



To: Nick Bisson, Senior Responsible Owner for the East Coast Main Line Enhancements Programme

From: Bernadette Kelly, Permanent Secretary of Department for Transport; and
Nick Smallwood, Chief Executive Officer of the Infrastructure and Projects Authority

24 November 2022

Dear Nick,

APPOINTMENT AS SENIOR RESPONSIBLE OWNER FOR THE EAST COAST MAIN LINE ENHANCMENTS PROGRAMME

We are writing to confirm your appointment as Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) of the East Coast Main Line Enhancements Programme with effect from 1 April 2022. This letter sets out your responsibilities and the support you can expect from your department and the Infrastructure and Projects Authority.

As SRO, you are directly accountable to David Hughes, the Director General for Rail Infrastructure Group, under the oversight of Bernadette Kelly, the Permanent Secretary, as accounting officer for the Department for Transport, and the Secretary of State for Transport.

Your programme forms part of the Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline, under the oversight of the Chair of the joint Department for Transport and Network Rail Portfolio Board, and is included in the Government Major Projects Portfolio (GMPP).

You have personal responsibility for the delivery of the programme and will be held accountable for the delivery of its objectives, with policy intent and outcomes expected. This encompasses securing and protecting its vision, ensuring that it is governed responsibly, reported on honestly, escalated appropriately and for influencing the context, culture, and operating environment of the programme. You are also responsible for ensuring the ongoing viability of the programme and recommending its pause or termination if appropriate. Where issues arise which you are unable to resolve, you are responsible for escalating these to the appropriate Department for Transport board.

You are responsible for ensuring a plan is in place for the closure of the programme at the appropriate time. This should include the transfer of Business As Usual activities to Passenger Services, Department for Transport, and Network Rail, and the capture and dissemination of appropriate lessons.

You remain accountable to Ministers, as set out in the Civil Service Code, and should deliver the project in accordance with the objectives and policy intent as set by Ministers.

In addition to your internal accountabilities, SROs for GMPP projects and programmes are personally accountable to Parliamentary Select Committees. This means that, from the date of this letter, you will be held personally accountable to and could be called by Select Committees to account for and explain the decisions and actions you have taken to deliver the programme.

It is important to be clear that your accountability relates only to implementation, within the agreed terms in this letter; it will remain for the Minister to account for the relevant policy decisions and development.

More information on this is set out in [Giving Evidence to Select Committees - Guidance for Civil Servants](#), sometimes known as the Osmotherly Rules. Information on the roles and responsibilities of the SRO are detailed in the Infrastructure and Project Authority's guidance on [the role of the senior responsible owner](#). You should also make yourself familiar with the [Government Functional Standard for Project Delivery](#), the requirements of the Government Project Delivery Framework, and the guidance and requirements for project delivery as set by Portfolio & Project Delivery Directorate.

Time commitment and tenure

This role will require 35% of your time to enable effective delivery of the role and execute your responsibilities in full. This will be combined with your wider management and leadership responsibilities within the Department and other responsibilities as SRO of Northern Powerhouse Rail and oversight of Midlands Rail Hub projects.

You are required to undertake this role until completion of the Power Supply Upgrade Phase 2 works, planned for FY2024/25. Progress towards this is reflected in your personal objectives. Any changes to the agreed time commitment or tenure of the role, as set out above, will require both departmental and Infrastructure & Projects Authority consent.

Objectives and performance criteria

The policy intent supported by this programme is to: improve journeys; boost economic growth and opportunity; provide a safe, secure and sustainable transport system; and build a one nation Britain.

Any proposed changes to scope which impacts on this intent or the realisation of benefits must be authorised by the Investment, Portfolio and Delivery Committee and may be subject to further levels of approval.

The success criteria for the programme are the delivery of the following outputs:

- reduction in journey times for the fastest Long Distance High Speed (LDHS) services in each hour to around 4 hours between London and Edinburgh and around 2 hours between London and Leeds;
- LDHS seating capacity into London increased by 38% from approximately today's 2900 to 3950 seats per hour;

- an increase in capacity from 6 to 8 LDHS services between London King's Cross and Doncaster and from 5 to 6 LDHS services between Doncaster and Newcastle per hour; and,
- maintain freight capacity for current and Freight Market Study forecast demand, using diversionary routes as far as practicable.

At this point in time, these outcomes are conditional and trade-offs may need to be made between capacity, journey times and performance as further work is completed by Network Rail to develop the new timetable.

It is recognised that Passenger Services are directly accountable for the timetable and rolling stock decisions which will realise the benefits of the programme through their governance structures.

Your personal objectives and performance criteria which relate to the programme are:

- As Sponsor for ECML, I will ensure: key outputs are clearly specified; disciplined commissioning of HS2 Ltd and Network Rail; effective financial management and governance; robust business cases are developed; benefits are capable of being realised; wider support and stakeholder relationships are maintained; agreed governance routes are followed; and proper integration with wider programmes.

You are expected to run your project in accordance with the [Government Functional Standard for Project Delivery](#), the other [Functional Standards](#) as applicable to this programme and the requirements of the Government Project Delivery Framework.

Extent and limit of accountability

Finance and Controls

The overall budget for the programme is £1,230 million, excluding VAT.

You should be aware that the Spending Review 2021 settlement (22/23 to 24/25) for the programme is up to £202.27m which is expected to provide sufficient funding to enable delivery. However this may need to be reviewed in light of the Autumn fiscal statement. Any changes to funding should be aligned with a renewed delivery plan.

HM Treasury spending controls will apply on the basis set out within the department's delegated authority letter. Where the programme exceeds the delegated authority set by HM Treasury, the Treasury Approval Point process will apply, and the details of each approval process must be agreed with your HM Treasury spending team. You should consult departmental finance colleagues on how to go about this.

You should note that where expenditure is considered novel, contentious, repercussive, or likely to result in costs to other parts of the public sector, HM Treasury approval will be required, regardless of whether the programme expenditure exceeds the delegated authority set by HM Treasury. If in doubt about whether approval is required you should, in the first instance, consult departmental finance colleagues before raising with the relevant HM Treasury spending team.

The overall estimated budget, resourcing requirements and tolerances for your project/programme will be agreed as part of the approval process. You will be expected to deliver within these tolerances and report quarterly on these as part of GMPP reporting.

You should operate at all times within the rules set out in [Managing Public Money](#). In addition, you must be mindful of, and act in accordance with, the specific HM Treasury delegated limits and Cabinet Office

controls relevant to the East Coast Main Line Enhancements Programme. Information on these controls can be found here: [Cabinet Office controls](#).

Delegated authority

- Your authorised expenditure is set out in your delegation letter.
- You are authorised to agree project rescheduling, provided you are satisfied that the expenditure can be accommodated under the annual expenditure limit, as agreed with HM Treasury for the SR21 period, in which the rescheduled expenditure would now fall. Rescheduling beyond this must be agreed with the Investment, Portfolio and Delivery Committee, and may, depending on circumstances, require wider cross-government agreement.
- You are also responsible for recommending to the Investment, Portfolio and Delivery Committee the need to either pause or terminate the Programme where necessary and in a timely manner. Again, this may require in certain cases wider cross-government agreement.

Where issues arise which you are unable to resolve, you are responsible for escalating these issues to the appropriate Department for Transport board.

Appointments

You have appointed a full time programme director to support you in the management of this programme and should make other appointments as required for the control and delivery of your programme within your delegated authority.

Governance and assurance

You should pay attention to ensuring effective governance for your programme, including ensuring that the East Coast Programme Board has appropriate membership and clear terms of reference.

You should ensure that the programme remains aligned to the strategic outcomes, costs, timescales, and benefits in line with the approved business case as well as monitoring the context within which the programme is being delivered to ensure it remains valid.

Where a change impacts the scope, costs, benefits, or planned delivery milestones agreed as part of an agreed business case, you are responsible for following the agreed change request approval process and setting a new, approved, business case baseline.

You are responsible for bringing to the attention of the accounting officer any material changes in the programme which could require a new accounting officer assessment to be completed and published. [Guidance on completing accounting officer assessments](#) for major projects is available from HM Treasury.

Although you are directly accountable for this programme, you are also expected to support delivery of the department's overall strategic objectives. This means that you are expected to work collaboratively with other SROs and project directors in adjacent projects and programmes and with the Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline Portfolio Management Office and Strategy, Portfolio and Capability Director to manage dependencies, resources, schedules, and funding to support delivery of the overall change the department needs to achieve its strategic objectives.

You should ensure that appropriate and proportionate assurance is in place and agree on the level and frequency of assurance reviews through the maintenance of an integrated assurance and approvals plan.

You should develop this plan and its maintenance in collaboration with the Departmental Assurance Coordinator and the Infrastructure and Projects Authority.

Programme status, reporting and transparency requirements

The programme status reflected in the most recent quarterly return on the programme to the Infrastructure and Projects Authority is the agreed position as you assume formal ownership of the programme.

You are responsible for ensuring the honest and timely reporting on the position of the programme to the Infrastructure and Projects Authority while it remains on the GMPP and for providing reports and information to the Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline Portfolio Management Office as required. In future, reporting should include carbon measurement, and other sustainable development goals in accordance with evolving government policy and standards. Information on the programme will be published annually by the Infrastructure and Projects Authority.

As part of the government's commitment to transparency on major infrastructure projects, you are responsible for publishing a close out report on GOV.UK after the programme has been completed.

Development and support

As a graduate of the Major Projects Leadership Academy, you are expected to maintain your continuing professional development as a project leader, including your status as an accredited assurance reviewer. To maintain your accreditation, you will be required to participate in a review at least once every 12 months.

The department will assist you in securing the necessary resources to support the programme, and will set clear guidance, requirements and standards, which align to the [Government Functional Standard on Project Delivery](#), to enable good governance and effective delivery. You will be part of the department's cohort of major project leaders who will be expected to support each other, share good practice and lessons learned and to collectively develop solutions. You should liaise with the department's Head of Profession for project delivery to discuss the maintenance and development of your delivery and leadership skills.

The Infrastructure and Projects Authority will be available to you for support, advice, and assurance throughout the programme's time on the GMPP.

The Rail Enhancements Portfolio Board will provide ongoing oversight and support and will take steps to help resolve and escalate risks, issues or constraints that are acting as a blocker to successful delivery.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish you every success in your role as SRO.

Yours sincerely,



BERNADETTE KELLY



NICK SMALLWOOD

Permanent Secretary, Department for Transport

Chief Executive Officer, Infrastructure and
Projects Authority

CONFIRMATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF APPOINTMENT

I confirm that I accept the appointment of Senior Responsible Owner for the programme, including my personal accountability for implementation, as set out in the letter above.

Nick Bisson

NICK BISSON

24 November 2022