Blackley and Broughton) - Long term consequence of lack of rail stock investment

Jason McCartney (Colne Valley) - Needs to recognise the investment in electric etc across the North, which has been positive, and emphasising need for a cross-Party consensus.

Martin Vickers (Cleethorpes) – recognise massive investment by the government. TPE withdrawing new and useful trains, leaving the old ones. Need clarity on ministerial involvement. Emphasised the *impression* this gives around Ministers potentially accentuating a North-South divide.

Diane Johnson – poor investment in lines and rolling stock particularly into Hull. Issues that line between Selby and Hull won't be electrified, despite a Private Sector led funding alternative that requires minimal Govt investment. Hopeful DfT can approve this soon.

Tom Hulme – fighting not a government but a Whitehall mindset. Supply and demand for service vs the need to provide a service for all. ‘Supply and demand cannot be a factor in this decision’.

Louise Ellman (Transport Ctte Chair) - Issues of rolling stock after electrification. Transport Select Committee has written to the Minister over this asking for a response. Want to know why TSC was not informed of this decision in advance.

Andrew Bingham MP (High Peak) in support. Importance of getting across the Pennines is key to the growth agenda. Can the contract that has already been signed be revoked?

Gordon Birtwhistle (Burnley) – Good investment in the ‘Todmorden Curve’ but the trains that were promised to use the line are being continually delayed for delivery. Brand new station, new lines, tunnel etc but no trains to run in the line. Problems with the quality of trains, delays, breakdowns etc. on existing routes into Leeds. Price has trebled but service has gone down. Wider issue of line investment taking place but no rolling stock to run on them (another example was given by the Nottingham South MP Lilian Greenwood).

Tom Blenkinson (Teeside) – lack of electrification and not enough rolling stock.

Lilian Greenwood (Nottingham South) - consider that there is a clause in the Chilterns contract that allows the trains to stay with TPE until replacements can be found. Will this be enacted?

Jonathan Reynolds (Stalybridge and Hyde) and Yasmin Querishi (Bolton SE) in support.

### **Ministerial Response, Stephen Hammond MP**

Highlighting electrification policy and low fares. North investment in services should be welcomed – North West Triangle, Leeds-Manchester etc. £4bn of impact.

All investment has an impact on rolling stock across the country. Increase in electrified trains and not diesel trains.

TPE rolling stock – 9 trains, not a high number – suggest it’s “9%” of the total?

DFT knew in October 2013 of this decision. Commercial decision that is not government related.

Discussions in place, nevertheless, to allow TPE to keep the trains until 2015 so they have time to find alternatives. Chiltern unsure what level they will need at that point so could be an extension to 2016 for some trains.

Section 54 notice only a “1 way guarantee “ - does not mean that trains will not be moved elsewhere between franchisees. Contract is not revocable, nor would Government want it to be.

TPE taking delivery of new trains shortly also (timing?).

Also, investment and trains being released for the Todmorden Curve line. Many more trains due to be released for solving rolling stock problems.

Franchise applications will need to address rolling stock issues in their bids.