

Transport and the Environment Board

17 March 2022

SYMCA Response to the Government's Integrated Rail Plan

Is the paper exempt from the press and public?	No
<i>Reason why exempt:</i>	Not applicable
Purpose of this report:	Discussion
Is this a Key Decision?	No
Has it been included on the Forward Plan?	Not a Key Decision

Director Approving Submission of the Report:

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Executive Summary

This report provides an update on the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) Response to the Government's Integrated Rail Plan for the Midlands and the North (IRP) and recommended next steps.

What does this mean for businesses, people and places in South Yorkshire?

The IRP determines the level and location of Government investment in the rail network in the Midlands and the North over the next 20-30 years. This in turn impacts on the level of connectivity, capacity and quality of rail services serving South Yorkshire and the scale of economic, social and environmental benefits these services would generate.

Recommendations

The Board is recommended to discuss and provide comment on issues raised in this report and agree to the development and implementation of a post-IRP action plan for South Yorkshire.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Government published its long-awaited Integrated Rail Plan on 18th November 2021, setting out its long term plans for investment in the rail network in the Midlands and North. This focused on their plans for High Speed Two (HS2) and Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) but also covered other key rail investment over the next 20-30 years, such as electrification and major line and station upgrades.
- 1.2 The previous proposals for HS2 and NPR were intended to create a 'step-change' in the connectivity of South Yorkshire, and particularly Sheffield, to adjacent cities across the North as well as to the Midlands and London. As both of these networks have only been partially taken forward, the IRP therefore presents limited plans to enhance capacity and connectivity in South Yorkshire.
- 1.3 The IRP plans for HS2 are broadly in line with the previous proposals for connecting South Yorkshire to the Midlands and London, albeit with a pared-back HS2 eastern leg and more conventional line running. The electrification of the Midland Mainline to Sheffield and the plans to run two HS2 services per hour from London to Sheffield with a journey time of 87 minutes, are both welcome.
- 1.4 The refocusing of the core NPR network solely on the line between Liverpool, Manchester and Leeds means that South Yorkshire will have one of the largest disparities between the published IRP and the preferred NPR network that was supported by Transport for the North and Northern Leaders.
- 1.5 The curtailment of the HS2 eastern leg to Leeds, which will now only be built from Birmingham to East Midlands Parkway, means that NPR services from Sheffield to Leeds will not be able to use the HS2 line from Clayton Junction as was planned. A further study is being undertaken by the Government to consider how best to serve Leeds by HS2 and until that is concluded, the original HS2 eastern leg remains safeguarded. This continues the blight for South Yorkshire residents, landowners and businesses along the HS2 eastern leg.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 Since the IRP was published, SYMCA is now considering our response to the disparities between the IRP and what was the preferred NPR network. The MCA will examine the actions that need to be taken to ensure these disparities are addressed. The development of a post-IRP action plan will need to be undertaken with the support of our constituent local authorities and other partners such as the LEP and business community.
- 2.2 SYMCA submitted a response to the call for evidence by the Commons Transport Select Committee which is conducting an inquiry into the IRP. A copy of the response is appended as Appendix A. This was based largely on SYMCA's previous submission to the National Infrastructure Commission Rail Needs Assessment call for evidence on the IRP and our HS2 & NPR Growth Strategy.
- 2.3 The focus of SYMCA activity in the next few months should be on securing a commitment to identified priority schemes and ensuring we have input into the IRP

schemes that affect South Yorkshire. Views of TEB members are invited on the following:

- A second fast train per hour from Sheffield to Leeds
- A third fast train per hour from Sheffield to Manchester
- Capacity enhancements at Sheffield Midland and Doncaster stations
- Securing Midland Mainline electrification and upgrade to Sheffield
- Input to the study on how to serve Leeds by HS2 with a focus on Sheffield to Leeds
- Ensuring the East Coast Mainline upgrade benefits Doncaster

2.4 One of the significant limitations of the IRP for South Yorkshire was the exclusion from the funded NPR network. This means Sheffield and South Yorkshire will not benefit from the previous plans for four fast trains per hour to Manchester and Leeds and two to Hull, nor the onward connectivity benefits to Manchester Airport, Liverpool and Newcastle. This also means no commitment to the two new NPR stations at Rotherham and Dearne Valley (Goldthorpe) and the improved connectivity for intermediate stations such as Doncaster.

3. Options Considered and Recommended Proposal

3.1 Option 1

Determine that no action is needed in response to the IRP.

3.2 Option 1 Risks and Mitigations

That South Yorkshire could lose out on further rail investment and the benefits this would bring, resulting in increasing disparity with other city regions and economic decline.

3.3 Option 2

Develop and implement a post-IRP action plan for South Yorkshire. This plan would enable the promotion of SYMCA's priority rail schemes and be used as a lobbying document to secure further investment and improvement in rail connectivity.

3.4 Option 2 Risks and Mitigations

There is a risk that despite the development of an action plan, this fails to influence government and we fail to secure additional funds. We shall engage closely with DfT and wider stakeholders in the development of this plan.

3.5 Recommended Option

Option 2

4. Consultation on Proposal

4.1 Consultation will take place with Local Authority partners, private sector partners and wider rail stakeholders on the action plan and scheme priorities.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 It is imperative that SYMCA acts on this urgently as key decisions are being taken and workstreams commenced and the region's voice needs to be heard.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications and Advice

6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Requirements for any further professional services support will be considered against available budget.

7. Legal Implications and Advice

7.1 There are no legal implications of this report.

8. Human Resources Implications and Advice

8.1 N/A

9. Equality and Diversity Implications and Advice

9.1 N/A

10. Climate Change Implications and Advice

10.1 Improving rail services and infrastructure will encourage more people to use rail instead of the private car, and for more freight to transfer from road to rail, reducing CO2 emissions and transport's contribution to climate change.

11. Information and Communication Technology Implications and Advice

11.1 N/A

12. Communications and Marketing Implications and Advice

12.1 SYMCA will undertake communications and engagement on its proposed response to the Integrated Rail Plan to ensure maximum impact and support for the actions.

List of Appendices Included

A SYMCA submission to the Transport Select Committee Inquiry into the IRP

Background Papers

Government's Integrated Rail Plan <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/integrated-rail-plan-for-the-north-and-the-midlands>