

## **DETERMINATION of NETWORK RAIL'S OUTPUTS AND FUNDING FOR 2014-19**

### **Response of Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership**

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1. Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership welcomes the publication of the draft Determination of Network Rail's Outputs and Funding for 2014-19 (Control Period 5).
2. We recognise the huge contribution that the railway system makes to the national economy and in particular to the economy of Thames Valley Berkshire.
3. Along with our private and public sector partners, and our predecessor Economic Partnerships, we have provided consistent and strong support for continued investment in a better railway. This campaigning work sits alongside our support for all sections of the rail industry in achieving greater productivity and efficiency in the day-to-day operation of the railway.
4. In particular, we welcome the reference in the draft Determination section on "other named schemes" to the Western Rail Access to Heathrow project (paragraph 9.91, page 331), reproduced below:

"9.91 Western access to Heathrow will create a new route from Heathrow terminal 5 onto the Great Western Main Line heading west. Network Rail and DfT have been working with aviation stakeholders and the project has strong local support. The information provided was good. But the Nichols consortium's review highlighted that the wrong cost base was used in the SBP submission and we have adjusted this accordingly. The HLOS stated that delivery of this project is anticipated to extend into CP6."

5. We have made the delivery of the Western Rail Access to Heathrow scheme our number one priority, and to this end it is the only Infrastructure scheme included in our draft City Deal bid to Government. We are actively exploring ways of backing our view of the urgent priority of this scheme with private investments. We are continuing to campaign for as much as possible of the scheme to be delivered in CP5.
6. We understand that there is a difference in the methodology applied by the DfT WebTAG approach to costs and benefits and that used by the ORR. We believe that the WebTAG approach which is inclusive of wider economic benefits is preferable to the narrower ORR approach which concentrates on fare-box income as a benefit. We ask you to reconsider the scoring of the Western Rail Access to Heathrow scheme.
7. The other major enhancements listed in the draft Determination are also of high interest to the LEP, and we fully support the efforts to:

- Complete Crossrail
  - Finish the Reading Station Enhancements
  - Deliver the electrification of the Great Western Mainline
  - Deliver the Intercity Express programme of new trainsets
  - Deliver the electrification of the Electric Spine, especially Basingstoke to Reading
  - Invest in train lengthening on the Reading-Waterloo service
8. We look forward to a major re-configuration of train operating patterns involving the outer suburban services from Oxford, Newbury and Basingstoke through Reading to London, Crossrail and Heathrow Express utilising the opportunities presented by Reading Station remodelling, Western Rail Access to Heathrow and Electrification. We hope that all these services can be aligned to provide a coherent service pattern between Thames Valley Berkshire, Heathrow, Paddington, Central London and beyond, without a harmful detriment to the existing high level of express services on the Great Western Mainline.
9. As for operational improvements, we are hoping that the twin bugbears of overcrowding and poor reliability can be tackled with the benefit of the major enhancement schemes noted above. This applies to all sections of the rail service in the Thames Valley Berkshire area
10. Therefore we welcome the statement at paragraph 31 (page 17):
- “There will be a renewed focus on improving the worst performing services, with the performance for each franchised operator in England & Wales to reach a minimum of 90% of trains on time. This will benefit customers on routes where train service reliability has been much worse than average.”
11. In addition the LEP has called for the following future projects to be developed:
- South-West Rail access to Heathrow
  - Improved frequency and journey times on the Reading-Wokingham-Bracknell-Ascot to London Waterloo line
  - Improved capacity and journey times on the Reading- Gatwick service
12. Thank you for the invitation to comment on your draft proposal.