

Essex Thameside Franchise Consultation

February 2012

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Contents

1. Foreword	5
2. Purpose and policy	7
Franchising policy	8
Wider rail and transport policy	8
3. Process and timescales	10
4. The Essex Thameside franchise	12
The current franchise	12
Franchise scope	13
Services	13
Reliability and performance	16
Rolling stock	17
Depots	18
Service quality	18
5. Objectives for the franchise	20
6. Franchise length	21
7. Schemes, stakeholders and other initiatives	22
Longer trains through the High Level Output Specification	22
West Ham resignalling project	22
Future investment including Fenchurch Street station	22
Community rail partnerships	23
Decentralisation	24
Passenger Focus and other consultees	24
Freight	25
Rail value for money	25
8. The service specification	27
Train service requirements	27
Service frequency	28
Capacity and crowding	28
Implementing changes to the timetable	30
Tilbury bus	30
9. Delivering improvements for passengers	31
Fares, ticketing and information	31
Better stations and better connections	32
Service quality, security and safety	33
Equality Act 2010	34

Improving the environmental performance of the railway	35
10. Consultation	36
The consultation criteria	36
Impact assessment	36
Action following consultation	36
Invitations to consultees	37
Freedom of information	37
Appendix 1: Consultation questions	38
Appendix 2: Stations	39
Appendix 3: List of formal consultees	42
Appendix 4: Glossary of terms	43
Appendix 5: Code of Practice on Consultation	45
The seven consultation criteria	45

1. Foreword

- 1.1 The Essex Thameside franchise provides amongst the most reliable train services in the country. Passengers enjoy modern rolling stock running on infrastructure that has seen substantial renewals in overhead power lines and signalling systems. Research from Passenger Focus tells us that passengers using the Essex Thameside franchise are amongst the most satisfied in the country.
- 1.2 The franchise operates on a network without significant interaction with other passenger operators, carrying people between the Essex coast through South Essex through east London and into the City of London. The franchise serves a mature market with the dominant use of the railway by commuters into central London. New housing in the Thames Gateway is likely to strengthen this market. However, with retail development such as Westfield Stratford City and the established Lakeside retail development at Chafford Hundred, there are increasing opportunities to attract passengers making other types of journey.
- 1.3 The new franchise presents an opportunity for a vision against which bidders can respond and the successful bidder can take forward the Essex Thameside services. This consultation is an opportunity for stakeholders to help shape that vision.
- 1.4 Developing a meaningful vision for this franchise does, of course, mean we need to be realistic about the affordability of different means to address future challenges whilst maintaining, and potentially increasing, passenger satisfaction. Affordability, which is particularly important in light of the UK's current fiscal position, may be achieved through commercial viability for the operator; or by offering sufficient value for money for Government within the Department's budget and fitting wider transport objectives.
- 1.5 We expect the operator to protect and build on the condition of the current railway, investing in stations to renew and improve facilities and for rolling stock to be well maintained. However, with a large rolling stock fleet already serving this franchise, providing additional rolling stock will be a more challenging proposition. The large difference in demand for weekday commuters compared with other times means that much of the current fleet is idle for all but a few peak hours per day.

- 1.6 However it is vital that the franchise responds to growth. Therefore considerations of affordability mean that, as well as targeted investment, Essex Thameside's success must be driven by exploiting creativity and innovation, fully optimising use of the resources already at its disposal to satisfy passengers. The vision could include:
- Maintaining high levels of punctuality and reliability with responsive and relevant passenger information at all points of the journey and particularly during disruption;
 - Operating services that are differentiated to deal effectively with demand and passenger priorities. For example, metro style services near London with suburban style services into Essex;
 - Making full use of the new arrangements at stations that could give the operator increased responsibilities and opportunities. Creating stations that form a welcoming and secure environment, and that contribute positively to the communities within which they sit; Allowing passengers to benefit from smart ticketing and other retail channels – greater speed and convenience in buying and using tickets and the possibility of seamless integrated travel with local transport services;
 - Developing a clear strategy for the off peak market to support local economic growth, reducing the disparity between rolling stock use between the peak and off peak and maximising the commercial capability of the rolling stock;
 - Exploiting smart ticketing, using information to understand passenger needs and build a more sophisticated relationship with passengers; then using these passenger insights to match services to needs, optimise the train planning and timetabling and encourage more commuters to travel on less busy (shoulder peak) services; and
 - A franchise whose success is built on its flexibility, characterised by transparent, efficient and strong relationships between the operator, stakeholders and suppliers.
- 1.7 Stakeholders are invited to comment on these aspirations for the new 15 year Essex Thameside franchise by **11 May 2012**.

1. How does this vision align with stakeholders' view of the future Essex Thameside franchise?

2. Purpose and policy

- 2.1 The new Essex Thameside franchise is due to commence in May 2013 and will be designed to provide a broadly similar level of service to that operated by c2c today and encourage the operator to improve upon these services. This consultation seeks views from stakeholders on the minimum requirements the Government sets for shortlisted bidders in the franchise specification. This document:
- informs stakeholders of the process and timescales for awarding the Essex Thameside franchise;
 - gives stakeholders background information about the current services, infrastructure capability on the Essex Thameside railway and the strategic planning and transport context of the new franchise;
 - advises stakeholders and potential funders of the objectives and expectations for the franchise and the options under consideration;
 - invites potential funders to formally notify the Department for Transport of any specific increments or decrements they may wish to purchase.
- 2.2 The closing date for consultation responses is **11 May 2012**. The Department will publish a report following the consultation which will summarise stakeholder views. This will form a key reference document for the franchise bidders.
- 2.3 Stakeholders were consulted in 2010 on replacing the Essex Thameside franchise. There have been substantial reforms to rail passenger franchising policy since that consultation which are expected to feature in the new franchise and so the Department considers it appropriate to hold a new consultation. Stakeholders who responded to the earlier consultation may choose to respond in the form of an update rather than a full response. Where that is the case, stakeholders are requested to confirm the status of their previous response.
- 2.4 We have considered whether the potential changes are likely to have any impact (adverse or differential) on race, disability or gender equality. It is not anticipated that any such impacts will occur. However, the Department takes its equalities duties very seriously and would welcome respondents' views on any issues that may affect equality of opportunity in these areas.
- 2.5 There are opportunities to improve services and improve value from the franchise, and the franchise will face new challenges over its 15 year life. The specification for the new franchise will set a framework within which the next franchise operator can deliver better services and better value. The specification will be built on the policy principles outlined below.

Franchising policy

- 2.6 The Government believes that the best deal for passengers and taxpayers will be achieved by creating incentives for the industry to contribute to economic growth and by supporting a rail industry ready to accept more responsibility. For passenger franchises, the Government believes Train Operating Companies (TOCs) should be given greater commercial freedom to optimise train services and respond to changes in demand. This freedom would be exercised within a framework set by the franchise and would work in conjunction with licence obligations, protecting the interests of passengers, the economy and taxpayers. The commercial freedoms include:
- Longer franchises. This should encourage investment to be funded within the franchise and allow more successful, long term working relationships to be built between train operators and Network Rail and other key stakeholders;
 - Our franchising policy reform programme. This will place an increased emphasis on the quality of outcomes for passengers and delivering the best possible value for money for the taxpayer in a constrained public spending environment.
- 2.7 Sir Roy McNulty's recent *Realising the Potential of GB Rail – Report of the Rail Value for Money Study* estimated the potential size of the savings available from greater efficiency and made recommendations about how they might be achieved. Getting those responsible for track and train to work more closely together, driving down costs to passengers and taxpayers, and improving the quality of services are priorities for the Government. Commitments to closer partnership working which promotes efficiency with Network Rail will be sought through the franchising process.
- 2.8 It is expected that the successful franchise bidder will be required to set out, and contract, how the costs of the franchise operation will be reduced.
- 2.9 The Government believes transparency can assist consumers in holding to account the organisations that deliver public services. So we are working towards greater transparency from the rail industry, both in relation to the public money spent on rail services and the outcomes that subsidy delivers. For example, the Department believes that greater disaggregation of performance data, in line with the drive to promote greater transparency from the railway industry, will encourage TOCs to achieve consistency across different types of service they operate.
- 2.10 The Department is also planning a consultation on the future of fares and ticketing. Smart ticketing technology offers new opportunities to understand and manage the journeys that passengers make. Changes in the working arrangements of commuters presents opportunities for the operator making better use of the existing railway in ways such as rewarding passengers who choose to use less crowded trains, allowing the railway to make better use of capacity. The characteristics of the Essex Thameside franchise make it a strong candidate to pilot implementation of proposals emerging from the fares and ticketing consultation because it largely operates without interface with other national rail services and because of its very specific market focus.

Wider rail and transport policy

2.11 This consultation document should be considered within the context of the broader transport policy environment, and stakeholders should be aware of a number of other relevant studies, documents and consultations that have a bearing on the franchise. These include:

- The ORR's consultation on incentives published in December 2011.
- A joint consultation by the Department for Transport and the Office of Rail Regulation on *a greater role for ORR regulating passenger franchises in England & Wales* published in December 2011;
- Network Rail's *Strategic Business Plan* published in October 2007 and subsequent updates published in April 2008, alongside Network Rail's *CP4 Delivery Plan 2009* updated in February 2011 and *CP5 Initial Industry Plan*, published in September 2011;
- Network Rail's *Network Route Utilisation Strategy Stations* published in August 2011;
- Network Rail's *London and South East Route Utilisation Strategy* published in July 2011;
- Sir Roy McNulty's independent *Realising the Potential of GB Rail – Report of the Rail Value for Money Study*, published in May 2011;
- The Department for Transport's response to the *Reforming Rail Franchising* consultation document, published in January 2011;
- The Department for Transport's White Paper *Creating Growth, Cutting Carbon: Making Sustainable Local Transport Happen* published in January 2011;
- Mayor of London's *Transport Strategy* published in May 2010;
- The Department for Transport's policy paper *Strategic Rail Freight Network: The Longer Term Vision* published in the Britain's Transport Infrastructure series in September 2009;
- Greater London Assembly *Alterations to the London Plan* published in February 2008;
- Network Rail's *Greater Anglia Route Utilisation Strategy* published in December 2007;
- The Department for Transport's *Towards a Sustainable Transport System – Supporting Economic Growth in a Low Carbon World* published in October 2007;
- Transport for London's *Rail Freight Strategy* published in August 2007;
- The Department for Transport's Rail White Paper *Delivering a Sustainable Railway* published in July 2007;
- Network Rail's *Freight Route Utilisation Strategy* published in March 2007; and
- Transport for London's *Transport 2025: Transport Challenges for a Growing City* document and *A Rail Strategy for London's Future 2025* document published in November 2006.

2.12 It is likely that the Department will publish during the Essex Thameside consultation period a command paper setting out the Department for Transport's vision for the railways. The Department also plans to consult in 2012 on de-centralising regional rail services to sub-national bodies.

3. Process and timescales

- 3.1 The Department is compiling the specification for the Essex Thameside Franchise, which will be informed by responses to this consultation. The Department has already met, and will continue to meet, stakeholders to formulate the final specification. Expressions of interest have recently been received from potential bidders for the franchise. The Department expects to issue an Invitation to Tender (ITT) to shortlisted applicants in June 2012. It is planned that the winning bidder will be announced in January 2013 with the new franchise starting in May 2013 as set out in Table 3.1.
- 3.2 The Department places great importance on protecting the interests of passengers. Passenger Focus therefore has a vital role within the specification process, emphasising the importance the Department places on passenger needs. They will continue to provide the Secretary of State with advice on key issues that the new franchise should seek to address. We are grateful to them for their input, and discussions with Passenger Focus will continue as the specification develops.
- 3.3 The Department's initial view of the specification is described in Section 8 of this document. Any changes to current services that are proposed will be assessed for value for money, deliverability, robustness, and operational impact. Together with comments received from respondents, this evaluation will inform the final specification, which will be issued in the ITT. The specification may also be modified to reflect other emerging information including any increments and/or decrements that potential funders would like included in the franchise. If any emerge that satisfy the criteria contained in Section 7 of this document, they may be included as priced options within the ITT.

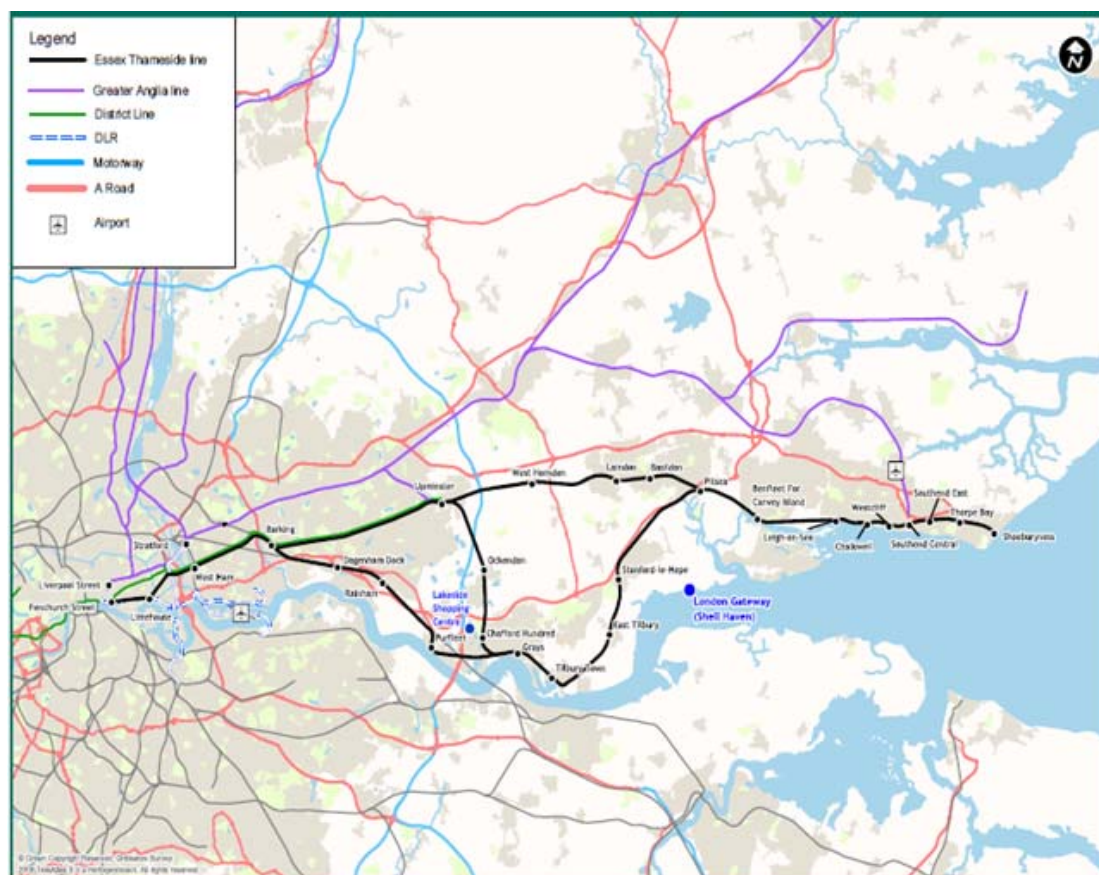
Stage	Stage dates
Franchise advertised and pre-qualification applications invited	December 2011 – February 2012
Stakeholder consultation period	February – May 2012
Bidders shortlisted from pre-qualification responses	February – April 2012
Tenders invited; bids prepared and submitted	June – September 2012
Bids evaluated, negotiated, approved and franchise award	September 2012 - January 2013
Franchise start	May 2013

4. The Essex Thameside franchise

The current franchise

4.1 The Essex Thameside franchise operates services in East London and parts of South Essex. The franchise provides train services on the London, Tilbury and Southend Railway line from Fenchurch Street in the City of London to Shoeburyness in Essex. The route runs along the entire length of the northern Thames Gateway area, including Basildon, Chafford Hundred, Tilbury and Southend-on-Sea. Figure 4.1 shows the geography of the franchise.

Figure 4.1: Geography of the Essex Thameside franchise.



- 4.2 The current franchise, one of the first three to be let in the UK, began in May 1996 for a term of 15 years and was due to expire on 29 May 2011. An agreement is in place that allowed the franchise to be extended to 25 May 2013. The franchise was initially awarded in December 1995 but was re-tendered in March 1996 and finally awarded to Prism Rail on 26 May 1996. Prism Rail was purchased by National Express in September 2000 and the franchise was rebranded from LTS Rail to c2c.
- 4.3 Each weekday 356 train services are run on the route, with 279 services on a Saturday and 160 on a Sunday, carrying over 35 million passenger journeys and 585 million passenger miles per year. The existing franchisee is the best performing train operator in London and the South East in terms of the reliability and punctuality of services. Total costs and revenues from the franchise are similar.
- 4.4 The route experiences some competition from the Greater Anglia franchise Great Eastern services between Southend and Liverpool Street.
- 4.5 The current franchise operator is Station Facility Owner (SFO) at 24 stations. The Department is discussing with Network Rail the possible transfer of Fenchurch Street station into the franchise. Key facility information and annual usage according to ORR statistics for the 24 stations managed under the current franchise and Fenchurch Street station are included as Appendix 2. The operator's services also call at West Ham and a small number of services operate via Stratford into Liverpool Street.

Franchise scope

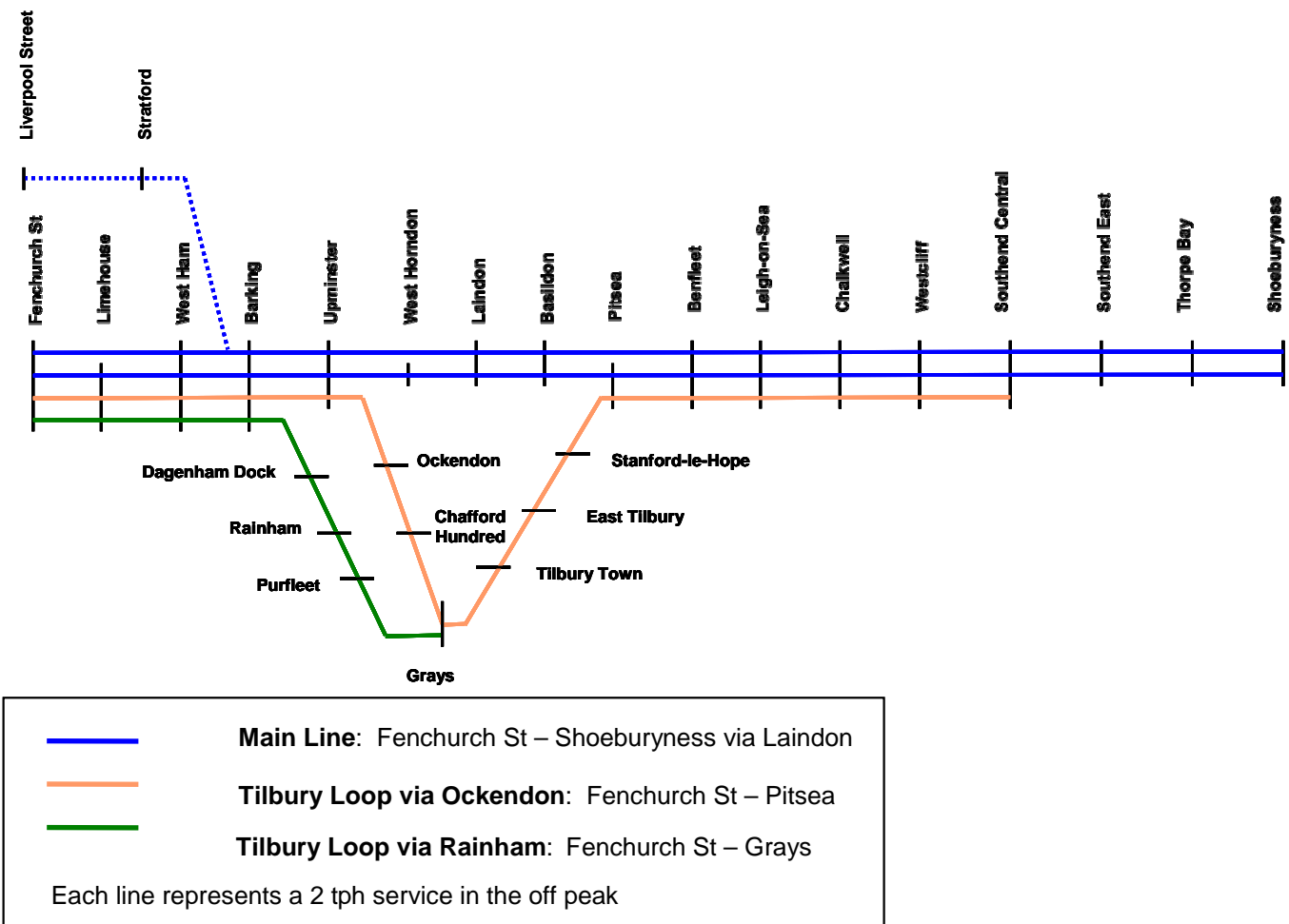
- 4.6 The route served by the franchise comprises:
- the main line covering 40 miles from Fenchurch Street to Shoeburyness via Laindon and Southend Central.
 - the Tilbury loop, which follows a longer southerly route from Barking to Pitsea via Rainham and Tilbury; and
 - the Ockendon line, from Upminster to Grays via Ockendon and Chafford Hundred (for Lakeside shopping centre).
- 4.7 Infrastructure works, including platform extensions, have been completed to allow 12-car formation trains to run on all lines. Driver Only Operation is used for trains of up to 8-car length.
- 4.8 The majority of the network is double track except between London Fenchurch Street and Christian Street Junction, (approximately 1.5 km from the London terminus), which is quadruple track, and the Ockendon branch between Upminster and West Thurrock Junction (near Grays), which is single track with a passing loop at Ockendon. The whole route is electrified at 25 kV AC. The whole route is signalled with three or four aspect colour light signalling controlled from the Integrated Electronic Control Centre at Upminster. Signalling in the West Ham area has been upgraded by Network Rail in time to facilitate additional stops at West Ham from the timetable date change in December 2011 and in preparation for train service access in 2012 for the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Services

4.9 The current franchise has evolved from a Passenger Service Requirement (PSR). The purpose of the PSR is to ensure the provision of a minimum level of services without restricting, more than is considered necessary, the freedom of the franchise operator to adjust its timetable to respond to passenger requirements and improve efficiency. The current timetable includes a substantial number of services that are additional to those specified in the original PSR. With the continuing regeneration of the Thames Gateway region a key consideration for the new franchise specification will be the level at which to set the minimum frequency of services.

4.10 The three service routes are shown in Figure 4.2: The Main Line; the Tilbury Loop via Rainham and the Tilbury Loop via Ockendon.

Figure 4.2: Essex Thameside service routes



4.11 The peak service frequency is shown for each route for the weekday morning and evening peaks in Table 4.1. The typical off peak service frequency is shown for each route with both the current timetable and the minimum PSR in Table 4.2.

Table 4.1 Peak service frequency

Route	Morning peak London arrivals			Evening peak London departures		
	7 - 8am	8 - 9am	9 - 10am	4 - 5pm	5 - 6pm	6 - 7pm
Main line	9	11	8	6	13	7
Tilbury loop via Ockendon	2	3	2	2	3	3
Tilbury loop via Rainham	3	4	4	3	4	3

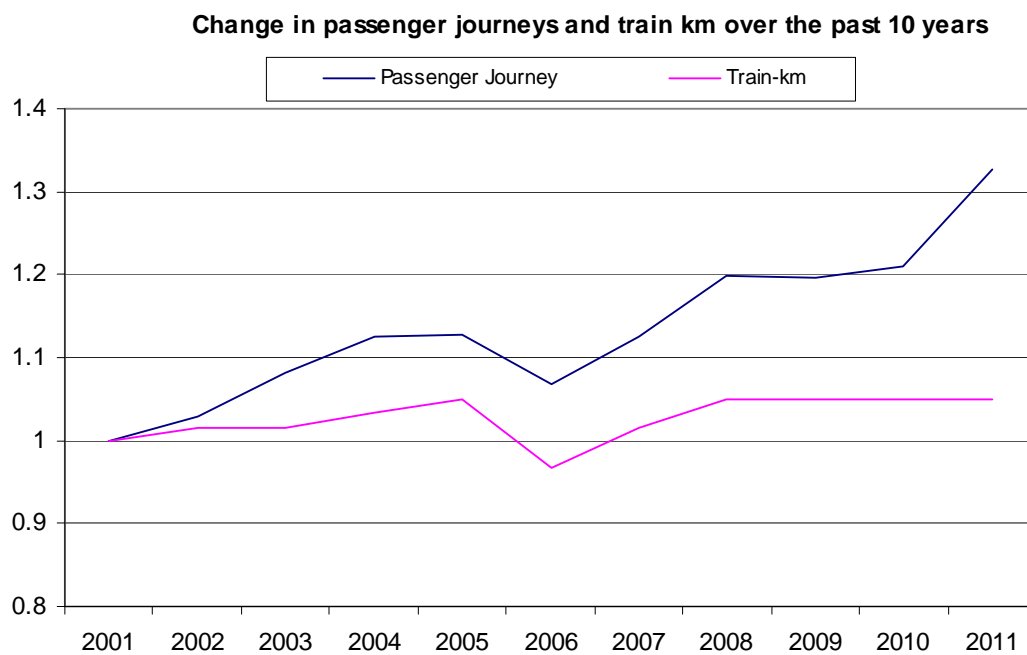
Table 4.2 Off peak service frequency

Route		Services		
Main line		Weekday Off-Peak	Saturday	Sunday
	Current Timetable	4	4	2
	Minimum Passenger Service Requirement	3	3	2
Tilbury loop via Ockendon		Weekday Off-Peak	Saturday	Sunday
	Current Timetable	2	2	2
	Minimum Passenger Service Requirement	2	2	1
Tilbury loop via Rainham		Weekday Off-Peak	Saturday	Sunday
	Current Timetable	2	2	1
	Minimum Passenger Service Requirement	2	2	0

- 4.12 The central part of Essex Thameside route has significant freight use, in particular the Tilbury loop, which provides access to a number of important freight terminals in the area.
- 4.13 In recent years business has grown significantly. The franchise has seen revenue compound annual growth of over 8% per annum since 2005/6, helped by strong economic growth and improvements in performance following the introduction of a new fleet of rolling stock. Passenger growth has been on a continuous increase since 2001, except for 2006, when a number of strikes disrupted services and demand (see Figure 4.3).

4.14 Crowding has been lower than average for London & South East train operators based on the Passengers in eXcess of Capacity (PiXC) measure. Latest published data show PiXC at 2.6% in the morning peak and 0.6% in the evening peak in autumn 2010. Calculations based on April 2011 data, the latest validated data available to the Department, indicate PiXC has risen to 3.8% in the morning peak and 1.4% in the evening peak. The drivers for this rise will need to be considered in bidder strategies for handling growth. Further information on PiXC can be found on the Office of Rail Regulation's website <http://dataportal.orr.gov.uk/displayreport/report/html/fb68984c-cd35-411c-99cf-b14ad9951f18#>

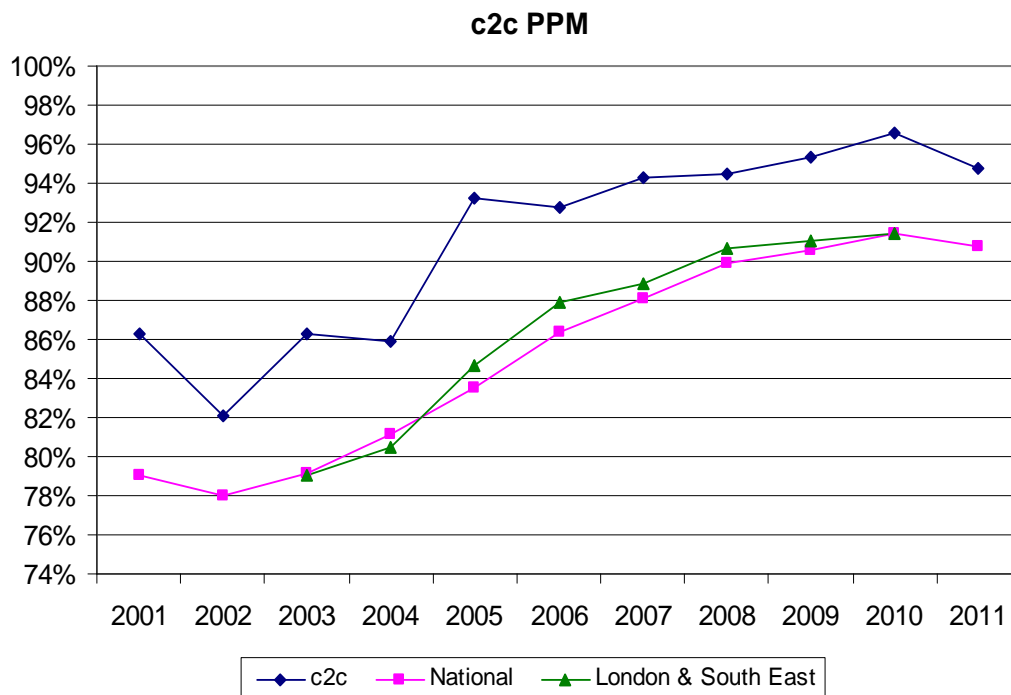
Figure 4.3 Passenger growth on Essex Thameside since 2001



Reliability and performance

4.15 Figure 4.4 shows performance since 2001 when the introduction of new rolling stock between 1999 and 2001 was complete. Performance has been consistently and substantially higher than National and London & South East averages. The current level of 98% average over the year to 5 February 2012 is the best of any franchise. Performance has been consistently high, and it will be important that high levels of performance are delivered in the new franchise.

Figure 4.4 Historic performance measures for c2c (MAA)



Rolling stock

- 4.16 In the last decade, the franchise has benefitted from 296 new carriages formed of 74 trains each comprising 4 carriages. These carriages have helped transform the quality of service offered to passengers, allowing new services to be operated and supporting strong demand. Table 4.1 details the rolling stock that the franchisee currently operates. The capacity figure includes seats and spaces for standing passengers. Of the 74 trains, 71 units are used in the peak but just 20 units, less than a third, are required off-peak and at weekends.

Table 4.1 Existing Essex Thameside franchise rolling stock

Unit class	Traction	Year built	Seating Type	Seats/Capacity	Units and formation
357/0 Electrostar	Electric Multiple Unit	1999	High density (2+3)	282/406	46 x 4 car
357/2 Electrostar	Electric Multiple Unit	2002	High density (2+3)	282/406	28 x 4 car

- 4.17 The 74 trains are capable of 100 mph running but the infrastructure, in particular the overhead line electric traction equipment, constrain operation to 75 mph or less. The franchisee already operates regenerative braking technology across the entire franchise area.
- 4.18 Whilst the Department will encourage the use of rolling stock designed and maintained for reliable, efficient, comfortable and high performing environmental operation, the specification does not require specific rolling stock to be used on the franchise. Rolling stock is leased or purchased by the operator to meet the performance requirements of the franchise, such as meeting punctuality and passenger satisfaction targets, and the operational requirements of the infrastructure. Some or all of the rolling stock may change at the start or during the life of the franchise.

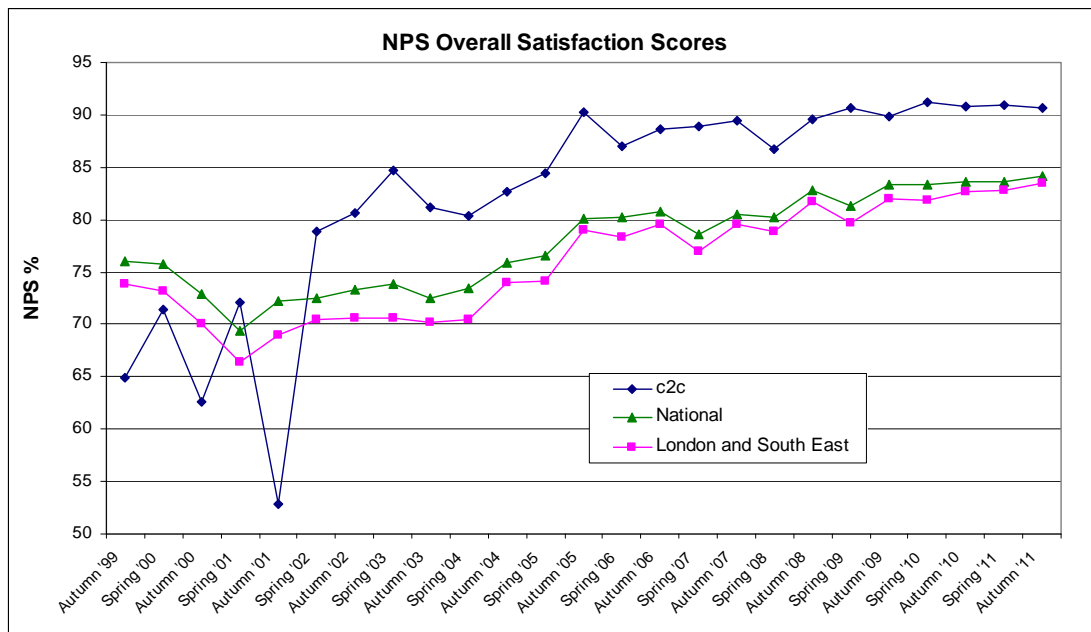
Depots

- 4.19 East Ham is the only maintenance depot located within the franchise boundary, and all of the Class 357 units are allocated here for maintenance. It is a large depot, with ten covered pitted roads of 12-car length and one shorter road. All maintenance and servicing activities on the Class 357 fleet are performed at East Ham, and some heavy maintenance.
- 4.20 Stabling takes place inside and outside the maintenance shed at East Ham, with 23 units stabled within the shed overnight and an additional 9 sidings. There is further availability for stabling at Shoeburyness with 31 lane sidings, although only 28 are currently used stabling 50 class 357 units overnight.
- 4.21 Ilford Heavy Maintenance Depot is a Bombardier-owned site outside the franchise boundary. For the Class 357 fleet, Ilford is used for tyre turning, bogie overhauls, corrosion repairs, painting and other heavy repairs beyond the current scope of East Ham. One unit is typically at Ilford for heavy maintenance each day.

Service quality

4.22 In recent years the current operator has improved the overall customer satisfaction as measured by the National Passenger Survey (NPS) (see Figure 4.5). The major dip in autumn 2001 was due to significant reliability issues with the new class 357 fleet when first introduced. All units were taken back out of service causing significant disruption to passengers. There has been a steadily improving trend to 2011 and NPS seems to have stabilised at 91%, substantially above the London and South East average.

Figure 4.5 NPS: c2c, London & South East and national averages



4.23 Recent improvements in satisfaction have been recorded in parking facilities, overall station environment, provision of information on the train and personal security on the train.

5. Objectives for the franchise

5.1 A key starting point for the development of the franchise specification is the establishment of clear objectives. Four key objectives have been endorsed by the Secretary of State:

- Support economic growth and in particular the development of the Thames Gateway through frequent train services of appropriate capacity. Use flexibility in the train service requirement to optimise services, delivering a balance of commercial and passenger benefit, while providing passengers with a broadly similar level of service as is currently timetabled;
- Ensure the overall passenger experience improves throughout the life of the franchise. This will include but not be limited to improvements in: service quality; retailing; provision of information to customers particularly during times of planned and unplanned disruption; implementing 'smart' technology and integrated ticketing throughout the franchise area on an inter-operable basis; improving accessibility (including disabled access) to stations and services; passenger security and improving the transparency of information about the franchise;
- Ensure that train services perform to the highest practical reliability and punctuality standards, aiming to be amongst the most reliable and punctual services on the national network. Benchmark and optimise the overall environmental performance and minimise the carbon footprint for the franchise;
- Deliver services in the most cost-effective and efficient manner possible, and consider improving the alignment between Network Rail and the franchise in keeping with the recommendations of Sir Roy McNulty's Rail Value for Money study.

6. Franchise length

- 6.1 The Department's current thinking in relation to franchise length was set out in *Reforming Rail Franchising*, which was published in January 2011. As set out in that document, the Government believes longer franchises will encourage private investment in areas such as station improvements, trains and the provision of a higher quality service. They will also support better planning as well as more effective working relationships between operators, Network Rail and local partners.
- 6.2 The independent Rail Value for Money study conducted by Sir Roy McNulty assessed how the costs of running the railway can be reduced, while continuing to invest in capacity enhancement and improving passenger satisfaction. The study's findings supported the Department's move towards longer franchises which is key to encouraging investment.
- 6.3 Accordingly the Department considers that a core franchise term of 15 years is appropriate for most franchise competitions. However for each specific franchise competition, consideration will be given to major projects that are likely to have a significant impact on the franchise and consequently whether a different franchise length may be more appropriate in light of these factors.
- 6.4 After careful consideration of these factors, and initial informal soundings with the rail industry, the Department proposes that the new Essex Thameside franchise should run for a 15 year term. The contract will be designed to allow for an extension of seven four-week rail periods at the Secretary of State's discretion.
- 6.5 The Franchise Agreement will include provisions that will allow the Department to manage the performance of the operator and, in a worst case scenario, to terminate the contract earlier if the franchisee fails to meet the Department's requirements.
- 6.6 The Department and the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) is currently consulting on whether a stronger role for the ORR in respect of some aspects of performance and service quality could be beneficial for passengers. The franchise will reflect the Government's and ORR's consideration of the responses to the consultation.
- 6.7 The detailed design of the core franchise and any extensions will be published in the ITT.

7. Schemes, stakeholders and other initiatives

Longer trains through the High Level Output Specification (HLOS)

- 7.1 In advance of each of the Office of Rail Regulation's (ORR's) Periodic Reviews of Network Rail's outputs and funding, the Department is required to set out the HLOS and Statement of Funds Available (SOFA) for the next five-year railway period (Control Period). The HLOS specifies the outputs that the Government wishes the industry to achieve, in areas such as reliability, safety and capacity. These are then incorporated into delivery plans by the industry, under the oversight of the ORR. During each Control Period the Government can also agree changes to the HLOS and SOFA, based on emerging industry needs. The first Control Period to use this process was CP4 which runs from April 2009 to March 2014. The process for CP5 has recently begun.
- 7.2 The CP4 HLOS required enhancements to the capacity of services into London Fenchurch Street through lengthening of platforms at stations on the Tilbury Loop to allow 12-car operation with the exception of the bay platform at Grays which remains as 8-car length and the bay platform at Upminster which is 7-car length. These works were completed in December 2011.

West Ham resignalling project

- 7.3 The Network Rail Discretionary Fund (NRDF) was used to progress this scheme which is part of the Olympic Delivery Plan. West Ham station is one of three key stations identified for access to the Olympic Park. The resignalling project has improved the number of peak trains able to stop at West Ham station, to allow interchange onto the District Line, Jubilee Line and Hammersmith and City Line. From the summer of 2010, further interchange has been available from West Ham on to the Docklands Light Railway to Stratford and City Airport. Changes to the timetable were implemented from December 2011.
- 7.4 Following the comprehensive renewal of the route infrastructure in the 1990s there are no major renewals planned for the immediate future.

Future investment including Fenchurch Street station

- 7.5 The Department is considering ways in which bidders might provide long term investment in the rail network, building on the long term value of the franchise while also delivering the objectives set out in Section 5 of this document. For this franchise, there is an option for stations to be transferred to the franchisee under a 99 year lease, transferred between operators at the end of a franchise, which gives the operator full responsibility for maintaining, operating and enhancing the stations and rights for certain commercial development. This follows the approach adopted in other recent replacement franchises.
- 7.6 Enhancements will be expected to be commercially viable, though not necessarily over the life of one franchise, and to deliver benefits to passengers. Bidders will be expected to assure the Department that such enhancements increase the value of the franchise and that assets thus funded are maintained in a good condition for the next franchisee.
- 7.7 The HLOS and delivery plan for CP5 will be developed and published in due course and the new franchisee should expect to work with the rail industry to facilitate the development of CP5 proposals, through the normal industry process. The initial plan includes a project to enhance Fenchurch Street station. The Department is discussing a possible change in the management of the station so that it becomes leased to the new Essex Thameside franchise operator under the proposed 99 year lease arrangements. If this change is implemented it will be for the operator to develop and fund enhancements to Fenchurch Street station for CP5 and beyond. However there is a Network Rail proposal to use the NRDF to fund a capacity enhancement at Fenchurch Street which, subject to approval, may be implemented during CP4.
- 7.8 In addition to the base case specification, bidders may be asked to submit proposals for a number of priced options. These could involve the provision of additional services or, in certain circumstances, a reduction in the level of service from that proposed by the Department. These increments or decrements could include schemes that funders, such as local authorities, have requested be included.
- 7.9 Any proposed increments or decrements must:
- comply with the objectives of the franchise;
 - be operationally robust;
 - demonstrate value for money; and
 - be funded by promoters for at least an initial three year period (for which the promoter will need to provide written guarantees of funding).
- 7.10 For further information, please see *Conditions Relating to the Funding of new or Enhanced Services Promoted by Local Bodies*, which is available on the Department's website at: <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/rail/strategyfinance/revisedpolicyfunding>.

2. What increments or decrements to the specification would stakeholders wish to see and how would these be funded?

Community rail partnerships

- 7.11 Within the Essex Thameside area there is scope to develop a number of community rail initiatives that are designed to support and develop the local rail network and create links between the community, businesses and the railway, including seeking ways to improve facilities on stations through local station sponsoring.
- 7.12 The Department expects the bidders for the new Essex Thameside franchise to demonstrate a commitment to work with any partnerships that develop over time and to indicate how they propose to work with communities over the life of the franchise.

Decentralisation

- 7.13 The Government expects shortly to consult on the feasibility of decentralising some responsibilities for local rail services. In the consultation, views will be sought on whether improved outcomes for passengers and transport users might be achieved in some cases if more decisions on local rail services were made closer to the communities they serve. Under the existing franchise arrangements services have been specified, funded and managed centrally by the Department.
- 7.14 Given the timescale for the Essex Thameside franchise, it is unlikely to be possible to implement decentralisation before the ITT is issued and the franchise let. Therefore, the Department would wish to work with local bodies who are interested in seeking a greater role in the provision of local rail services with a view to forming a priced incremental option that could be incorporated into the franchise agreement.

Passenger Focus and other consultees

- 7.15 Passenger Focus provides independent advice to the Secretary of State, based on research and consultation with wider stakeholders on the key issues that the new franchise should consider. Passenger Focus published a report in November 2009 to inform the Department's consultation from January 2010 on the Essex Thameside franchise. The recommendations from the report have been supplemented with an updated view of passenger perceptions. Both documents are available on the Passenger Focus website (www.passengerfocus.org.uk). Certain findings are referred to in this consultation document (in particular in section 9) and have been considered in formulating the vision outlined in the foreword. However, stakeholders are encouraged to view the full documents.
- 7.16 Bidders will be encouraged to use Passenger Focus research to shape their proposals for the new franchise. The Department will continue to work with Passenger Focus in considering how best to incentivise bidders to develop services in a cost-effective, affordable and practical manner. In general, the Department is supportive of those elements that seek to improve service quality, passenger information and link improvements to monitored results.
- 7.17 The South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP), encompassing East Sussex, Essex, Kent, Medway, Southend and Thurrock is seeking investment in strategic infrastructure. This includes improvements in road and rail networks, ports and airports to enable economic growth. The Government is keen that the planned growth and development in the Thames Gateway area comes forward as quickly as possible and recognises that the Essex Thameside franchise has an important role in supporting the area's economic regeneration.

- 7.18 The Department places a high value on the insight and knowledge that stakeholders bring to the franchise replacement process and appreciates the contributions already made. The Department will continue to engage positively with interested parties, including those groups listed in Appendix 3. Stakeholders are encouraged to discuss proposed responses to this consultation with the Department and its advisors early in the consultation period.

3. Are there specific research findings, evidence or publications stakeholders wish to bring to the attention of the Department as part of this refranchising process?

Freight

- 7.19 At London Gateway, a new deep water port is being developed which will be of national importance to the future of the UK port and logistics industry and will necessitate additional access for freight. Local rail connections with London Gateway will be enhanced by the double tracking of the Thameshaven branch line, which links the port to the main rail network at Stanford-le-Hope.
- 7.20 Freight operators are significant users of the central part of Essex Thameside's route network, in particular the Tilbury Loop, which provides access to a number of important freight terminals. In addition to the Thames Haven and future London Gateway port terminal there are:
- Tilbury Container Terminal;
 - Ripple Lane interchange sidings for Channel Tunnel traffic;
 - Aggregates (Dagenham and Purfleet); and
 - Automotive (Dagenham and Purfleet);
 - Ministry of Defence Terminal at Shoeburyness
- 7.21 Freight traffic is forecast to grow, particularly in respect of aggregates, associated with the development of the Thames Gateway area, and containers to and from London Gateway Port. Currently, all freight trains enter and leave the Essex Thameside network via the connection from Barking to the Gospel Oak line and to the Great Eastern Main line at Forest Gate. To accommodate the forecast growth, gauge and capacity enhancements to the Gospel Oak – Barking route have recently been completed.
- 7.22 Overall there is an aspiration for an increase from the current 8 freight paths per day to 50 freight paths per day in each direction, primarily along the Tilbury loop, by 2030. This is not expected to threaten availability of train paths for passenger services but will require careful management to avoid impacting on the future punctuality of services.

Rail Value for Money

- 7.23 The Government is determined to secure a sustainable and efficient railway. Sir Roy McNulty recently conducted the independent *Rail Value for Money Study*. The study findings and recommendations were published in May 2011 as *Realising the Potential of GB Rail – Report of the Rail Value for Money Study* and are available at: <http://www.dft.gov.uk/publications/realising-the-potential-of-gb-rail>.
- 7.24 The study highlighted that our railways are up to 40% less efficient than the leading European comparators. It set out a series of recommendations for the Government and the rail industry for reducing the costs of running the railway by up to £1 billion per year by 2018/19, while continuing to expand network capacity. A key conclusion was that closer working and alignment of incentives between TOCs and Network Rail, as well as strong leadership across the industry, could significantly improve value for money.
- 7.25 The Department and ORR are examining options for better aligning the incentives of TOCs and Network Rail. The aim is to get them working more closely together to deliver better value by driving down the cost of running the railway to benefit passengers and taxpayers and improving the quality of services. The ORR has recently published a consultation on railway industry incentives for CP5, the outcome of which will feed into the final Essex Thameside ITT. One of the ORR's consultation proposals is for a Regional Efficiency Benefit Share, which would give TOCs a share of both good and poor performance by Network Rail against its Operations, Maintenance and Renewal (OMR) efficiency targets.
- 7.26 The Department will challenge bidders to develop proposals in discussion with Network Rail for how they would reduce the unit costs of their existing operations to improve efficiency. The Department also expects that cost data will be made available to the Department and ORR during the franchise and could be published and compared with the levels of unit costs in other franchises, in order to facilitate the overall reduction of unit costs.

4. What improvements do stakeholders believe could be made to partnership working between Network Rail and the operator on the Essex Thameside franchise?

8. The service specification

- 8.1 This section sets out the Department's proposed approach to the specification of the services to be required of the new Essex Thameside franchisee. It sets out the main train service issues that the franchisee will need to address. The Government intends to set the train service specification so that operational and timetabling decisions are devolved to TOCs as far as possible, both in the bidding phase and during the life of the franchise itself, while protecting key outcomes for passengers, the economy, and the taxpayer.
- 8.2 Bidders will be asked to consider how they might improve stations and trains, building on the work already done and planned for Control Period 4 (CP4), as well as improving service quality, while reducing the unit costs of operating the railway. The Government's approach is likely to include elements aimed at:
- providing appropriate capacity for passenger services within the constraints imposed by the available infrastructure;
 - maintaining reliability and punctuality, with the aim of achieving consistently good performance across the network;
 - improving value for money, in keeping with the objectives of the McNulty Report; and
 - improving overall passenger satisfaction.
- 8.3 The Department will need to ensure the specification is affordable, delivers value for money and fits with broader transport objectives. The specification will also include any proposals for increments or decrements that funders (other than Government) would like to see considered as priced options for the franchise in keeping with the Government's decentralisation agenda.

Train service requirements

- 8.4 The Department intends that the specification should provide flexibility for operators to respond to demographic and market changes and commercial opportunities than is the case under the current franchise. However, whilst the specification needs to allow for this more flexible approach the service specified in the new franchise contract also needs to be sufficiently detailed to protect key journey opportunities, especially in relation to services that deliver important economic benefits and connectivity but which would be vulnerable to decisions based on purely commercial factors.

8.5 A range of different train service features will therefore be considered for the new franchise: Examples include:

- quantum of stops
- frequency of services, peak and off-peak;
- capacity of services into London;
- maximum journey times;
- first and last train times;
- specific requirements for weekday, Saturday and Sunday services;
- connectivity between stations on the route; and
- connections with other transport modes.

Ideas put forward by consultees on different approaches to the train service specification be welcomed and carefully considered.

8.6 The level of service achieved with the current timetable will provide our starting point for the new franchise. There is likely to be a requirement to optimise services against evolving demand.

5. Which aspects of the specification would stakeholders wish to see mandated and which aspects of the specification could be left to commercial discretion? What changes to services would stakeholders propose and why?

Service frequency

8.7 Peak service frequencies are typically restricted by the capacity of the approach to Fenchurch Street station which, with the currently timetabled services, already operate at up to 20 trains per hour.

8.8 Most off peak services operate under the current timetable with a frequency greater than the minimum Passenger Service Requirement set at the start of the current franchise, as summarised earlier in section 4, table 4.2. If services were differentiated to create metro style services nearer London and suburban style services further out into Essex there may be the potential to increase the frequency of services to fit with the overall service offer subject to affordability and value for money considerations.

6. What do stakeholders consider to be the drivers for service frequency on the Essex Thameside routes? What would be the opportunities created from increasing off peak service frequencies and the impact of reducing off peak service frequencies?

Capacity and crowding

- 8.9 Use of the Essex Thameside services is heavily dominated by commuters travelling into central London Monday to Friday in the morning peak and returning to Essex in the evening peak. These flows mean that the rolling stock fleet is heavily used for these limited periods, only for much of it to then be laid up during the day and at weekends. Some growth of the market outside of peaks has been achieved in the current franchise but we believe there is more potential. So one of the challenges we are likely to set the new operator is to grow the use of train services out of the peak. That may lead to services over and above the minimum specification requirements and help make more effective use of the existing rolling stock.
- 8.10 The Department expects the already heavy commuter demand to grow, with increased pressure on peak train services. It is likely that purchasing additional rolling stock purely for use in the commuter peak periods will be difficult to justify, either as commercially viable for the operator or offering sufficient value for money to justify Government investment. So it is important to look wider and explore other means to accommodate future demand. The options to achieve this might include some or all of the following (subject to findings from the fares and ticketing consultation):
- Operating services that are differentiated to manage demand and respond to passenger priorities which could be metro style services near London with suburban style services into Essex. The detailed look and feel of those services would be developed by the operator in discussion with passengers but could include timetable changes and refitting of some carriages to better serve short peak journeys;
 - Exploiting the passenger insights gained from smart ticketing technology, and the more sophisticated relationship with passengers we will expect the operator to build, to:
 - optimise the train planning and timetabling;
 - encourage more commuters to travel on less busy (shoulder peak) services to achieve better use of capacity; and
 - develop a clear strategy for the off peak market to support local economic growth and reduce the disparity between rolling stock use at different times of the day.
 - Rewarding passengers who travel on less busy services, enabling better use of capacity.
- 8.11 The specification would include a requirement to review the efficient allocation and deployment of available rolling stock to ensure that appropriate capacity is matched to demand, addressing existing and forecast crowding to the maximum extent possible.
- 8.12 Stakeholders are encouraged to consider these options and how successful they might be given the local context of the Essex Thameside route.

7. How might better use be made of the capacity currently available? What are the future capacity requirements, what steps should bidders be expected to take to meet passenger demand and what are the most appropriate mechanisms for managing demand?

- 8.13 The specification of a franchise is underpinned by demand forecasts developed in accordance with the Department's guidelines, using a forecasting framework based on standard rail industry models (*Passenger Demand Forecasting Handbook (PDFH) Version 4* for fares). This allows a number of exogenous drivers to be modelled, as well as forecasting the effects of service quality and fare changes. The Department is currently considering the adoption of the variables contained in PDFH version 5.0 and may choose to adopt some of these during this franchising process.
- 8.14 Prior to the issue of the ITT, the Department will prepare a revised set of forecasts to take account of the most recent changes in the base levels of passenger demand and forecasts of the variables that might influence future demand. These forecasts will be used to assess the robustness of the bids submitted.
- 8.15 TOCs provide data on passenger numbers to the Department, and the current data will be given to bidders, who will be expected to use this to assist their assessments of requirements for future train service patterns

Implementing changes to the timetable

- 8.16 The timetable proposal for the December 2013 timetable change will already have been made by the time the new operator takes over the franchise, so changes to the inherited train service are unlikely to occur before the timetable change date in December 2014.
- 8.17 For material timetable changes during the franchise period, the operator is likely to be required to carry out a public consultation based on a detailed assessment of the impact on passenger experience before the changes are included in the timetable planning process.

Tilbury bus

- 8.18 Currently a bus service is specified which operates twice hourly between Tilbury Town station and Tilbury Riverside, allowing connections to ferry services and cruise ships. Stakeholder views are sought as to whether the bus service should form part of the new franchise specification.

8. Should the bus service between Tilbury Town and Tilbury Riverside be retained in the new franchise?

9. Delivering improvements for passengers

- 9.1 The Department may require bidders to make proposals aimed at improving the overall quality of service delivered to passengers. Bidders will be encouraged to find innovative ways to enhance the level of passenger satisfaction over and above that of today and will be free to propose alternative approaches to those noted below.
- 9.2 We would emphasise that, while we welcome ideas and proposals on all the matters set out below from stakeholders and bidders, only some of these issues are suitable for inclusion in the franchise specification and/or the legally binding Franchise agreement that will flow from it.

Fares, ticketing and information

- 9.3 This consultation is published in parallel with the Department's review of fares and ticketing. The review will not yet have concluded by the time tenders are invited in June 2012. However, bidders will be encouraged to maximise use of the opportunities under current policy, and to use new opportunities presented by emerging policy, to provide a better experience for passengers. This will include the introduction of ITSO based smart ticketing but could also include:
- Better usability of all options for ticket purchase including:
 - ticket vending machines which research by Passenger Focus (*Ticket Vending Machine Usability* report of July 2010) identifies as a significant area of concern for passengers; and
 - web retailing which research by Passenger Focus (*Ticket Retailing Website Usability* report of June 2011) suggests can be improved to help passengers find better deals on tickets.
 - Innovative use of new and existing technologies, including use of ITSO-compliant and inter-operable smart ticketing (which could include personal technology such as smart phones and contactless bank cards); and using these technologies to develop new ticket types, and more flexible versions of existing tickets, based on passengers' needs; and
 - Insightful use of information and marketing, including social media, and the development of customer relationships to build demand on less busy services in the off peak and shoulder peak.

- 9.4 When implementing these new approaches, the franchisee will be expected to participate actively in establishing a common industry approach.
- 9.5 Bidders will also be required to produce a Passenger's Charter, including a Delay Repay compensation scheme based on delays to journeys, and will be required to demonstrate a commitment to a proactive policy of informing passengers of their right to make a claim in any relevant situation.

9. What improvements do stakeholders believe could be made to fares and ticketing for the Essex Thameside franchise?

- 9.6 Research by Passenger Focus has highlighted that the provision of timely and accurate information is a key priority for passengers, and that passengers have distinct information needs before travelling and during their journeys. This is especially true during periods of disruption. The ORR has consulted on the future of passenger information and has announced its intention from February 2012 to apply new licence conditions requiring the operator to comply with the ATOC Approved Code of Practice which defines standards for passenger information during disruption. Bidders will be required to set out their plans for keeping passengers informed.

10. What local considerations do stakeholders feel need to be taken into account with providing passenger information?

Better stations and better connections

- 9.7 Key station facilities, including improvements to facilities to the end of the current franchise, and annual usage according to ORR statistics are summarised as Appendix 2. It is proposed that greater responsibility for maintenance and enhancement of station facilities is transferred from Network Rail to the new franchisee, under revised station lease agreements. This will transfer the responsibility for asset stewardship from Network Rail to the operator, that is to maintain, renew, improve and develop stations for the long term. This approach is likely to be extended to the management of Fenchurch Street station.
- 9.8 We would be interested to understand stakeholder views on priorities for investment in station facilities over the life of the new franchise. In particular where these priorities are different to general passenger perceptions of the most important facilities to have at stations published in research from Passenger Focus. The Department could seek commitments to improve passenger satisfaction at stations.
- 9.9 It will be for bidders to consider what appropriate enhancements should be made at stations. They will be expected to have considered how best to enhance the quality of the station portfolio in their proposals and will be required under new stewardship obligations of their station licence to satisfy the reasonable requirements of those funding improvements or providing services.

- 9.10 In the short term, improvements at stations have been identified under a number of funds:
- The Access for All Scheme which aims to improve access to national rail stations. Plans include improvements at Laindon, Limehouse and Tilbury Town between 2012 and 2015. Further information can be found at the Department's website at www.dft.gov.uk/transportforyou/access/rail/railstations;
 - The National Stations Investment Programme (NSIP), a £150 million fund to improve approximately 150 medium-sized stations, which was announced in 2007. Details about the NSIP programme can be found on Network Rail Website at www.networkrail.co.uk.; and
 - The Station Commercial Project Facility (SCPF) which was established to fund station improvement projects delivering commercially focussed investment at existing stations during Control Period 4. SCPF schemes are funded to provide gating at Purfleet and Southend East and are expected to be delivered by 31st March 2012. These will complete gating for the whole Essex Thameside franchise.
- 9.11 Passenger Focus research identifies connections with other train services as a substantial driver of dissatisfaction for Essex Thameside passengers, more than 3 times more important than for other franchises in London and the South East. The Essex Thameside franchise has limited connections so it is important that every effort is made to make the connections it has operate well. As well as the quality of connections with trains and buses there are significant opportunities to enhance car parking, to build up the facilities and encourage the maximum use of cycle parking provision. The franchisee will also be encouraged to develop Station Travel Plans as part of the operator's asset stewardship responsibilities.
- 9.12 Fenchurch Street station is perceived as providing limited connectivity with underground and bus services, in particular compared to Liverpool Street station. A small number of services are currently timetabled to run into Liverpool Street via Stratford and services are diverted into Liverpool Street at weekends during engineering work on the approach to Fenchurch Street. We would expect bidders to review the opportunities to use Liverpool Street for more services.
- 9.13 Network Rail's access requirements for engineering works impacts the availability of parts of the railway for early and late services and the availability of access to Fenchurch Street station. We anticipate Network Rail and the operator working together to explore the trade off between engineering access and services to meet evolving passenger needs. One potential opportunity could involve re-scheduling some maintenance activities from Sunday mornings to Monday to Wednesday evenings with the following effects:
- It would allow the operator to run more and earlier trains into Fenchurch Street on Sunday mornings, so that, for example, regular through services could run from Grays and associated Tilbury Loop stations right through to Fenchurch Street instead of running, as they do today, as a shuttle service between Grays and Barking;
 - However, it would require all trains after 2100 on Mondays to Wednesdays to run to and from Liverpool Street, which may be seen as offering some disadvantages.

The arrangement would also improve the efficiency of Network Rail's maintenance regime for the stretch of railway between Barking and Fenchurch Street stations.

11. What's important to stakeholders in the future use and improvement of Fenchurch Street and other stations? Would stakeholders wish to see an increased use of Liverpool Street station and under what circumstances?

Service quality, security and safety

- 9.14 The Department is considering approaches to specify service quality for the new franchise which will be influenced by responses to the current consultation on the future role of the ORR in passenger franchises. Recent franchises have included contracted targets based on the National Passenger Survey.
- 9.15 The Department is seeking improvements that, above all, are aimed at enhancing the overall quality of the service experienced by passengers using the Essex Thameside services. Current areas of passenger concern include how the operator deals with delays linked to staff availability and helpfulness on the train and at stations. Particular focus should be given to keep passengers well informed.
- 9.16 Passenger Focus research identifies personal security factors as particularly important to Essex Thameside passengers. Personal security at stations ranks 5th and personal security on the train ranks 8th compared with rankings of 14th and 12th nationally. Personal security whilst using the station is identified on c2c as a key driver of dissatisfaction. Passenger Focus has produced a publication on this subject entitled *Passenger Perceptions of Personal Security on the Railways*. Secure stations status for stations on the Essex Thameside route is included in Appendix 2.
- 9.17 Perceptions of personal security have improved recently but there is still opportunity to further improve, particularly as personal security appears to be substantially higher priority to Essex Thameside passengers compared to passengers nationally.
- 9.18 The transfer of stewardship responsibility at stations provides an opportunity to develop an ambitious plan to transform passengers' experience at stations in Essex Thameside. We expect this could include, and may go beyond, security enhancements such as extensions to CCTV coverage and improved working with the British Transport Police (BTP).

12. What do stakeholders see as the most important factors in improving security (actual or perceived and addressing any gap between the two)?

Equality Act 2010

- 9.19 The Department will expect bidders to ensure that their proposals comply with equalities and discrimination legislation, and include the production of a Disabled People's Protection Policy (DPPP), which sets out accessibility and service levels that disabled people should expect. In particular, bidders will be requested to describe in detail their compliance strategies applicable to services, stations and trains. They will also need to detail how they will consult with relevant groups to ensure that the reasonable needs of all passengers are identified and addressed, both within existing facilities and where enhancements are planned. Bidders will also need to outline their plans for staff awareness training and detail their procedures for the sale of tickets, including the provision of a free assisted persons' helpline.
- 9.20 Bidders will be aware of the date (1 January 2020) by which all trains must be accessible to persons with reduced mobility. As this franchise extends beyond that date, it is required that bidders should work with rolling stock leasing companies to identify, in their bid, opportunities during the franchise for any corrective works to take place to enable applicable fleets to operate past 2019.
- 9.21 The Department has conducted a screening level assessment of the impact this franchise consultation will have on the promotion of equality and is satisfied that, at this stage, a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required. Details of the screening level assessment can be obtained on request.

13. What local accessibility and mobility issues do stakeholders see and how might they be addressed?

Improving the environmental performance of the railway

- 9.22 Although rail is a relatively clean and efficient means of transport, it must still play its part in reducing its environmental impacts and in contributing to the Government's broader sustainable development objectives. In addition, with large populations living near the railway, all TOCs have an important role to play in managing their activities to reduce noise, pollution and other disturbance to their line-side neighbours.
- 9.23 Consequently, the Department will expect bidders for this franchise to set out plans for measuring, monitoring and reducing the environmental impact of their rail activities. As part of this process, bidders will be encouraged to set annual targets to improve the environmental performance of the franchise and to ensure they have appropriate environmental management systems.

- 9.24 Bidders will be expected to reflect industry best practice in their proposals, in particular around measuring, monitoring and reducing traction and non-traction energy consumption. Where initiatives reduce energy bills or other costs, the Department would expect the benefits to be reflected in lower franchise costs. The Department may expect bidders to develop and implement a sustainable procurement policy to reduce the environmental impact of goods and services procured as part of the franchise.

14. What environmental targets would stakeholders like to see within the franchise specification?

10. Consultation

- 10.1 Consultees are requested to comment on aspects of the Department's proposed approach to the new Essex Thameside franchise and in particular the questions posed through this consultation document and brought together in Appendix 1. The Department would also welcome formal notification of any specific increments or decrements that potential funders wish to pursue as part of the franchise.
- 10.2 Responses to the consultation will be examined the by the Department and a report published summarising the responses and how those responses have been taken into account. The report will form a key document for bidders to consider.

The consultation criteria

- 10.3 This consultation is being conducted in line with the Government's Code of Practice on Consultation. The criteria are listed at Appendix 5, while a full version of the Code of Practice on Consultation is available on the Better Regulation Executive website at:

www.bis.gov.uk/files/file47158.pdf

- 10.4 If you consider that this consultation does not comply with the criteria or have comments about the **consultation process**, please contact:

Consultation Coordinator
Department for Transport
Zone 2/25
Great Minster House
London SW1P 4DR
Email address: consultation@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Impact assessment

- 10.5 The Department has conducted a screening level assessment of the impact this franchise consultation will have on the promotion of equality and is satisfied that, at this stage, a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required. Details of the screening level assessment can be obtained from the Department on request.

Action following consultation

- 10.6 Following the consultation period, the Department will consider responses, undertake such further analysis as might be necessary and, if appropriate, include consultees' suggestions within the ITT as part of the Base Specification or as a priced option.
- 10.7 The Department will produce a summary of the outcome of the consultation process as a Stakeholder Briefing Document and will publish this alongside the ITT which we plan to issue in June 2012.

Invitations to consultees

- 10.8 A list of bodies formally consulted is set out in Appendix 3.
- 10.9 Rail User Groups should send comments in the first instance to the Department for Transport and also provide copies to Passenger Focus as appropriate.
- 10.10 Members of the general public may also wish to copy their responses to their local district, county, unitary authority or London borough or Member of Parliament. Copies of comments can also be made available to Passenger Focus.
- 10.11 When responding, please state whether you are responding as an individual or representing the views of an organisation. If responding on behalf of a larger organisation please make it clear who the organisation represents and, where applicable, how the views of members were assembled.

Freedom of Information

- 10.12 Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.
- 10.13 If you want information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals, amongst other things, with obligations of confidence.
- 10.14 In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information, we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.
- 10.15 The Department will process your personal data in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, and in the majority of circumstances this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.
- 10.16 It should be noted that submissions made will not in general receive an individual response.
- 10.17 This document can be made available in appropriate accessible formats on request.

10.18 Responses to this consultation should be sent to:

Essex Thameside Franchise Consultation Manager
Department for Transport
Zone 3/15
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London SW1P 4DR

Or by email to: EssexThameside@dft.gsi.gov.uk

The deadline for responses is **11 May 2012**, but earlier replies will be very welcome.

Appendix 1: Summary of consultation questions

Respondents to the consultation are encouraged to consider the following questions:

1. How does this vision align with stakeholders' view of the future Essex Thameside franchise?
2. What increments or decrements to the specification would stakeholders wish to see and how would these be funded?
3. Are there specific research findings, evidence or publications stakeholders wish to bring to the attention of the Department as part of this refranchising process?
4. What improvements do stakeholders believe could be made to partnership working between Network Rail and the operator on the Essex Thameside franchise?
5. Which aspects of the specification would stakeholders wish to see mandated and which aspects of the specification could be left to commercial discretion? What changes to services would stakeholders propose and why?
6. What do stakeholders consider to be the drivers for service frequency on the Essex Thameside routes? What would be the opportunities created from increasing off peak service frequencies and the impact of reducing off peak service frequencies?
7. How might better use be made of the capacity currently available? What are the future capacity requirements, what steps should bidders be expected to take to meet passenger demand and what are the most appropriate mechanisms for managing demand?
8. Should the bus service between Tilbury Town and Tilbury Riverside be retained in the new franchise?
9. What improvements do stakeholders believe could be made to fares and ticketing for the Essex Thameside franchise?
10. What local considerations do stakeholders feel need to be taken into account with providing passenger information?
11. What's important to stakeholders in the future use and improvement of Fenchurch Street and other stations?
12. What do stakeholders see as the most important factors in improving security (actual or perceived and addressing any gap between the two)?
13. What local accessibility and mobility issues do stakeholders see and how might they be addressed?
14. What environmental targets would stakeholders like to see within the franchise specification?

Appendix 2: Stations

Station	County or Unitary Authority	09/10 entries and exits	09/10 inter-changes	Ticket office induction loop	Secure Station Accreditation	Accessible toilets	Seating and catering (where available)	Public address	Customer information screens	Station opening hours		
										Week day	Sat	Sun
Barking	Greater London	4,677,952	211,034	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0515-2330	0515-2330	0615-2330
Basildon	Essex	2,429,748	0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	0515-2200	0515-2130	0615-2200
Benfleet	Essex	2,844,178	0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	0515-2200	0515-2200	0615-2200
Chafford Hundred	Thurrock	1,898,824	0	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	0545-2200	0645-2130	0715-1630
Chalkwell	Southend-On-Sea	1,384,692	0	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0515-2000	0815-1740	0645-1610
Dagenham Dock	Greater London	290,544	0	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	0615-1340	0815-1540	
East Tilbury	Thurrock	305,310	0	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	0615-1335	0615-1540	0915-1630
Grays	Thurrock	2,788,040	55,970	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	0520-2200	0715-2200	0715-2200
Laindon	Essex	1,745,876	0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	0515-2200	0615-2100	0615-2100
Leigh-On-Sea	Southend-On-Sea	1,775,572	0	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0515-2200	0615-2000	0645-1940
Limehouse	Greater London	2,570,892	0	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	0615-2100	0700-1700	

London Fenchurch Street (Network Rail)	Greater London	15,093,655	194,400	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	0545-2140	0545-2140	0715-2140
London Liverpool Street (Network Rail)	Greater London	51,596,155	1,760,215	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	0400-0100	0340-0100	0340-0100
Ockendon	Thurrock	562,288	0	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	0545-2030	0715-1630	0815-1540
Pitsea	Essex	1,031,186	129,968	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0615-2200	0615-2200	0715-2200
Purfleet	Thurrock	402,506	0	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	0615-1340	0615-1340	
Rainham (Essex)	Greater London	1,296,164	0	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	0615-2200	0645-1600	0915-1640
Shoeburyness	Southend-On-Sea	607,410	0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	0615-2200	0815-1740	0715-1840
Southend Central	Southend-On-Sea	1,838,927	42,024	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0545-2200	0615-2200	0715-2200
Southend East	Southend-On-Sea	1,709,329	0	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0515-2030	0615-1540	0615-1540
Stanford-Le-Hope	Thurrock	923,242	0	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0530-2030	0615-2030	0645-1600
Stratford (Greater Anglia)	Greater London	12,370,245	1,383,003	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	0615-2130	0615-2130	0615-2130
Thorpe Bay	Southend-On-Sea	760,416	0	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0515-2030	0615-1540	0645-1600

Tilbury Town	Thurrock	793,268	2,462	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	0545-2030	0615-2030	0715-1630
Upminster	Greater London	3,018,822	485,439	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	0515-2200	0615-2200	0645-2200
West Ham (LUL)	Greater London	2,156,940	9,589	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	0615-1900	0915-1800	0930-1630
West Horndon	Essex	336,136	0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	0615-2030	0815-1740	
Westcliff	Southend-On-Sea	979,824	0	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0545-2200	0615-1540	0615-1540

Appendix 3: List of formal consultees inside the proposed service area

Association of Train Operating Companies
British Transport Police
Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee or successor
Equality and Human Rights Commission
Freight Operators
Freight Transport Association
Greater London Authority
South East Local Enterprise Partnership
Local Government Association
Local, Metropolitan, County and Unitary Authorities (within the franchise area)
London Boroughs (within the franchise area)
London TravelWatch
Mayor of London's Office
Members of Parliament (within the franchise area)
National Rail Contractors Group
Network Rail
Office of Rail Regulation
Passenger Focus
Rail Freight Group
Rail Safety and Standards Board
Rolling Stock Leasing Companies
Thames Gateway South Essex Rail Group
Train Operating Companies
Transport for London

Appendix 4: Glossary of terms

A4A	Access for All
ATOC	Association of Train Operating Companies
BTP	British Transport Police
CCTV	Closed Circuit TeleVision
CIS	Customer Information System
CP4	Control Period 4
CP5	Control Period 5
The Department	Department for Transport
DOO	Driver Only Operation
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act 2000
HLOS	High Level Output Specification
HS2	High Speed Two
ITSO	ITSO (Smartcard system)
ITT	Invitation to Tender
MAA	Moving Annual Average
NPS	National Passenger Survey
NR	Network Rail
NSIP	National Stations Investment Programme
NRDF	Network Rail Discretionary Fund
ORR	Office of Rail Regulation
PDFH	Passenger Demand Forecasting Handbook
PPM	Public Performance Measure
PSR	Passenger Service Requirement
PTE	Passenger Transport Executive
ROSCO	ROLLing Stock COmpany
RUS	Route Utilisation Strategy
SCPF	Stations Commercial Project Facility
SDO	Selective Door Operation
SFO	Station Facility Owner
TAA	Track Access Agreement
TfL	Transport for London
TOC	Train Operating Company
tph	Trains per hour
TOC	Train Operating Company
TVM	Ticket Vending Machine
VfM	Value for Money

Appendix 5: Code of Practice on Consultation

The Government has adopted a Code of Practice on consultations. The Code sets out the approach Government will take to running a formal, written public consultation exercise. While most UK Departments and Agencies have adopted the Code, it does not have legal force, and cannot prevail over statutory or other mandatory external requirements (e.g. under European Community Law).

The Code contains seven criteria. They should be reproduced in all consultation documents. Deviation from the code will at times be unavoidable, but the Government aims to explain the reasons for deviations and what measures will be used to make the exercise as effective as possible in the circumstances.

The seven consultation criteria

- 1. When to consult:** Formal consultation should take place at a stage when there is scope to influence the policy outcome.
- 2. Duration of consultation exercises:** Consultations should normally last for at least 12 weeks with consideration given to longer timescales where feasible and sensible.
- 3. Clarity of scope and impact:** Consultation documents should be clear about the consultation process, what is being proposed, the scope to influence and the expected costs and benefits of the proposals.
- 4. Accessibility of consultation exercises:** Consultation exercises should be designed to be accessible to, and clearly targeted at, those people the exercise is intended to reach.
- 5. The burden of consultation:** Keeping the burden of consultation to a minimum is essential if consultations are to be effective and if consultees' buy-in to the process is to be obtained.
- 6. Responsiveness of consultation exercises:** Consultation responses should be analysed carefully and clear feedback should be provided to participants following the consultation.
- 7. Capacity to consult:** Officials running consultations should seek guidance in how to run an effective consultation exercise and share what they have learned from the experience.

If you consider that this consultation does not comply with the criteria or have comments about the consultation process please contact:

Consultation Coordinator
Department for Transport
Zone 2/25 Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London, SW1P 4DR

Email: consultation@dft.gsi.gov.uk