

DEVON AND EXETER RAIL PROJECT WORKING PARTY

17 July 2015

Present:-

Devon County Council:-

Councillors B Hughes (Chairman), Ball, Biederman, Bowden, Julian, Sellis, Squires, Way, Westlake and Younger-Ross

[NB: Councillor Julian present from Minute 25 onwards]

Exeter City Council:-

Councillors Leadbetter and Wardle

[NB: Councillor Leadbetter present from Minute 25 onwards]

East Devon District Council:-

Councillors Bailey and Foster

Mid Devon District Council:-

Councillors Chesterton and Heal

North Devon Council:-

Councillor Luggar

Teignbridge:-

Councillors Goodey and Prowse

Torbay Council:-

Councillor Manning

Members attending in accordance with Standing Order 25:-

Councillor Hosking (DCC)

Apologies:-

Councillors Mathews (DCC), Sutton (Exeter), Flynn (North Devon) and Doggett (Torbay)

23 **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 13 February 2015 be signed as a correct record.

24 **Induction for New Members**

The Head of Planning, Transportation & Environment gave a presentation on the composition and role of the Devon and Exeter Rail Project Working Party, the rail industry structure and how partner authorities worked with the rail industry.

25 Update from South West Trains

Mr C Loder, Head of Business Projects, South West Trains, gave a presentation which covered:

- December timetable plans - including improved services to Yeovil, London, Cranbrook and Honiton;
- general update - overhaul of Class 159 diesel multiple unit fleet; passenger growth; pressure on services west of Salisbury;
- "Deep Alliance" with Network Rail - due to end on 31 August 2015;
- second South Western Direct Award (franchise) - consultation period to commence later this year;
- long-term future stakeholder aspirations - including: reduced journey times to London; a second station for Cranbrook; and link between West of England and Tarka Line services.

Matters discussed by Members with Mr Loder included:

- train operating companies continuing to work together on the common goal of improved services, the constraints involved and the excellent spirit of co-operation;
- the opportunity provided by new franchise consultations to pursue aspirations for improved services, Devon Metro, links with branch lines, additional rolling stock etc;
- capacity planning for new development east of Exeter (Cranbrook etc);
- reinstatement of Barnstaple - Bideford Line;
- Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) as a source of funding for rail improvements;
- impact on local commuters of hourly Waterloo - Exeter service;
- planning for greater capacity in the South West.

26 Update from First Great Western

Mr M Greedy, Stakeholder Manager, First Great Western gave a presentation which covered:

- passenger growth - significant increase, and line updates: Exeter - Barnstaple (Tarka Line), Exeter - Exmouth (Avocet Line), Exmouth - Paignton and Devon Metro;
- performance - best Moving Annual Average in over a year;
- recent activity - including: key trains strengthened; improvements/future investments at Exmouth, Tiverton Parkway and other stations; opening of Newcourt Station in Exeter;
- service level commitments;
- second Great Western Direct Award (franchise) - September 2015 to April 2019, overview; aspirations; fleet changes; West of England High Speed Service transformation; December 2018 timetable - West of England service; night Riviera services; community rail; rebranding of FGW as GWR.

Matters discussed by Members with Mr Greedy included:

- extra passing loops between Exeter and Honiton;
- capacity increase on the Exeter - Exmouth (Avocet) Line;
- provision for development in the Exeter - Teignmouth area;
- Okehampton - Exeter service;
- funding to support the Tavistock - Bere Alston reinstatement;
- additional use of train unit held at Exeter St David's Station between services;

- travel experience on the new Hitachi AT300 high speed trains;
- provision for carrying bicycles on new rolling stock;
- impact of further competition (e.g. SWT's new Bruton/Frome - London service);
- car parking at Copplestone, Eggesford and Umberleigh Stations;
- accessing Harrington Humps;
- bus flag and signal box at Crediton Station.

27 **Progress Report**

The Working Party considered the Report of the Head of Planning, Transportation & Environment (PTE/15/41) on progress made by the County Council and rail project partners since its February 2015 meeting, and further planned work during 2015/16, on the following ExeRail and other projects:

- Peninsula Rail Task Force - PRTF are producing a 20 Year Plan for Rail and will be submitting their interim plan in September 2015 before the final plan in Summer 2016. In the meantime PRTF was continuing with its stakeholder engagement/lobbying with Government; and other key peninsula issues;
- new stations at Newcourt, Cranbrook and Marsh Barton;
- Tavistock to Bere Alston reinstatement - Basic Service Agreement with Network Rail; Transport and Economics Report; Wider Economics Benefits study; negotiations on Section 106 Agreement; Environmental Impact Assessment; future work areas;
- Newton Abbot Station Access Footbridge;
- Exmouth Station access improvement scheme;
- service enhancements, including: INTERREG funded enhanced service between Newton Abbot and Paignton; ExeRail local authority funded enhanced service between Exeter and Exmouth; First Great Western's new direct award franchise; Okehampton Sunday Rover;
- Tarka Line Strategy;
- other improvements and projects, including: access improvements at Exeter St Thomas Station; new stations at Cullompton, Wellington and Edginswell; rail access to planned intermodal freight terminal site near Cranbrook.

This year had seen one of the most significant steps towards achieving the Devon Metro vision of making the best use of the local rail network to meet the challenges of growth around Devon with the opening of Newcourt Station in Exeter on 4 June 2015. Tenders had been received for Marsh Barton Station in Exeter while Cranbrook Station was under construction and expected to be open by Autumn 2015.

Completed improvements at Exeter Central and Exmouth Stations were already benefitting passengers and the emerging designs for a new access into Newton Abbot Station had enabled First Great Western to prepare and submit a partnership bid for funds.

Sources of project funding included the County Council's Local Transport Plan Capital Programme, the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (Access to Stations), European Regional Funding (INTERREG) and contributions from partner authorities, Network Rail and train operating companies.

The Working Party noted the ongoing work on rail projects and the importance of the ExeRail contributions to the continuing support of enhanced Sunday train services.

CABINET

Devon and Exeter Rail Project Working Party: 17/7/15

28 **Next Meeting**

RESOLVED that the next meeting of the Working Party be held on Friday 19 February 2016 (2.00pm).

The meeting started at 2.00pm and finished at 4.05pm