



Promoting Britain's
Railway
for Passengers
and Freight

East Anglia Franchise Consultation
Rail Executive
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13th March 2015

Dear Sir,

Response to DfT East Anglia Franchise Consultation

Railfuture is the UK's leading independent organisation campaigning for better services for passengers and freight. A voluntary organisation to which many rail user groups are affiliated, the organisation is independent both politically and commercially.

This response is made by the Passenger, and Infrastructure & Networks Groups of Railfuture with contributions from the East Anglia, and London and South East Branches. The comments made are not confidential, and we would be happy for them to appear on your website and you are welcome to use them in discussion with funders and other stakeholders. We would be happy to enlarge on any of the points made above or to work with you to identify the best options for the future. Our ToC Liaison for this franchise area is Chris Burton (email: chris.burton@railfuture.org.uk)

Introduction

The key issues for the franchise are Reliability, Growth and Service Improvements (including longer distance journey times). Rolling stock is relatively old in comparison with other franchises in the South East/Anglian regions. This is reflected in the answers provided.

Question 1 (Paragraph 4.6)

Please select 3 of the Passenger Focus recommendations set out in paragraph 4.6 which you believe require particular attention in order to improve your end to end journey?

If relevant, please identify the rail line to which your answer relates.

These answers apply to all lines in East Anglia. We list three but all are of great importance.

1. Providing a punctual and reliable service

This applies to the Great Eastern main line and services into Norwich, Cambridge and Ipswich off and along the interurban (regional) network. Too often there are cancellations caused by rolling stock shortages and the lack of any spare trains/units. This particularly affects the interurban (rural) network. The new franchise MUST be adequately resourced.

On the main line there are often delays attributed to 'train faults' affecting both longer distance and services to Southend. The need for replacement rolling stock is becoming acute. We note that the WAML is better by and large in regard to train breakdowns with a recent introduction of Electrostar units. OLE failures have reduced but still remain a concern.

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2. Provision of sufficient capacity, both in terms of train frequency and the availability of seating on board the train

This is a problem on the line between Ipswich and Cambridge/Peterborough lines and between Cambridge and Norwich. The trains between Cambridge and Ipswich are too often formed of a single unit which is completely overwhelmed by intending passengers. Additional services should be provided on both routes to cater for 'stopping' and 'semi-fast' service patterns.

Additional services and/or train strengthening are required to respond to cultural and sporting events that often are often overloaded and fail to adequately cater for demand.

3. Effective management of disruption, especially through information to passengers

The number of disruptions is high and the summoning of alternative road transport is often patchy. Information given to passengers is often late and sometimes inconsistent leaving passengers frustrated.

Alternative routes are available for some longer journeys but information is often poorly disseminated. The visibility of staff (including senior staff) at busy nodes should be mandatory.

Use of online resources (Web/Twitter/Facebook/Smartphone app etc.) are an important and growing market for disruption information, but there are often wireless and mobile blackspot before and during journeys that prevent access to this information and there are still many people that cannot or choose not to use these. The importance of audio information on trains and stations as well as more dynamic use of Passenger/Customer Information displays is important for passengers. Many train fleets in this franchise have no on board passenger information displays at all.

Getting information to staff on board trains, at the gate line and across the franchise is also a common issue that needs attention.

Question 2 (Paragraph 4.12)

Are there any examples of outstanding customer service experiences, related or unrelated to passenger rail services, which you believe the new East Anglia franchise should aspire to? If so, please provide supporting details or evidence in your answer.

Boxing Day Train service provision.

There are examples elsewhere in the country of train operators who run services on Boxing Day, which is one of the busiest days of the year for travel on the road network. These include, Chiltern (London-Bicester), South Eastern (Javelin service), Southern (Victoria to Brighton), Gatwick and Stansted Expresses. People wish to visit friends and relatives and would prefer to avoid driving if they wish to celebrate! It is a full day in the sporting and other cultural activities and a major day for retail activity.

A basic hourly service calling at principal stations between London and Norwich via Ipswich and via Cambridge should be mandated to be instituted as soon as practicable, building to a minimum hourly service on all routes by the end of the franchise.

Many East Anglian communities are growing fast and are ill-served by their boarded-up station buildings. Most other stations are well painted but that does not mask the general tired look of the stations. Buddleia growing out of the roof of Cambridge station says a lot. At the boarded up stations of Brandon, Thetford, Attleborough, Bury St Edmunds, Needham Market and many more, the franchisee should emulate Merseyrail and work towards opening up the buildings with a convenience store that sells rail tickets and dispenses information for the railway and local area. Bicycle/car hire, warm modern waiting rooms as well as community meeting rooms and commercial start up offices should be provided to enable the station to be at the centre of local life....depending on the size of the building. Existing staffed stations could be enhanced in such a way also. Such facilities should enable the station to be staffed from beginning to end of service.

The stringent Scotrail Service Quality incentive Scheme (SQUIRE) should be considered for implementation. Transport for Scotland inspectors audit set standards for trains and stations every four weeks.

Question 3 (Paragraph 5.8)

Are there any changes to the current passenger rail service (i.e. number of trains per hour/day), as set out in paragraph 5.8, which you feel should be considered?

If so, please explain your rationale. For example, please identify specific local factors which might influence the future level of passenger demand which you consider should be reflected in the specification.

Colchester - Colchester Town - Wivenhoe - Thorpe - Clacton/Frinton/Walton

This route should be reviewed and plans drawn up to provide more frequent off peak stopping and fast services to address latent demand and social and economic regeneration,

Norwich - Wymondham - Attleborough - Thetford - Brandon - Ely -Cambridge Science Park - Cambridge

This route needs to be viewed in the context road traffic congestion on the approaches to both Cambridge and Norwich as well as the synergy between these two cities and the vibrant communities between, most with very productive high tech industries of differing sorts that are fast growing. These industries need excellent communications between each other and to London via Cambridge and to Stansted Airport / Gatwick Airport. Wymondham station serves an important town and also Norwich Science Parks so will need special attention with linking bus services. Also noteworthy is the A11 trunk road that has seen significant journey time upgrades. The railway now needs the same attention.

A second train needs to operate each hour calling only at Cambridge Science Park, Ely, Thetford, Attleborough and Wymondham (Brandon in the peaks). Apart from dealing with latent demand that Cambridge Science Park station will unlock, this second train will provide a better travel to work arrival time compared with the current relatively poor xx.56 arrival time in Cambridge. Note that very large housing developments are planned around Attleborough station, included in c6000 planned in the town.

Note that will be a continuing surge in usage on all lines north of Cambridge when the Science Park Station opens. This huge employment area hardly ranks as a travel to work destination from the north by rail as it takes up to one hour to travel back from Cambridge station by bus. The train passes the site 2mins out from Cambridge station, and cycling from Cambridge railway station to Science Park is faster than the bus.

Norfolk County Council has expressed a desire for a "Cross Norwich" Thetford to North Walsham stopping train service. We endorse this aspiration.

Note also the section below regarding Great Yarmouth.

Norwich - Great Yarmouth/Lowestoft

The population of Caister/Great Yarmouth-Gorleston/Lowestoft coastal conurbation is around 140,000. Connectivity is particularly poor at the Great Yarmouth end of this urban strip. Bus journeys end to end through the conurbation are very slow. Footfall through Yarmouth station is relatively good for the rather poor railway offer of just an hourly train to Norwich....up to 2tph in the peaks...461,000 footfall in 2012/13. A second train per hour is required and it should be extended "Cross Norwich" to become the fast train to Cambridge. (See above). Great Yarmouth has a vibrant and developing North Sea offshore energy industrial sector as well as tourism. It also has considerable regenerational opportunities. This additional fast train service would give potentially much improved connectional arrangements at Ely and at Cambridge for Stansted Airport, Stevenage, Harlow, etc. This fast hourly service would offer competition to the A11 and M11 road journeys as well as making rail much more attractive for local journeys into Norwich. Many groups of tourists encumbered with luggage and travelling by train would have one less change of train to make...a huge benefit and one that could grow longer distance traffic. Tourism is a very important industry in this area and the railway must do more to actively support it.

It is important that the franchisee has a duty to develop the stations at Yarmouth and Lowestoft to enable them better to cope with peak passenger numbers together with normal day-to-day numbers. The track layout at both stations must be retained to deal with long excursion trains, which may require engine release. The franchisee must be empowered to resist any call for re-siting the stations further away from the town centres.

The franchisee must be empowered to work with Network Rail to take measures to introduce 2tph (see above) to both towns, which may include track upgrades to enable 75mph running and additional stretches of double track, particularly on the Acle route.

The benefits of (potential) speed improvements are enormous as a competition tool against the improving highway network in and across Norfolk.

Cambridge - Newmarket - Bury St Edmunds - Stowmarket - Ipswich

This should be increased to half hourly with alternate 'fast' and stopping services.

The current service is very well used but latent demand at to/from the four major towns en route is not being entirely met owing to the poor arrival times for travel to work times....arrivals at Ipswich at xx.02, Cambridge is off pattern at 08.22 but otherwise at xx.36 and Bury St Edmunds xx.56. Newmarket has just one peak hour train into Cambridge whereas Ely has 7. This is a similar distance from Cambridge and a similar sized population. More train services are vital from Newmarket to Cambridge to help solve the chronic and unsustainable road traffic congestion on the approaches to Cambridge. Departures from these stations are poorly timed for leaving work ...a half hourly service will meet most end of work situations.

Note: the additional service should be a 'fast' service serving Stowmarket, Bury St. Edmunds and Newmarket. The rationale is to make it attractive to commute over the length of the line between Ipswich and Cambridge. The current service takes 80 minutes to cover 55 miles. By offering a limited stop service accompanied by line speed improvements, this journey should be possible in under an hour.

During disruption between London and Ipswich, it would make the route via Cambridge a feasible alternative.

To achieve this will require infrastructure interventions to double /track the line between Newmarket and Cambridge.

Growth at Dullingham (39%) and Kennett (90%) stations has been strong since 2009 and this in spite of only a two hourly service...increasingly an anomaly. The second train per hour would enable to serve these two stations each hour. There have been/will be large housing developments in the Red Lodge area nearby to Kennett and the very 'well heeled' villages around Dullingham railhead there to escape the poor road traffic conditions leading into Cambridge. Both stations need to be developed as park and ride stops.

Ipswich to Felixstowe

Remain hourly until infrastructure is provided to enable an increase to half hourly.

This service has not seen the growth associated with the rest of the network owing to very poor performance associated with capacity problems.

Ipswich- Woodbridge - Saxmundham - Beccles - Lowestoft

This should run half hourly as far as Saxmundham on weekdays and Saturdays extending hourly to Lowestoft. It should also run hourly to Lowestoft on Sundays (currently only every alternate hour). The rationale for this is the increasing loadings on existing services south of Saxmundham over recent years which if trends continue will lead to overcrowding on this route. It also offers the opportunity to vary the stopping pattern so that the hourly service to/from Lowestoft only need to call at Woodbridge between Ipswich and Saxmundham and offer passengers from stations north of Saxmundham a faster service. To achieve this will require infrastructure interventions by Network Rail and are the subject of a separate response to the 'Anglia Route Study'. Services to/from Saxmundham should serve Westerfield station every hour in addition to the hourly service on the Felixstowe service. The rationale for this is the imminent expansion to the north of Ipswich with over 3000 dwellings planned in the area around Westerfield station.

Ipswich to Bury St Edmunds - Ely - Peterborough

This should be increased to hourly, 7 days per week. The rationale for this is to provide an improved service between the GEML via Ipswich and the East Coast Main Line at Peterborough. Of all the services from In East Anglia this is the only one that fails to achieve a basic hourly frequency. Passengers affected by late running on the East Coast Main Line when travelling south are penalised by a two-hour wait at Peterborough if the connection to Ipswich and beyond is missed. By the same token but more positively, passengers will have twice as many travel opportunities via Peterborough for the North and Scotland. Currently, this leaves Ipswich and Colchester as the 'poor relations' to Norwich and Cambridge among the major economic city regions in East Anglia that would benefit from better rail connections to the of the north England and Scotland.

Witham - Braintree

Introduce a half hourly service between Witham and Braintree using the proposed passing loop halfway along the branch line. It is not intended that these additional trains should be to/from London as there are adequate connecting services available at Witham.

Cambridge - Ely - March - Peterborough/Wisbech

Currently this corridor is very poorly served, just 1tph which is often extraordinarily overcrowded to March. An additional hourly service from Wisbech pop 33,000 would enable a proper service of stopping trains and expresses to be instituted. Wisbech trains should call at all stations all through the day enabling the North Cambridgeshire Fens to be properly connected to the Cambridge. Manea can develop as a P&R station for nearby Chatteris, pop 10,000, currently the edge of the feasible road based travel to work area for Cambridge.

Cambridge - Audley End - Stansted Airport/London Liverpool Street/Stratford

Currently the Stansted Airport - Cambridge route offers 1tph from early to late Mon - Sat and a recently introduced off peak service 1ph Mon - Fri. Both services load very well. The service must be extended to 2tph 7 days a week all day with good connections from all over East Anglia. The conundrum of freight paths that are rarely or never used and fiercely protected by freight operators must be solved. This is stopping the development of this equally important passenger train services.

The Cambridge - London services are currently a much improved peak service of varying stopping patterns including 2tph stopping into/out of Cambridge in both directions in the peaks. These trains serve very important and growing high tech industrial hubs to the south of Cambridge served via Great Chesterford station and Whittlesford. Considerable numbers of workers travel from Cambridge in the morning returning in the evening. Extending all services to/from Cambridge Science Park station is imperative as this will cut travel time to the new station from Cambridge station to the Science Park to 2 or 3 minutes (longer to more distant parts of the a Park if on foot.) cycle parking will be available. The train operating company must expect a surge of traffic as intermodal shift takes place.

Cambridge - Audley End for Saffron Walden - London services are currently operated by a mix of good and poor quality trains. Rolling stock improvements together with improved off peak frequencies are required to cater for the suppressed latent demand all along this corridor.

Beaulieu Park Station - The construction of the proposed station, north east of Chelmsford, is becoming increasingly urgent as construction of the housing development has started. Services and their frequencies at this station need to be considered and opportunities to ensure that this can be provided as early as possible.

On all other routes the franchisee should work towards achieving 2tph. This frequency will be increasingly be expected as the region's population and economy continues to expand. It already has an economy that contributes more to the nation's finances and will in return expect a high quality frequent, interconnecting railway.

Question 4

Results indicate that rail is not the preferred mode of transport when travelling to Stansted Airport. What improvements do you believe should be made to the rail service in order to make this your first choice of travel?

Great Yarmouth, Lowestoft, Thetford, Wisbech, Ipswich, Bury St Edmunds, Newmarket are not well connected by rail to Stansted. However, if the services to Cambridge were improved in frequency and journey times (as described in Question 3 above) this would offer improved connection opportunities with services to Stansted if the Cambridge - Stansted service ran to 2tph minimum early to late 7 days a week including Boxing Day. All the towns above have strong flows to the Airport for cultural, industrial/business/commercial reasons.

We note that there are aspirations for 2tph on all routes leading to Cambridge. Inevitably most of these routes lead through Ely and onto Cambridge for connections to the Airport. This latent demand will remain repressed unless these aspirations are met. NR must be empowered to carry out works between Ely North Junction and Ely Station that meet these aspirations. These works will entail more than 'just' doubling single lead junctions. The provision of at least a third track will certainly be required together with the entire Ely area lines bi-directionally signalled.

Greater use of the limited stopping service to/from Stansted Airport from the south could be made, by air passengers and airport workers alike, if improved possession-management for routine maintenance [including single-line working with bi-directional signalling] enabled earlier first and later last Stansted Express trains throughout the week. When infrastructure allows, some additional services could be considered to serve more stations from the south to provide an alternative to the car for local air passengers and workers.

Question 5 (Paragraph 5.10)

If you have a view on or would be affected by the proposal set out in paragraph 5.10, please answer the following:

Which direct service would you most value? Where possible please explain your rationale when responding to this question.

- *a direct service between Norwich and Liverpool*
- *a direct service between Norwich and Peterborough providing connections to Liverpool*
- *a direct service between Norwich and Peterborough providing connections to the East Coast Main Line.*

It is clear that there is need for a fast frequent service from Norwich (Serving North and East Norfolk, the Broads) to Peterborough for onward connections to the ECML. Beyond that it is also clear locally that the preference is for such a train to continue to Nottingham and beyond.

- *a direct service between Ipswich and Peterborough*
- *a direct service between Ipswich and Ely providing connections to Peterborough.*
- *a direct service between Ipswich and Ely providing improved connections to the ECML via Peterborough.*

It is clear locally that the preferred option is a direct train service between Ipswich and Peterborough and that the current train service should be made more frequent at 1tph.

The rationale is that Ipswich and connecting passengers from the East Suffolk Line, Felixstowe Line and from Colchester, should enjoy connections with the a) the East Coast Main Line b) services to Birmingham and c) services to Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield and Nottingham at Peterborough with the fewest changes possible between trains.

The existing service to Peterborough every 2 hours has a limited stopping pattern and is clearly aimed at a longer distance travel market than the 'all stations' Ipswich to Cambridge service. Passengers travelling over greater distances are more likely to travel with luggage and/or with family members for whom changing trains and making multiple seat reservations would be a disincentive to choosing the train.

Ely area capacity problems.

Questions 3 and 4 cannot be addressed without including in the service mix, the present Stansted to Birmingham service via Cambridge currently operated by 'Cross Country'. The following is a potential solution to the capacity problems between Ely and Ely North Junction.

Currently the number of passenger trains and the 'train paths' they occupy, aggregated over both directions, is as follows:-

Service	Trains per hour	Paths per hour
Norwich to Liverpool	1	4 (Call at Ely both ways)
Cambridge to Kings Lynn	1	2
Cambridge to Norwich	1	2
Stansted to Birmingham	1	2
Ipswich to Peterborough	1 (every other hour)	1
Total	4.5	11

Increasing the frequency of Ipswich to Peterborough services to hourly would increase the total 'paths' to 12. In addition to this aspiration, there are proposals to increase the services to Kings Lynn to half hourly, Cambridge to Norwich to half hourly and to introduce an hourly service between Cambridge and Wisbech. The following solution achieves the above aspirations without exceeding 12 paths per hour.

Upon the introduction of half hourly trains from Cambridge to Kings Lynn and Cambridge to Norwich the Norwich to Peterborough/Liverpool service could operate via Ely 'west curve' and omit the call at Ely. This would speed up journey time. Connectivity between Kings Lynn and Peterborough would be maintained via the Stansted and Ipswich services that would continue to call at Ely. On renewal of the 'Cross Country' franchise, the opportunity should be taken to include the Ipswich-Peterborough service and the Stansted to Birmingham service under the same franchise. These 2 services would 'portion work' south of Ely combining to a single train of increased length through to Birmingham. As well as offering Ipswich a direct service to the midlands, it would also assist loadings west of Leicester. The released paths would then accommodate the Cambridge to Wisbech trains. The resulting service pattern would then be:-

Service	Trains per hour	Paths per hour
Norwich to Liverpool	1	0
Cambridge to Kings Lynn	2	4
Cambridge to Norwich	2	4
Stansted to Birmingham	1 (combining at Ely)	2
Ipswich to Birmingham	1 (combining at Ely)	-
Cambridge to Wisbech	1	2
Total	8	12

The rationale for making the service from Ipswich rather than the one from Norwich the 'through' service to Birmingham is for the following reasons:-

1. Later this year (2015), Network Rail is due to publish (and hopefully consult upon) its 'Electrification Refresh' Route Utilisation Study (RUS). The above proposal anticipates that the case for electrification from Felixstowe to Nuneaton/Birmingham will be brought forward for completion in Control Period 6 (2019-2024). This falls within the anticipated lifetime of the passenger franchise to be awarded in 2016. The case will largely be made on the use of the line by freight trains. The fuel saved will be a function of the energy used in moving payloads which relates to the weights of train. A 3-car DMU weighs in at around 150 tonnes, a freight train at around 1,500 tonnes; a ratio of 1:10. The 'Mid Anglia' line is therefore likely to be much further up the priority list than the 'Breckland' line. Electrification of this route would release the following DMU diagrams:-

Service	DMUs diagrams released
Ipswich-Felixstowe	1
Ipswich-Cambridge	3
Ipswich-Peterborough	2 (4 if the service was hourly)
Stansted-Birmingham	7
Birmingham-Leicester	3
Total	16 to 18

16-18 diagrams, allowing for servicing, is worth 22 or more diesel units that can be redeployed to other routes. The Ipswich/Stansted to Birmingham proposal is therefore one that is more easily converted to electric traction during the course of the franchise.

2. Both the line from Ipswich and the one from Cambridge approach Ely from the South. Splitting/joining trains running in the same direction would involve a more economic use of platform space and crossovers at Ely which is already a 'pinch-point' on the network.

3. We also note that subject to the complete doubling of the Soham to Ely line, the doubling of most of the Westerfield to Felixstowe line, the quadrupling of the route through Leicester Syston-Wigston that NR wishes to run up to 48 freight trains per 24 hours through Ely. We assume these will be strictly timetabled at about 2 paths an hour with hopefully a good many running through the night. There will thus be about 14 paths each way through Ely a North Junction plus up to 4 paths per hour needs to access the West Curve. NR can now understand the number of paths required by the economy of East Anglia through this junction and plan accordingly. This may need full bidirectional signalling of all routes leading to the junction, a possible third track all the way from Ely Dock Jct. to Ely North Jct..

Question 6 (Paragraph 5.17)

Do you have any proposals to improve Community Rail Partnerships so as to deliver more of the beneficial outcomes for passengers achieved so far? Please provide any evidence in support of your proposal.

Railfuture supports the concept of community rail partnerships.

It does seem unfortunate that local authorities have to fund much of partnerships. We recommend that the train operator/DfT to take over much of the necessary funding to make sure of continuity as is the case with a number of recent franchise awards (including Direct Awards).

Question 7 (Paragraph 5.22)

Do you wish to submit a proposal for a future third party promoted scheme that would involve a change to the current rail service in the franchise?

If so, please include any supporting business case or value for money analysis together with your proposal.

It should be made easier for Local Authorities to contract with Train Operating Companies. An example at Derby Road station in Ipswich where the local council has offered capacity on the town's monitored CCTV system has been frustrated by the apparent inability of franchise operators to contract with third parties for periods that extend beyond the term of their franchise.

We would recommend that the Cambridgeshire County proposals for the station at Chesterton Junction ("Cambridge Science Park") and its Wisbech to March and Cambridge passenger service be taken on as franchise commitments.

Question 8 (Paragraph 5.24)

How can the franchise operator help you better during a) planned disruption, such as engineering works and forecasted bad weather, and b) unplanned on-the-day disruption? Please provide separate answers for both cases.

a) Combining 'engineering works' and 'forecasted bad weather' into the same 'planned disruption' category is unfortunate as there are different characteristics to each.

i. 'Engineering works' are planned many months in advance, tend to be well advertised and the train company is able to plan alternative road transport. In most cases things seem to be well organised. However, it is the 'unplanned over running' of engineering works, which is the cause of most frustration when there is little time to arrange alternative transport. Planned engineering works should be accompanied by a contingency plan to cover over running, if necessary by Network Rail owning and operating its own fleet of replacement road vehicles to have on stand-by. This would avoid the embarrassment of having nothing to offer the public on a Monday morning when all the available local buses are on school contracts.

Operators must plan in as much use of the rail network as possible. In one instance the TOC closed the railway between Ely and Thetford as planned but then refused to operate the part of the service between Ely and Cambridge. It relied on other operators services and of course created huge overcrowding problems on those services and massive inconvenience on a very busy corridor. Three differing TOCs operate off peak 3tph. The users see it as one service not three separate services.

ii. In the case of forecasted bad weather, there needs to be an arrangement with the DfT that allows train companies some lee-way in the calculation of Public Performance Measures. There is a tendency for the train operator to offer an unnecessarily 'defensive' service when high winds are forecast that leads to overcrowding on many services.

Also see comments made in Q1 (3)

b) Unplanned disruption (line blocked due to bad weather bringing lines down, persons being hit by trains or cable theft affecting signalling) are events outside the control of the railway. There needs to be better training of staff in communicating with the public and more 'open' approach which will get customers on the side of the industry. The first thing that would bring immediate benefit to already tense situations is if there could be a way of silencing the automated platform announcements. Much time is wasted trying to correct misinformation rather than focusing on helping the public. There needs to be consistency between information given on screens, on platform announcements, and on the internet. During the 'St.Judes' storm of 2013 for example, there were no services but the web information suggested that there were!

Also see answers made in Q1 (3)

Question 9 (Paragraph 5.27)

To improve the railway's ability to match growth in demand with appropriate levels of capacity, we recognise that an increase of carriages per train, or in the number of services per hour, would help. However, we are confined by limited timetabling and infrastructure constraints and are therefore looking for other innovative ways to resolve the issue. When travelling on a service where capacity is stretched, what opportunities do you see which would improve your on board experience?

1. New rolling stock needs to be adequately resourced to cope with growth. The current franchise has been the subject of a series of 'mind-the-shop' renewals resulting from previous collapses of either the franchising process or the termination of previous awards. There has been little capacity added to the Anglia Network since 2004. Assuming that this franchise will run until 2024 then it needs to cater for 20 years of growth in demand beyond that which it is currently capable of meeting.
2. When new rolling stock is provided, the franchise needs to retain enough of the existing rolling stock as is required to cover for unforeseen shortages. There has to be 'something in reserve'.
3. The operator needs to be much more responsive to disruption caused by insufficient availability of trains. The current franchise does not seem able to 'think on its feet' and vary the timetable using 'additional stop orders'. The loadings on the GEML are such that shortages of trains are always going to lead to overcrowding but this is preferable to being left on a platform watching a train go by that could have stopped.
4. Although attention to the route problem should be a priority, commonly and exceptionally crowded trains need to be identified and publicised to allow passengers to choose alternative services and journey times if possible. 1st Class should be considered for declassification and the release of pre-booked, but unused, reservations (after 5 minutes).

Question 10

What are your views on removing first class seating in order to provide more overall seating and reduce standing?

First Class accommodation is not required on those trains that serve the 'interurban' (or regional) services. However fares must be offered that allow through booking to ECML first class accommodation. Standard class seating of comfortable standard with good legroom must be provided, where possible arranged 2+2.

It is required on GEML intercity and outer suburban services and Greater Anglia services to Stansted Airport and Cambridge. Off peak the operator must be mandated to promote this facility with offers and provide 'free' tea/coffee and light refreshments. The interior of such accommodation must be always well presented - if it cannot be, it should be declassified.

Question 11 (Paragraph 5.29)

Are there any specific stations or services that you feel could improve on reliability or punctuality? Where possible, please explain your reasoning when responding to this question.

Of the lines that run into Ipswich the greatest problems with service cancellations and delays is the Felixstowe service. This stems from the fact that the line is already operating beyond its theoretical capacity due to the volume of freight trains. Network Rail is addressing this issue and have some limited 'double tracking' proposals planned in CP5 (to 2019). However, in the long term it is likely that this line will need to be double track almost throughout. However, not all cancellations are due to freight movements. The service is also prone to cancellations due to rolling stock shortage. The 8:25 from Ipswich has a 10% chance (according to official statistics) of not running, particularly inconvenient for those with employment in Felixstowe. This train is formed of the unit from the Cambridge service and is often 'taken out' if the operator is a unit short.

All temporary speed restrictions must be immediately reviewed with the aim to remove them quickly.

Question 12

What sort of improvements would you like to see prioritised at the station(s) you use? Please provide details and reasoning for these as well as the name of the station(s).

Railfuture members use all the stations on the East Anglia network. We categorise them into three groups:

1. Large: which includes Norwich, Ipswich and Cambridge, Colchester, London Liverpool Street and Stratford

For this group we would expect full staffing from beginning to end of service including full ticket office/travel centre provision plus ticket machines. There should be a full range café and other retail facilities. There should be adequate warm indoor seating preferably around a café facility. There should be adequate seating on the platforms and outside the station. All platforms must have full canopy provision to aid the safe boarding and alighting from trains together with clear departure and arrival information. This should be separate from any notice of engineering work. Adequate provision of toilets must be made in particular for women for whom it is usually under-provided. There should be a range of cycle and car hire facilities. There should be long term and short term car parking and cycle parking which must be more than normally required, though not at Liverpool Street and Stratford. Facilities are normally good at Cambridge[*], Colchester and Norwich but Ipswich station needs a complete refurbishment and reorganisation. It has become cluttered as a result of various initiatives that have been introduced at different times, which do not fit together well. Among improvements needed in the short term are:-

- Provision of toilets on the 'island' platform (platforms 3 & 4)
- Repairs to the platform canopies that leak in wet weather.
- Replacing the gap in the canopy created by the new footbridge

In the longer term, there will be a need to increase the capacity of the station to take more services as frequencies increase, particularly on connecting 'rural' routes. Following electrification, these trains are likely to be longer making 'platform sharing' more difficult. There is space to create up to 3 additional platforms, of 4, 6 and 8 car lengths, without building outside the railway boundary.

Linked to this there will be a need to create a second set of entrance gates to cope with passenger volumes. There is space to do this adjacent to platform 1.

[*] Cambridge is currently being rebuilt with some of these facilities missing. We expect they will be restored on completion. To enable the local authority to manage traffic around the station, the franchisee should be prepared to cooperate in providing an additional entrance to the platforms via a new footbridge from the east side of the railway.

2. Medium: Ely, March, Whittlesford, Audley End for Saffron Walden, Thetford, Yarmouth, Lowestoft, Newmarket, Bury St Edmunds, Sheringham, Stowmarket, Diss, Manningtree, Dovercourt, Wivenhoe, Clacton, Frinton, Walton, Colchester Town, Marks Tey, Sudbury, Romford, Shenfield, Southend Victoria, Southminster, Wickford, Witham, Chelmsford, Braintree, Hackney Downs, Severn Sisters, Edmonton Green, Cheshunt, Tottenham Hale, Broxbourne, Hertford East, Harlow Town, Bishops Stortford and Stansted Airport.

Full staffing from beginning to end of service. Warm pleasant waiting rooms (on both platforms where there are two), with a café, must be provided. Several of these stations that are currently unstaffed but should be staffed using a shop/café that includes a warm waiting room. Toilets must be provided. Formal car parking and cycle parking must be provided and other facilities for tenants to use such as car hire. There must be adequate real time information screens. Adequate seating should be provided. All areas of the station and access to it might be brightly lit.

Note that Sheringham needs particular and urgent attention.

3. Small: this covers all other stations.

On a case by case basis car parking should be provided. Cycle parking too. Each platform must have adequate shelter and seats. All areas of the platform/station must be adequately lit. Information screens showing next train should be provided. Some stations have a footfall adequate to provide a convenience store/café and ticket machine. Attleborough, Wymondham and Needham Market come into this category. Passenger Information/Emergency points must be provided.

Question 13 (Paragraph 6.8)

Do you have any proposals to improve security and safety at stations or on trains that you would like us to consider? Please provide any supporting evidence and details of any specific stations which you feel merit consideration for future improvement under these schemes.

Derby Road: lacks natural surveillance and is unattractive to users after dark.

Cambridge: platforms 1/2, 4 are used by services for their whole lengths with often several hundred people boarding and alighting from trains simultaneously. When it is raining this a deeply unpleasant and sometimes dangerous operation. Canopies need to be provided along the whole length of these platforms.

Stratford: platforms 9/10/10a/11 and 12 are used by thousands in many hours yet have no canopy. In poor weather conditions many shelter in stairwells. Someday a passenger will slip and tumble down the stairs causing injury or worse. Canopies and decent warm shelters must be provided for safety reasons and courtesy.

Sheringham: Platform is dangerously narrow and short.

Question 14 (Paragraph 6.11)

Are there areas of improvement in customer information and engagement you would like to see before, during and after your journey?

Clearer signing of platforms at all stations. Clearer signing to bus, taxi, car hire cycle storage as appropriate at all stations. Cambridge station is particularly poor in this latter regard.

Platform CIS summary screens on all platforms used by passengers for interchange between different services eg the up platform at Tottenham Hale has nothing to indicate the next trains' destinations/calling points so passengers alighting and wanting Stratford [or Lea Bridge] or Hackney Downs have no means of knowing in advance if their train is running and when.

In times of significant disruption, posters should be displayed as soon as practical after explaining the issue and reminding passengers of their rights to claim refunds.

We welcome the existing stakeholder forum arrangements and would want to see this valuable contact continued and expanded. Our organisation would welcome the opportunity to work with future franchisees regarding specific passenger issues – e.g. Planned and Unplanned Disruption handling.

Also see answers in Q1 (3)

Question 15

On a scale of 1 to 9, how would you rate the following on board passenger facilities (1 = not important; 9 = very important):

(Where possible, please explain your reasoning when responding to this question.)

Facility	Rating	Comment
Luggage holds	6	Assuming adequate capacity of luggage racks)
Cycle storage	2	Passengers in peak hours are encouraged to use bike parking at stations or carry folding bikes that can be stored in luggage holds (above). Cycle parking at stations needs to be more than adequate though.
Audio Passenger Information	9	As long as this is essential information only. Vital for those with visual impairment.
Visual Passenger Information	9	Visual confirmation of information is important. Those with hearing impairment rely on visual information.
Provision of different classes of service	8 for Intercity and some WA services. For most other services 1.	Fewer firms offer 1st class travel as part of an employment package and with space becoming more scarce it becomes more difficult to justify vacant seats in 3 intercity coaches per train designed for 49 1st class passengers when the same space could seat up to 80 regular passengers. Train companies should provide 'quiet' zones at no premium
Catering on intercity services	8	Good catering on intercity services is a campaign requirement of local authorities, the LEP and business in general. (We note that the increasing numbers of catering outlets at stations have encouraged people to buy

		snacks and beverages off train.) Trolley service on Stansted Express services is well regarded.
Tables	9	Tables are not just used for eating and drinking. They are increasingly used as 'workstations'. Tables that fold down from the backs of seats do not take up valuable space.
Staff presence	8	Particularly on trains late into the evening as they offer a security presence.
Baby changing facilities	8	This can be designed into the toilet areas perhaps by including the facility in toilets for use by Persons with Restricted Mobility and ensuring that there are sufficient of these included on the train.
Plug sockets	7	Becoming more important as trains are used as mobile offices.

Where possible, please explain your reasoning when responding to this question.

Please also identify any other on board passenger facilities not listed above that you deem very important.

Wireless internet access is becoming ever more vital for long distance passengers and should be included along with power sockets. People are commuting over longer distances as the cost of living in London increases. Time spent on the train is now part of the working day. As technology has got smaller the train offers the advantage over the car as people can work and travel at the same time. Provision of this should not be seen as a 'cost' but as a direct investment in the nation's productivity. People are less likely to complain about fare increases if they are getting rent-free office space as part of the bargain!

Question 16 (Paragraph 6.15)

What areas of customer service within your end-to-end journey would you expect to see monitored and reported on in the new franchise, in order to improve the service quality for passengers?

A change to the public Performance Measure (PPM) of train service punctuality to one that rewards the maintenance of train connections. The current measure, focused on arrival times, discourages operators from holding connecting trains for passengers on trains that are delayed. There are 2 possible alterations to the PPM rules that would solve the problem.

1. To remove from the PPM data any train that was a 'held' connection
2. To subtract from the connecting train's arrival time the number of minutes by which its departure was delayed in order to maintain the connection. This would reward connectivity while ensuring that no further delay to the connecting train went unrecorded.
3. A breakdown of statistics by route (as introduced on recent franchise awards such as Southeastern) allow focus on the worst performing services as well as maintaining the best ones.

Implementation of SQUIRE.

Question 17

Based on your experience or knowledge of rail passenger services, do you have any observations that may assist us in our commitment to have due regard to the Environment, Equality, Social Value and the Family (as set out in paragraphs 6.16 to 6.20) in the development of the specification of passenger services for East Anglia?

1. CET retention tanks to be fitted to all trains.
2. Development of Senior bus pass as a Senior Rail Card allowing normal discounted fares.
3. Work to extend the effectiveness of the Network Card by reducing or removing mid-week minimum and encourage more off-peak travel.
4. Smart cards to give discounted fares in peak shoulders and off peak.
5. Family friendly fares off peak without railcard.
6. Work with local authorities to institute improvements requested by them in a set period of time.
7. Work towards Boxing Day trains and later services on all routes. Sunday service to be largely that which operates on Saturday.
8. CRPs to be primarily funded by DfT or TOC, but with potential additional support from and involvement of the wider community.
9. Keep all trains much cleaner in and out. (The DMU fleet is rarely cleaned properly on a daily basis.)

Question 18

In summary, what three aspects of your current East Anglia rail journey would you like to see improved to enhance your overall travel experience?

1. New trains and more of them operating faster more frequent train services, particularly on 'cross country' routes, so long as all stations are adequately served.
2. Improvements to stations as set out above.
3. Improved connections at key nodes.

Question 19

Please indicate if there are any additional areas that you think it is important for us to consider and that have not already been addressed in this consultation.

1. Work to improve derelict stations to being into community use and as local hubs.
2. Minimum standards for all stations as outlined above. Always look for added value.
3. TOC should be committed to work NR to improve connections at key nodes...Cambridge, Ely, Ipswich, Stowmarket, Norwich, Colchester. Half hourly services will be the key to this objective.
4. Close cooperation with joint and adjacent operators (including TfL) to support cross boundary and areas of joint working both in normal & contingency services and also ticketing arrangements. The prime, but not exclusive, example is Stratford that has developed into the prime UK hub with multiple operators/services and could develop further in the future. This principle also applies at Liverpool Street/Cambridge, Stansted Airport.

The DfT should take on the life-time leasing of trains and to work with the rail industry to develop a rolling stock strategy that makes effective use of, and help drive, the train building capacity. This is not to say that they should 'specify' them (that should remain an operational decision) but some mechanism needs to be found to ensure that additional trains can be obtained to meet unforeseen changes in demand during the period of a franchise rather than only getting the chance when a new franchise is let. Leasing companies are reluctant to deal with train companies with little time left on their franchise in case the following operator wants something different. Specification of rolling stock by a train operator is unlikely to result in the wrong product being ordered and therefore should be binding on the succeeding franchise. Rolling stock needs are liable to change due to external factors, such as a decision to electrify a particular route, and therefore the DfT should carry the risk and be perfectly open about managing rolling stock cascades. We trust these comments will be of use.

Yours faithfully,



Chris Austin OBE MA FCILT
Railfuture
Head of Infrastructure and Networks Group
for Director of Policy

Appendix 1: Railfuture - Aspirations for the next Greater Anglia Franchise

Introduction

The document has been compiled by the East Anglia and London and South East Branches of Railfuture with input from various local rail user groups.

East Anglia is one of the fastest growing regions in the country and is a net contributor to the Treasury. The existing rail franchise does not require a subsidy and pays a premium to the Government. Rail travel is growing on most routes and overcrowding is common on both the main lines and branch lines. However despite these factors, the level of rail investment in the region has been low compared with other areas. When investment has taken place, the results have been spectacular, for example the considerable increase in passengers since an hourly service was introduced on the Ipswich to Lowestoft route.

Significant passenger increases have also been recorded on the Cambridge to Ipswich and Norwich routes following improvements.

It is therefore essential that the new Greater Anglia franchise include major investment within the specification that covers rolling stock, service improvements and enhanced passenger experience. Aspirations and priorities for these areas are detailed below and build on the ideas in the East Anglia Rail Prospectus developed by the LEPs, MPs, local authorities and rail groups.

Rolling stock

Investment in rolling stock must be the key element of the franchise specification.

Additional rolling stock is required to deal with current overcrowding, support the planned growth in housing and jobs, and improve connectivity between key centres and between them and less economically developed areas.

New and refurbished rolling stock is needed to meet growing passenger expectations for information and therefore need to include displays that show connecting train information at key stations and notice of future engineering work etc. This information is especially important at times of disruption.

London – Norwich Route

New inter-city quality rolling stock is required for the London to Norwich service. Existing coaches and locomotives are over 25 years old. The new rolling stock needs to meet the following requirements:

- 10/11 coach formation
- Inter-city quality with end doors (powered doors for reduced station dwell times)
- Additional seating capacity over existing trains
- Catering facilities
- Enhanced acceleration and top speed for reduced journey times
- Wi-fi and power sockets at all seats
- Air-conditioning
- Enhanced information systems
- Space for cycles. Closed off area for parcels traffic off-peak

London outer-suburban routes

These routes cover services from London Liverpool Street to Cambridge, Hertford, Stansted Airport, Southend, Southminster, Braintree, Clacton, Harwich and Ipswich.

Existing services on these routes are operated by a mixture of units; classes 317, 321, 360 and 379. The class 317 and 321 units date from the 1980s and do not meet current passenger expectations. In particular the seats on these trains are too low and therefore uncomfortable for many users when seated over long periods of time. A fleet comprising fewer types would reduce maintenance costs and allow more flexible operation.

Peak hour trains are over-crowded and many services need lengthening from 8 to 12 coaches.

New and additional rolling stock is therefore required and need to meet the following requirements:

- Enhanced acceleration and top speed for reduced journey times
- A mixture of 2+2 and 2+3 seating as required having regard to the need to provide adequate seating for passengers in a mix of airline and bays. (We note however, surveys showing user dislike of 2+3 seating.)
- Mini-tables at all seats for drink cups, laptops etc
- Gangways between units to allow ticket inspection and for passengers to find seats

- Wi-fi and sockets at all seats
- Air-conditioning
- Enhanced information systems
- Space for off-peak cycle use.
- Toilets satisfying disabled access requirements and to be waste retentive.

Interurban routes

These routes cover services between and via the key centres of East Anglia:

Cambridge, Ely, March, Thetford, Norwich, Peterborough, Ipswich, Bury St Edmunds, Newmarket and services to Felixstowe, Lowestoft, Great Yarmouth, Sudbury and Cromer.

Many trains of these routes have standing passengers during the morning and evening peak periods and also on Saturdays with shoppers and tourists. There is also a lack of spare units to cope with special events, for example, summer holiday traffic, football matches and horse racing at Newmarket. Spare stock is also required to deal with incidents where trains are struck by vehicles at level crossings (a frequent occurrence in the region).

Therefore as a minimum 3-4 additional 2/3 coach diesel units are required to maintain a robust existing service. Such units may become free following electrification elsewhere around the country.

Electrification of the Sudbury branch would allow a diesel unit to be deployed elsewhere and provide a more robust service as spare trains would be available at Colchester and reduce empty stock working each day for the diesel unit to return to Ipswich for refuelling.

Additional trains will also be required to support enhanced services as detailed in the following section.

Additional Services

Additional train services are required on many routes to cope with overcrowding, support regional growth and to improve connectivity between the main centres.

The main routes out of London Liverpool Street are operating at close to full capacity in the peak periods. Although the Crossrail project may allow some additional services to operate, proposed investment in infrastructure such as additional tracks in the Lea Valley and on the Great Eastern Main line between Chelmsford and Colchester will be required to enable an increase in services.

Priorities for service enhancements are detailed below:

Ipswich to Peterborough hourly service – This route is the only one in the region that does not have an hourly service. Introduction of an hourly service will improve connectivity between two of the region's main centres and provide better links with the rest of the rail network at Peterborough.

The near doubling of the number of passengers following the introduction of an hourly service between Ipswich and Lowestoft shows the benefits of an enhanced service can bring. The service on this route would be limited stop.

London – Norwich – A third train each hour, with limited stops to achieve the Norwich in 90 aspirations of the local authorities and business groups.

Colchester – Clacton/Walton - A half hourly service all day for both local and London groups – The Tendring Peninsula is economically subdued compared with many parts of the region. Additional services will improve access to jobs and education in Colchester and encourage business to set up in the Clacton area.

Stansted Airport – Cambridge/Ely – Although second service commenced on this route as an off-peak service as recently as mid 2014, it is already very well used. The service needs to be extended to run all day to match aircraft arrivals and departures from the Airport. The service should also be extended to Ely to provide better connections to other parts of the region and to provide extra capacity on the Ely-Cambridge section where overcrowding is an issue in peak periods. This link is vital to economic growth in the region as the digital economy continues to develop.

Cambridge – Norwich - A half hourly service – Since the introduction of the quality regular through service, traffic has grown steadily. Many services are now running at capacity. A half-hourly service will improve links between these two centres and the market towns in between. The opening of Cambridge Science Park station and the continuing development of research parks in the Norwich area make this essential.

The franchisee must work with a Network Rail to increase line speed limits to match the capability of the rolling stock. The track has generally been rebuilt and is capable of higher speeds. The parallel road network has been upgraded, leaving the railway service disadvantaged.

Cambridge – Ipswich - A half hourly service – Many services on this route suffer from severe overcrowding, especially to and from Cambridge in peak periods. Offpeak, the existing service is totally inadequate to cope with traffic to the Newmarket races. A half hourly service with a mixture of stopping and limited stop trains is required to meet this demand and to provide an alternative to the congested A14*. The level of service and inadequate rolling stock provision is causing severe overcrowding into Ipswich and Bury St Edmunds in the morning peaks as well as Cambridge.

*The franchisee must work with a Network Rail to increase line speed limits to match the capability of the rolling stock. The track has generally been rebuilt and is capable of higher speeds. The parallel road network has been upgraded, leaving the railway service disadvantaged. The Newmarket to Cambridge section needs to be speed enhanced urgently.

Increased frequency to half-hourly on other routes should be introduced to suit growth in particular towns on the route.

Norwich to Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft is the next priority and this enhancement must be linked into changing patterns of longer distance service provision emerging in East Anglia to/from the Midlands and North. A direct service from/to Great Yarmouth is essential throughout the day to Peterborough and/or Cambridge via Norwich. Apart from supporting the economic growth of the offshore North Sea based industrial and primary material sectors, there is an important residual tourist base to be encouraged.

(Note the population of the continuous Caister/Great Yarmouth/Gorleston/Lowestoft conurbation is c.146,000). Although most stations have a regular service, there are some stations between Ely and Norwich, which have a very limited service. Stations such as Spooner Row, Eccles Road and Harling Road should have a train service that enables people to access especially Norwich but also Cambridge each day for work and leisure. This can be achieved by either adding stops to existing services or a dedicated shuttle service making a number of trips each day.

We note that very large housing developments are planned for Attleborough and such a service could support those enabling the second Cambridge service run as a limited stop.

Existing peak hour services between Kings Lynn and London Liverpool Street should be maintained. **(London Liverpool Street) - Bishops Stortford -Cambridge locals** - currently, peak stopping services are half hourly into Cambridge with appropriate by direction additional semi fast services serving The City of London in the morning and return evening services. Off peak services operate 1tph semi fast and 1tph stopping. To serve the increasingly important Cambridge market a second stopping service is needed. This could be provided by the extension of a stopping Stratford service north of Bishops Stortford. The limited track capacity south of Bishops Stortford makes additional services on this section difficult.

Lea Valley Services - It is currently impossible to run an all stations local stopping service on the Lea Valley line owing to Stansted Express trains running along this 2 track line at 100 mph every 15 minutes. The Network Rail Control Period 5 programme includes a third track between Coppermill Junction and Angel Road plus a new station at Angel Road to serve the new Meridian Water development. At minimum, the franchisee to work to include the extension of the third track north to Brimsdown with a passing loop north of Angel Road, in order to enable an all stations local service at a 15 minute frequency between London Liverpool Street/Stratford and Broxbourne. In the longer term, The Airport Commission's proposal for a 4 track railway between Coppermill Junction and the Hertford branch junction north of Broxbourne should be implemented....see also below.

Witham – Braintree - half hourly service - The service between Witham to Braintree Line should be significantly improved by the addition of an additional passing loop at an appropriate location. This would enable a half hourly service to operate along the branch.

Wickford – Southminster - half hourly service - The service between Wickford and Southminster should be increased to half hourly with the addition of appropriate passing loops.

Marks Tey - Sudbury - half hourly service - The service between Marks Tey and Sudbury should be increased to half hourly with addition of an appropriately placed passing loop. Investigate operating once an hour to Colchester Town.

Last Services

As a general aim, the last train arrivals to the branch termini (Yarmouth, Lowestoft etc.) should be between 00:30 and 01:00 and offer London departures up to 22:00.

Main line services should offer Ipswich a 'post 01:00' arrival and therefore a post 00:00 departure from London. Elsewhere (notably Thameslink) there are services throughout the night. There is no reason why services should not move to all night at hourly intervals London to Norwich and Cambridge. Such a frequency could permit 'one line working' and not conflict with engineering works. Freight trains run at night.

Sunday Services & Public Holidays including December 26th

Sunday service timetable must move to at least 'Saturday' service timetable (that is, in the same timings) and be also operated on December 26th (Boxing Day). For families and football supporters Boxing Day is one of the busiest days for travel in the year.

New Services and stations

The franchisee must work with Cambridgeshire County Council, Fenland District Council and the local enterprise partnerships to develop the business case to reopen the **Wisbech to March line**. (Wisbech has an urban population of 33000 with additional 40000 in its immediate catchment. Railfuture arranged a local petition in support of this scheme signed by nearly 4000 people, with 95% of those people living along the route.) The reopening should be included within the franchise specification as a priced option with a service between Wisbech, March and Cambridge.

The franchisee must work with the appropriate authorities and Network Rail to develop plans **for new stations on the existing network at Cambridge Science Park, Beaulieu Park Chelmsford and Soham**.

Hall Farm Curve - Stratford – Chingford

Although no longer part of the Greater Anglia franchise, we would suggest that there is merit in the introduction of a service operated by London Overground between Chingford and Stratford via a reinstated Hall Farm (South) curve. We would urge that this be considered as part of the Mayor of London Transport strategy. This will improve local connectivity towards Stratford with its Shopping Centre, the QEII Olympic Park and connections to Docklands, East Anglia and Kent. Network Rail has recently carried out a cost benefit analysis of this scheme, which shows a promising ratio of 2.9%.

The door to door journey experience

The franchise specification and scoring system for bidders needs to recognise the importance of the overall door to door journey. Areas to be considered include:

- Up to date running information on web-sites and other social media
- Alternative route information during times of disruption
- Print your own tickets at home – especially important in rural areas with generally unstaffed stations.
- Smart ticketing – integrated with local buses, encouraging people onto less busy train services
- Access to stations – adequate car parking*, bus links, cycle access and storage. *Car parking must always be available at hubs so more than is normally required should be provided.
- Station travel plans for all major stations
- Station staffing – major stations should have staff present from first to last trains* - these stations include the interurban hub stations such as Ely, Newmarket, Bury St Edmunds, Thetford, Diss, Stowmarket, Great Yarmouth, Lowestoft, Kirby Cross. All smaller town stations should have staff during the busiest periods. *Note - staffing should mean not only selling tickets but attending user's needs such as parking, taxi and bus links and where not in existence, operating refreshment and convenience stores, attending waiting comfortable lounges and quality toilets. A vital task would be making sure bus substitution services met the standards users expect at intermediate stations but currently do not receive. (One commuter recently stated in a television report regarding the latest disruption, that 'bus rail replacement', were the three saddest words in the dictionary.)
- Ability to purchase or collect tickets at stations
- All stations to have help points linked to CCTV
- All stations to have the ability to inform during times of disruption either through display screens and/or long line public address.
- Waiting shelters on all platforms
- Minimise the need for bus substitution and aim to run train services of as much of the route as possible. Consider alternative routes such as direct London to Norwich trains via Cambridge rather than bus for part of the journey.
- Regular senior management meetings with passengers at stations around the region
- Retention of the Anglia Day Ranger ticket and its promotion as the cheapest ticket for many journeys.

Infrastructure work associated with improved and new services

To achieve the new and improved services mentioned above will require the new franchise operator to work closely with Network Rail, local authorities and LEPs to deliver the following improvements to the infrastructure:

- Initiate electrification of the network that must include Felixstowe - Ipswich; Haughley - Bury St Edmunds - Cambridge/Ely - Peterborough; Ely - Thetford - Norwich. Apart from cheaper and more sustainable operation, this network electrification will release many dmu diagrams. Electrification of the Sudbury branch to free up a diesel unit, increase capacity and provide a more robust service
- 4 track section on the West Anglia main line initially in the Lea Valley area of London but eventually to Broxbourne (see section on Lea Valley above) and 2 tracks into Stansted Airport through the tunnel.
- Four track on the Great Eastern Main line between Beaulieu Park and Witham to allow for proposed new station and extra services.
- Double track to Trowse swing bridge outside Norwich station
- Extra platforms at Ipswich to cope with additional services
- Add an extra track and platform at Colchester Town to improve flexibility and allow additional services/stops at the town centre, for example, a service to and from Sudbury.
- Extra platforms at Norwich to cope with additional services. (The engine release track between platforms 4/5 can be adapted to enable those platforms to be divided for two additional platforms for short local trains.)
- Work to the Felixstowe line to enable a robust passenger service to be operated with increasing freight trains
- Doubling and additional passing loops are necessary to enable half-hourly service on the East Suffolk line, even if only on the southern (Saxmundham-Ipswich) section initially.
- Line speed improvements on ALL routes to reduce journey times, provide longer turnaround times and increase options for connections at key stations.

Rail Replacement Buses

Bus/coach operators should be subject to various standards of quality. Bus drivers must be trained on all routes. Vehicles must reach a minimum EU emission designs i.e. Euro 4 vehicles (Built from 2005 onwards). For emergency disruption the TOC must use available bus operators that are nearest to the main station of disruption, not necessarily the cheapest who may be located a considerable distance away. Rail replacement buses must all comply in accordance with legislation for bus and coaches. The Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations 2000 states that buses used on registered services have to be compliant as follows: January 2015 – buses with a laden weight under 7500 kos, January 2016 all single deckers, January 2017 all double deckers and from January 2020 coaches. (Buses used on school contract and with under 22 seats are exempt).

Compensation - Delay Repay/refunds

This requires reform. The current scheme states that claims can only be made if the train is over 30 minutes late. Therefore, a train can be late every morning up to 30 minutes, with a monthly compound delay of several hours but the passenger is unable to receive any compensation. Payment by Travel Vouchers should be stopped. In line with other consumer products/service failures, compensation should be issued with a direct payment by either cheque or bank transfer. Travel vouchers cannot be used for on-line bookings or with ticket machines. There should be a minimum refund per journey. Amount to be agreed.

UK call centres

It is essential that all are UK based. Off-shore call handlers, apart from getting Trimley mixed up with Frimley and Derby Road with Derby, rarely have more reliable information about delayed and cancelled trains than already known by the media, the Internet and Twitter. Passengers must be able to engage with the TOC for the most reliable 'real time' details regarding service disruption.

Fares

We note at towns with two or more stations often have a single fare to all Birmingham "stations" etc. Work to provide same facility for Ipswich, Westerfield, Derby Road; Cambridge, Cambridge Science Park.

We support any national initiatives to simplify fares. The franchisee must significantly improve the experience of purchasing a ticket to ensure passengers buy a ticket which they are confident is best suited to their requirements, and also understand operator, route and time restrictions. Clear information is needed whether bought on-line, from ticket machines or from ticket offices.

Every season ticket purchased must accompanied with written explanation of what the ticket entitles the purchaser to by way of routing, such added value such as gold card etc.

The franchisee must actively promote fares and services on all routes.