

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 8 FEBRUARY 2011

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR
PLANNING POLICY AND TRANSPORT

NATIONAL EXPRESS EAST ANGLIA: PROPOSAL TO DELIVER
INCREASED CAPACITY, TIMETABLE CONSULTATION FOR WEST
ANGLIA SERVICES FOR MAY 2011 AND DECEMBER 2011
TIMETABLES

WARD(S) AFFECTED: All

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To agree this Council's response to National Express East Anglia's proposal to deliver increased capacity timetable consultation for West Anglia services for May 2011 and December 2011 timetables.

RECOMMENDATION FOR DECISION:

(A)	<p>That National Express East Anglia be advised that, in relation to 'the proposal to deliver increased capacity timetable consultation for West Anglia services for May 2011 and December 2011 timetables', East Herts Council, in respect of:</p> <p>i) Proposal 1: Generally supports the plan to introduce a faster, hourly off peak service between Cambridge and London, using the new class 379 trains, which calls only at Whittlesford, Audley End, Bishop's Stortford and Tottenham Hale, but would prefer the service to call at Broxbourne (to enable enhanced connections from the Hertford East branch line) rather than Bishop's Stortford, which is already currently served by Stansted Express fast services.</p> <p>ii) Proposal 2: While supporting the increase in local services for stations in East Hertfordshire that a twice an hour service from Stratford would bring,</p>
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	<p>would prefer that at least one of the two timetabled trains should continue to Stansted Airport, in order to ensure that the only direct link to Stansted from other Hertfordshire stations is maintained.</p> <p>iii) Proposal 3: Objects to the planned reduction in Stansted Express journey times by looping the Hertford East service at Broxbourne to allow a Stansted Express service to pass it, as adding around 3 to 4 minutes to the journey time of the Hertford East service will be of no benefit to East Herts residents; and, by making an already long journey even less attractive to users, may reduce patronage and encourage journeys to be made by less sustainable modes.</p> <p>iv) Proposal 4: Expresses no preference on the option of whether to run, in the morning peak, 3 x 12 car services with new trains from Cambridge to London or, alternatively use the same new trains to run 2 x 12 car services from Cambridge and 1 x 12 car service from Stansted Airport.</p> <p>v) Proposal 5: Supports, in principle, the introduction of a new service either from Cambridge or Ely to Stansted Airport on the opposite half hour to the Cross Country service, as provision from either location may help engender modal shift.</p>
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1.0 Background

- 1.1 The abolition of the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA), by the terms of the Railways Act 2005, imposed a new duty on the Secretary of State which led to the redefining of the role of the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR). A consequence of the legislation was that the Secretary of State was bound to set out a High Level Output Specification (HLOS) by July 2007; the timetable for the delivery of the HLOS proposals having been set by the ORR. The Government complied with that timetable by publishing a White Paper; Delivering a Sustainable Railway, in July 2007 in which it set out its plans for the rail network for the following 30 years.
- 1.2 Three key issues that DfT agreed with ORR and Network Rail must be covered by the HLOS relate to reliability, safety and capacity. In line with the principles of the HLOS, National Express East Anglia (NXEA) signed an agreement with the Department for Transport (DfT) in April 2009 to introduce an extra

188 carriages onto the National Express East Anglia network and, regarding the capacity issue of the HLOS, carried out a consultation in 2009 concerning the company's intentions in that respect. That consultation sought views on NXEA's proposals for the deployment of the new rolling stock to be implemented over Control Period 4, running from 2009 to 2014. East Herts Council made its response to that consultation under Executive Non Key Decision 09/23, at **Essential Reference Paper 'B'**, which can be found at: <http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=9252>

1.3 After consideration of the feedback received to the 2009 consultation, NXEA has now developed more detailed proposals for the deployment of the additional rolling stock and associated service improvements on the West Anglia line. Additional consultation is therefore now being undertaken over these further changes, which NXEA consider would enhance its services and would wish to deliver starting from the May 2011 timetable, with the remainder fully implemented in the December 2011 timetable. However, the changes proposed would necessitate alterations to some services to enable them to be implemented, and it is on these issues that views are being sought. The consultation closes on Friday 11th February 2011.

2.0 Report

2.1 The NXEA revised consultation is a short document of only 2½ pages in length, but which includes five key proposals on alterations to services that had previously been consulted on. The document can be found within this report at **Essential Reference Paper 'C'**. The reason for the consultation is that the introduction of these alterations could have consequences on either existing services or those proposed under the original 2009 consultation.

2.2 While, for the most part, it is considered that the proposals are aimed at improving service delivery, there are some areas of concern for services that impact on the district of East Herts. The proposals should therefore be considered on an individual basis.

2.3 Proposal 1: *'To introduce a faster, hourly off peak service between Cambridge and London, using the new class 379 trains, which calls only at Whittlesford, Audley End, Bishop's Stortford and Tottenham Hale'*. This proposal would offer a new fast off-peak service, which would be of benefit. However, as there are already fast services serving Bishop's Stortford (via the Stansted

Express), it is suggested that a further alteration to this proposal, that would replace this stop with the service calling at Broxbourne instead, would actually be more beneficial to the residents of East Herts, as it would enable enhanced connections from the Hertford East branch line.

- 2.4 Proposal 2: *'To switch the hourly Stratford to Stansted Airport service to a twice an hour Bishops Stortford to Stratford service with connections to Stansted Airport (except for special services during the Olympics and Paralympics period)'*. While an increase in local services that a twice an hour service from Stratford would bring for some stations in East Hertfordshire is clearly to be supported, there is concern that this would result in the discontinuance of the only direct link to Stansted Airport from other Hertfordshire stations. In order to preserve this existing level of provision, preference should be expressed for ensuring that at least one of the two timetabled trains is continued beyond Bishop's Stortford to Stansted Airport.
- 2.5 Proposal 3: *'To reduce Stansted Express journey times by looping the Hertford East service at Broxbourne to allow a Stansted Express service to pass it (this will add around 3 to 4 minutes into the journey time of the Hertford East service)'*. While this proposal would allow a speedier Stansted Express service, it would have a most detrimental effect on services in East Herts via the Hertford East branch line. Services on this line have already seen reductions over recent years and this new proposal would serve to add an additional 3 to 4 minutes to the journey time of an already lengthy ride. This would make an already long journey even less attractive to users and may potentially reduce patronage and encourage journeys to be made by less sustainable modes. As this proposed service would be of little or no benefit to East Herts residents, this element of the consultation should be objected to.
- 2.6 Proposal 4: *'To run, in the morning peak, 3 x 12 car services with new trains from Cambridge to London or, alternatively use the same new trains to run 2 x 12 car services from Cambridge and 1 x 12 car service from Stansted Airport'*. As this proposal would have little effect on East Herts residents and the Stansted Express is itself due to benefit from new rolling stock as part of the original proposals, it is recommended that no preference be expressed as to either of the options.

2.7 Proposal 5: *'To introduce a new service from Cambridge or Ely to Stansted Airport on the opposite half hour to the Cross Country service'*. As this would be an additional service over that proposed in the original consultation with no impact on existing services, it is recommended that this proposal should be supported.

3.0 Implications/Consultations

3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

Background Papers

Executive Non Key Decision 09/23: Proposal to deliver increased capacity for West Anglia and Stansted Express services - Timetable Consultation by National Express East Anglia, Decision Date: 28 August 2009 (<http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=9252>).

The Future of Rail – White Paper, July 2004, DfT

Delivering a Sustainable Railway – White Paper, July 2007, DfT

Contact Member: Councillor M G Carver, Executive Member for Planning Policy and Transport

Contact Officer: Kevin Steptoe, Head of Planning and Building Control – Ext 1407

Report Author: Kay Mead, Senior Planning Officer

ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

<p>Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/Objectives (delete as appropriate):</p>	<p>Promoting prosperity and well-being; providing access and opportunities <i>Enhance the quality of life, health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities, particularly those who are vulnerable.</i></p> <p>Pride in East Herts <i>Improving standards of the built neighbourhood and environmental management in our towns and villages.</i></p> <p>Shaping now, shaping the future <i>Safeguard and enhance our unique mix of rural and urban communities, ensuring sustainable, economic and social opportunities including the continuation of effective development control and other measures.</i></p> <p>Leading the way, working together <i>Deliver responsible community leadership that engages with our partners and the public.</i></p>
<p>Consultation:</p>	<p>Given the cross-cutting nature of this document, internal consultation has taken place with the Executive Member for Planning Policy and Transport and the Council's Planning Policy; Community Planning and Partnerships; and Economic Development Teams.</p>
<p>Legal:</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p>Financial:</p>	<p>None at this consultation stage</p>
<p>Human Resource:</p>	<p>Officer time in responding to consultation</p>
<p>Risk Management:</p>	<p>Failure to respond to the consultation could result in the implementation of timetables that do not take into account the views of East Herts Council and its recommendations for improvement, in particular to ensure that localised services are maintained.</p>