



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WITHDRAWN JANUARY 2026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

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 / Windemere – 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