

Agenda Item No. 4(b)

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**MEETING OF CABINET MEMBER – HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND
INFRASTRUCTURE**

8 June 2017

Report of the Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Communities

SOUTH EAST MANCHESTER RAIL STUDY

(1) **Purpose of Report** To advise the Cabinet Member on the production of the South East Manchester Rail Study and seek approval to make a financial contribution to it.

(2) **Information and Analysis** Rail North is a consortium of Local Transport Authorities with a vision to improve rail services. This involves being a partner in rail franchising and tackling the lack of connectivity which is restraining economic growth. This work has highlighted the need for a review of the information currently held by Local Transport Authorities, and their understanding of the rail network across the north.

Transport for Greater Manchester [TfGM] has already embarked on a series of studies around its area to gather information and help provide supporting analysis. It has now reached the stage where it has commissioned a study into services in South-East Manchester and want to involve adjacent Local Authorities in the process. To that end, it has approached the County Council and Cheshire East Council [amongst others in Greater Manchester] to share in this work, as the South East Manchester rail network involves the Manchester-Glossop, Manchester-Buxton and Manchester-Sheffield [Hope Valley] local services in its remit, as well as looking at existing freight routes for potential enhancement. This includes the freight line that links Chinley with Buxton serving the extensive quarries and cement facility in the area.

In summary, the study seeks to develop an in-depth understanding of the rail market in the area which will then be utilised to inform the development of an agreed rail strategy that is founded on robust interpretation of the evidence and supports appropriate policy. For the County Council, an inclusive approach to solving rail issues in the area will help to resolve current issues that have been developed piecemeal over many years and created disparate policies, often in the middle of an existing rail line. This will mean that the services are less likely to be reduced at the TfGM boundary and trains travel to where Derbyshire residents live. So there is a benefit of the County Council

being involved. Northern, the train operator, is already looking at some local service enhancements based on this approach. This will align with the policies of Rail North and its partner, Transport for the North, particularly when the two organisations merge over the next year. The County Council, TfGM and Cheshire East Council are all members of Rail North.

A separate work stream to look at specific rail capacity issues on the Hope Valley line has identified a need for an in-depth analysis of the route and discussion with all relevant parties, including train operators and Network Rail. This will assist in future rail investment planning, as the route is currently congested all day and has a sub-optimal timetable in place. Some of this work is already within the remit of this Study and Rail North has agreed to fully finance all the extra work to find potential solutions to the problem, without recourse to the other funding partners.

TfGM has already tendered for the work under its framework system and, after analysis, including input from partners, the work was awarded to Aecom. Work has already commenced in gathering the evidence for study analysis, and the main part of the Study is expected to be completed by early Autumn.

(3) **Financial Considerations** The original Study has been awarded to Aecom at a cost of £64,806. Cheshire East Council has a very small area involved in the study and it has agreed to contribute £500 to the Study. It is recommended that, in view of the number of Derbyshire lines covered by this work that an offer of 10% of the cost of the Study is made to TfGM, i.e. £6,480. This allows the County Council full involvement in the study, including the Hope Valley capacity work, and the sum can be found from the Transport Studies Revenue budget.

The extra capacity study work on the Hope Valley line is being entirely funded by Rail North.

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: legal, prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, environmental, health, property, social value and transport considerations.

(4) **Key Decision** No.

(5) **Call-In** Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No.

(6) **Background Papers** Held on file within the Economy, Transport and Communities Department. Officer contact details – Kevin Williams, extension 36747.

- (7) **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS** That the Cabinet Member:
- 7.1 Authorises the involvement of the County Council in the South East Manchester Rail Study.
 - 7.2 Approves a contribution of £6,480 to the South East Manchester Rail Study.

Mike Ashworth
Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Communities