

TRANSPORT Briefing

TfL plans for two more Overground concessions

Posted 28/05/12

Train routes operated by Southeastern and Abellio will be added to the London Overground network if the government agrees to plans to be submitted by the Mayor of London.

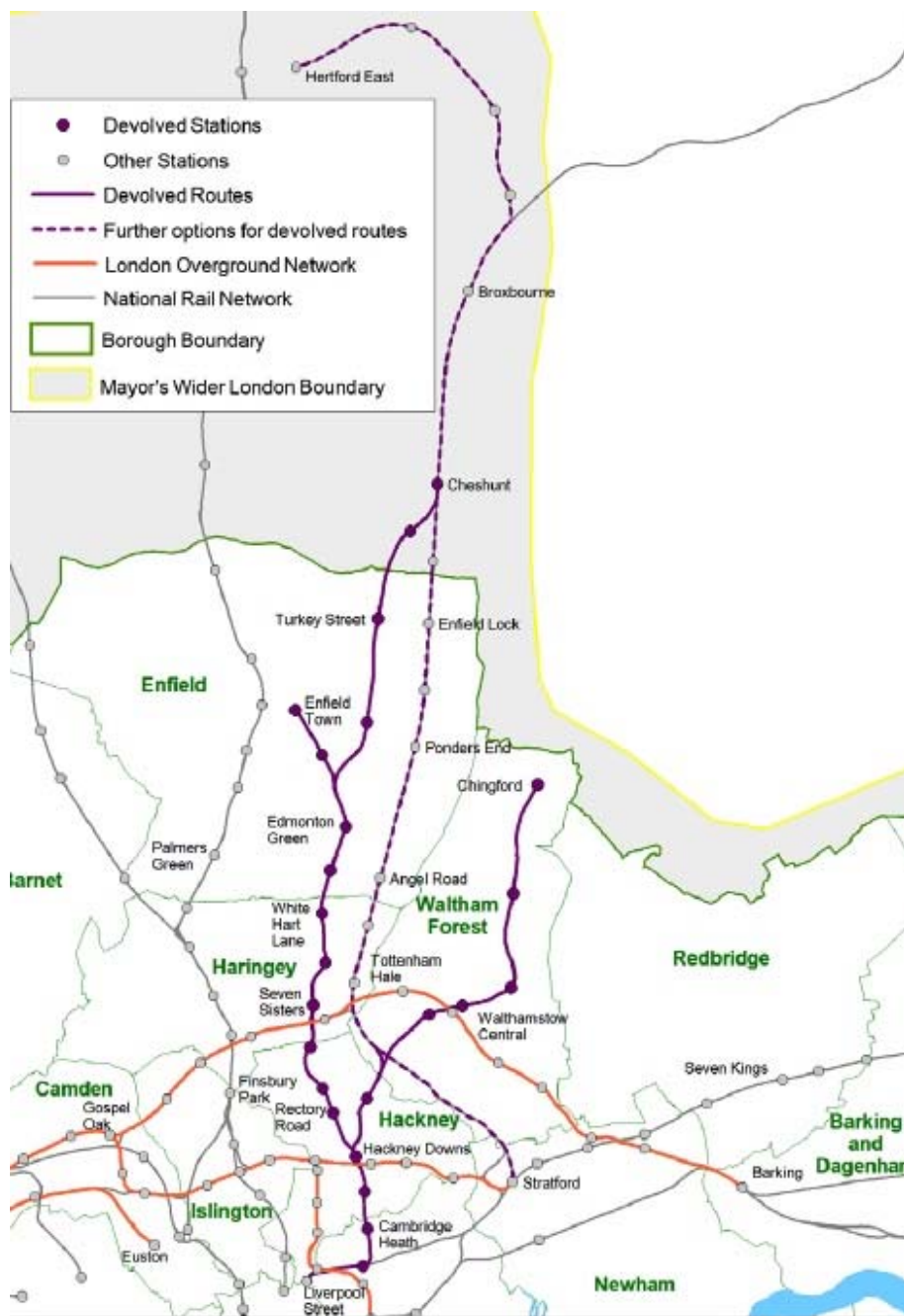
Transport for London has prepared a draft response to the Department for Transport's consultation on devolving control of rail services, part of the government response to Sir Roy McNulty's Rail Value for Money review published earlier this year (TB 8341).

Following the sharp increases in passenger numbers and customer satisfaction recorded since TfL gained control of north and west London Metro routes from Silverlink in 2007, and which are now part of the Overground network, TfL proposes that responsibility for specifying, procuring and managing some London-focused inner suburban services should be transferred to its control along with general responsibility for setting rail fares for travel within the London area.

In the forthcoming round of rail franchise reletting, TfL says that the DfT should continue to specify and manage the Essex Thameside and Thameslink franchises but when the Anglia and Southeastern operations are refranchised in 2014, inner suburban routes should be let as separate TfL concessions.

The routes proposed for devolution are the West Anglia inner services, currently part of the Greater Anglia franchise, operating between Liverpool Street/Stratford and Chingford/Enfield Town/Cheshunt/Hertford East, along with the inner services that are currently part of the Southeastern franchise running between Charing Cross/Cannon Street/Victoria and Dartford/Orpington/Sevenoaks/Hayes.

Potential West Anglia Overground routes



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TfL notes that an option for it to manage Hertford North to Moorgate services has also been discussed with the DfT and the final choice of routes will

depend on operational feasibility, affordability, value for money and support from key stakeholders.

Work carried out for TfL is said to show that West Anglia inner suburban services can be disaggregated from longer distance services with little impact on operational efficiency. The Southeastern network is more complex and disaggregation would result in an increase in the number of vehicles required although the increase would be small in relation to the size of the fleet.

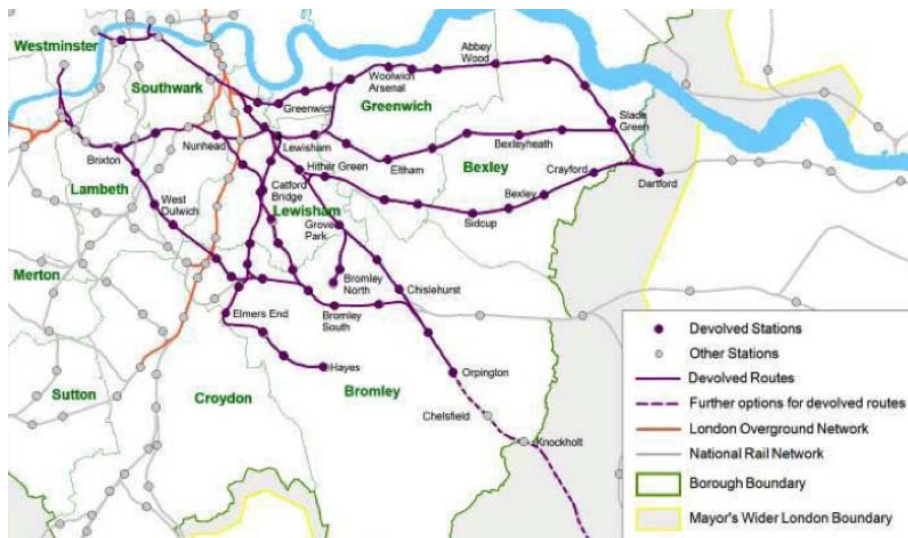
Commenting on which model of decentralisation it would prefer, TfL calls for the entire devolution of services which would see it take responsibility for specifying, funding and managing routes with existing funding transferred from the DfT. TfL says it is well placed to take financial risk on the concessions as it already takes risk on £3.2bn of fares revenue and is also capable of acting as operator of last resort - a status it has for existing London Overground services.

If the government agrees to devolve the Southeastern and Abellio routes TfL says it would increase service frequencies to a minimum turn up-and-go level wherever possible. This would include implementing a new, off-peak Bromley South to Victoria all-stations service to address gaps in service provision identified in previous TfL studies.

The Southeastern and West Anglia routes are said to have been identified for devolution "because service quality is currently poor and TfL has almost no rail presence in south east London, other than parts of the DLR and Tramlink networks". Of the 68 National Rail stations on the Southeastern network within Greater London, TfL has a presence at only one - New Cross.

A final version of the response to the rail consultation will be submitted to the DfT by 28 June 2012.

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