

## Combined Franchise Consultation Questions – Sevenoaks District Council Response

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> ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Minimising Thameslink/London Bridge disruption, particularly unplanned disruption</li> <li>* Track record in managing passengers at times of disruption should be a key criteria in franchise</li> <li>* Integrated Control Centre – NR and TOC – passenger not train focused -based on Waterloo example</li> <li>* Improved passenger information, at stations and in advance – accuracy and timeliness</li> <li>* Better co-ordination of planned engineering works – not affecting several routes at the same time</li> </ul>
Q.2 Do consultees have any other specific <u>aspirations</u> for the new franchise that they wish to bring to the Department's attention?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Welcome potential additional of Maidstone East Line – likely to attract passengers from overcrowded classic mainline services. Detailed modelling required to ensure capacity to meet demand. Must not impact upon current Victoria service from this station.</li> <li>* 10 car trains on the Uckfield Line – commitment to extend platforms, but franchise should specify the rolling stock requirement</li> </ul>
Q.3 Are consultees aware of any other <u>rail or non-rail development</u> schemes that might affect the new franchise?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* 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</li> <li>* Many house-owners commuters into London – additional peak time travel</li> <li>* Potential Gatwick airport expansion may have a future impact</li> </ul>
Q.4 What <u>increments or decrements</u> to the specification would stakeholders wish to see and how would these be funded?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Ashford-Tonbridge-Edenbridge-Redhill-Gatwick service (hourly)</li> <li>* Preference for Tonbridge to Redhill Line to be in SE franchise – driver training on diversion route, more interest in provision of a Gatwick service</li> <li>* Better spacing of evening services London-Tonbridge / introduction of night-time services</li> <li>* Boxing day service (Ashford-Tonbridge-London)</li> <li>* Sunday service from Uckfield, earlier services required to facilitate weekend journeys into London</li> </ul>
Q.5 Which aspects of the specification, other than those operating through the Thameslink core route, would stakeholders wish to see <u>mandated</u> and which aspects of the specification could be left to the discretion of the operator?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Darenth Valley line (via Otford) - a vital local link (min frequency 30 min)</li> <li>* London Bridge to Uckfield / Redhill to Tonbridge</li> </ul> <p>General issues to be mandated (to be at least as good as the existing service):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Frequency of trains / time of first and last train / maximum travel times / off-peak services</li> <li>* Non-geographic numbers banned for train call centre</li> <li>* Ticket prices / season-tickets prices / benchmarking v EU</li> <li>* Refunds – for disruptions – TOC to refund passengers greater proportion of NR payment</li> <li>* Websites / TVM should always offer cheapest tickets – stakeholders provided seriously negative</li> </ul>

	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 Are there other approaches to train service <u>specification</u> which you would prefer?	n/a
Q.7 What <u>changes to services</u> would stakeholders propose, what is the rationale for them and would these provide economic Benefit?	* 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.
Q.8 How might better use be made of the <u>capacity</u> currently available?	* 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?	* 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 <u>destinations</u> on the current Southeastern network do respondents think should be served by the combined franchise's services and what is the rationale for such proposals?	* Sevenoaks, proposed Maidstone East service and Tunbridge Wells * Darenth Valley route via Otford * 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 expense of Victoria service * Not supportive of transfer of SE suburban services to TfL – TfL only directly accountable for residents of London, and services altered to work around London timetabling.
Q.11 How might better use be made of the capacity available on	* The Oxted route could be extended to run down to Brighton, to provide an additional alternative route to the Brighton Main Line.

the <u>Brighton Main Line</u> ?	* The Milton Keynes to East Croydon services could also be extended to/from Brighton
Q.12 What steps should bidders be expected to take to improve performance on the route?	n/a
Q.13 -15 re Great Northern route	n/a
Q.16 What services would be appropriate to serve the <u>Airport market</u> ?	<p>* Semi-fast service between Ashford and Gatwick Airport would provide Kent with a direct link to the airport. Kent is the only county in south east England without a direct link to Gatwick. This would eliminate large numbers of road journeys from Kent greatly improving the environment.</p> <p>* Should be a high priority for either the combined Thameslink/Southern franchise or the new SE franchise. Would provide economic benefits – connecting business and tourist destinations</p> <p>* Over 2m residents of Kent use Gatwick airport flights annually</p>
Q.17 What improvements could be made without adversely affecting the service provision?	n/a
Q.18 What services that run via Elephant & Castle do respondents think should run via the <u>Thameslink core route</u> ?	* Sevenoaks services should continue to run via Thameslink core since otherwise Kent will have no direct service to Thameslink core with its vital access to central London, St Pancras and from 2018 to Crossrail for Docklands, City and Heathrow.
Q.19 Recognising that not all of these services can run via the Thameslink core route, what would be the most satisfactory way of managing the <u>interchange at Blackfriars</u> ?	* Maidstone East service should run via Thameslink core since it will be the only direct fast service from Kent.
Q.20 re Coastway East and West	n/a
Q.21 What improvements would respondents like to see made to <u>other Southern services</u> as part of the combined franchise from 2015?	* Early services from Edenbridge Town currently over-crowded – needs mitigation and additional train units
Q.22 What are respondents' views on the practice of splitting	Splitting trains at Haywards Heath supported to have 30 minutes service to east and west coast

trains at stations such as <u>Haywards Heath</u> ?	
Q.23 <u>Newhaven Marine line</u>	n/a
Q.24 How would you like to see <u>performance information</u> published?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Provided on a line of route basis</li> <li>* Abolish 5 minute allowance (which causes interchange issues) and skipped stops should be treated as a cancellation</li> <li>* Full transparency – availability of raw data and aggregate</li> <li>* Lateness should be weighted by passengers numbers affected / key stops misses</li> <li>* Information available on web and in stations</li> </ul>
Q.25 How <u>frequent</u> should its publication be?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Monthly, previous month, annual average, equivalent last year, to facilitate comparison</li> <li>* Web-based data could be more real-time (i.e. weekly)</li> <li>* Historic records should be available (at least the past two years)</li> </ul>
Q.26 What level of <u>disaggregation</u> of performance is reasonable?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Daily operations report - clear explanation for travellers as to the reasons for delays</li> <li>* Raw data, weekly, monthly, annual, incident reports as above</li> </ul>
Q.27 What are the priorities that respondents consider should be taken into account to improve the <u>passenger experience</u> of using these services?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Customer Information Systems need to be improved – better use of staff and technologies, particularly in times of disruptions</li> <li>2) An affordable and logical fares structure.</li> <li>3) A stronger focus on performance, especially in poor weather</li> <li>4) Services matching customer travel needs-frequency, travel times, stopping patterns &amp; destinations</li> <li>5) Additional rolling stock to reduce overcrowding</li> <li>6) More attention to cleanliness and availability of on train toilet facilities</li> </ol>
Q.28 What do stakeholders see as the most important factors in improving <u>security</u> (actual or perceived) and addressing any gap between the two?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Visible presence of staff at quiet times</li> <li>* CCTV on trains / stations</li> <li>* Opening hours of ticket offices / waiting rooms / toilets</li> <li>* lighting of approach roads / removal of vegetation</li> </ul>
Q.29 What is important to stakeholders in the future use and <u>improvements in stations</u> ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Customer information – at home, at station and on-board / real-time info re onwards travel / SMS alerts / passenger-centric not train-centric information</li> <li>* Improvements in TVM to always sell cheapest fare</li> <li>* Attractive, well-signposted, welcoming, comfortable and safe environments, with clear passenger information</li> </ul>
Q.30 What priorities would	* Stations are interchanges with other modes, which should be convenient e.g. bus / cycle. Better

respondents give to <u>car parking and cycling facilities</u> at locations where these are fully used?	<p>integration / signposting / information on other modes should be available.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Duty to provide adequate secure cycle storage at all stations (and for motorcycles)</li> <li>* Discourage anti-social parking in areas around the station</li> <li>* Flexibility in car-park pricing at off peak times would reduce on street parking</li> </ul>
Q.31 What sort of ticketing products and services would you expect to see delivered through <u>'smart' technology</u> on this franchise?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Retention of all existing "allowable routes" in the Sevenoaks area</li> <li>* Study of extending the TfL zone structure to cover all stations served by SE Metro services (Oyster not ITSO)</li> <li>* Early introduction of smart ticketing technologies / Pay as you go season tickets / early bird peak</li> <li>* Innovative combined-ticket products to provide encouragement to use bus/PT rather car to travel between home and station</li> <li>* 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</li> </ul>
Q.32 What local <u>accessibility and mobility issues</u> do stakeholders see and how they might be addressed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* A ramp on the down platform at Hildenborough is a high priority</li> <li>* Bat and Ball, Edenbridge Town, Edenbridge and Ashurst do not have full step-free access, which should be rectified by 2020</li> <li>* 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.</li> <li>* 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</li> </ul>
Q.33 What <u>environmental targets</u> would stakeholders like to see within the franchise specification?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Publish annual environmental reports</li> <li>* Build incentives into the franchise to encourage environmentally responsible behaviour and reward investment in environmental improvements.</li> <li>* Duty on the franchisee to actively support local initiatives to promote access to stations by cycling, public transport and for pedestrians.</li> <li>* Infill electrification of the remaining diesel routes in the South-East should undertaken as soon as possible. In all cases, the routes are quite short and electrification would permit existing diesel stock to be cascaded to replace older stock on other parts of the national network with minimal delay.</li> </ul>