

1. Do our priorities correctly reflect your views?

No. Metro services should be controlled by Transport for London and not the Department for Transport. TfL has a track record of successfully running National Rail services in London; the Department for Transport has failed London passengers since 2006 by lumbering us with Southeastern and a franchise which prioritises high speed services us in south east London have no interest or stake in, and penalises us with fares that are far higher than those paid in other parts of London. The operation of the Bromley North to Grove Park shuttle should not be a concern of central Government, it should be a concern of Greater London's devolved government. Our priorities in south-east London are not the same as those of Kent.

In south-east London, the priorities should be: Giving metro services to Transport for London; putting metro services on the TfL fare scale; and rebuilding the infrastructure at Lewisham and other locations to provide a better, simpler service, as proposed in the TfL rail devolution business plan of October 2016.

This would also enable the operator of Kent's trains to better focus on that county's needs.

You have also grossly underestimated population growth in south-east London. How do you plan to accommodate those alongside growth on the Jubilee Line and Crossrail? How on earth can you plan this separately from Transport for London?

2. Do you agree that more space is needed for passengers at the busiest times of the day?

Yes.

3. What comments, if any, do you have on options for providing more space through: a) Longer trains; and b) Metro style carriages with larger entrances and more standing room and handholds?

Metro-style carriages, such as the Class 378 trains used by London Overground, should run on Metro services. The best organisation to specify this would be Transport for London, which has a track record in successfully operating such services, not the Department for Transport, which does not.

4. Would you support removing First Class seating on the busiest routes to provide more space?

There are no first class seats on Transport for London services, and the only appropriate organisation to be contracting metro rail services in London is TfL.

5. What comments, if any, do you have on our plans to improve customer service and the overall passenger experience?

The standards set by Transport for London in terms of passenger information for London Overground and TfL Rail should be the minimum aimed for. As such, the best organisation to govern metro services in London should be Transport for London.

Stations should be staffed from first train to last throughout London.

6. Do you have any other ideas or priorities for improving customer service?

Giving London-area services to Transport for London to specify would work, as TfL has a strong record in encouraging good customer service. Most London-area customers would struggle to see where the 100 extra Southeastern staff have been deployed.

7. What changes to the fares structure would be of benefit to you?

Charging London-area fares at TfL rates, rather than National Rail rates, would be of benefit, as would removing the £1.50 surcharge for using both Southeastern and TfL services in a single Oyster/contactless journey. This would happen if London-area services were transferred to Transport for London.

8. What else could be done to improve the way tickets are sold and provided?

Giving London-area services to Transport for London would allow integration with Oyster retailing.

Oyster should be valid to Ebbsfleet and Gravesend (it is already valid to Grays, across the Thames from Gravesend) to have any hope of properly catering for people moving to this area. It should also be valid to Sevenoaks, as proposed by Transport for London.

It is hard to see what use The Key smartcard is to anyone inside London when it offers few practical advantages over paper ticketing or the existing TfL offer, and does not appear to be integrated with other London operators.

9. What further comments, if any, do you have on our plans to improve access and facilities at stations?

Giving London-area services to Transport for London would enable stations to be staffed from first trains to last, as they are on London Overground.

10. What more could be done to improve access and provide facilities for those with disabilities or additional needs?

Giving London-area services to Transport for London would enable stations to be staffed from first trains to last, enabling staff to help those who need more assistance.

11. How far do you support, or oppose, the extension of High Speed services from London St. Pancras to Hastings, Bexhill, and Rye, where this would represent value for money to the taxpayer?

No opinion.

12. How far do you support, or oppose, reducing journey times to key destinations in Kent and East Sussex, by reducing stops at less well used intermediate stations to create hourly fast services?

No opinion.

13. If you support this proposal, which services do you think would most benefit from this approach?

n/a

14. Which journeys do you make today which are difficult? a) By rail? b) By road, which would be easier by rail?

a1) Any service on Southeastern Metro at weekends is difficult due to unpredictable and poorly-advertised engineering works. Even when the reason for engineering works should be clear - such as the Thameslink Programme or Crossrail at Abbey Wood - the patterns of service are hard to anticipate and plan for. Southeastern also tend to reduce services to the minimum they can get away with - half-hourly - which is not acceptable.

a2) Pan-south London trips (eg, Woolwich Arsenal to Peckham Rye) can be difficult due to the unpredictable and infrequent nature of the service, long interchanges at Lewisham, and the lack of stations/calls in key locations such as Brockley high level, (East) Brixton and Clapham High Street. This is something TfL had planned to try to address with its plans - what are yours?

b1) Many local SE London journeys by bus - eg, Greenwich to Woolwich, Eltham to Lewisham - could be done quicker and more efficiently by rail. But the poor service and expensive fares (more expensive than equivalent Tube services) are a deterrent. Transferring these to Transport for London would allow an integrated service with better value fares - this strategy has worked on London Overground's North London Line.

b2) It is quicker, cheaper and easier to drive to and from the Kent coast from SE London than it is by train. This deters train trips there. Giving metro services to Transport for London will incentivise the Kent-area operator to think more creatively about the kind of services and fares that it offers to those travelling to and from that county.

15. Which additional services would you wish to see provided in the next franchise?

A minimum of six trains per hour on the Greenwich line to Cannon Street, first train to last, seven days per week. (It is absurd and unfair that the rush hour service on the Greenwich line is worse than the off-peak service.)

A minimum of six trains per hour on both the Bexleyheath and Sidcup lines, first train to last, seven days per week. A continuation of (at least) half-hourly trains from Woolwich/Charlton to Lewisham. The Thameslink proposals for Blackfriars services on the Greenwich/ North Kent line are welcome, but must not be at the expense of current services, particularly the link from Charlton to Blackheath/Lewisham provided by the Gillingham-Charing Cross service.

A more frequent service from Lewisham to Victoria with reopened platforms at Brockley high level and East Brixton. Transport for London has proposed reopening the Brockley high level

station, and should be given the opportunity to do this by being given control of Southeastern Metro services.

16. How far do you support, or oppose, options to simplify the timetable?

The timetable should be, as far as possible, the same seven days a week, including at peak hours. This is something Transport for London has achieved on the existing London Overground North London Line, and it should be given the chance to do the same on the Southeastern Metro.

17. How far do you support, or oppose, options to reduce the choice of central London destinations served from individual stations with the aim of providing a more regular, evenly spaced timetable, and a more reliable service?

You have not provided enough detail as to how this would work. This should not take place unless Transport for London is given control of the Southeastern metro network.

The improvements at London Bridge mean this could be possible for Charing Cross and Cannon Street services - but this should only be once TfL is controlling the metro network and has completed the necessary improvements, so trains are frequent enough to reduce inconvenience.

For Victoria and Blackfriars services, serious infrastructure improvement at Lewisham - as suggested by Transport for London in its business plan to take over Southeastern metro services - will be needed to make this work properly. Neither the station nor the junction are fit for purpose.

Any simplification should only be allowed to go ahead if services are controlled by Transport for London, and the necessary improvements are carried out, as specified in its October business plan. (Figure 6, page 55:
<http://content.tfl.gov.uk/rail-devolution-business-case-narrative.pdf>)

Just as importantly, because of the difficulties of interchanging outside zone 1, this scheme must not happen until SE London rail services are transferred to the TfL fare scale instead of the more expensive National Rail scale which sees passengers charged extra for using the Tube in central London.

Services should be more frequent late at night and run at the same frequencies seven days a week, too, so passengers can be in no doubt they are getting a better service for the sacrifice of losing, eg, Charing Cross direct trains.

18. How far do you support, or oppose, plans for the train operator and Network Rail to form a close alliance with the aim of reducing delays and improving performance?

Transport for London has a track record of working with Network Rail on both London Overground and London Underground, and should be given the Southeastern metro services.

19. What are your views on how this alliance should be incentivised and held to account for its performance?

Once again, Transport for London has a track record of working with Network Rail on both London Overground and London Underground, and should be given the Southeastern metro services.

20. How would you prefer the next South Eastern operator to engage with you: a) As an individual? b) As an organisation (if appropriate)?

As a valued customer. Transport for London is democratically accountable to the people of London and has built relationships with the counties outside, and upholds high customer service standards, unlike the incumbent South Eastern operator.

21. What approaches to customer service in other companies could be adopted by the next South Eastern train operator?

Staffing from first train to last should be offered on London metro routes, as used by London Overground. This would be best achieved by giving metro trains to Transport for London.

22. Where do you think private sector investment would be of most benefit to the railway?

Attractive rents should be offered for small businesses to operate on railway premises - coffee shops, newsagents, etc.

23. Should we consider using the more lightly used sections of the railway in a different way? If so, how should this be done?

The Hayes line is not lightly used, but should be transferred to the Bakerloo Line.

24. Looking to future, beyond this franchise, what, if any, benefits do you consider there would be for passengers from a franchise with a different geographical boundary?

The benefits of transferring metro trains to Transport for London would include fairer fares, a better focus on services and the ability to gain from proven experience in working alongside Network Rail in major projects. In addition, giving metro services to Transport for London will incentivise the Kent-area operator to think more creatively about the kind of services and fares that it offers to those travelling to and from that county.