



Department  
for Transport



## United Kingdom-London

Railway transport services  
prior information notice for  
a public service contract

New contract for Northern Trains Ltd

WITHDRAWN JANUARY 2026

## Prior information notice

Form for notification under Article 7(2) of Regulation 1370/2007, as amended by the Regulation (EC) No 1370/2007 (Public Service Obligations in Transport) (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020, to be published one year before the launch of the invitation to tender procedure or direct award on the Department's website.

Competent authorities may decide not to publish this information where a public service contract concerns an annual provision of less than 50,000 kilometres of public passenger transport services.

### Section I: Competent authority

#### I.1 Name and addresses

Department for Transport  
Great Minster House  
33 Horseferry Road  
London SW1P 4DR  
United Kingdom

Email: [railprocurement@dft.gov.uk](mailto:railprocurement@dft.gov.uk)

NUTS code: UK

Main address: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport>

#### I.2 Contract award on behalf of other competent authorities

#### I.3 Communication

Additional information can be obtained from the above-mentioned address.

#### I.4 Type of competent authority

Ministry or any other national or federal authority, including their regional or local subdivisions.

### Section II: Object

#### II.1 Scope of the procurement

##### II.1.1 Title

Contract for Northern Franchise rail services. Currently operated by Northern Trains Limited (NTL).

## **II.1.2 Main CPV code**

60200000

## **II.1.3 Type of contract**

Services

Areas covered by the public transport services: Rail transport services.

## **II.2 Description**

### **II.2.2 Additional CPV code(s)**

60210000

### **II.2.3 Place of performance**

NUTS code:

UKC – North East

UKD – North West

UKE – Yorkshire and the Humber

UKF – East Midlands

Main site or place of performance:

The Northern Trains Limited services consist of a range of inter-urban, commuter and rural services throughout the North of England. The envisaged operating routes are summarised below.

### **II.2.4 Description of the procurement**

Contract for provision of regional passenger rail services on the UK conventional mainline rail system. It is envisaged the services would run between:

Bradford Forster Square – Skipton

Wakefield – Huddersfield/Hebden Bridge – Bradford Interchange – Leeds – Selby

Bradford Forster Square – Ilkley

Sheffield – Moorthorpe – Leeds

Sheffield – Hull

Knottingley – Wakefield

Bradford FQ – Skipton

Goole – Castleford – Leeds

Blackpool North – Leeds/York

Sheffield – Gainsborough Central/Lincoln

Doncaster – Scunthorpe

Hull – Scarborough

Hull – Bridlington – Scarborough

Wigan – Leeds

Leeds – Bradford Forster Square

Leeds – Ilkley

Bradford FQ – Ilkley

Hull – York/Bridlington

Scarborough/Hull – Sheffield via Doncaster

Barton on Humber – Cleethorpes

Carlisle – Settle – Leeds  
Skipton – Leeds  
Adwick – Sheffield  
Doncaster – Leeds  
Leeds – Knottingley  
Leeds – Knaresborough  
York – Leeds/Huddersfield  
Sheffield – York  
Wakefield – Huddersfield  
Halifax – Hull  
Leeds – Barnsley – Sheffield (Stoppers)  
Blackpool N – York  
Leeds – Lancaster  
Castleford – Bradford Interchange via Huddersfield  
Leeds – Lincoln via Sheffield  
Leeds – Sheffield via Moorthorpe  
Leeds – Harrogate – York  
Leeds – Manchester Victoria  
Sheffield – Huddersfield  
Leeds – Garforth – York  
Leeds – Nottingham  
Leeds – Chester  
Cleethorpes – Gainsborough  
Bishop Auckland – Darlington – Saltburn  
Newcastle – Carlisle  
Saltburn – Chester le Street – Carlisle  
Saltburn – Bishop Auckland  
Newcastle – Carlisle  
Whitby – Middlesbrough  
Durham Coast  
Chathill – Newcastle  
Wigan Wallgate – Via Bolton – Manchester Vic  
Manchester Vic – Stalybridge/Huddersfield  
Manchester Ox Road / Manchester Airport – Crewe (Styal)  
Southport – Wigan – Via Atherton – Manchester Vic  
Manchester Piccadilly – Crewe via Stockport  
Clitheroe – Manchester Victoria via Bolton  
Rochdale – Blackburn  
Manchester Piccadilly – Crewe via Manchester Airport  
Manchester Piccadilly – Chester  
Manchester Piccadilly – Buxton  
Manchester Piccadilly – New Mills Central  
Manchester Piccadilly – Stoke on Trent  
Kirby – Manchester Victoria via Atherton  
Clitheroe – Blackburn – Manchester Victoria via Todmorden  
Southport – Stalybridge  
Manchester Victoria – Stalybridge  
Manchester Piccadilly – Marple/Rose Hill  
Hazel Grove – Blackpool  
Manchester Piccadilly – Hadfield/Glossop  
Blackburn – Wigan

Manchester Piccadilly – Sheffield  
 Southport – Alderley Edge via Bolton  
 Manchester Piccadilly – Hazel Grove  
 Liverpool – Newton Le Willows/Wigan/Manchester Victoria  
 Windermere – Oxenholme  
 Liverpool/Warrington Central – Manchester Oxford Road/Piccadilly  
 Blackpool N – Preston  
 Barrow / Windermere – Preston – Wigan – Bolton – Manchester  
 Warrington BQ – Liverpool  
 Liverpool/Hunts Cross – Warrington Central – Manchester Ox Rd  
 Blackpool N – Liverpool (Stoppers)  
 Preston – Ormskirk  
 Carlisle – Whitehaven – Barrow  
 Liverpool – Manchester Airport via Warrington (express)  
 Cumbria Coast  
 Blackpool N – Liverpool (express)  
 Blackpool South – Colne  
 Manchester – Preston  
 Manchester Airport – Windermere/ Barrow (Express) via Wigan  
 Blackpool N – Manchester Airport (Express) via Bolton  
 Liverpool – Crewe via Manchester Piccadilly  
 Barrow/Windermere – Preston  
 Liverpool – Oxford Road via Warrington Central (Stoppers)  
 Carlisle – Clitheroe – Blackpool N  
 Lancaster – Morecambe  
 Ellesmere Port – Liverpool via Warrington BQ  
 Blackpool North – Preston – Manchester

There is a mixture of leisure, business and commuter travel. These services would be similar to those currently operated by Northern Trains Limited.

## **II.2.7 Envisaged start date and the duration of the contract**

Start: 1 March 2022

Duration in months: up to 60 months

## **Section IV**

### **Procedure**

#### **IV.1 Type of procedure**

Direct awards for railway transport (art. 5(6) of 1370/2007)

## **Section VI: Complementary information**

### **V1.1 Additional information**

It is anticipated that the contract will have a duration in the region of 24 months to 5 years in total and this is likely to include a core period of at least 24 months with an optional additional period or periods exercisable at the sole discretion of the Contracting Authority.

The Contracting Authority reserves the right not to proceed with the Direct Award as envisaged or to use an alternative method to procure an operator for the contract.

### **V1.4 Date of dispatch of this notice**

1 March 2021

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