



Department
for Transport

Consultation InterCity West Coast Rail Franchise

Moving Britain Ahead



May 2016

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This consultation document on the future of the InterCity West Coast (ICWC) franchise has been produced by the Department for Transport (DfT). It plays an important role in helping us to plan the future of rail services, stations and other supporting services provided by the ICWC rail franchise. The consultation, which runs from **10 May 2016** till the **2 August 2016** seeks the views of passengers, rail industry employees, communities, businesses, rail groups, local authorities, Local Enterprise Partnerships, Devolved Administrations, unions and other organisations.
- 1.2 The ICWC rail franchise is currently operated by Virgin Trains (a joint venture between Stagecoach Group PLC and Virgin Group). They operate long-distance high-speed services, primarily on the West Coast Main Line, between London, Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, North Wales, Glasgow and Edinburgh. See **Fig 2.1** for a map of where services run.
- 1.3 This franchise is due to end in April 2018. A timetable setting out the key milestones for awarding a new train operator to run the new ICWC franchise is at **Annex A**. The process of franchising¹ provides us with an opportunity to look again at the services provided by the ICWC franchise to ensure it meet the needs of the people and the areas it serves.
- 1.4 Our vision for the new franchise, set out in detail in our ICWC Overview and Vision² document, is to deliver a rail service that: makes journeys better for passengers; works in partnership with communities to understand and support their needs and the towns it serves; and connects and helps grow and develop the current market to enable economic growth and support the long-term vision of HS2 services.
- 1.5 With passengers providing around 60% of the rail industry's revenues³ and 40% funding from government it is important that rail services provide value for money for the taxpayer and fare paying passengers. We therefore welcome your views on all aspects of the rail service offered so we can ensure the new franchise delivers the best possible railway for passengers, communities and businesses.
- 1.6 Your responses to this consultation will help us to identify priorities for improvement and help inform what we ask for in the tender documents for the future ICWC franchise. Details on how to respond to this consultation are at Section 4: Conclusions or you can go to the link at www.gov.uk/government/collections/rail-franchising#intercity-west-coast-franchise
- 1.7 While this consultation is about future services which may be provided by the ICWC franchise rail, we are also interested in your views on connections between ICWC franchise services and those provided by other rail companies and other modes of

¹ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/443621/franchise-competition-guide.pdf

² ICWC Overview and Vision document https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/486661/intercity-west-coast-overview-vision.pdf

³ £7.7 billion in 2012/13. (The Government's expenditure was £5.1 billion.)

transport. We are not consulting on the HS2 scheme or services that may operate after HS2 is completed. This is expected to be the subject of a separate consultation in due course.

- 1.8 Following the close of this consultation, we will publish a report summarising stakeholder views on the franchise and our conclusions on them. This will be provided to potential bidders to consider when submitting their proposals to operate the ICWC rail franchise. We plan to publish this report on our website in November 2016, at the same time that the Invitation to Tender (ITT) is planned to be issued. We will not reply individually to each consultation response.

The Department for Transport (DfT) and rail franchising

- 1.9 Most rail services in England are operated under contractual agreements between the DfT and selected train companies. These are known as Franchise Agreements and each one covers specific train services and stations. These are normally on particular rail lines or in a geographical area. There are currently 15 rail franchises in England overseen by the DfT.
- 1.10 The ICWC franchise operates cross-border services between England, Scotland and Wales which are specified and funded by DfT. DfT regards the Governments for Scotland and Wales as important partners. The aspirations that have already been expressed to us by Transport Scotland and the Welsh Government are included at Part 2 to **Annex B**.
- 1.11 Each franchise runs for a fixed period of time, which varies depending on the circumstances of that franchise. Towards the end of each agreement a formal process is undertaken to decide how services and stations in the next franchise agreement should be operated and to select a train company to provide these services to the public. This is called a franchise competition and this consultation is part of that process for the ICWC franchise.

Britain's Railway Industry

- 1.12 Great Britain has a large and highly valued rail network. Passenger numbers are increasing and so is the amount of money provided through passenger ticket sales and other services (passenger revenue).
- 1.13 A number of organisations work together to help people and goods move around the rail network safely, effectively and in a way that best meets the needs and aspirations of passengers and businesses. These include:
 - Private sector train operating companies which run passenger train services and train stations, normally through franchise agreements. The current operator of ICWC, Virgin Trains, is one of these.
 - Network Rail which owns and operates the fixed railway infrastructure including track, signalling, overhead wires and many major city centre stations.
 - Train leasing companies (known as rolling stock operating companies or ROSCOs) which own and lease out passenger and freight trains.
 - Private rail freight companies which carry goods around the country and internationally.

- High Speed 1 Limited (HS1) is the company that holds the concession to operate Britain's first high speed railway between St Pancras International in London and the Channel Tunnel, connecting with international high speed routes between London and Paris/ Brussels.
- High Speed 2 Limited (HS2) is responsible for developing a new national high speed rail network. Phase one provides a new high speed rail line between London Euston and Birmingham complementing future services on the West Coast Main Line
- The Office of Rail and Road (ORR) is the independent industry regulator that ensures Network Rail and train companies are acting legally in terms of health and safety and consumer protection. They also manage track and station access and regulate Network Rail costs and charges.
- Transport Focus is an independent organisation which gathers the views of public transport and road users across the country to understand what customers want, what works well and what could be improved. More details on Transport Focus can be found at www.transportfocus.org.uk
- London Travelwatch is an independent, statutory watchdog for transport users in and around London for all modes of transport, promoting integrated and better public transport by liaising with transport operators, providers, regulators and local authorities. More details on London Travelwatch can be found at <http://www.londontravelwatch.org.uk/home/>
- Rail Supply Group was formally launched in January 2015. This new body brings together DfT, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and the UK Rail Industry in collaboration to strengthen the capability and competitiveness of the UK rail supply chain to win business at home and overseas.
- The rail industry also works closely alongside a range of other organisations and stakeholders to improve and develop services. These include Local Authorities, Local Enterprise Partnerships, Unions and Rail User Groups.

Objectives for the new ICWC rail franchise

- 1.14 The starting point for the development of any franchise specification is the establishment of clear objectives. The next ICWC franchise will be expected to deliver a transformation in the way the railway serves its markets and communities. We are seeking a franchise operator who will deliver benefits to passengers through increased efficiency, improved effectiveness and in collaboration with a range of stakeholders (**Fig 1.1**).
- 1.15 The new franchise will create an opportunity to rejuvenate this important part of Great Britain's railway and there will be ample scope for innovation and modernisation.

Figure 1.1 Objectives⁴ for the new ICWC franchise



⁴ ICWC Objectives from Overview and Vision document
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/486661/intercity-west-coast-overview-vision.pdf

2. The Current Franchise

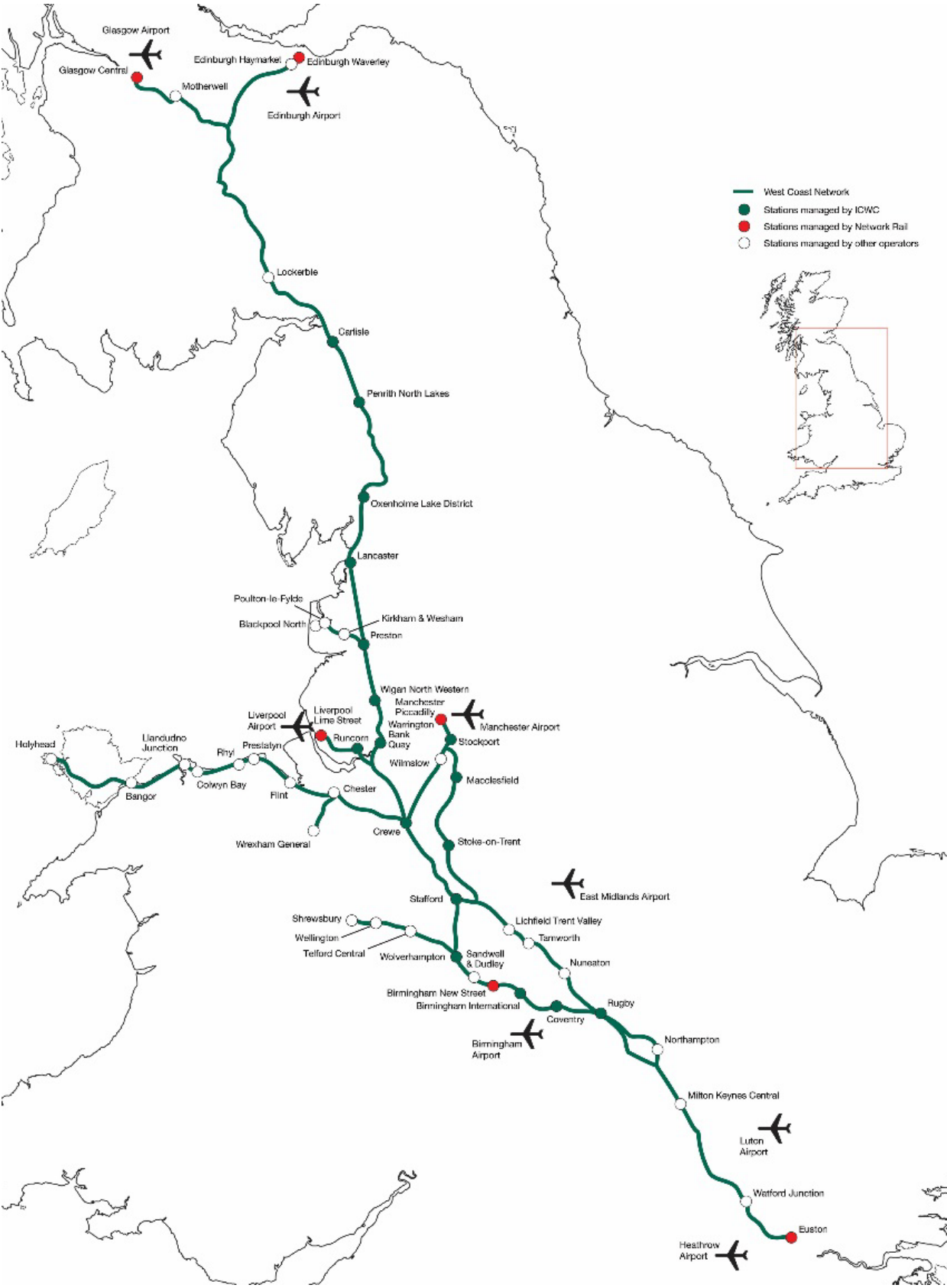
- 2.1 This section provides you with information on the current ICWC franchise to help you respond to the consultation.
- 2.2 There are a number of further developments / major projects taking place both on the railway and in towns and cities with ICWC services. Details of these can be found in **Annex B**.

Train Services

- 2.3 The ICWC franchise (currently operated by Virgin Trains) runs long-distance high-speed services, primarily on the West Coast Main Line, between London, Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, North Wales, Glasgow and Edinburgh.
- 2.4 There are around 300 train services every day on the ICWC with journeys to and from London accounting for 63% of services. Journeys are typically long-distance with approximately 60% being over 100 miles. Of the journeys made around 66% are made for leisure, 23% for business and 11% for commuting purposes with season tickets.
- 2.5 **Figure 2.1** in this section provides a full geographical map of train services and stations.
- 2.6 A list of other train operators that provide train services on the same parts of track as the ICWC franchise are listed in **Annex D**.
- 2.7 Some services and stations within England that are currently run as part of the Wales and Borders Franchise may be moved into this and/or another franchise in a process known as remapping. This comes as a result of the Government's agreement in principle to devolve responsibility for the next Wales and Borders franchise to the Welsh Government⁵ We will consult separately on any remapping as a result of these proposals.

⁵ See pages 30/31 in https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/408587/47683_CM9020_ENGLISH.pdf

Figure 2.1 ICWC Geographical Map



Train Fleet and Stations

2.8 Currently train services are provided by 56 electric Pendolino and 20 diesel-electric Super Voyagers (Fig 2.2). In 2012, 106 extra Pendolino carriages were added to the fleet in 2012. By September 2015 35 of the 9 carriage trains were extended to 11 carriage trains, increasing the number of standard class seats by 150 on each extended train. In May 2015 work was completed on Pendolinos improving Wi-Fi speeds by around four times faster (a year ahead of schedule).

Figure 2.2 Pendolino on the left and Super Voyager on the right



2.9 The ICWC rail franchise currently directly manages the following 17 stations

Category	Description	Trips per annum	Stations
A	National Hub	Over 2 million	Crewe Stockport Preston
B	Regional Interchange	Over 2 million	Birmingham International Carlisle Coventry Lancaster Warrington bank quay Wigan North Western Wolverhampton
C	Important feeder	0.5-2 million	Macclesfield Rugby Runcorn Stafford Stoke-on-trent
D	Medium staffed	0.25-0.5 million	Oxenholme Lake District
E	Small staffed	Under 0.25 million	Penrith north lakes

- 2.10 The ICWC franchise also serves a further 32 stations which it does not manage, these are managed by other operators and Network Rail and are listed in **Annex C**.
- 2.11 Transport for Greater Manchester have stated an ambition to take over responsibility for stations in the Greater Manchester areas. For the ICWC franchise this could require the transfer of the management of Stockport and Wigan North Western station out of the franchise. DfT will be working with Transport for Greater Manchester, in advance of the Invitation to Tender, to better understand the case for any such transfer of responsibility.

Usage and performance

- 2.12 On a national level, passenger journeys by train have almost doubled over the past 18 years from 845.7 million in 1997/98 to 1.65 billion in 2014/15, rising faster than any other major European rail system.
- 2.13 Over 34 million journeys were made on ICWC franchise services from the start of April 2014 to the end of March 2015 with 4.3 billion passenger miles travelled. Passenger journeys have grown by around 20% between 2010/11 and 2014/15. The majority of demand for rail travel on the ICWC is for journeys to and from London.
- 2.14 Performance for the ICWC operator is reported in terms of the percentage of trains that arrived at their destination less than 10 minutes late having called at all stations (also known as PPM – Public Performance Measure). For the year up to March 5 2016, the performance of ICWC franchise services – for the 12 months up to March 5 2016 – is 86.2%, below the national performance of 89.1%.

Figure 2.3 National Rail Passenger Survey (NRPS)

Overall passenger satisfaction Virgin Trains and Long distance sector, Autumn 2007 to Autumn 2015



Source: Transport Focus NRPS, Autumn 2007 to Autumn 2015

Customer satisfaction

- 2.15 Transport Focus undertakes two rounds of the National Rail Passenger Surveys (NRPS) every year in spring and autumn, covering over 54,000 passengers a year. It also undertakes separate, detailed studies into specific areas of rail customer satisfaction.
- 2.16 In Autumn 2015 overall journey satisfaction with existing ICWC franchise (Virgin Trains) services was 91%, 4% higher than the average for the long-distance sector⁶. The top six areas of satisfaction were: the time/speed of journeys; handling of requests by station staff; overall satisfaction with the journey; punctuality/reliability of train services; train arriving/departing on time and frequency of train services on the route.
- 2.17 The areas of the ICWC franchise where Transport Focus reported the highest dissatisfaction scores from passengers were: availability of seating at stations, car parking facilities, luggage space on trains, toilet facilities, and value for money of the price of tickets.
- 2.18 In addition to these surveys (Autumn 2015), Transport Focus held a series of focus groups along the ICWC rail franchise route with ICWC passengers (leisure, business and commuters). These reported⁷ that passengers consider the ICWC experience to be a mostly positive one with particular satisfaction relating to the overall journey experience, and reliability and punctuality of the service and want to see these areas at least maintained, if not improved.
- 2.19 Key aspirations identified by the focus groups for improvement within the next franchise are:
- a fare structure that is transparent and easy to understand;
 - a simple, seamless ticketing process;
 - on-board enhancements to luggage storage, Wi-Fi and toilets;
 - increased staff visibility and a proactive approach to customer service;
 - dealing with overcrowding of the concourse and train boarding issues at Euston Station; and
 - greater levels of customer recognition and reward.

⁶ CrossCountry, East Coast, East Midlands Trains and Grand Central.

⁷ <http://www.transportfocus.org.uk/research/publications/west-coast-trains-what-passengers-want-agency-reports>

3. Question Areas

3.1 The following sections contain a series of themes, aligned to our vision for the ICWC franchise (see below) with questions on which we would like your views. The responses will either help inform what we ask for the franchise in the specification we issue to bidders or be provided as information to bidders in the Stakeholder Briefing Document to help inform and improve their bid.

The question themes are:

- A - Passengers:
 - Customer experience and satisfaction
 - Information

- B – Train services:
 - Ensuring train services meet the needs of the areas and passengers they serve
 - Capacity

- C – Communities, heritage and a sustainable railway
 - Supporting the community
 - Stations for passengers and communities

- D - The whole journey:
 - Make the railway more accessible for all
 - Fares, ticketing and paying for your journey

3.2 We would be grateful if, wherever possible, you could explain why you have given the answer you have and provide any evidence that supports your response. We look forward to receiving your views.

A – Passengers



Customer experience and satisfaction

- 3.3 We want to make journeys better for passengers. To help do this, we are investigating ways the operator could improve satisfaction for example improving luggage storage and Wi-Fi on trains, increasing staff visibility at stations and on trains and greater levels of customer recognition and reward. Our aspiration is for the new ICWC operator to set a new benchmark for passenger satisfaction and we will set targets for the next ICWC franchise that reflects this aim.
- 3.4 We have worked with Transport Focus and other stakeholders to identify where passengers are already satisfied and also where there is a need for improvement⁸.
- 3.5 Bidders will be asked to consider how they can improve the service offered to customers on board trains and at stations. The Government has committed⁹ to deliver free WiFi across 90% of Passenger journeys. We expect bidders to consider how they will deliver free WiFi and improved mobile coverage as a priority during the first years of the franchise.
- 3.6 We will be asking bidders for the new franchise to consider how they will improve the overall quality of service delivered to passengers and encourage new and increased usage of the railway in the franchise area. We want potential bidders to be innovative and consider what they can do to satisfy passengers' needs and aspirations.
- 3.7 From NRPS¹⁰ surveys the top six areas of customer satisfaction for the ICWC are time/speed/reliability of journeys; handling of requests by station staff; overall satisfaction with the journey; punctuality/reliability of train services; services; train arriving/departing on time and frequency of train services on the route.

⁸ <http://www.transportfocus.org.uk/news/articles/west-coast-trains-what-passengers-want>

⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/free-wi-fi-to-help-rail-commuters-stay-connected>

¹⁰ NRPS Autumn 2015 survey, available on Transport Focus' website <http://www.transportfocus.org.uk/research/publications/national-rail-passenger-survey-nrps-autumn-2015-main-report>

Q1: We have listed below examples of areas identified that customers would most like improved on their ICWC journey and would ask you to rank your top five. It would help us analyse this information if you could explain why you think this area warrants/needs improvement, if it relates to a particular station or train service, and what you think the new train operator could do to help.

Description	Your priority for improvement (1 = highest to 5 = lowest)	Reason why you think this warrants/needs improvement, location if appropriate and example of what you would like to see done.
<i>Availability of seating at train stations</i>		
<i>Getting a seat on trains</i>		
<i>Car parking facilities at train stations</i>		
<i>Customer recognition and reward (e.g. loyalty schemes)</i>		
<i>Increased staff visibility (at train stations or on trains)</i>		
<i>A more proactive approach to customer service at train stations</i>		
<i>Luggage space on trains</i>		
<i>Overall satisfaction with the station and their cleanliness</i>		
<i>Getting between the train and station concourse</i>		
<i>Toilet facilities on train</i>		
<i>Being kept informed about delays</i>		
<i>Access to catering and refreshments on board</i>		

If there are other areas for improvement not included in the above table, please explain what these areas are and why you think this area could be improved?

Information

- 3.8 We understand the importance of accurate and timely information for passengers. People want to be able to plan their journey easily from their origin to their destination, and be given all the information they need to make an informed choice about which services to use.
- 3.9 This could include information on which trains are busiest, journey times for different services (i.e. some services depart later but arrive earlier than others due to their speed and number of stops), advance notice of timetable changes, how to make onward connections, services offered on board or at stations and how to get to the station by public transport, car, on foot or by bike.

- 3.10 While disruption can be caused by unplanned situations arising such as signalling problems, broken down trains, trespassers or weather, it can also be the result of known issues such as necessary safety and improvement works being carried out on the railway. An example of a planned disruption to services can be found in **Fig 3.1** below.
- 3.11 We know in particular how important the provision of information about disruptions to services is for customers. During the course of the new ICWC franchise there will be significant work carried out to deliver improvements to the rail network, for example HS2 construction works at Euston, that may restrict access to the station and the rail network. The new franchise operator will be asked how they will proactively improve reliability and punctuality and manage problems in ways that are focussed on the needs of customers.

Fig 3.1: Planned disruption to services

To carry out essential engineering works to the railways, such as delivering track maintenance or important improvement work, it is vital Network Rail staff have safe access to the railway.

Whilst most engineering work is planned for times when trains would not normally operate, for example during the night, due to the volume of work being undertaken this is not always possible. This may result in some disruption to services.

Network Rail works with affected train operators and other stakeholders to plan and develop contingency plans for maintaining a service for customers. This can include:

- Providing train services on diversionary routes to the same destination;
- Where access to a station is not possible, ensuring trains terminate at stations that enable people to travel on to their desired destination with as little disruption as possible
- Co-ordinating train services across different train operators to provide alternative journey opportunities;
- Providing rail replacement bus services for part or all of the journey to ensure that passengers can still travel; and
- Communicating the impact of disruption to passengers and providing additional staff at stations to help.

- 3.12 The new franchise operator will be required to work collaboratively with rail industry partners like Network Rail, HS2 Ltd, other train operating companies and local transport authorities during the delivery of rail projects to deliver the best possible outcome for passengers.
- 3.13 We know from what passengers have told us and Transport Focus that providing passengers with information about disruption, both planned and unplanned, and when it takes place is one of the biggest areas of dissatisfaction for those on ICWC. We will therefore be asking bidders to consider how they can use both existing and new channels of communication to ensure people are given advance warning of

disruptions and are kept up to date during periods of disruptions including while they are at the station and on board trains.

Q2: What type/method of communication do you find most effective to:

- a. **Enable you to plan your end to end train journey?**
- b. **Be informed in advance about known disruptions such as planned engineering works?**
- c. **Be informed during unplanned disruptions both before you travel and during the journey?**

This could include, but is not limited to, talking to customer services, notices at stations, leaflets, voice announcements, information on websites or social media.

Where possible please provide reasons for your answers.

B – Train services



Ensuring train services meet the needs of the areas and passengers they serve

- 3.14 How people travel has changed significantly in recent years as economic activity and development has continued to grow. More people are using the railway, and people are choosing to travel at different times such as evenings and at weekends to new or alternative destinations.
- 3.15 The markets for commuting, education, business, tourism and leisure will all continue to evolve. We want the rail services provided by the ICWC Franchise to meet the needs of existing and prospective passengers together with the growing economies in the franchise area which the railways play a key role in supporting both now and in the future.
- 3.16 Major investment is being made by Government, Network Rail, local authorities, train companies and other bodies to improve the railway (as outlined in the first part of Annex B). However, the capacity for additional train services on the West Coast Mainline is limited and will remain so until additional capacity is provided by HS2.

High Speed 2 (HS2)

- HS2 is the new north-south railway connecting London with the West Midlands (Phase One) before running on to Manchester, Leeds and Sheffield (Phase Two). Construction is planned to begin in 2017. Phase One is intended to open in 2026, followed by the accelerated Phase 2a to Crewe opening in 2027 followed by the rest of Phase Two in 2033.
- HS2 will provide a new rail line which will deliver a huge increase in the number of trains and passenger capacity on our main north–south routes, not only on the new railway itself, but also by freeing up space on the current rail lines allowing for significant improvements in intercity, commuter and freight services. This increased capacity, combined with reduced journey times between our major towns and cities will stimulate economic growth in the Midlands and the North.

- 3.17 Whilst some services are highly used in the peak (the times in the morning and evening when most people travel), or just outside of peak hours, there are times of the day where the level of service might not reflect the level of demand at stations. In these cases we are interested in understanding whether there may be opportunities to adjust the level of service at stations which might enable wider benefits to be delivered elsewhere. For example reducing the number of stops required at intermediate stations (each stop could increase the overall journey time by several minutes) could enable reductions in the overall journey time to Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool or Glasgow or for potential new journeys to be offered.
- 3.18 Whilst providing a large number of end to end journeys, ICWC services also serve a number of highly used and important connections to local services at major stations such as Birmingham New Street and Manchester Piccadilly. We know that changing trains can make travelling by rail feel complicated and increase uncertainty for some passengers; discouraging people from using the railway.
- 3.19 We want to make sure that changing trains and making connections is as easy as possible for the customer in the new franchise. To help with this we want to ensure that, wherever possible, services are well timed and regular, with clear and timely information provided (Section D looks at making the railway more accessible). We will be asking bidders to consider how they will improve connections between both ICWC Franchise services and those provided by other companies and what additional measures bidders can provide to make changing between trains easier. For example consideration of which platforms to use and, where possible, ensuring connections can still be made during disruption.
- 3.20 We expect potential bidders to plan their train services to meet the needs of passengers at the stations they serve considering how best to serve and link markets and improve service reliability. To make sure these plans best reflect the needs of the franchise we are seeking your views on this in the following questions.

Q3: Are there any direct journeys currently provided by ICWC that you would want to see protected at a minimum level (e.g. 1 train every 2 hours)?

Please say where would this be and your reasons why where possible.

Q4: Please rank the options below to indicate your priority for potential changes you would like to see to ICWC train services. Please say where would this be and your reasons why where possible

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Please rank these options (1 = highest priority to 5 = lowest priority)</i>	<i>Please say where would this be and where possible your reasons why</i>
<i>Speed up service for long-distance passengers for example by changing stops at low-use stations.</i>		
<i>Introduce new stops to provide services to destinations not currently directly served by the ICWC franchise.</i>		
<i>Swap an existing stop for another to increase destinations not currently directly served by the ICWC franchise.</i>		
<i>Adjust the level of service (e.g. evening, weekend) to better match demand.</i>		
<i>Better support the economic development of the towns and cities served by the franchise for example by increasing/reducing services for seasonal travel (e.g. tourism, holidays) or for a major event (e.g. concert or sporting event).</i>		
<i>Improve/connections with other trains services as part of longer-distance journeys.</i>		
<i>Holding trains at stations for connecting trains</i>		

Capacity

- 3.21 ICWC services typically operate over long distances and are used by a mix of passengers making short or long journeys. In some locations and times of the day, for example between London and Milton Keynes or around Birmingham (Birmingham International) and Manchester (Stockport), this can result in increased crowding over short distances resulting in longer distance passengers having to stand for parts of their journey. However, there are often alternative services for these short distance journeys provided by other competing train operators, for example the West Midlands franchise between London Euston and Milton Keynes, whereas the ICWC operator is the only operator providing the long distance journey.
- 3.22 In order to prioritise available capacity for long distance passengers on ICWC services, passengers at Watford Junction can currently only travel on services to or from stations to the north, and there are limited stops at Milton Keynes at peak times.
- 3.23 We are considering how to specify train services for the future franchise to enable the best use of capacity over the entire ICWC geography whilst ensuring that passengers have choice over which services they use to make their journey.

Q5: Based on your journey, please could you state whether you consider any priority should be placed on either:

- **Protecting long distance capacity on trains; or**
- **Providing maximum choice of operator over short distance journeys.**

Where possible, please provide reasons for your answer.

- 3.24 Trains on some routes within the ICWC franchise area are very busy. High levels of crowding and difficulty moving through the train have been highlighted as key concerns for passengers as reported in focus groups carried out by Transport Focus.
- 3.25 With train use continuing to grow significantly, options to increase capacity for passengers need to be explored and bidders will be asked to consider how they might do this based on current passenger usage and predicted growth.
- 3.26 However, until HS2 is built, options for addressing this problem, such as additional or longer trains, may be limited. They also may not be affordable or operationally deliverable in all areas of crowding due to constraints such as platform lengths and space within timetables and at stations to fit extra trains in.
- 3.27 Bidders will be asked to consider innovative solutions to address capacity issues such as changing the balance of first and standard class provision on carriages or by encouraging more passengers to travel at quieter times where they have the option to do so. This might be through new ticketing schemes which could be linked to smart technology or providing passengers with better information on which are the busiest services and train carriages.
- 3.28 We want bidders to look carefully to see what opportunities there are to deliver extra capacity for passengers to help reduce instances of crowding.

Q6: What methods do you think could enable more people to travel and improve the railway's ability to cater for passenger growth?

Where possible, please provide reasons for your answer.

C – Communities, heritage and a sustainable railway



Supporting the community

- 3.29 ICWC services provide a wide range of socially and economically important services to communities across the UK.
- 3.30 We envisage that the future operator would build and develop partnerships with local transport authorities, Transport Scotland, the Welsh Government and with other bodies so that those who depend on, and benefit from, the railway can play a greater role in supporting and improving it and help develop their stations into hubs for the community.
- 3.31 Additionally we would like to encourage local communities, local businesses and local and devolved governments to build on existing partnerships and come forward with their own proposals to partner train operators for example through station adoption or Community Rail Partnerships.
- 3.32 A priority for DfT is that the new ICWC franchise operator considers how to provide rail services in a sustainable way that is considerate of the environment, its social and economic impact, its workforce, equality and wellbeing within the area it serves.
- 3.33 We will be asking train companies bidding for the ICWC franchise to consider how they will:
- set out how they can provide rail services (including all the support functions it needs) in a way that respects and helps to maintain the environment. This will include reducing waste, recycling, better energy and carbon performance and the reduced use of water and other resources where possible.
 - outline how they can support economic growth and work with local communities to listen to passengers, residents and businesses - involving them in decisions that affect their lives and making sure that rail services are responsive to social needs.
 - have a particular focus on its workforce, supporting equality, diversity, health and wellbeing. We want to make sure staff feel valued, that training is available to develop and retain people in the industry and attract new people reflecting the community they serve.
- 3.34 In specifying the new franchise, we are considering the views of stakeholders, including those representing disabled passengers' needs, as well as the public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010:
- to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act our aim is to;
 - to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and

- to foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it.
- 3.35 In August 2014 the Government introduced a Family Test to ensure that all Government policy making takes into account the impact it may have on family relationships.
- 3.36 We will consider how the new franchise may impact on families, having regard to the questions posed by the Family Test. Further details and guidance on the application of the Family Test to new Government policies may be found here:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/family-test-assessing-the-impact-of-policies-on-families>
- 3.37 We will be asking bidders to consider how they can help both local and national government in their commitments to have due regard to all the aspects outlined above in the development and delivery of passenger services. We are keen to understand your views as to where these areas can be improved to help inform companies when setting out their plans.

Q7: Based on your knowledge of your local area/station, how could the new ICWC train operator:

- a. **Improve rail services (including all the support functions it needs) in a way that respects and helps to maintain the environment?**
- b. **Better support the economic growth of the areas it serves?**
- c. **Improve its support and development of its workforce?**
- d. **Play a greater role in supporting and improving the community it serves, the heritage of the railway and help develop their stations into hubs for the community?**
- e. **Improve the services offered to reduce discrimination and advance equality of opportunity for people from protected groups¹¹?**

Stations for passengers and communities

- 3.38 Railway stations are an essential part of the rail network and the communities that they serve, and should provide an attractive gateway to both train services and their local area. Investment to ensure that stations meet the expectations of passengers and the community has to be carefully prioritised in order to make sure the railway is affordable and accessible for all. This is supported by the Rail Delivery Group's recent Vision for Stations Report (2015)¹².
- 3.39 Significant investment has already been made to improve a number of stations within the ICWC franchise area. This includes major developments such as Birmingham New Street and Manchester Piccadilly as well other enhancements including improvements to the station concourse and retailing at such as increased car parking provision, additional, CCTV, security and help points and automatic ticket gating at a number of stations and the introduction of free Wi-Fi at all Virgin operated stations by April 2016. However we recognise that there is still more to be done and that further investment is needed.

¹¹ A list of the protected groups can be viewed using this link <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/private-and-public-sector-guidance/guidance-all/protected-characteristics>

¹² http://www.raildeliverygroup.com/files/Publications/2015-10_vision_for_stations.pdf

- 3.40 We want bidders to build on the investment in stations already provided, focusing on those areas that will make the biggest difference to passengers, be they at small or large stations to improve the overall rail travel experience. We will also ask them to set out how they plan to improve signage and keep all stations clean, tidy and well maintained in an effective and efficient way.
- 3.41 To facilitate this, we are keen to further understand the priorities for stations from passengers, stakeholders and communities across this franchise area. We would also like to know what priorities non-users have and what station facilities would encourage them to use the rail network.

Q8: Please list, in priority order, the top five facilities you would like to see either improved or introduced at the station(s) served by the ICWC Franchise

a) you use; or

b) as a non-user would encourage you to use the rail network.

Please provide the name of the station(s) and why you think these improvements are needed.

D – The whole journey



Make the railway more accessible for all

- 3.42 A key priority for DfT is to provide a railway that is easily accessible to all members of society. We recognise that passengers' journeys rarely start or end at a railway station. We need to consider the whole journey experience for passengers, from planning their journey and leaving their starting point to when they arrive at their ultimate destination.
- 3.43 We want to see improved connections and integration between different modes of transport to encourage and enable more people to travel from their origin to their destination. We are considering how the new franchise operator can work with partners to improve connections between trains and other modes of public transport, by for example, co-ordinating timetables. With 66% of journeys being made for leisure purposes, we want the new ICWC operator to ensure stations and trains are more accessible for passengers travelling with luggage or buggies and to improve signage and information for non-English speaking passengers (e.g. tourists).
- 3.44 We have been working with members of the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC) and have obtained feedback from accessibility and equality groups to understand barriers to using the rail network. A key aspiration for them is that we provide a "Turn up and go" railway- the ability for a passenger with disabilities to arrive at a station and utilise the services they require without a need to have pre-booked. We want to continue to work towards making this a reality. Passengers with disabilities also tell us that arriving at and navigating through stations is the most difficult part of their journey with the availability and quality of assistance on offer is a key concern, it would be much easier and efficient if they could book their assistance and ticket in one go.
- 3.45 DfT is developing a Departmental Accessibility Action Plan (AAP) which we will ask franchise operators to consider to improve accessibility for all. The AAP will be seeking to improve the outcomes and quality of rail services that are provided to mobility impaired passengers focusing on providing better services in addition to the delivery of Access for All schemes and full compliance with Persons with Reduce Mobility - Technical Specifications for Interoperability (PRM-TSI) on rail vehicles by 2020.
- 3.46 We will be asking future operators to consider how journey planning, ticketing, marketing initiatives, signage and information can be improved to encourage more people to use train services by making them easier to get to. This will also include co-operation with multi-modal smart ticketing schemes being delivered in the area covered by the franchise.

- 3.47 We are keen to understand from a wide range of users and non-users of the railway with different needs what changes would make it easier and more enjoyable to use the railway and what would need to be improved to encourage those who don't use it.
- 3.48 We would like to know about all parts of the journey from planning your trip and buying tickets to arriving at the station, using the train and onward travel.

Q9: Thinking of the journeys you make or have made on the ICWC, or a journey you could make by the ICWC but where you decide to use an alternative transport mode instead:

- ***what specific changes could be made to make the railway easier to access and therefore more attractive to use; and***
- ***why do you think these changes would help?***

Fares, ticketing and paying for your journey

- 3.49 We want to ensure that customers feel they are valued and being treated fairly, while attracting more people to the rail network and generating revenue/income to pay for ongoing improvements. However we recognise there are mixed views on whether customers feel they get value for money for the cost of their ticket. We know that this can also often be a key deciding factor whether someone chooses to travel by train or not.
- 3.50 We are also committed to improving compensation arrangements for passengers. Currently under the Delay/Repay system, passengers can claim for delays of 30 minutes or more, whatever the cause (50% of a single fare for delays of 30 to 59 minutes, 100% of a single fare for delays of 60 minutes or more and 100% of the return fare for delays of 2 hours or more). In his Autumn 2015 Spending Review the Chancellor announced that passengers will soon be able to claim for delays of 15 minutes.
- 3.51 We want the future train operator to provide passengers with all the information required to make a decision on when and how they travel. This might include providing a range of fares which are clear, fair and consistent, and products that closely reflect the needs of passengers. We want the future train operator to deliver more flexible products that could benefit passengers, including the introduction of tickets that will benefit those who work or commute part-time and allow the costs of all season tickets to be spread out.
- 3.52 It is clear that ticket buying habits are changing with more people purchasing their tickets online and at ticket machines.
- 3.53 This is something DfT supports and we will expect the new ICWC franchise operator to improve passenger satisfaction in relation to fares, ticketing and retail by providing passengers with widespread and easy access to the full range of tickets, ensuring that they have all the information they need to select and purchase the most appropriate ticket for their journey.
- 3.54 To achieve this, the future operator will be expected to work with partners to introduce more modern ways for people to pay for their journey. This includes making greater use of new technology, improving station ticket retailing and the roles staff play.

- 3.55 We also want the new operator to consider how it can deliver improvements that enable a significant increase in the use of smart and digital ticketing (tickets stored on electronic devices) by ensuring availability across a wide range of media, for example smartphones, tablets or tickets that can be printed at home, etc with the aim of withdrawing magnetic stripe ticketing for more innovative solutions. Passengers should continue to benefit from a simple and seamless experience, including where they interact with other operators and transport authorities as part of their journey.
- 3.56 Operators will be expected to work with the DfT, Devolved Administrations, Local Authorities, other train operating companies and other stakeholders.

Q10: Considering the above, what do you think the future ICWC train operator could do to modernise and improve the ticketing experience for customers? Please include your views on the elements or parts of service the train operator should consider when developing their ticketing and ticket retailing plans.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 To conclude this consultation we would like to give you the opportunity to provide any views, comments or areas of best practice you have not had the opportunity to give through the specific question areas.

Q11: If there are any additional areas that you think it is important for us to consider that have not already been addressed in this consultation please explain them here.

- 4.2 A summary of all questions is provided in **Annex F**. The online survey is available at www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/icwc-franchise

How to respond

- 4.3 The consultation period begins on 10 May 2016 and will run until 2 August 2016. Please ensure that your response reaches us before the closing date. If you would like further copies of this consultation document, it can be found on the DfT website at: www.gov.uk/government/collections/rail-franchising#intercity-west-coast-franchise
- 4.4 Please respond by filling out the consultation survey online at:
- 4.5 www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/icwc-franchise If you need an alternative format of this document (Braille, audio, CD, etc.) please contact us at:

ICWC Consultation
Department for Transport
4/18 Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

0300 330 3000 (switchboard)

- 4.6 You can also respond in writing to the above address or by email at: ICWCConsultation@dft.gsi.gov.uk
- 4.7 When responding, please state whether you are responding as an individual or representing the views of an organisation.
- 4.8 If responding as an individual, to make sure we can make best use of the information you provide and make focused changes where necessary, it would be helpful if you could please provide the following details:
- First name and surname
 - First half of your postcode
 - Your nearest station (not necessarily the one you use)

- Where you normally travel from and to on the train
 - The times you most regularly travel on the train
 - How frequently you travel on the train
 - The purpose of your most regular rail journey i.e. commuting, leisure or business
 - Any specific accessibility needs you have which could include, but is not limited to, wheelchair access, pushchair access, English is not your first language, you are blind or partially sighted, capability impairments
- 4.9 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 gathered.
- 4.10 There will be a series of public and stakeholder events organised for people to come along and ask questions to inform their response to the consultation. Dates and venues for the events will be published online at www.gov.uk/government/collections/rail-franchising#intercity-west-coast-franchise.

What happens next

- 4.11 Following the conclusion of the consultation process, DfT will analyse all the responses and use them to inform what we put into the specification – the document which sets out what we want the operator of the new ICWC franchise to provide. We will publish a report on the GOV.UK website which will summarise public and stakeholder views and how they have been fed into the specification. This will form a key reference document for the bidders, and is expected to be published in November 2016.
- 4.12 Paper copies will be available on request.

Freedom of Information and Data Protection

- 4.13 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.
- 4.14 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.
- 4.15 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 DfT.
- 4.16 DfT will process your personal data in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and in the majority of circumstances this will mean that your personal data will

not be disclosed to third parties. Individual consultation responses may be shared with bidders in an anonymised format as part of the franchise competition.

- 4.17 By providing personal data in response to this consultation, you consent to the DfT, or third parties contracted to the DfT, processing your personal data for the purpose of analysing responses to this consultation.
- 4.18 It would be very helpful to DfT if, as part of its analysis of responses to this consultation, it was able to take into account certain sensitive personal data that you may wish to provide in response to this consultation. In providing your responses to the DfT by email or post please indicate whether you consent to the DfT, or third parties contracted to the DfT, processing your sensitive personal data for the purposes of analysing responses to this consultation.

Consultation Principles

- 4.19 The consultation is being conducted in line with the Government's key consultation principles. Further information is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consultation-principles-guidance>
- 4.20 If you have any comments about the consultation principles please contact:

Consultation Co-ordinator
Department for Transport
Zone 1/29 Great Minster House
London SW1P 4DR
Email: consultation@dft.gsi.gov.uk

0300 330 3000 (switchboard)

Annex A: Franchise process & timescales

Franchise process

The ICWC Franchise Competition will broadly follow the processes set out in the Franchise Competition Guide¹³. Any deviation from this process will be documented and advised to interested parties.

Franchise timescales

An indication of the proposed timescales for the new ICWC Franchise is given below. This is intended as a guide and we reserve the right to depart from this.

December 2015	Issue Overview and Vision Document Engagement Day
May 2016	Public consultation starts
May 2016 – July 2016	Series of consultation events
June 2016	Bidder Day (for train companies to meet the franchise team) Issue Expressions of Interest to selected train companies
August 2016	Public consultation closes, analysis of responses takes place
November 2016	Publication of Stakeholder Briefing Document outlining how responses to the public consultation have informed what we are asking for from the new ICWC franchise operator Issue Invitation to Tender to short-listed bidders, setting out what they will be required to deliver and asking for proposals and costs for doing so.
November 2017	Award contract for the new franchise to the successful bidder
November 2017 – March 2018	Handover from current operator
April 2018	New franchise starts

¹³ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/443621/franchise-competition-guide.pdf

Annex B: Major rail & station schemes & Stakeholder aspirations

Part 1 of this Annex provides a list of some of the major railway and station schemes in the ICWC franchise area delivered in the last five years, and due to be delivered in the future. Part 2 includes details of stakeholder aspirations for the ICWC.

Part 1

Schemes delivered in the last five years

Birmingham New Street Station

This saw the major redevelopment of Birmingham New Street Station, Phase 2 of which opened in September 2015 and provided platform improvements, easier access to the concourse by stairs, escalators and lifts, a new high quality shopping area (Grand Central) within the station including a major new department store (John Lewis), new entrances and walkways to improve access to the station on foot, a new taxi and drop off area and new public information systems. Some works to Navigation Street bridge and platforms will continue in 2016.

The redevelopment of Birmingham New Street forms part of a much wider investment package for the city. The extension of Midland Metro from Birmingham Snow Hill Station through the heart of the city to Birmingham New Street is due to be completed in early 2016 and further extensions will connect the tram network to Wolverhampton Station and public transport interchange by and the Birmingham Broad Street conference and leisure area by 2019.

Schemes due to be delivered in the future

Wolverhampton Station

Redevelopment of Wolverhampton Station, will include an expanded car park, incorporating improved public access on the approach to the railway station, along with an extension to the tram network and provision of a tram stop at the railway station. Programme is being delivered in partnership by Wolverhampton City Council, Neptune Developments, Centro, Network Rail, Virgin Trains and the Canal & River Trust.

HS2

HS2 is the new railway connecting London with the West Midlands (Phase 1), before running on to Crewe (Phase 2A) followed by Manchester, Leeds and Sheffield (Phase 2B). Phase 1 will open in 2026 followed by Phase 2A to Crewe in 2027, and Phase 2B in 2033

HS2 will provide a new rail line which will deliver a huge increase in the number of trains and passenger capacity on our main north–south routes, not only on the new railway itself, but also by freeing up space on the current rail lines allowing for significant improvements in intercity, commuter and freight services. This increased capacity, combined with reduced journey times between our major towns and cities will stimulate economic growth in the Midlands and the North.

The hybrid Bill for Phase 1 is progressing through parliament with Royal Assent planned for December 2016. Construction is due to begin in 2017.

More information on this massive infrastructure scheme can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/high-speed-two-limited>

Euston

The new station will be delivered in two stages. The first stage will see the construction of 6 new high speed platforms and a concourse to serve them, to the west of the station to support the opening of Phase 1 high speed services in 2026. Eighteen platforms will remain in the current station to serve the existing network.

The second stage will see the construction of 5 further high speed platforms and an additional concourse to support the opening of Phase 2 high speed services in 2033.

The staged approach means existing services can continue to operate, reducing both disruption for passengers and the effects on the community as a whole at any one time.

The facilities at Euston’s London Underground Station are going to be significantly enhanced with greatly improved access for passengers including a link to Euston Square and a new entrance to Euston Underground Station south of Euston Road.

Part 2

Stakeholder Aspirations

The below Stakeholder Aspirations are not part of the consultation and are provided for information only. No reliance should be placed on the aspiration statements in terms of the outcome of the ICWC franchise specification. The bodies that have provided the below Stakeholder aspirations will be able to respond, if they choose to do so, to the ICWC Stakeholder consultation as set out at Part 4 of this Consultation document.

Following the close of this consultation we will publish a Stakeholder Briefing Document summarising how the views expressed in response to this consultation have been reflected in the ITT specification.

Transport Scotland

Transport Scotland has provided the following statement regarding aspirations:

The Scottish Ministers’ aspiration for the specification of the Inter City West Coast Franchise is clear: safe, fast, frequent, reliable, punctual services connecting Scotland to London and intermediate locations with on board facilities and fares that attract and retain passengers.

There ought to be a focus on working with others to deliver improvements at stations including, Motherwell, Lockerbie and Carlisle. Measures to increase connectivity and attractiveness would be particularly welcome. Motherwell, is increasingly a hub station in that it is serviced by not only ICWC but also ScotRail and other cross-border operators.

Additionally, rail must provide clear, readily understandable passenger information, and catering, seating, WiFi connectivity and luggage storage must be provided at levels commensurate with the needs of business and leisure passengers on a long distance journey.

Furthermore, measures must be taken to improve capacity, reduce overcrowding and ensure that ticketing is in line with prevailing practice which increasingly facilitates integrated journeys.

Welsh Government

The Welsh Government has provided the following statement regarding aspirations:

Maintaining the current ICWC service offering for North Wales at a minimum, including the current stopping patterns, and seeking to enhance North Wales coast services to London Euston, ensuring additional services fully consider the balance of journey times against connectivity.

Increasing the number of direct services between Wrexham and London, and further improving interchange opportunities at Chester for North Wales services.

Ensuring the ICWC franchise operator works effectively with the Wales and Borders franchise operator to optimally timetable services from across North Wales to London services via connections at Shrewsbury.

Encourage franchise operators to work together to more effectively manage disruption and provide appropriate capacity/resources for events and seasonal peaks.

Improving direct rail links to major cities, ports and airports across England and Wales, including better timetabling of services with ferries to/from Dublin via Holyhead port.

Improving the use of Welsh language in the delivery of rail services, supporting the Welsh Government's vision to see Welsh language thriving in Wales.

Supporting tourism and sustainable travel choices through providing adequate space for luggage; further encouraging sustainability and active travel by ensuring sufficient space is made available for bicycles on trains

Engaging with communities served by the franchise, encouraging community improvement projects in north Wales to apply for and secure funding - a good example of this practice being Great Western Rail's Customer and Communities Improvement Fund

Transport Focus

Transport Focus believes the new ICWC franchise must balance the needs of the different passengers using the services and reflect the findings of evidence about their experience and aspirations.

Research into passenger priorities for improvement identifies that, along with value for money for the price of the ticket and free Wi-Fi on the train, the top requirements are provision of sufficient seats on suitably frequent services, keeping passengers informed about delays, and providing a generally punctual and reliable service.

Other important issues are the cleanliness of the inside of the train and a comfortable on-board environment, providing a clear and transparent fares and ticketing system and better station experiences. We know that getting these factors right is important in driving passenger satisfaction. Improving knowledge of individual customer requirements and developing opportunities for recognition and reward will also enhance the passenger experience.

Annex C: Stations currently served by the franchise

Train stations are managed by a single party with overall responsibility for their day-to-day management and operation. Normally this is one of the train operators but, for some of the busiest stations, Network Rail takes on this role. The table below identifies both the stations currently served by ICWC franchise and the operator responsible for the day-to-day management of them.

Table C.1 Stations served and who manages them	
Station	Station Operator
Bangor	Arriva Trains Wales
Chester	
Colwyn Bay	
Flint	
Holyhead	
Llandudno Junction	
Prestatyn	
Rhyl	
Shrewsbury	
Wrexham General	
Birmingham International	
Carlisle	
Coventry	
Crewe	
Lancaster	
Macclesfield	
Oxenholme Lake District	
Penrith north lakes	
Preston	
Rugby	
Runcorn	
Stafford	

Stockport	
Stoke-on-trent	
Warrington bank quay	
Wigan North Western	
Wolverhampton	
Lichfield Trent Valley	London Midland
Milton Keynes Central	
Northampton	
Nuneaton	
Sandwell & Dudley	
Tamworth	
Telford Central	
Watford Junction	
Wellington (Shropshire)	
Haymarket	
Lockerbie	
Motherwell	
Birmingham New Street	Network Rail
Edinburgh Waverley	
Glasgow Central	
Liverpool Lime Street	
London Euston	
Manchester Piccadilly	
Blackpool North	Northern
Kirkham & Wesham	
Poulton-le-Fylde	
Wilmslow	

Annex D: Other operators currently providing some services on the ICWC route:

Table D.1 Other operators	
Operator	Routes
Arriva Trains Wales	Crewe – Holyhead Chester – Wrexham Birmingham International - Birmingham New Street Birmingham New Street – Shrewsbury Birmingham New Street - Stafford Stafford - Manchester Piccadilly
Caledonian Sleeper	London Euston – Edinburgh Waverley Carlisle – Glasgow Central
CrossCountry	Coventry – Crewe – Manchester Piccadilly
East Midlands Trains	Stockport – Manchester Piccadilly
First TransPennine Express	Wigan-Edinburgh Waverley and Glasgow Central.
London Midland	London Euston – Birmingham – Liverpool Lime Street Rugby – Lichfield Trent Valley – Stafford Wolverhampton – Shrewsbury
London Overground	London Euston – Watford Junction
Northern	Stoke-on-Trent – Manchester Piccadilly Crewe-Manchester Piccadilly Preston-Blackpool North Preston-Lancaster-Oxenholme
Scotrail	Haymarket – Edinburgh Waverley Motherwell – Glasgow Central Carlisle – Glasgow Central via Dumfries
Govia Thameslink Railway	Watford Junction – Milton Keynes Central
Virgin Trains East Coast	Haymarket – Edinburgh Waverley Motherwell – Glasgow Central

In addition to these services, Great North Western Railway (GNWR) has been approved to begin offering 6 daily services between Queens Park and Blackpool on the West Coast Main Line, as an open access operator¹⁴ from early 2018.

¹⁴ Having applied to the Office of Rail Regulation to operate passenger services not otherwise provided.

Annex E: Community Rail

The following routes have designated services and lines run by Community Rail Partnerships (CRP):

Table E.2 Community Rail		
Community Rail Partnership	Route	ICWC interaction
Tyne Valley CRP	Carlisle - Newcastle	Carlisle Station
Settle & Carlisle RDC	Carlisle - Settle	Carlisle Station
Lakes Line CRP	Oxenholme - Windermere	Oxenholme Lake District
Furness Line CRP	Lancaster – Barrow in Furness	Lancaster Station
Leeds-Lancaster-Morecambe CRP	Leeds – Lancaster - Morecamber	Lancaster Station
South Fylde Line CRP	Preston – Blackpool South	Preston – Kirkham & Wesham Route
East Lancs CRP	Preston - Colne	Preston Station
West of Lancashire CRP	Preston - Ormskirk	Preston Station
Mid Cheshire CRP	Manchester Piccadilly – Northwich - Chester	Manchester Piccadilly Station Chester Station
High Peak & Hope Valley CRP	Manchester Piccadilly – Stockport – Buxton Manchester Piccadilly – Sheffield Manchester Piccadilly – Glossop / Hadfield	Manchester Piccadilly – Stockport Route.
Crewe - Manchester CRP	Crewe – Manchester Piccadilly	Crewe – Wilmslow Route – Stockport - Manchester Piccadilly Route
North Staffordshire CRP	Crewe – Stoke-on-Trent - Derby	Crewe Station Stoke-on-Trent Station
Conwy Valley Rail Initiative	Llandudno - Blaenau Ffestiniog	Llandudno Junction
Borderlands Line Rail Partnership	Wrexham Central - Bidston	Wrexham General Station
Chester - Shrewsbury Rail Partnership	Chester - Shrewsbury	Shrewsbury Station Chester – Wrexham General Route
Cambrian Rail Partnership	Shrewsbury – Aberystwyth / Pwllheli	Shrewsbury Station
Heart of Wales Line Forum	Shrewsbury - Swansea	Shrewsbury Station

Marston Vale CRP	Bletchley - Bedford	
Abbey Line CRP	Watford Junction – St Albans	Watford Junction Station
East Lothian CRP	Edinburgh Waverley – North Berwick Edinburgh Waverley – Dunbar	Edinburgh Waverley Station
Glasgow (Central) - Barrhead CRP	Glasgow Central - Barrhead	Glasgow Central Station
Borders Line CRP	Edinburgh Waverley - Tweedbank	Edinburgh Waverley Station

Annex F: Summary of consultation questions

The question themes are:

- A - Passengers:
 - Customer experience and satisfaction
 - Information

- B – Train services:
 - Ensuring train services meet the needs of the areas and passengers they serve
 - Capacity

- C – Communities, heritage and a sustainable railway
 - Supporting the community
 - Stations for passengers and communities

- D - The whole journey:
 - Make the railway more accessible for all
 - Fares, ticketing and paying for your journey

- Other areas not addressed

A - Passengers: Customer experience and satisfaction

Q1: We have listed below examples of areas identified that customers would most like improved on their ICWC journey and would ask you to rank your top five. It would help us analyse this information if you could explain why you think this area warrants/needs improvement, if it relates to a particular station or train service, and what you think the new train operator could do to help.

<i>Description</i>	<i>Your priority for improvement (1 = highest to 5 = lowest)</i>	<i>Reason why you think this warrants/needs improvement, location if appropriate and example of what you would like to see done.</i>
<i>Availability of seating at train stations</i>		
<i>Getting a seat on trains</i>		
<i>Car parking facilities at train stations</i>		
<i>Customer recognition and reward (e.g. loyalty schemes)</i>		
<i>Increased staff visibility (at train stations or on trains)</i>		
<i>A more proactive approach to customer service at train stations</i>		
<i>Luggage space on trains</i>		
<i>Overall satisfaction with the station and their cleanliness</i>		
<i>Getting between the train and station concourse</i>		
<i>Toilet facilities on train</i>		
<i>Being kept informed about delays</i>		
<i>Access to catering and refreshments on board</i>		

If there are other areas for improvement not included in the above table, please explain what these areas are and why you think this area could be improved?

A - Passengers: Information

Q2: What type/method of communication do you find most effective to:

- a. Enable you to plan your end to end train journey?**
- b. Be informed in advance about known disruptions such as planned engineering works?**
- c. Be informed during unplanned disruptions both before you travel and during the journey?**

This could include, but is not limited to, talking to customer services, notices at stations, leaflets, voice announcements, information on websites or social media.

Where possible please provide reasons for your answers.

B – Train services: Ensuring train services meet the needs of the areas and passengers they serve

Q3: Are there any direct journeys currently provided by ICWC that you would want to see protected at a minimum level (e.g. 1 train every 2 hours)?

Please say where would this be and your reasons why where possible.

Q4: Please rank the options below to indicate your priority for potential changes you would like to see to ICWC train services. Please say where would this be and your reasons why where possible

Issue	Please rank these options (1 = highest priority to 5 = lowest priority)	Please say where would this be and where possible your reasons why
<i>Speed up service for long-distance passengers for example by changing stops at low-use stations.</i>		
<i>Introduce new stops to provide services to destinations not currently directly served by the ICWC franchise.</i>		
<i>Swap an existing stop for another to increase destinations not currently directly served by the ICWC franchise.</i>		
<i>Adjust the level of service (e.g. evening, weekend) to better match demand.</i>		
<i>Better support the economic development of the towns and cities served by the franchise for example by increasing/reducing services for seasonal travel (e.g. tourism, holidays) or for a major event (e.g. concert or sporting event).</i>		
<i>Improve/connections with other trains services as part of longer-distance journeys.</i>		
<i>Holding trains at stations for connecting trains</i>		

B – Train services: Capacity

Q5: Based on your journey, please could you state whether you consider any priority should be placed on either:

- **Protecting long distance capacity on trains; or**
- **Providing maximum choice of operator over short distance journeys.**

Where possible, please provide reasons for your answer.

Q6: What methods do you think could enable more people to travel and improve the railway's ability to cater for passenger growth?

Where possible, please provide reasons for your answer.

C – Communities, heritage and a sustainable railway: Supporting the community

Q7: Based on your knowledge of your local area/station, how could the new ICWC train operator:

- a. Improve rail services (including all the support functions it needs) in a way that respects and helps to maintain the environment?**
- b. Better support the economic growth of the areas it serves?**
- c. Improve its support and development of its workforce?**
- d. Play a greater role in supporting and improving the community it serves, the heritage of the railway and help develop their stations into hubs for the community?**
- e. Improve the services offered to reduce discrimination and advance equality of opportunity for people from protected groups¹⁵?**

C – Communities, heritage and a sustainable railway: Stations for passengers and communities

Q8: Please list, in priority order, the top five facilities you would like to see either improved or introduced at the station(s) served by the ICWC Franchise

a) you use; or

b) as a non-user would encourage you to use the rail network.

Please provide the name of the station(s) and why you think these improvements are needed.

D - The whole journey: Make the railway more accessible for all

Q9: Thinking of the journeys you make or have made on the ICWC, or a journey you could make by the ICWC but where you decide to use an alternative transport mode instead:

- what specific changes could be made to make the railway easier to access and therefore more attractive to use; and**
- why do you think these changes would help?**

¹⁵ A list of the protected groups can be viewed using this link <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/private-and-public-sector-guidance/guidance-all/protected-characteristics>

D - The whole journey: Fares, ticketing and paying for your journey

Q10: Considering the above, what do you think the future ICWC train operator could do to modernise and improve the ticketing experience for customers? Please include your views on the elements or parts of service the train operator should consider when developing their ticketing and ticket retailing plans.

Other areas not addressed

Q11: If there are any additional areas that you think it is important for us to consider that have not already been addressed in this consultation please explain them here.