

Mayoral Combined Authority Board

14 November 2022

Integrated Rail Plan Update and South Yorkshire Rail Investment Priorities

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

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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. The proposed response has been encapsulated in a Post-IRP Positioning Plan and key priorities which are summarised in this report.

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

The IRP is intended to determine 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 approve the SYMCA Post-IRP Positioning Plan and key priorities and agree to its implementation over the coming months as a lobbying and advocacy plan.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Government published its Integrated Rail Plan on 18th November 2021, setting out its long term plans for £96.4bn of 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. Whilst there are some elements of the IRP that are positive for South Yorkshire, the region's rail ambitions are not fully represented in the Plan, and there is still some uncertainty that what it promised will be delivered.
- 1.2 The IRP cancelled the eastern leg of HS2 Phase 2B between the East Midlands and Leeds through South Yorkshire. The eastern leg will now only be built from Birmingham to East Midlands Parkway Station and HS2 trains will then run on the Midland Mainline to Sheffield via Derby, as well as to Nottingham. Two HS2 services per hour will run from London to Sheffield in 87 minutes. The IRP also confirmed the full electrification of the Midland Mainline to Sheffield.
- 1.3 A further study will be undertaken by the Government to examine how best to serve Leeds by HS2 - however the terms of reference for this study are yet to be released. Until that study is concluded, the original HS2 eastern leg route through South Yorkshire remains safeguarded, which means a continuation of the blight for residents, landowners and businesses.
- 1.4 The IRP refocused the NPR network solely on the core line between Liverpool, Manchester and Leeds, meaning that South Yorkshire will no longer be served by NPR in the IRP plans. This is therefore a significant loss to South Yorkshire in terms of planned connectivity uplifts to major Northern cities and Manchester Airport.
- 1.5 To assist the Mayor, elected officials, senior officers and key stakeholders in making the case for the important rail improvements that South Yorkshire needs following publication of the IRP, a Positioning Plan and supporting key priorities have been produced for consideration.
- 1.6 Given the recent change in Prime Minister and in the Cabinet, as well as the on-going economic uncertainty and budget pressures, there may be a review of the IRP or aspects of it such as HS2 and NPR. During her short tenure, the previous Prime Minister pledged to deliver 'NPR in full' although it was uncertain what this actually meant and if it included the South Yorkshire corridors. It is therefore important that the Plan is agreed and used to lobby the new Government as soon as possible.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 The proposals included in the Government's IRP were not intended to be seen as an end state for the rail network. The IRP recognises that there is the opportunity to develop a further adaptive pipeline of rail improvements across the North and the Midlands going forward, provided that a strong case for investment can be made and the outcomes from that investment would add value to the committed programme.

2.2 To ensure South Yorkshire secures the maximum benefit from the planned IRP investment, we have developed a clear set of desired outcomes, actions and narrative in our IRP Positioning Plan, which will be used to strengthen the case for delivering South Yorkshire's rail priorities and aspirations. In the development of this Plan, discussions have been held with the Local Authorities, the Local Enterprise Partnership and key rail delivery partners.

2.3 To further support the region's messaging around our rail ambitions, our key priorities, which summarise the contents of the Plan, are outlined below:

- Deliver the IRP commitments- MML electrification to Sheffield, then bringing HS2 services to Sheffield as soon as possible with a stop at Birmingham Interchange; and deliver the ECML upgrades addressing the capacity constraints at Doncaster.
- Improve South Yorkshire's strategic connections, continuing the benefits of MML electrification through the Dearne Valley towards Leeds, bringing decarbonisation and operational benefits, enabling new hub stations at Rotherham and Barnsley Dearne Valley; and deliver the long planned enhancements on the Hope Valley Line and at Manchester Piccadilly to enable faster and more frequent services to Manchester and international gateways.
- Support the role of rail in accessing South Yorkshire's planned growth hubs, securing short term service enhancements, new stations and rail links to underpin our economic aspirations, including key economic growth sites, to maximise the impact of rail investment for South Yorkshire

2.4 The Plan is centred on three main priorities against which South Yorkshire's objectives for rail can be promoted:

- Securing and Maximising the Core IRP Pipeline
- Improving South Yorkshire's Strategic Connections
- Supporting the role of rail in accessing South Yorkshire's planned growth hubs

These categories and the main schemes within them are described below. They have been allocated to two phasing periods – priorities for early delivery (pre-2024), and medium term interventions (up to 2030).

2.5 ***Securing and Maximising the Core IRP Pipeline*** is predominantly about securing the interventions for South Yorkshire that are set out in the Government's IRP and ensuring they are actually delivered. It is also about seeking to influence the scope of those interventions to ensure that they deliver the maximum benefit for South Yorkshire.

2.6 The key workstreams to be influenced in this category are:

- *Midland Mainline electrification* – ensuring this reaches Sheffield by 2030 and includes the full electrification of Sheffield Midland Station. Also working closely with Network Rail on the design of the scheme including bridge reconstruction and three-tracking from Dore to Sheffield.

- *East Coast Mainline upgrade* – ensuring delivery of the planned investment in upgrading the East Coast Mainline benefits Doncaster, including journey time and capacity / connectivity improvements and local service uplifts.
- *HS2 to Sheffield* – ensuring HS2 reaches Sheffield via the Eastern Leg to East Midlands Parkway and the Midland Mainline via Derby, with two trains per hour in around 90 minutes from London. Influencing the scope of the plans such as stopping one train per hour at Birmingham Interchange.
- *HS2 to Leeds* – ensuring that the planned study on taking HS2 from the East Midlands to Leeds also considers the needs of the Sheffield to Leeds corridor, in order to provide faster and more frequent trains between these two major cities. Ensuring that the chosen route does not have any adverse impacts on South Yorkshire and where possible benefits it. Seeking early lifting of the safeguarding of the previous HS2 Eastern Leg.

2.7 ***Improving South Yorkshire's Strategic Connections*** seeks to address the principal gaps in the IRP and also secure shorter term investment to enhance local and regional services and infrastructure. This category focuses on securing some of the benefits that South Yorkshire would have seen from the full NPR and HS2 networks, as well as new services, stations and infrastructure improvements in the medium-term.

2.8 The key workstreams to be influenced in this category are:

- *Second fast train between Sheffield and Leeds* – ensuring this is secured in the May 2023 timetable.
- *Sheffield to Leeds* - further electrification and infrastructure enhancements to improve connectivity on the key north-south route via the Dearne Valley, including extending electrification to South Kirby Junction (ECML) and unlocking new station proposals for Rotherham Mainline and Dearne Valley Parkway.
- *Third fast train between Sheffield and Manchester* – continuing to make the case for this service as an outcome of the Hope Valley Line upgrade.
- *Address capacity issues in the Sheffield area* – secure the package of short term capacity upgrades at Sheffield Midland and work with Network Rail and DfT on the package of longer term capacity enhancements for the wider Sheffield area.
- *Other infrastructure enhancements* – secure line speed improvements to deliver improved journey times such as to Hull, Lincoln and Manchester;
- *NPR Conditional Outputs* – in the longer term, working to secure the full NPR network and the outputs of four fast trains per hour from Sheffield to Leeds and Manchester and two fast trains to Hull.

2.9 ***Supporting Rail in Accessing Growth Hubs*** focuses on rail schemes that will enhance connectivity and access to the region's growth areas and therefore support economic development and employment creation. Schemes in this category include:

- New stations – secure the MCA's new station plans, including Waverley and Gateway East (DSA).
- The MCAs Restoring Your Railways schemes across the region – Askern Line, Barrow Hill Line and Don Valley Line
- *Local service enhancements* – such as a second train per hour on the Penistone Line and improved regional connectivity for Barnsley, including platform lengthening at Barnsley Station.

- Re-instatement of services withdrawn due to the pandemic and staffing issues in the short term, including the Manchester Airport service.
- Rail Freight Requirements – improve rail access to I-Port and upgrade other rail freight routes and terminals.

2.10 The Positioning Plan also sets out the key partners to work with to achieve these aspirations and outcomes, including Government, rail industry bodies and neighbouring authorities. It also sets out the evidence requirements and timescales, and aspirational journey times.

3. Options Considered and Recommended Proposal

3.1 Option 1

Finalise the post-IRP Positioning Plan for South Yorkshire and agree the key priorities. Approve swift implementation of the Plan as a lobbying tool to ensure we secure our priority rail schemes and further investment in rail connectivity for South Yorkshire. Ensure the region speaks with one voice on rail.

3.2 Option 1 Risks and Mitigations

There is a risk that, despite the implementation of the Plan, this fails to influence government and the rail industry and the region does not secure additional investment and rail improvements. To mitigate this, we will engage closely with DfT, partners and wider stakeholders in the implementation of the Plan and seek to ensure all South Yorkshire MPs and Leaders are briefed on it.

3.3 Option 2

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

3.4 Option 2 Risks and Mitigations

This approach would mean 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.

3.5 Recommended Option

Option 1

4. Consultation on Proposal

4.1 Consultation has taken place with Local Authority partners and the Local Enterprise Partnership on the Positioning Plan and scheme priorities.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 It is imperative that this Plan is implemented urgently to ensure the region's voice is heard as decisions are being taken and workstreams commenced.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications and Advice

6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Requirements for 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 A communications and engagement strategy will be developed to provide focus on its proposed response to the Integrated Rail Plan and to ensure maximum impact and support for the actions.

List of Appendices Included

None

Background Papers

None