

South Eastern Franchise Consultation Questions – Sevenoaks District Council Response

<p>Q.1 What improvements do stakeholders believe could be made on the combined franchise through <u>partnership working between Network Rail and the new operator</u>?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Minimising Thameslink/London Bridge disruption, particularly unplanned disruption * Track record in managing passengers at times of disruption should be a key criteria in franchise * Integrated Control Centre – NR and TOC – passenger not train focused -based on Waterloo example * Improved passenger information, at stations and in advance – accuracy and timeliness * Better co-ordination of planned engineering works – not affecting several routes at the same time
<p>Q.2 What changes to South Eastern services need to be made given the likely changes in demand that could result from <u>Crossrail</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Good connections with Crossrail once operational * Address overcrowding out of London Bridge * Upgrading power supply out of Tunbridge Wells, to facilitate 12 car service * Must not lose any platform space at London termini (it has been declining over several years)
<p>Q.3 Are consultees aware of any other <u>rail or non-rail development</u> schemes that might affect the new franchise?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Large development sites in and adjoining district and growth areas in wider Kent e.g. Dunton Green in Sevenoaks (500 houses), Paddock Wood (600 houses), Ashford growth area (55,000 in 25 yrs), Maidstone and Uckfield * Many house-owners commuters into London – additional peak time travel
<p>Q.4 What <u>increments or decrements</u> to the specification would stakeholders wish to see and how would these be funded?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Preference for Tonbridge to Redhill Line to be in SE franchise – driver training on diversion route, more interest in provision of a Gatwick service. Ashford-Tonbridge-Edenbridge-Redhill-Gatwick hourly service * Better spacing of evening services London-Tonbridge / introduction of night-time services * Boxing day service (Ashford-Tonbridge-London)
<p>Q.5 Which aspects of the specification, other than those services operating on the HS1 network, would stakeholders wish to see <u>mandated</u> and which aspects of the specification could be left to the discretion of the operator?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Peak fast services to Charing Cross and Canon Street (and current off-peak) <p>General issues to be mandated (to be at least as good as the existing service):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Frequency of trains / time of first and last train / maximum travel times / off-peak services * Non-geographic numbers banned for train call centre * Ticket prices / season-tickets prices / benchmarking v EU * Refunds – for disruptions – TOC to refund passengers greater proportion of NR payment * Websites / TVM should always offer cheapest tickets – stakeholders provided seriously negative feedback and examples where TVM offer the most expensive option first (e.g. Tonbridge to Bromley via HS1). This practice appears to be discriminatory, particularly to people with disabilities who attempt to use these machines. It is understood that local rail user groups will be raising this with

	trading standards, but TVM should be re-programmed to offer the most frequently used tickets via the quick-ticket screen, and then the most appropriate route rather than the most expensive option.
Q.6 What <u>changes to services</u> would stakeholders propose, what is the rationale for them and would these provide economic benefit?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ashford-Tonbridge-Edenbridge-Redhill-Gatwick service – reducing car journeys, congestion, pollution. Kent is the only county in the SE without a direct train link to Gatwick. Direct links to tourist and business destinations. * Linking Rehill and Strood via Tonbridge and Maidstone West * Reducing journey times on Charing Cross-Tonbridge-Ashford line would increase capacity * Shoulder evening peak services from London-Sevenoaks-Tonbridge * Early morning connections to Eurostar at Ashford
Q.7 Do respondents feel that there are other destinations that domestic high speed services could serve that would support regional and national economic growth?	n/a
Q.8 How might better use be made of the <u>capacity</u> currently available?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * HS1 services not full due to fare premium. Reducing this premium would mean fewer East Kent passengers using classic services, freeing up capacity in West Kent * Stabling closer to London (not Ramsgate) * Reconsider balance of first and standard class * Peak-time services (from Tonbridge) should be 12 carriage trains * Review loading on trains / longer trains * Later services from London on Friday/Saturday evenings
Q.9 What steps might bidders be expected to take to <u>meet passenger demand</u> and what might be the most appropriate mechanisms for managing demand?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Reasonable fares/flexibility in ticket pricing (e.g. shoulder peaks/lower fares for lightly-used services) * Good information systems influence passenger behaviour * Maximum length trains at peak times * Regularly review loading and seasonal variation
Q.10 What destinations on the current Southeastern network do respondents think should be served by <u>Thameslink core</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Darent Valley route via Otford - a vital local link (30 min frequency) * Potential for an additional service Tunbridge Wells – Sevenoaks – Otford – London – which would provide additional capacity and relieve overcrowding on the SE mainline. * Welcome Maidstone East being added to Thameslink network, but not at the expense of services to

services and what is the rationale for such proposals?	Victoria. *Concerns that during London Bridge re-building, when Charing Cross trains are non-stopping at London Bridge for 18 months, it is queried whether the Canon Street service will run later, as they currently stop after the evening peak, which would then result in no service from London Bridge.
Q.11 What improvements would respondents like to see made to <u>other South Eastern services</u> , what is the rationale for them and would these provide economic benefit?	* Reducing standing * Improved journey time would improve stock utilisation * Elimination of lightly loaded services in East Kent by concentrating more rolling stock and manning nearer London (not Ramsgate) would substantially improve stock utilisation
Q.12 Folkestone Harbour branch	n/a
Q.13 How would you like to see <u>performance information</u> published?	* Provided on a line of route basis * HS1 disaggregation / mainline and metro should have same targets * Abolish 5 minute allowance (which causes interchange issues) and skipped stops should be treated as a cancellation * Full transparency – availability of raw data and aggregate * Lateness should be weighted by passengers numbers affected / key stops misses * Information available on web and in stations
Q.14 How <u>frequent</u> should its publication be?	* Monthly, previous month, annual average, equivalent last year, to facilitate comparison * Web-based data could be more real-time (i.e. weekly) * Historic records should be available (at least the past two years)
Q.15 What level of <u>disaggregation</u> of performance is reasonable?	* Line of route – HS1, mainline routes Ashford via Tonbridge, Hastings, Medway towns - monthly performance * Daily operations report - clear explanation for travellers as to the reasons for delays * Raw data, weekly, monthly, annual, incident reports as above
Q.16 What are the priorities that respondents consider should be taken into account to improve the <u>passenger experience</u> of using these services?	1) Customer Information Systems need to be improved – better use of staff and technologies, particularly in times of disruptions 2) An affordable and logical fares structure. 3) A stronger focus on performance, especially in poor weather 4) Services matching customer travel needs-frequency, travel times, stopping patterns & destinations 5) Additional rolling stock to reduce overcrowding 6) More attention to cleanliness and availability of on train toilet facilities

<p>Q.17 What do stakeholders see as the most important factors in improving <u>security</u> (actual or perceived) and addressing any gap between the two?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Visible presence of staff at quiet times * CCTV on trains / stations * Opening hours of ticket offices / waiting rooms / toilets * lighting of approach roads / removal of vegetation
<p>Q.18 What is important to stakeholders in the future use and <u>improvements in stations</u>?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Customer information – at home, at station and on-board / real-time info re onwards travel / SMS alerts / passenger-centric not train-centric information * Improvements in TVM to always sell cheapest fare * Attractive, well-signposted, welcoming, comfortable and safe environments, with clear passenger information
<p>Q.19 What priorities would respondents give to <u>car parking and cycling facilities</u> at locations where these are fully used?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Stations are interchanges with other modes, which should be convenient e.g. bus / cycle. Better integration / signposting / information on other modes should be available. * Duty to provide adequate secure cycle storage at all stations (and for motorcycles) * Discourage anti-social parking in areas around the station * Flexibility in car-park pricing at off peak times would reduce on street parking
<p>Q.20 What sort of ticketing products and services would you expect to see delivered through '<u>smart</u>' technology on this franchise?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Retention of all existing “allowable routes” in the Sevenoaks area * Study of extending the TfL zone structure to cover all stations served by SE Metro services (Oyster not ITSO) * Early introduction of smart ticketing technologies / Pay as you go season tickets / early bird peak * Innovative combined-ticket products to provide encouragement to use bus/PT rather car to travel between home and station * Southern does not restrict use of off-peak tickets in evening peak southwards from London, but First Capital Connect does northwards. This restriction should not be applied southwards from London and the existing range of regulated and unregulated tickets should continue to be available
<p>Q.21 What local <u>accessibility and mobility issues</u> do stakeholders see and how they might be addressed?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * A ramp on the down platform at Hildenborough is a high priority * Bat and Ball, Edenbridge Town, Edenbridge and Ashurst do not have full step-free access, which should be rectified by 2020 * Currently Southeastern provide good support to travellers with mobility issues including their turn up and go approach which should be a requirement for the next franchisee and provides an excellent exemplar for many other TOCs. * Up to 20% of customers cannot read normal station displays due to sight problems, illiteracy, inadequate knowledge of English etc. Real-time announcements must be made clearly (not pre-

	recorded announcements). Greater emphasis should be placed on staff training, with special attention to information provision for those with hearing and visual disabilities during disruptions
Q.22 What <u>environmental targets</u> would stakeholders like to see within the franchise specification?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Publish annual environmental reports * Build incentives into the franchise to encourage environmentally responsible behaviour and reward investment in environmental improvements. * Duty on the franchisee to actively support local initiatives to promote access to stations by cycling, public transport and for pedestrians.